

MANAGEMENT OF CELIAC DISEASE BY ALTERNATIVE THERAPY: A CASE STUDY

*¹Dr. Pratyush Kumar, ²Dr. Shrawan Kumar Sahu, ³Dr. Dheeraj Tyagi and ⁴Dr. Vijay Kumar

¹Associate Professor, Swasthya Rakshan Department, Patanjali Ayurveda College, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.

²Research Officer(Ay.), Regional Ayurveda Research Institute, Gangtok, Sikkim, India.

³Assistant Professor, Swasthya Rakshan Department, Patanjali Ayurveda College, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.

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*Corresponding Author

Dr. Pratyush Kumar

Associate Professor,
Swasthya Rakshan
Department, Patanjali
Ayurveda College,
Haridwar, Uttarakhand,
India.

ABSTRACT

Celiac disease (CD) is one of the most common diseases, resulting from both environmental (gluten) and genetic factors [human leukocyte antigen (HLA) and non-HLA genes]. The prevalence of CD has been estimated to approximate 0.5%-1% in different parts of the world. Currently, the only treatment available for CD individuals is a strict life-long gluten-free diet (GFD). Consumption of GFD is not only cumbersome, but it is usually more expensive and harder also to find than common gluten-containing foods. Although hydrolysis of toxic gliadin peptide, prevention of toxic gliadin peptide absorption, blockage of selective deamidation of specific glutamine residues by tissue, restoration of immune tolerance towards gluten, modulation of immune response to dietary gliadin, and restoration of intestinal

architecture may be taken as future treatment modalities, but its fruitfulness cannot be ascertained. The acceptance of traditional, alternative and complementary systems of medicine has been increasing exponentially after it was addressed by the World Health Organization (W.H.O.) at Alma Ata in 1978. Keeping these very facts into consideration, this case study was conducted to introduce a better management of the disorder. It comprises of three purification procedures of Alternative therapy namely Shankh Prakshalan, Kunjal Kriya and Yog vasti followed by Ayurvedic medicines viz. Haritaki Churna, Arogyavardhini Vati, Avipattikar Churna, Kamdudha Rasa and Prawal Panchamrit Ras. After two months of the

therapy, the patient was in a position to eat gluten-diet without any problem, which was confirmed by her TTG value (0.50U/mL).

KEYWORDS: Celiac disease, alternative therapy, Shankh Prakshalan, Kunjal Kriya, Yog vasti, Prawal Panchamrit Ras.

INTRODUCTION

The designation of the month May as "Coeliac Awareness Month" by several coeliac organisations itself iterates the graveness of the diathesis.^[1] Coeliac disease is a long-term autoimmune disorder that primarily affects the small intestine.^[2] Classic symptoms include gastrointestinal problems such as chronic diarrhoea, abdominal distension, malabsorption, loss of appetite and among children failure to thrive.^[3]

Coeliac disease is caused by a reaction to gluten, which are various proteins found in wheat and in other grains such as barley and rye.^{[4],[7]} It occurs in people who are genetically predisposed.^[5] Upon exposure to gluten, an abnormal immune response may lead to the production of several different autoantibodies that can affect a number of different organs.^[6] In the small bowel, this causes an inflammatory reaction and may produce shortening of the villi lining the small intestine (villous atrophy).^[5] This affects the absorption of nutrients, frequently leading to anaemia.^{[5],[7]}

Diagnosis is typically made by a combination of blood antibody tests and intestinal biopsies, helped by specific genetic testing.^[5] While the disease is caused by a permanent intolerance to wheat proteins, it is not a form of wheat allergy.^[5]

At present, the only effective treatment is a lifelong gluten-free diet.^[8] No medication exists that prevents damage or prevents the body from attacking the gut when gluten is present. Strict adherence to the diet helps the intestines heal, leading to resolution of all symptoms in most cases and, depending on how soon the diet is begun, can also eliminate the heightened risk of osteoporosis and intestinal cancer and in some cases sterility.^[9] The diet can be cumbersome; failure to comply with the diet may cause relapse. Gluten-free products are usually more expensive and harder to find than common gluten-containing foods.^[10] On the other hand, although Gluten-free diet improves healthcare-related quality of life, it doesn't completely normalise the quality of life.^[11]

AYURVEDIC VIEW

Although exact correlate of Coeliac disease is not available in Ayurvedic classics, on the basis of similarities of symptoms, this disease may be assumed equivalent to a disease named Grahani Dosha which has been explained in Ayurveda in detail. As per the Ayurvedic texts, Grahani Dosha comes into existence with Agni-Dusti(the derangement of digestive fire).^[12]

Digestion is ruled by Agni supported by by the three Dosha (body humours). Hence any derangement in Agni or any imbalance of one or more Dosha are capable of hampering the process of digestion, ultimately leading to a disease of Annavaha Srotas(GI tract).

According to Ayurvedic literature, wheat is endowed with Madhura Rasa and Sheet-Snigdha-Guru Guna. It increases Kapha Dosha and brings about Mandagni(weakness of digestive fire) which ultimately leads to formation of Ama(toxins), responsible for existence of Grahani Dosha.^{[13],[14]}

Treatment of Grahani Dosha, like other diseases, proceeds with adoption of Sanshodhan-Vidhi(Purification methods i.e. emesis/Purgation) and it is complemented by use of palliative medicines.^[15]

CASE REPORT

A 48 years old lady, diagnosed as a case of Celiac disease, reported the Swasthya Rakshan OPD of Patanjali Ayurved Hospital in November for proper management of the same, having gotten no any relief from the mainstream healthcare system. According to the patient, she was having generalized weakness for last 1 year along with frequent bloating, abdominal discomfort, depression and loose motion. The problems used to enhance along with excessive abdominal pain on consumption of food items prepared with wheat. For having permanent relief from this annoying disease condition, she had visited a well known private hospital where she was diagnosed as a case of Celiac disease, confirmed by high TTG of her biopsy specimen. She had been a known case of Hypothyroidism also and for it, she had been taking Allopathic medicine.

Accepting the challenge of managing this intractable disorder, a holistic approach of the treatment was planned and accordingly the patient was admitted in IPD of the hospital. Assuming the diathesis equivalent to Grahani(discussed earlier), she was made to undergo

following procedures of internal purification of the gut followed by intake of prescribed Ayurvedic medicines:

A) Procedures: Taking the graveness of the disorder into account, the patient was introduced the two procedures of Yoga (Shankh Prakshalan and Kunjal Kriya) and one procedure of Ayurveda (Yog basti) for uprooting the cause of the ailment. The brief descriptions of the procedures are as follows:

I. Shankh Prakshalan-This is a Yogic process to clean the alimentary canal by removing toxins with salty water.^[16] Here a definite amount of salty water is drunk in a sitting position followed by performance of successive five Asanas viz.

- Tadasana(Standing pose with raised arms interlocked and facing upwards)
- Tiryak Tadasana(Swaying Palm Tree Pose)
- Kati Chakrasan (Standing Spinal Twist)
- Tiryak Bhujangasana (Serpent pose looking at the heels alternatively from right and left side).
- Udarakarshasana (Abdominal Twist Pose)

Owing to this Yogic practice, there occurs an urge for evacuation of bowel which results into the expulsion of toxins from the same. Two rounds of this procedure is assumed to be sufficient one, marked by the evacuation of almost pure water. A total of 45 to 60 minutes of rest in Shavasana position is recommended after the procedure. After the passage of around 2 hours, a light diet (preferably Khichadi prepared with rice, Moong Daal, and sufficient water) with ample amount of Ghee is served for sustaining the integrity of the gut wall.

II) Kunjal Kriya

It is one of the six purification methods of Shatkarma and is meant for cleaning the stomach and the upper digestive tract.^[17] Here, vomiting is induced in a person by pressing the root of the tongue with two fingers via stimulation of vomiting reflex. Before performing the procedure, one has to drink enough water (1 to 1½ litres) to completely fill the stomach.

III) Yog basti (योग बस्ति)

This is a type of therapeutic enema in which a series of total 8 enema are inoculated to pacify the one or more vitiated Dosha.^{[18],[19]} Here commencement is done with oil enema, which

follows three rounds of alternate oil enema and decoction enema and terminates with oil enema.

B) Medicines

After the successful completion of above procedures of detoxification following medicines were prescribed as a palliative treatment:

1. Haritaki Churna-3gm x HS with warm water.

2. Arogyavardhini Vati-1 tab. x BD after meal

3. Avipattikar Churna -3 gm

Kamdudha Rasa -125 mg

Prawal Panchamrit Ras -125 mg

1 dose x 2 times empty stomach with water

RESULTS

From the very beginning of the procedures, the patient started feeling well. After the completion of the procedures, she was almost 60 percent well subjectively. After an interval of one month of intake of prescribed Ayurvedic medicines, she felt herself extremely suitable to take Gluten-diet and began the same. After the passage of one more month, she went for an immunological investigation. As per the report, her TTG value was 0.50U/mL i.e. strongly negative and it indicates the supremacy of Alternative therapy over the conventional one.

DISCUSSION

In accordance with its name, Alternative Therapy is very much capable of becoming an alternative to the conventional healing system if given enough opportunity as elicited by this very case study. Here, Asanas (postures adopted), during the process of Shankha Prakshalana, activate peristalsis, sphincters or valves, muscles and nerves of the digestive tract. Tadasana and katichakrasana act mainly on stomach, small intestine and stretches the colon. Udarakarshasana squeeze and massage the coecum, sigmoid colon and rectum. Udarakarshasana and Bhujangasana stimulate the recto-sphincter reflex. In this way these Asana helps to create pressure and eliminate toxic materials through anus. This local cleansing and purification of the digestive tract improves the digestive process and strengthens the whole body(Gherand Samhita, Chapter1, Versus 17). Kunjal Kriya performed after Shankha prakshalana, further expelled out the remaining impurities of the gut of the sufferer. Taking the nature of the diathesis into account, Yog Vasti was adopted to complete the extensive process of purification. As the Sun residing in the sky is very much capable of

dragging water from the earth surface, owing to Teekshna, Ushna and Vyavayi Guna, Basti has the capacity to drag the vitiated Dosha present throughout the body to be expelled out with the faeces^[20], So far as the use of medicines (Haritaki Churna, Arogyavardhini Vati, Avipattikar Churna, Kamdudha Rasa and Prawal Panchamrit Ras) is concerned, these all are proved Pittashamak medicines and hence worked well in this case, since Grahani is basically a Pitta dominant GI disorder.

CONCLUSION

The potential of Alternative therapy has not been deciphered till date systematically, In the light of this case report, it can be iterated that Alternative therapy is capable of giving solution to even intricate ailments like Celiac disease,. Multicentric clinical trials should be done by taking large enough sample size to come up with a concrete conclusion.

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