

HISTORICAL REVIEW OF VATA RAKTA (GOUT)

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ABSTRACT

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The chasing modernisation in today's world, processed food culture, stressful and speedy life, prevalent in urban areas is spreading its wings in remote villages too. Human beings are vulnerable to many disorders due to their altered life style and food habits leading to metabolic disorders, Vatarakta is one of them. It is an illness where both Vata and Rakta are afflicted by distinct aetiological factors which is more distressing and common metabolic disorder prevalent in present era & is characterised by severe pain, tenderness, inflammation and burning sensation in the affected joints. It is a Vatapradhana Tridoshaja Vyadhi where Rakta is main Dushya. Classical Ayurvedic texts are loaded with plenty of references and detailed description of the disease under the name of Vata-Rakta, Vata-Balasa, Adhya-Vata

and Khudda-Vata. Sedentary lifestyle along with mental stress, consumption of non-vegetarian and high protein diet, excessive alcohol intake are some of the precipitating factors which causes acute exacerbation of Vatarakta.

KEYWORDS: Vatarakta, Vata, Rakta, Vata-Balasa, Gout.

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INTRODUCTION

The understanding of ideal definition of health and Dhatu Samya is very essential for human beings in order to attain the first pursuit of life for attaining Hita and Sukha Ayu. Health according to Ayurveda is the state of Dhatusamya (Su.Sa.15/48). Acharya Charaka says that a man desirous of happiness should observe the rules which are related with the prevention of unborn diseases and the cure of those which have already arisen. This is evident from the fact that before planning the management of diseases, description of Dincharya and Ritucharya is given. Charaka has clearly mentioned the general principles for maintaining health which includes observing various measures like following of dietic and behaviouristic regimen of life according to Desha, Kala and Prakrti, avoidance of Sahasa, Asatmaya-indriyarth Samyoga etc. The disorders produced by the conjugation of vitiated Vata and Rakta generate multiple health ailments which in greater term are referred to as Vatarakta. Hence it has been described as a separate disease entity in Charaka Samhita. The status of Vata-rakta is often compared with Gout in the allied sciences due to the outstanding similarities. Gout is a clinical syndrome and is a group of metabolic diseases in which clinical manifestations are associated with tissue deposition of crystals of monosodium urate monohydrate from hyperuricemic body fluids.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Historical reviews in a chronological order (from Vedic Kala, Samhita kala & Adhunik Kala) by different Acharyas has been compiled here. Acharya Charaka has mentioned Vata Rakta as Swatantra Adhyaya whereas Acharya Sushrut has mentioned it in Vata Vyadhi.

HISTORICAL REVIEW

History is the discipline of recording and interpreting past events, developments, etc. Oftenly in chronological approach all that is preserved or remembered especially in written form. Specific advances in a science happen with the culmination of knowledge from different scholars over a period of time. Ayurveda, also developed on the same principles with the passage of time. Comprehensive searches within the Ayurvedic literature and the present day annotations also unveil the gradual and progressive understanding of Vatarakta. Thus, it becomes necessary to discuss the history of Vatarakta which will help us to understand the Ahara-Vihara, traditions, culture, ways of living and other diseases.

Vedic Period: (5000 B.C.-800 B.C.)

Vedic Period is considered to be the oldest written literature. Vedas give numerous individual

references to Vata and Rakta along with their qualities but the various disorders produced by them collectively are not found. Scattered references of joints like Sakthi, Janu and Shroni is narrated in Atharva Veda but no details of joint disorders is found.

Pruranic Period: (4000 B.C.- 1000 B. C.)

With the exception of Garuda and Agni Purana, not a lot of information is available in the literatures of Purana Kala. Details of Vata-rakta including etiopathogenesis and symptomatology is available in Garuda Purana. It also gives a vivid management of Vata-rakta using Guduchi in the form of Kalka, Swarasa, Churna and Kwatha. Use of Vardhamana Pippali along with Pathya like Guda, Patola, Triphala and Katuki have been prescribed to alleviate the burning sensation in Vata-rakta.

Agni Purana also gives a brief description of Vata-rakta and food items like Raktashali, Godhuma, Yava, Mudga and Madhu which have been advised for the patients suffering from this disease.

Samhita Period (2000 B.C.-800.A.D)

Samhitas are the mainstay among the Ayurvedic literature. Much of the information in Ayurveda including Vata-rakta has been well documented in the Samhitas.

Charaka Samhita (2000 B.C.)

Charak Samhita describes Vata-rakta in the 29th Chapter of Chikitsa Sthana. There we can find a complete explanation of this disease including Pancha Nidana, types and Chikitsa Sutra. Both Shamana and Shodhana Chikitsa have been mentioned to manage the disease. Before the conclusion of the chapter a distinctive patho-physiology of Vata-rakta, comprising the Margavarna of Vayu by Kapha and Meda along with its management with help of Gomutra, Haritaki and Takra have been elucidated.

Sushruta Samhita (1000-1500 B. C.)

Sushruta Samhita's understanding of Vata-rakta is different regarding its types. It states that the Uttana and Avagadha Vatarakta are not the types of this illness rather they are its Avastha Vishesh. In Sushruta Samhita, the disease has been described in 2 chapters, under Vatavyadhi Nidansthana 1st Chapter and Mahavatavyadhi Chikitsasthana 5th chapter where all aspects of disease are described in detail.

Other classical texts which include description of Vata-Rakta. are Harita Samhita (1000 B.C.)

and Bhela Samhita (1000 B.C.). In Harita Samhita, Vata-Rakta Vyadhi is described in 23rd chapter Tritiya Sthana Vata-Rakta Nidana Evam Chikitsa. Where as in Bhela Samhita Vata-Rakta is mentioned in Vata-Shonita Chikitsa Chapter 15 and 24.

Samgraha Kala

Ashtang Hridya and Ashtang sangraha compile the views of Charaka and Sushruta Samhita. Ashtanga Hridaya has also added the management of Saama and Nirama stages of Vatarakta. Other classical texts of Ayurveda in which description of Vata-Rakta vyadhi is found in detail are Madhava Nidana, Vrinda Madhava, Sharangdhara, Bhava Prakasha, Yogaratnakara and Bhaishjya Ratnavali.

Table shows the Description of Vata Rakta in different classics.

S.No.	Name of text	Period	References
1	Charaka Samhita	1000-1500B.C.	Vata-Shonita Cikitsa, chikitsa sthana, ch.-29
2	Sushruta Samhita	1000-1500B.C.	Vatavyadhi Nidanam, Nidan sthana ch.-1, Mahavatavyadhichikitsa, Ch.-5
3	Bhel Samhita	1000B.C.	Vata Shonita Cikitsa 14&24
4	Harita Samhita	1000B.C.	Vata Rakta tritya sthana tryovinaso adhyaya-23
5	Vagabhatta Samhita a) Ashtanga Samgrah b) Ashtanga Hridaya	600-700A.D.	Vatashonita Ni Sth 16, Ci. Sth 24 Vatashonita Ni Sth 16, Ci. Sth 22
6	Madhava Nidana	700A.D.	Vata Rakta Ni. Chap. 23
7	Vrinda Madhava	900A.D.	Vata Rakta adhikara Chap. 23
8	Chakradutta	1100A.D.	Vata Rakta ci. Chap. 23

Historical Aspect of Gout

Gout is known as a hereditary disorder of purine metabolism. It was first recognised medically by the ancient Greeks and Romans. Clinical records of disease 'Gout' are available in the writings of Aretacus of Cappadocia, Caelius Aurelianus and Hippocrates. (Harrison TR-1951).

"Gout" is a truly ancient disease. It is mentioned firstly in the 5th century B.C. It has been described as 'King of the diseases and Disease of the King's'.

(RL Wortmann & WN Kelley 2000)

Hippocrates, the father of Modern medicines is given the credit for the first clear and clinical description of Gout in about 500 B.C. It has been mentioned that this disease rarely occurs before puberty in males and seldom before menopause in females (Goldman & Bennat

2000).

Major events in the history of Gout have been given in the following table.

Date	Events	Author
500B.C.	Aphorism on Gout	Hippocrates
1 ST cent A.D.	Familial Nature	Seneca
3rd cent A.D.	Tophi described	Galen
13 th cent A.D.	Term Gout originated	De Vielehardoum
1679	Crystals in Gouty tophi	Van Leuwenhock
1776	Uric acid in stones	Scheele
1797	Urate in tophi	Wallaston
1814	Specificity of Colchicine in acute gout	Waut
1848	Hperuricemism in gout	Garrod
1899	Urate crystals cause gouty arthritis	Freundweiler
1950	Introduction of effective uricosuric agents	Talbott
1963	Allopurinol introduced	Guttman & Yu
1967	1 st specific enzyme deficit described in patient with gout	Rundles et.al. Kelley et.al.

CONCLUSION

The prevalence of life style disorders is rising rapidly. The best thing which can be done in current scenario is to prevent it rather than cure. Vata-rakta is also a life style disorder of today's world. Excessive purine diet and sedentary life style are the causative factors of the disease. Disease can be controlled by adopting certain life style changes like increased water intake, reducing body weight and low purine diets. In advance cases there may be need of some herbal drugs which can remove excess uric acid present in the body and alleviate symptoms of the disease.

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