

Agnikarma in Ayurved: An Overview

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the everlasting supreme science of medicine because it deals with promotion of health and curing the diseases. The aim of Medical Science is to provide better health to every human being. To achieve this goal the pathy should be able to eliminate the disease and that to be without any side effects.

Ayurveda have *shaman* and *shodhan chikitsa*. Variety of medical procedure mentioned in Ayurved *samhita* as like *ksharkarma*, *lepanam* etc. *AgniKarma* is one of the important procedure described in Ayurveda. In this fast lifestyle patients need instant result on all pain. *AgniKarma* is one of the fast procedure to reduced *vedana* (pain). Many *samhitas* have description of *AgniKarma*. From meaning to indication, contraindication, its superiority all information included in *charak*, *sushrut*, *vagbhat*, *harita* as *amhita*. *Acharya Dalhana* have given explanation regarding the shapes of *AgniKarma* in his commentary. This *AgniKarma* is original idea of modern cauterization procedure. This review article will help to all to gain best knowledge about *AgniKarma*.

Key Words: *AgniKarma*, Ayurveda, Review.

INTRODUCTION

Definition of *AgniKarma*:

The *AgniKarma* word made up with combination of two words - *Agni* and *Karma* (i.e. fire and procedure). In short we can said as a procedure done by *Agni* for treating a disease. ⁽¹⁾

History of *Agnikarma*:

- **In charaka Samhita:** *Acharya Charaka* give detail description of *AgniKarma* is comes under 36 *Upakramas* of *Vrana* in

the chapter of "*DwiVraniyaChikitsa*". ⁽²⁾ Also *AgniKarma* used in different disease as follow – in *Gulmachikitsa*; ⁽³⁾ in *bhagandar-chikitsa* as *taildagdha*; ⁽⁴⁾ in *plihodar*; ⁽⁵⁾ in *arshachikitsa*; ⁽⁶⁾ in *visarpachikitsa*; ⁽⁷⁾ in *Arditchikitsa* ⁽⁸⁾

- **In Sushruta Samhita:** *Sushruta* mentioned the *AgniKarma* as supreme in all the para surgical procedures. A separate chapter in *Sutra-Sthana* with details about every aspect of *AgniKarma*, denotes its importance in the treatment, during those period. *Sushruta* has referred *Agni* in *Agropaharaniya*, ⁽⁹⁾ as *Upayantra*, ⁽¹⁰⁾ *Anushtra* ⁽¹¹⁾
- **Ashtang Samgraha:** Details Description of *AgniKarma* found in 40th chapter of *Sutra Sthana* of *Ashtang Samgraha*.
- **In Ashtang Hridaya:** A detailed description of *AgniKarma* is described in 30th chapter of *Sutra Sthana* of *Ashtang Hridaya*.
- **In Harita Samhita:** *Acharya Harita* has mentioned *AgniKarma* as one of the eight important types of treatment. ⁽¹²⁾ Beside this, he has also indicated *AgniKarma* in various diseases.

MATERIALS & METHODS

For the present Review study detailed literary study is performed. The Detail content and references are analysed from available text. Principal texts referred are *Charak*, *Sushruta*, *Vagbhatta* and *harita samhita*. Also relevant references are taken from books, Thesis & Research articles.

Dahnopakarana used for Agnikarma:

In classics, there are different Dahnopakarana, have been described during the descriptions of disease cured by AgniKarma. Dahnopakarana means accessories like drugs, articles and substances used for AgniKarma. Each of them is having their own peculiarity in Dahnopakarana.

A list of Dahnopakarana has been given here as available in texts:

Table 1 : showing Dahnopakarana used for AgniKarma.

| Name of Dahnopakarana used for AgniKarma | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------|------------|--------|
| Pipali | Loha | Suchi | Varti | Tamra |
| Aja Shakrida | Jambavastha | Sneha | Majja | Rajata |
| Godanta | Kshaudra | Ghrita | YastiMadhu | Kansya |
| Shara | Madhuchhista | Taila | Suryakanta | |
| Shalaka | Jaggery | Vasa | Hema | |

Acharya Sushruta has indicated the materials by name according to the site of AgniKarma: (13)

1. Twakadagdha - Pippali, Ajasakrida, Godanta, Shara, Shalaka.
2. Mamsadagdha – Jambhavsta Shalakra and Other Metals.
3. Sira, Snayu, Sandhi and Asthidagdha - Madhu, Jaggery and Sneha.

According to Acharya Vagbhata for Twakadah, Godanta and Suryakanta should be used. Madhu, Sneha, Jambavastha and Jaggery should be employed for AgniKarma of Arsha, Bhagandara, Granthi, Nadivrana etc.

Heating Time of Dahnopakarana used for Agnikarma: (14)

Table2: Showing heating time of Dahnopakarana used for AgniKarma.

| Sr.no | Dahandravya | Instrument of heating | Period of heating |
|-------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Raupyashlaka | High-pressure gas | 10-15 second |
| 2 | suwarnashlaka | High-pressure gas | 10 second |
| 3 | suwarnasuchiwashlaka | High-pressure gas | 2-3 second |
| 4 | tamrashlaka | High-pressure gas | 6 second |
| 5 | Haridrakhnada | candle | 40 second |
| 6 | Lendipipli | Candle | 50 second |
| 7 | Gajapipali | Candle | 60 second |
| 8 | Aja skhrut | candle | 55 second |

Classification of Agnikarma:

There is no direct description available regarding classification of

AgniKarma, it can be classified on various basis as below:

1 According to type of Dravya:

AgniKarma can be classified into two groups

- a. SnigdhaAgniKarma:- AgniKarma done by Madhu, Ghrita, Taila etc.
- b. RukshaAgniKarma:- AgniKarma done by Pippali, Shalaka, Ajasakrida etc.

2 According to the Disease:

There are so many types of AgniKarma eg.

In the disease like Arsha, Kandara etc. it should be done after surgical excision.

In Sinus, fistula in ano etc. it should be done after incision.

In Krimidanta it should be done after filing the cavity by Jaggery, Madhuchhista etc.

3 According to Akriti:

In regard to Akriti, Acharya Sushruta have mentioned four types of AgniKarma. (15)

- I. Valaya(Circular shape)
- II. Bindu(Dot like shape)
- III. Vilekha (Making of different shapes by heated shalaka)
- IV. Pratisarana (Rubbing at indicated site by heated Shalaka and there is no specific shape)

Acharya Vagbhata has added more three types. (16)

- I ArdhaChandra (Crescent shape)
- II Astapada (It is specific shape containing eight limbs in different directions)
- III Swastika (It is specific shape of Swastika Yantra)

4 According to Dhatus: (17)

According to Acharya Sushruta and Vagbhata the AgniKarma should be done as per involvement of the Dhatus such as -

- I Twakadagdha
- ii Sira and Snayudagdha
- iii Mamsadagdha
- iv AsthiSandhidagdha

Sign AND Symptoms Produced After Agnikarma as Per Dhatus (18)

A) TwakaDagdha:-

When the Twaka is cauterised, burning is attended with a crackling sound, bad odour, and contraction of the skin.

B) *MamsaDagdha* :-

When *Mamsa* is cauterised, there occurs a pigeon like discolouration of the part, inflammation, mild pain, lesion get dried up and shrivelled.

C) *SiraSnayuDagdha*:-

When the *Snayu* and *Siras* are cauterised, there occurs black discolouration, swelling of the lesion and a cessation of discharge (including that of blood).

D) *Sandhi and AsthiDagdha* :-

When *Asthi* and the *Sandhis* are cauterised there occurs dryness, redness, hardness and fixity of the lesion.

Indications of Agnikarma :

A number of diseases and conditions have been explained in text where *AgniKarma* as therapeutic measure has been indicated as below:

- **Acc.sushrut:** ⁽¹⁹⁾ If there is excessive pain (Due to *vataprakopa*) in *twak* (skin), *mansa* (muscles), *sira* (veins), *snayu*, *sandhi* (joints), *asthi* (bones) ; *Grahnti* (lymphnodes), *arsh* (piles), *bhagandara* (fistula in ano), *apache* (lymphadenitis), *shlipad* (filreasis), *chrnakil* (warts), *tilkalaka* (pigmented moles), *antravrudhi* (inguinoscrotal hernia), excessive bleeding from *sandhi* (joints), *siracheda* (cutting of veins), *nadivrana*(sinus).
- **Acc.to other samhitas:** ⁽²⁰⁾ *Shiroroga*, *Ardhavybedaka*, *Bharu-lalataVedana*, *VartmaRoga*, *PakshamaKopa*, *Alaji*, *Arbuda*, *Puyalasa*, *Abhisyanada*, *Adhimantha*, *Lagana*, *MedajaOsthaRoga*, *DantaNadi*, *KrimiDanta*, *Adhidanta*, *SheetaDanta*, *DantaVidhradhi*, *Jalarbuda*, *Arsha* (*Vataja-Kaphaja*), *Lingarsha*, *Yonyaarsha*, *Bhagandar*, *Chippa*, *Kunakha*, *Kadara*, *Balmika*, *Jatamani*, *Mashaka*, *Tilakalaka*, *Charmakila*, *Prasupti*, *VishaChikitsa*, *SarpnaDamsa*, *AlarkaVisha*, *Luta* *Visha*, *MushakaVisha*, *Gridhrasi*, *Vatajashoola* in *Twaka*, *Vishwachi*, *Galaganda*, *Gandamala*, *Apachi*, *Granthi*, *Arbuda*, *AntraVridhi*, *Shlipada*, *Nadivra* ana,

Upadamsa, *Gulma*, *Vishuchika*, *Alasaka*, *Vilambika*, *Sanyasa*, *Unmada*, *YakritaPlihodara*, *SonitaAtiPravriti*, *SiraSandhichhedha*, *Visarpa*, *Sotha*.

Contra-indications for Agnikarma:

- According to *sushrut* *AgniKarma* should not be done in the *Pitta Prakriti*, *Bhinna Kostha*, *Durbalya*, *Vridhdha*, *Antah Shonita*, *Anuddhrata Shalya*, *Bala*, *Bhiru*, A person afflicted with a large number of *Vranas*, A person who is forbidden for *Swedana*. ⁽²¹⁾
- According to *Charaka* *AgniKarma* should not be done in the *Vrana* of *Snayu*, *Marma*, *Netra*, *Kushtha* and *Vrana* with *Visha* and *Shalya*. ⁽²²⁾
- According to *Ashatgsangrha* *AgniKarma* should not be done in the patient who take *virechana*, suffering from *atisaar* (diarrhoea), who has *shalya* in his body, who has boils on body, who is contraindicated for *ksharkarma*. ⁽²³⁾

Suitable Season for Agnikarma:

AgniKarma can be done during all the seasons except *Grishma* and *Sharada*. Even in these Seasons, during emergency States amenable only to cautery, it may be used after taking appropriate counter measures against them. ⁽²⁴⁾

Procedure of Agnikarma:

The detailed description of procedure of *AgniKarma* is available in *AstangSamgraha*

***AgniKarma* Methodology includes three steps:**

1. *PurvaKarma* (Pre-procedure of *AgniKarma*)

Pre *AgniKarma* Diet: ⁽²⁵⁾ In all diseases and during all seasons, the *AgniKarma* can be done after feeding the patient with *pichhila* diet, and on an empty stomach in case of Mal-presentation of foetus, Calculus diseases, Fistula in ano, abdominal diseases, Piles and diseases of Oral Cavity.

Pre *AgniKarma* Assessment: ⁽²⁶⁾ Before going to any surgical or para surgical procedure complete assessment should

be carried out regarding all the factors. So here too before going to *AgniKarma* a thorough examination of patient, shape of the lesion, related vital part of the body, the disease and the season etc. should be done.

2. PradhanaKarma (Principal procedure of AgniKarma) (27)

Before doing the procedure of *AgniKarma*, *swasthikvachan* should be done; the patient kept in suitable position by keeping head in the East direction and held by expert assistants to avoid movement. After this the surgeon should make the different shapes of *Agnikarmaviz*:- *Valaya*, *Ardhchandra*, *Swastika*, etc. as per need by heated *Shalaka* in a smoke free fire of *Khadira* or *Badara* with the help a blower or a fan. During this period if patients feel discomfort then keep them satisfied by courageous, consolations talks, give cold water for drink and sprinkle cold water. But procedure of *AgniKarma* should be done till production of complete cauterisation.

3. Paschyat Karma (Post AgniKarma Management) (28)

After completion of *AgniKarma* *Madhu* and *Ghritha* apply on the part where *AgniKarma* has done for *Ropana* of *Dagdha Varna*.

Mode of Action of Agnikarma: (29)

Table 3 : showing mode of action of agnikarma

| |
|---|
| <i>AgniKarma (ushanguna)</i> |
| ↓ |
| <i>Utkleshnamtodhatu</i> |
| ↓ |
| <i>Activatesdhatwagni</i> |
| ↓ |
| <i>Digest aama and achieve niramavastha</i> |
| ↓ |
| <i>Pacifies vata and kafa</i> |

Effects of Agnikarma:

Its increases metabolism, blood circulation, decreased pain, stimulates nerves, relaxed muscles, decreased

infection, decreased joint stiffness and inflammation.

Superiority of Agnikarma:

Agnikarma is superior to *bheshaja*, *shastra* & *Ksharakarma* as a disease burnt with *Agni* will never reoccur. Disease which cannot be cured with medicines, *Kshara* and Surgery, can be cured with *Agni*. (30)

There will be vaso-constriction due to heat and it will check the haemorrhage. (31)

CONCLUSION & RESULT

AgniKarma is pain management procedure described in Ayurved. From ancient period this procedure performed in different place with different name. Nowadays modern science used cautery like instruments which is nothing but modified *AgniKarma* only. This is superior treatment than all other procedure. After *AgniKarma* there is no chance of reoccurrence of disease. This is one attempt to describe all detail information of *Agnikarma* in this Research article.

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