



Ayurvedic management of *Greevagatavata* W.S.R.T. cervical radiculopathy: A case report

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Abstract

Cervical radiculopathy refers to pain that travels from neck towards arm. Cervical radiculopathy most often occurs when a herniated disk or an overgrowth of bone puts pressure on part of the nerve. Herniated disc is common cause of cervical radiculopathy. In this condition patient experiences maximum pain in unilateral direction, which gets aggravated with improper posture of neck or cervical extension. The distribution of pain in the upper extremities is dependent on site of nerve compression but feels relief while at rest. According to Ayurveda, based on resembling clinical manifestation this condition can be co-related with *Greevagatavata*.

Aim: To understand the efficacy of Ayurveda treatment protocol in the management of Cervical radiculopathy (*Greevagatavata*).

Materials and Method: A 38 years old female suffering from complaints of *Greevashoola* (neck pain), radiating to right upper limb, which increased while working on laptop/mobile, while reading and while lifting heavy weights since past 2-3 years on and off, presented in the OPD of SDACH, Chandigarh. The above complaints exasperated over the last 1 month. Based on clinical presentation and X-RAY findings the condition was diagnosed as cervical radiculopathy (*Greevagata vata*). A multimodal therapeutic intervention as per Ayurveda with *greeva basti*, *nadi swedan*, *basti*, *nasya*, were prescribed. Clinical assessment was done before and after treatment based on Neck disability index/questionnaire.

Observation and Results: Before treatment Neck disability index score was 28 and after the complete treatment patient reported relief in symptoms of *Ruk* (pain), *Stambha* (stiffness), *Spandan* (cramping), distribution of pain significantly reduced and score was only 5.

Conclusion: The present case study revealed that the multiple Ayurveda treatment modalities including *Shaman* and *Shodhan Chikitsa* (palliative and purification therapies) were effective in the management of Cervical radiculopathy.

Keywords: Ayurveda intervention, *greevagatavata*, cervical radiculopathy, *greeva basti*, *basti*, *nasya*

Introduction

Cervical radiculopathy presents insidiously with neck pain with severe discomfort in movements. Common cause of disease is aging, trauma, disc bulge, spondylolisthesis, regional tumor, arthritis of spine. Stenosis or spinal column narrowing results in neck pain with restricted or painful movements of the neck and affecting day to day working efficiency. It develops when the spinal cord is compressed by a bone or an intervertebral disc bulge, a bony protrusion into cervical spinal canal and hypertrophy of ligamentum flavum, and distribution of pain in upper extremities depends on site of compression.

According to ancient Ayurveda literature *Greevagatavata* shows similar symptoms as Cervical radiculopathy. Such *Vyadhi* (diseases) are consider as *Vatavyadhi* (diseases cause by vitiation of *vata*). Taking all these factors into consideration, in present case study specific Ayurveda treatment protocol including *Greeva Basti Nadi Sweda*, *Basti* and *Nasya* has been decided.

Case report

A 38 years old female came to Shri Dhanwantry Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Chandigarh, OPD, with complaints of (*Greevashoola*) neck pain, pain radiating to right upper limb,

pain increases while reading, using laptop and mobile and on lifting heavy weights over last 2-3 years, but significantly aggravated since last 1 month, she experienced more pain and discomfort while working as her working profile was of sitting in nature, on computer.

On examination

General condition of patient was good

No pallor seen

Pulse-80/min

BP: 110/70mm of hg

CVS: S1, S2 Normal

CNS: Conscious well oriented

RS: AE=BE, clear

P/A: Soft, non-tender

Medical history

H/O received allopathy medicines with analgesics for above complaint with minimal relief.

NO H/O DM, HTN, Thyroid disorder, IHD.

Personal history

Diet-Non-vegetarian

Time and frequency of intake-irregular

Appetite-normal
Sleep: Disturbed
Addiction-no specific addiction
Bowel-irregular occasionally constipation

Ashtavidha Pariksha

Nadi (pulse)-*Vataj*
Mala (bowel habits)-occasionally hard
Mutra (urine)-NAD
Jivha (tongue)-*Nirama*
Shabdam (voice of patient)-NAD
Sparsham (touch) - *Samshitoshna* (temperate)
Drika (eye & vision) – NAD
Akriti (body building)-*Madhyama* (medium)

Clinical Examination

Tests- Cervical distraction test-Positive
Neck movements; -
Flexion, extension, and side rotation all were restricted.
Local examination - No local swelling, no muscle wasting,
no change seen in curvature of spine.
Tingling sensation and numbness of upper limb was found.

Investigations

Hb % 11gm % TLC-9760 /cu mm
DLC-N-65%, L-32%, M-2%, E-1%
ESR-13mm/Hr
RBS-128mg/dl

RA factor: Negative

LFT: No Abnormal values reported

RFT: No Abnormal values reported

Thyroid profile: within normal limit

Radiographic investigations

X-ray findings shows intervertebral disc space reduced at C5-C6



Intervertebral disc space reduced at C5-C6

Diagnosis

Greevagatavata was diagnosed based on presenting symptoms, neck disability questionnaire and X-ray findings.

Assessment Criteria

Criteria of assessment was decided to be based on ‘Neck Disability Index’. It contains questionnaire for neck pain and disability. Its important tool to measures patient’s functional disability. This contains 10 sections (questions). Each question is rated on 6 points (0-5) scale measuring daily activities like personal care, pain intensity, reading, sitting, driving etc. Assessment carried out before and after the treatment.

Treatment Plan

- *Snehana*¹ (*Greeva Basti* with *Mahanarayan Taila*) for 21 days
- *Swedana*² (*Nadi Swedana* with *Dashmoola Kwatha*) for 21 days
- *Yoga basti*³ (*Niruha* with *Dashmooladi Kashaya*, *Anuvasan* with *Ksheerbala Taila*) for 8 days
- *Nasya* for 7days, with 7 days gap after completion of *Basti* (with *Ksheerbala Taila 101*)
- *Mahavata Vidhwansan rasa*⁴ (62.5 mg BD) for 21 days
- *Ekangveer rasa*⁵ (125 TDS) for 21 days
- *Maharasnadi Kshaya*⁶ (20 ml BD) for 21 days
- Cap. *Ksheerbala 101* (1 TDS) for 21 days
- *Swarna Bhasma*⁷ (15mg BD) for 21 days
- *Nidana Parivarjana* (Avoiding causative factors)

(Note: 630 mg of *Swarna Bhasma*, 2625mg of *Mahavata Vidhwansan rasa* and 5250 mg of *Ekangveer rasa* were mixed and divided into 42 doses and one dose twice a day after meal was advised to take with 20 ml of *Maharasnadi Kshaya*)

Diet advised

Pathya Ahara (healthy food): *Mudga* (green gram), *Puran Shali* (aged rice), *Takra* (butter milk) in diet.

Pathya Vihara (healthy lifestyle): *Vishrama*, *seka*, *ushna jala snana*

Apathya Ahara (unhealthy food): avoiding *Rooksha*, *Abhishyandi* diet, curd at night, street food, bakery food items, cold drinks, fridge water, heavy intake at night.

Apathya Vihar (unhealthy lifestyle): *Diwaswapna* (day time sleep), *Vega Vidharan* (hold natural urges), *Ratrijagran*, long standing work.

Observations and Results

Before treatment ‘Neck disability questionnaire’ was 28 and after the complete treatment patient reported relief in symptoms of *Ruk* (pain), *Stambha* (stiffness), *Spandan* (cramping), distribution of pain significantly reduced and score was 5.

Improvement of 82.14% was seen on ‘Neck disability index’.

Neck disability index

Symptoms	Before Treatment	After Treatment
Neck disability index score	28	5
<i>Ruk</i> (pain)	Severe	Nil
<i>Stambha</i> (stiffness)	Severe	Nil
<i>Spandan</i> (cramping)	Severe	Mild

Discussion

The symptoms seen in the present case were like that of *Greevagatavata* disease described in *Ayurveda*. *Greevagatavata* is a *Vatavyadhi* associated with the symptoms of *Ruk* (Pain) in cervical region, pain radiates to right upper extremity, *Toda* (pricking pain), *Stambh* (stiffness), *Spandan* (cramping) in *Bahu* (arm) and *Greeva* (cervical region), based on this consideration, combined Ayurvedic treatment protocol for *Vatavyadhi* was followed.

Greevabasti

As a patient had history of working on computer for prolonged time which causes chronic neck pain, in that condition *Greeva basti* provides nourishment and lubrication to the structure in cervical vertebra i.e., *Snayu* (ligaments), *Sandhi* (joints), *Sira* (blood vessels) and *Marma* points. *Mahanarayana taila* was used for management of neurodegenerative disorder as it has more *balya*, *snighdha* and analgesic activity. It normalizes the *Vata* and has anti-inflammatory properties too.

Swedana

Sthanik Swedana by *Nadi Sweda* using *Dashmoola kwatha* (as it is potent *Vatashamak*) relieves *Stambh* (stiffness), increases joint mobility, reduces stress and fatigue and *Swedan* drugs are capable to clean all micro channels in the body.

Basti: is said to be one of the highly effective treatment modalities for *Vataja* diseases. The drugs administered through *Basti* remains in the rectum and colon (*Pakwashaya*) and later absorbed into the body, thereby pacifying as well as nourishing the nerves.

Nasya

Nasya was also adopted as *sthana vishesha chikitsa* as it is indicated in *urdhwa jatrugata vyadhi vighatan*⁸. By this process oil enters the nose, gets absorbed through vessels and nourishes the structures of neck and shoulder joint.

Maha Vata Vidhwansan rasa

Acts on nerves and nerves system. *Maha Vata Vidhwansan rasa* contains *kajjali* which is *rasayani* and *yogvahi*, *tamra bhasma* reduces radiating pain, *vatsnabh* reduces inflammation of nerves and act as potent *shoolaghna* (analgesic). *Abhrak* and *tankan bhasma* are *balya* for nerves and *vatashamak*.

Ekangveer rasa

Contains *Kant loh-naga loh-vanga loh-tamra loh-abhrak loh-tikshana loh Bhasma* which acts as *Bhrimhaiya*, *jeevaniya* and *rasayan*, in *vata roga*, *bhrihana* is only *shaman* so all these ingredients help to do *Vata shaman* and act well in radiating pain, tingling or numbness (*nadi balya*).

Maharasnadi Kwath

Helps to suppress the inflammation, pain, and stiffness in joints. Its main ingredient is *Rasna* which is excellent *Vataghna* and acts as *Deepana*, *Pachana* and *Shoolgana*. It is very usefull in *jeerna* (chronic) *vatavikara*.

Cap. Ksheerbala 101 provide *snehana* and *balya* effect and has all properties anti to *vata dosha* thus help in *Vata shaman*. It has prime action on healing and nourishing degenerative bone tissue.

Swarna Bhasma is used as anti-inflammatory and analgesic. Also, it is *rasayan* for chronic *vata* diseases and strengthens the musculoskeletal system. It helps in tissue regeneration.

Conclusion

The multimodal approach following *Ayurveda* principles, yielded good therapeutic results in the case wherein surgical treatment is commonly preferred.

Ayurvedic Procedures like *Greevabasti*, *Nadisweda*, *Basti* & *Nasya* along with *Shaman Aushadhi* give good results in chronic conditions like cervical radiculopathy, and helps in improving quality of life of the patients and makes them able to perform day to day activities easily.

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