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CONCEPT OF VAMANA BY SUKSHMA TAMRA RAJA IN GARAVISHA CHIKITSA: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Garavisha (Concocted poison) as per classics can be considered as any part of the body tissue, waste products, Bhasmas (ashes) of Viruddha aushadhi (incompatible drugs), drug or poisons having less potency, powdered bodies of the insects, etc. It interferes with the digestion and produces harmful effects over a period of accumulation and is considered to be fatal in time. Vamana karma (emesis therapy) by Sukshma Tamra Raja with honey is indicated in Garavisha (Concocted poison) chikitsa (treatment), which expels the accumulated toxins.

Keywords: Garavisha, Chikitsa, Vamana, Tamra Bhasma.

INTRODUCTION

Garavisha (Concocted poison) is considered as the form of Kritrim visha (Chemical or combinative or resultant poison) which gets formed by the combination of two or more poisonous (e.g. food additives like sweeteners, flavoring agents, coloring agents, preservatives, in junk foods, etc.) or nonpoisonous substances (e.g. over consumption of milk products like Cheese, Butter, etc., Viruddhahara, Kala viruddha - time incompatibility, eating cold substance like ice-creams in winter, etc) and finally damages the whole body by vitiating all the Dhatus (tissues) in the body.

In olden days, when there was such type of poisoning, first vomiting & purgation was induced to remove poison in the gut. Then, to cleanse the heart, Sukshma Tamra Raja (fine powder of Copper sulphate) was administered to the patient. After that, Swarna bhasma (fine powder of gold) is administered for a long period of time for the protection of Heart.

Metals are used in various disease conditions from Vedic period. These are one of the suitable pharmaceutical forms mentioned in Ayurveda. Tamra is one among them. It is a very good emetic drug and produces instant vomiting in all ailments and in poison, if taken in small doses.

CLASSICAL VIEW

Garavisha (Concocted poison)

According to classics, Acharya Charaka says that Garavisha (Concocted poison) is prepared artificially by the mixture of various substances. It produces diseases. Since it takes some time for this type of poison to get metabolized and to produce its toxic effects, it doesn't cause instantaneous death of a person¹,

while Maharshi Sushrut's opinion is that the powdered bodies of the Kita (insects) which when administered internally with any medicine or externally with any Lepa (plaster) turns into a Garavisha (Concocted poison) as it possesses the features of Dushivisha (Enfeebled Poison)² and Vagbhata's view about Garavisha is, it is Combinative poison which is prepared from, Combination of different body parts & waste matter (faeces) of different animals, drugs having opposite property, poisonous substances of mild potency and ashes³ some may kill the person quickly due to certain combination of drugs, while others after a long time or may only produce swelling, anemia, enlargement of abdomen, insanity, hemorrhoids, etc.⁴

Chikitsa

The patient of Garavisha (Concocted poison) should instantaneously be given Vamana (Emesis) by the physician. He should be given fine powder of copper along with honey for cleansing the heart (here it means stomach). After the heart is cleansed the patient should be given one Shana of the Bhasma (fine powder) of gold.⁵

When Gara Vishaktata (Poisoning) is diagnosed in any person it should be treated immediately.⁶

After subjecting the patient, who has taken poison, to Vamana (Emesis) & Virechana (Purgation), he should be given fine copper powder mixed with honey, at the right time (i.e. after Samsarjana karma) so as to detoxify Hridaya (here it means the stomach).⁷

After the Hridaya is detoxified, the patient should be given a Shana of powdered gold (One Shana = 4 Masha = 24 Ratti (3gm approx.), however the dose of gold powder is practically too

large. Therefore, the gold bhasma is preferably used in therapeutic dose 1/8 ratti to ¼ ratti (15-30 mg approx.)⁸. These same treatment procedures are to be adopted in case of intake of Garavisha (Concocted poison) also.⁹ The powdered gold has characteristics to mollify the effect of poison and also act as a Hridya.¹⁰ Vagbhata also advocated the use of dipan-pachan medicine for mandagni caused by Garavisha (Concocted poison).¹¹

Applicability of Vamana Chikitsa in the treatment of poisoning

Emesis is regarded as the best one among all the therapeutic measures for the poison taken orally.¹² If the poison has reached the stomach then the physician in the beginning, should administer emetic therapy.¹³ Emesis helps in the instantaneous elimination of poison taken orally.¹⁴ If drugs (Emetics) are administered through mouth, it works quickly on disease (Poison) located in stomach.¹⁵ Induced emesis or vaman is indicated in amashaygatavisha (poison present in stomach).¹⁶ The Vamana (Emesis) and Virechana (Purgation) are the best therapeutic modalities of all type of Dhatu-Updhatu (metallic), Sthavara (inanimate) and Jangama (animate) Visha.¹⁷

Definition of Vamana (Emesis)

The process of expelling (causing to eject) the contents (morbid material) of the stomach through the upward tract (by mouth) is called Vamana (Emesis).¹⁸

Mode of Action of Vamaka Dravya

Drugs [used for emesis] which are Ushna (hot), Tikshna (sharp), Sukshma (subtle), Vyavayi (those pervading the entire body before getting digested) and Vikasi (those causing looseness of joints), by virtue of their own potency, reach the heart, and circulate through the vessels because of their Agneya nature (predominance of Agni mahabhuta), they liquefy the compact (adhered) Dosha (morbid material), and because of their sharpness (Tikshna attribute) they separate the adhered Dosha located in the gross and subtle channels of the entire body and gets propelled by Udana vayu.

Because of the predominance of Agni and Vayu mahabhuta as in these (emetic) drugs, and because of their Prabhava (specific action which cannot be rationally explained - Achintya Shakti¹⁹) to move upwards, the morbid material gets expelled through the upward tract (mouth).²⁰

The emetics eliminate the Doshas (from above) due to their specific effects themselves. Emetic on the other hand, is not digested, owing to (its lightness due to) its inherent extraordinary qualities (are those of the Vayu and of the Agni) but it soon forces its way up with the Doshas (to be) removed.²¹ Among the two Shodhana (Elimination/Purification) procedures emetic drugs eliminates the Doshas before they are digested however purgatives drugs eliminate the Doshas while they are undergoing digestion. Therefore, in case of emesis, the digestion of the drug is not to be awaited and instantaneous emesis is performed.²²

In all the emetic recipes, honey is added in order to facilitate the liquefaction and Chedana (separation of adhesion) of Kapha which helps in the elimination of morbid material.

However, honey taken along with hot water is thrown out before digestion along with vomited material. So it is usefully added to the emetic recipes.

Vamaka Dravya (Emetic drugs)

Emetic drugs are of different types depending upon the Desha (habitat), Kala (time of their availability), Sambhava (origin), Asvada (palatability), Rasa (taste), Virya (potency), Vipaka (the taste that emerges after digestion) and Prabhava (specific action). Patients for whom these drugs are to be used are also of different types depending upon the nature of their Deha (physique), condition of the Dosha (body humor), Prakriti (constitution), Age, Strength, Agni (power of digestion and metabolism), Bhakti (liking for a particular type of recipe), Satmya (wholesomeness) Rogavastha (stage of the disease) etc. [To cater to the requirement of all these factors], the recipes of drugs become innumerable in types.²³ On the basis of this description, the intelligent physician, well-versed in inference and propriety, can formulate many other recipes to suit the exact requirement of his patient.²⁴

Indications of Vamana (Emesis) Chikitsa (Emetic Therapy)

Emetic therapy is indicated for the Vishapita (ailments caused by the intake of natural poisons),²⁵ Garavisha (Concocted poison), Visha-dashta (poisonous bites), Visha-digdha-viddha (ailments caused by injury with weapons smeared with poisonous material).²⁶ Emesis is indicated in poison, artificial poison, indigestion, and one who had eaten incompatible food.²⁷

Contra-indications of Vamana Chikitsa (Emetic Therapies)

There are certain conditions given in which Emesis should be avoided²⁸ otherwise it may cause complications.²⁹ However, administration of emetic therapy is not prohibited even in the contraindicated ailments if the person is suffering from Visha (poison), Garavisha (Concocted poison), because these ailments produce their effects instantaneously.³⁰

Proper Administration of Therapies

Purgation including emetic therapies work like poison if inappropriately administered, if properly administered these work like ambrosia. It is essential to administer these therapies at the time of need. Therefore, these therapies are to be administered carefully.³¹

In emergency (like poisoning) too, one should administer the therapy with great care after modifying the seasonal effects sufficiently by artificial means producing qualities contrary to the season and by making the measure appropriate in standard potency with variations in combination, processing and quantity.³²

The physician should examine the disease first then the drug and thereafter the management. He should always proceed with prior knowledge.³³

Therapeutic measures should be appropriately used otherwise, even a useful therapy (Pathya) may turn out to be harmful (Apathya).³⁴

Use of Tamra Bhasma for Vamana (Emesis)

It is said that the patient of Garavisha (Concocted poison) should instantaneously be given Vamana (Emesis) with fine powder of copper along with honey for cleansing the heart (here it means stomach).

Sukshma Tamra Raja suggested to be given above should not be Shodhita (the purified and calcined one) because such Shodhita

Tamra bhasma does not cause emesis which is intended here for cleansing the heart.³⁵ Nirmalikrita (Filtered) Sukshma Tamra Raja can also be used here for emesis as it also possesses emetic property. As its use is also safe over Ashodhita Tamra bhasma.³⁶

Properties of Tamra³⁷

Rasa	Tikta, Kashaya, Madhura & Amla
Guna	Snigdha
Virya	Ushna
Vipaka	Katu
Karma	Vishahara, Saraka, Lekhana, Dipana, Rochaka, Aayuvardhaka, Vamak & Virechaka
Doshagnata	Pittaja, Kaphaja & Pitta-Kaphaja
Rogagnata	Krimihara, Kushtha, Kasa, Shvasa, Kshaya, Pandu, Arsha, Grahani, Sthaulya, Jvara, Vran'a, Garavisha , Udara, Shula, Amlapitta, Yakrutpliha, Apasmara, Visuchika, Chardi, Akshepa, Khalli, Agnimandya, Parinamshula & Aantrashosha

Therapeutic Dose

15 mg to 60 mg³⁸

DISCUSSION

In Ayurveda Garavisha (Concocted poison) is described as artificially prepared mixture of various substances and Sukshma Tamra Raja is described for emesis in its treatment. Though utility of Tamra has been mentioned in classics, it is said to be a poison or more than a poison if used in Ashuddha (impure) form. But here, Tamra in unpurified form only, causes desired effect i.e. Vamana (Emesis). In fact, it justifies the dictum "vishasyavishamaushadham". Metals & minerals that are transformed into drug must have excellent therapeutic efficacy & must be safe, through Animal experiment, evaluation of safety margin of the therapeutic dose can be assessed. So, from above discussion we can say that though Tamra is useful as an emetic its role needs to be ascertained by adopting suitable analytical parameters.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion we can conclude that - (1) When Gara Vishaktata (Poisoning) is diagnosed in any person it should be treated immediately. Though it doesn't cause instantaneous death of a person, but still being a poison, it causes toxic effect which may lead to death after some time also, if left untreated. (2) So, in treatment of Garavisha (Concocted poison) firstly Shodhana should be done by giving Vamana & Virechana by the procedures described in detail in Classics. (3) Then after Shodhana, patient should be given Sukshma Tamra Raja (fine powder of copper sulphate) along with honey for cleansing the heart. Here to clean the heart means stomach & after cleaning, to protect the heart means heart (vital organ of the body) itself. (4) Sukshma Tamra Raja removes the residual poison left over after Shodhan (Vamana) karma, which even left in minute quantity may produce toxic effect after being digested if left unattended and may reach to heart through circulation & causes death also. (5) Sukshma Tamra Raja should be considered as fine Copper sulphate powder & not the elemental Copper.

So, we can conclude that in treatment of Garavisha (Concocted poison), Vamana (Emesis) by Sukshma Tamra Raja (fine Copper sulphate powder) described in classics proves to be useful to eliminate the poison from stomach. But at the same time, there is a need to revalidate this classical principle and develop safety profiles to generate evidences.

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