

## Review Study of Ayurvedic Management of Rheumatoid Arthritis W.S.R to Amavata

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### Abstract

Amavata is a disease in which vitiation of Vata Dosha and accumulation of Ama take place in joints, and it simulates rheumatoid arthritis (RA) at modern parlance. Shamana and Shodhanatreatments are advised in Ayurveda whereas anti-inflammatory, analgesics, steroids, and disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs are required for its management according to modern medicine, which are not free from side effects. Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) affects about 0.92% of adult population in India. It is a systemic autoimmune disease which leads to swelling (inflammation) of various joints. The swelling destroys joints from within and causes permanent deformities.

**Keywords :** Amavata, Ama, Arthritis, Srotodhusti

### Introduction

Ama is a maldigested product, which is not homogeneous for the body. Whenever this Ama gets situated in the body tissue or joints, it can lead to production of pain, stiffness, swelling, tenderness, etc. in the related joints.

The features of Amavata are much identical to RA (an autoimmune disorder) which causes chronic symmetrically and inflammatory polyarthritis. In Ayurveda, Nidana Parivarjana is considered as the first and foremost line of treatment for any disease. Virechanakarma is a Shodhana process (biological

purification of the body) which balance the vitiated dosha in general and Pitta Dosha in particular.<sup>[4]</sup> Hence, this study included both the treatment modalities, i.e. Nidana Parivarjana and Virechanakarma to manage Amavata effectively. Arthritis affects more than 180 million people in India - prevalence higher than many well-known diseases such as diabetes, AIDS and cancer. India will emerge as the capital of Osteoarthritis by 2025 with more than 60 million to be likely affected..

Several lifestyle factors and pre-existing conditions are linked to an increased risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis. It has been observed that the following factors increased the risk of developing RA: sedentary habits, bad life style, obesity, consumption of alcohol, smoking, tobacco, no or less physical work or exercise etc are now a days the basic cause if RA.

Rheumatoid Arthritis (known as Amavata in Ayurveda) is an autoimmune disease that causes chronic inflammation of the joints. It can also cause inflammation of the tissue around the joints, as well as in other organs in the body. Autoimmune diseases are illnesses that occur when the body's tissues are mistakenly attacked by their own immune system. Patients with autoimmune diseases have antibodies in their blood that target their own body tissues, where they can be associated with inflammation. Because

it can affect multiple other organs of the body, Rheumatoid Arthritis is referred to as a systemic illness and is sometimes called rheumatoid disease. It mainly causes pain in small as well as big bones of the body.

#### **Classification Of Amavata (Rheumatoid arthritis)**

1. Vataj
2. Pittanubandi
3. Kaphanubandi

#### **Vataj Amavata**

In this condition vata is predominant and pain is severe.

#### **Pittanubandi**

In this condition pitta is predominant and burning sensation in effected joints and redness occurs.

#### **Kaphanubandi**

In this condition kapha is predominant and loss of movement of joints and itching is present.

#### **Causative Factors**

1. Incompatible food and habits.
2. Poor digesting capacity
3. Lack of physical activities.
4. No exercise
5. Diet including fats in excess.
6. Contaminated water

The cause of rheumatoid arthritis is unknown. Even though infectious agents such as viruses, bacteria, and fungi have long been suspected, none has been proven as the cause. Certain genes have been identified though that increases the risk for rheumatoid arthritis. Increased intake of indigestible, heavy and incompatible foods; having food at improper times; indigestion; intake of milk and milk products, especially yogurt; intake of meat of aquatic animals; lack of physical activity or doing exercise after having fatty foods are some of the common causes of Rheumatoid Arthritis.

#### **Sign & Symptoms of Amavata (Rheumatoid Arthritis)**

##### **Signs**

1. Pain all over the body
2. Loss of taste
3. Thirst
4. Lack of enthusiasm
5. Heaviness
6. Fever
7. Indigestion
8. Swelling of body parts.

##### **Symptoms**

- Thirst
- Swelling
- Indigestion
- Lethargy
- Pain and stiffness in the body
- Heaviness in the body
- Sometimes lack of appetite
- Pain and stiffness in the joints of the hands

##### **Diagnosis**

1. There is no singular test for diagnosing rheumatoid arthritis. The diagnosis is based on the clinical presentation. Ultimately, rheumatoid arthritis is diagnosed based on a combination of the presentation of the joints involved, characteristic joint swelling and stiffness in the morning, the presence of blood rheumatoid factor and citrulline antibody, as well as findings of rheumatoid nodules and radiographic changes (X-ray testing).
2. CBC
3. ESR
4. CRP
5. Anti- CCP
6. ASLO Titer

##### **Treatment**

Improper food habits and sedentary lifestyle can lead to impairment of digestive fire, formation of ama (toxin) and vitiation of Vata (air). When a person indulges in Vata-aggravating diet and lifestyle, then this aggravated Vata

circulates ama in the channels of the body and deposits it in the joints, causing Amavata.

Ayurvedic treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis starts with pacification of Vata and elimination of toxins from the body. Herbal medicines are administered to improve the digestive fire and prevent further formation of ama. Panchakarma massage therapies are quite useful in subsiding pain in Arthritic patients.

### **Ayurvedic Management of Amavata**

#### **A. AharaChikitsa or Dietary regimen:**

One should take Old Rice, Butter Milk, Wet Ginger, Garlic, Wheat, Bitter gourd and Horse Gram in his diet. Avoid consumption of Dairy products, Sweets, Oily foods, Chinese Food, Junk and Fast Foods, Salty and Sour Foods, Jaggery, Black Gram, Fish, Cold Drinks and Ice Creams.

#### **B. ViharaChikitsa or Life Style Modifications**

One should avoid Cold Breeze and Excessive Wind. Bathing with cold water should be strictly avoided. Warm water bath is recommended. It is also advisable to take a gentle walk after consumption of food. Also it is good to avoid water intake immediately after consuming food.

#### **C. AushadhaChikitsa or Drug Therapy**

'Guggulu' is the most effective drug in treating 'Amavata'. Also herbal preparations of Ashwagandha, Haritaki, Rasna, Sunthi, Pippali and Trivrat are helpful in 'Amavata'. Administration of castor oil is also very effective in this disease. The mentioned drugs should be taken only after consulting a Qualified Ayurvedic Physician.

#### **D. PanchakarmaChikitsa or Detoxification Procedures**

this is a purification procedure. By taking this Therapy Toxins are eliminated from the body. The course is as follows:

##### **1. Snehana**

Internal and external oleation to the body / affected parts

is given as a preliminary process.

##### **2. Swedana**

This is done by application of steam on the affected parts. It helps in reducing inflammatory conditions in the body. Especially in 'Amavata' fomentation with sand bag is recommended. SankaraSweda is also very helpful. In chronic cases Shalishasthikapindasweda is recommended.

##### **3. Virechana Karma**

It is a type of Purgation which is induced by oral intake or herbal compound preparations. By the process of Virechana, the 'Ama' is eliminated from the body. Also the bowel is cleansed, which results in proper absorption and assimilation of the medicinal preparations properly.

##### **4. Vasthi karma**

This is done by administration of herbal enema. It is helpful in chronic cases. Kashaya Vasthi, AnuvasanaVasthi and MatraVasthi etc are planned according to the Patient's requirement and necessity.

##### **Lifestyle Regimen**

- Avoid curd, fish, milk, urad dal and jaggery
- Consume horse gram, ginger, bitter gourd and drumsticks
- Intake of garlic is advised
- Avoid day time sleep
- Evacuate bowels regularly
- Always use warm water to drink and for taking a bath
- Reduce stress by practicing yoga and meditation
- Weight should be controlled, avoid a high fat diet
- In Ayurveda Rheumatoid arthritis has been described as Amavata.

##### **Discussion**

Amavata is a degenerative inflammatory disorder, where joint inflammation initially causes pain (sandhishula) and later swelling (sandhishotha). Due to pain and swelling, the mobility of joints is restricted (stambha), and on movement results in excruciating pain

(prasaranaakunchanayohovedana), which becomes unbearable even on mild touch in the form of tenderness (sparshaasahyata). The degenerative changes later result in manifestation of crepitus (sandhisphutana). Sandhigataavata and RA are quite similar diseases found in clinical practice in which the etiopathogenesis and symptoms overlaps.

The symptoms of rasavahasrotas such as gaurava and angamarda improved due to its tikta rasa and ushnavirya, whereas the symptoms of medovahasrotas, i.e. karapadayohsuptatadaha, alasya and suptatachaangeshu (numbness of body parts) improved due to its ruksha, laghuguna and ushnavirya; it also reduces medas. The symptoms of asthivahasrotas and majjavahasrotas improved due to tikta rasa and katuvipaka, as they counteract the pathogenic process of sandhivata. The main site of sandhivata is sandhis which are the site of shleshakakapha. By pacifying kaphadosha, tikta rasa leads to proper nutrition of the other dhatus.

The improvement in radiological findings such as joint space, subarticular sclerosis, synovial effusion, articular erosion and osteophytes was due to the anti-inflammatory activity of B. serrata resin. It soothes the joints and also helps treat levels of synovial fluid, making the entire structure lubricated and easy to rotate or to move. AKBA helps preserve structural integrity of the joint cartilage and maintains a healthy immune mediator cascade at a cellular level. Decrease in biochemical parameters, mainly, CRP, serum triglycerides and erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR), is due to anti-inflammatory activity.

### **Conclusion**

Rheumatoid Arthritis is a Joint Disorder, which affects Multiple Joints at various sites. It is described as "Amavata" in Ayurveda. The word 'Ama' means Toxic material generated as a un wholesome product in the body due to weakening of digestive fire. This 'Ama' is then

carried by 'Vayu' and travels throughout the body and accumulates in the joints, which is the seat of 'Kapha'. As this process continuous, all the Joints are gradually affected, which results in Severe Pain and Swelling in the Joints. When 'Pitta' also gets aggravated, it causes Burning Sensation around the Joints. Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is an autoimmune disease that causes chronic inflammation of the joints. Autoimmune diseases are illnesses that occur when the body's tissues are mistakenly attacked by their own immune system

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