HEALTH PROMOTING ASPECTS OF PANCHAKARMA FOR JARA (GERIATRIC DISORDERS)


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ABSTRACT:– The primary cause of mortality among aged people comprise respiratory problems, heart diseases, cancer and stroke.

Major causes of morbidity among this group is chronic inflammatory and degenerative conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, osteoporosis, alzeimers disease, depression, psychiatric disorders, parkinsons disease and age related urinary problems.

Conventional medical therapy does not have health promoting agents for prevention of these.

Ayurveda on the other hand has interventions and procedures that improves physiological processes that influence metabolic and immunological status.

Central focus of strength of Ayurveda in geriatric care swings around the concept of Rasayan therapy which compensates the age-related biological losses in the mind, body system and affords rejuvenative effect to a remarkable extent.

Panchakarma is one of the unique therapeutic procedures in Ayurveda used for the elimination of disease causing factors and to maintain the health.

It plays vital role in the preservation, maintenance of health and promotion of longevity.

These measures are also indicated as preparatory procedures before the administration of rasayan and vajeekaran.

Panchakarma eliminates toxins and stagnated excreta and metabolites from the body, cleanses the srotas, enhancing the absorption and metabolism of nutrients and drugs and helps in minimising their dose and increasing efficacy.

Panchakarma has been given special place in all ancient Ayurvedic texts. Aacharya Charak has mentioned the extensive use of Panchakarma therapy for almost all major diseases.
Benefits of Panchakarma therapy as told by Aacharya Charak are as follows—Elimination of vitiated doshas, enhancement in digestion and metabolism, diseases are cured, normal health is restored, sense organs, mind, intelligence and complexion becomes clear, person is not affected by old age and lives long disease free life.

**KEYWORDS** :- Panchakarma, Jara, Geriatric disorders.

**INTRODUCTION**:-

Acharya Sushruta described old age as above 70 years. Acharya Charaka on the other hand mentioned old age above 60 years. Ayurveda considers ageing as the Swabhavaja Vyadhi i.e. It is inherent nature of the living being to get old.

Vagbhata was the first one to record decade wise ageing process, which was followed later by Sharangadhar.

It is clear that ageing does not occur simultaneously in all the tissues. Different body tissues are affected ageing at different time period. Gradual declination of a particular faculty takes place in each decade of life.

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**PANCHAKARMA IN JARA**

- Certain procedures of classical Panchakarma such as Vaman are of drastic nature, therefore ordinarily they are contraindicated in elderly persons.
Bala, Vridha, Durbala and Garbhini are contraindicated for the major samshodhan procedures of Panchakarma therapy. If at all the therapies are to be given, it should be given with necessary precautions and appropriate modifications. However, many procedures may be suitably tailored and modified to be administered in elderly persons to achieve desired results.

The Purvakarmas like Deepan, Pachan, Snehana and Swedana can be easily administered. One can take a little precaution to minimize the dose of Internal Snehana. External Snehana and Abhyanga massage are specially indicated in elderly patients.

Vaman after 60 years of age should be administered with great precaution and after careful monitoring of the general health and accompanying diseases. Vaman should not be administered in an elderly person (or any other person), if he is suffering from Hypertension, Ischaemic Heart diseases, peptic ulcer, Liver Cirrhosis, Pulmonary Tuberculosis or any major lung disease and glaucoma etc.

Virechan especially of Mrudu variety is best suited to the elderly patients,

Basti is specially indicated.

The practices of Keraliya Tradition such as Dhara karma, Pinda sweda and Shirobasti can be prescribed in elderly persons.

Panchakarma in the elderly has two fold objectives:

1. In normalcy - As a therapy for rejuvenation to retard ageing i.e. to ward off the effects of ageing for healthy ageing.
2. In diseases of the elderly - As an adjunct in the treatment of diseases of the elderly.

Normal elderly person should undergo periodical Panchakarma Therapy followed by Rasayan inorder to promote his overall health and to avert the effects of ageing like muscular weakness, muscle atrophy, wrinkling of skin, graying of hairs, loss of vision, hearing and other senses, memory and cognition, etc.

Rejuvenative treatments for healthy ageing are:

- Deepan, Pachan,
- Snehan/ abhyanga,
- Swedan- sarvang swedan by dashamoola kwath / Pinda sweda
• vamana (only in selected cases),
• Mrudu virechana
• basti- preferably anuvasan type depending upon the condition.
• Shirodhara, shirobasti
• Shirovirechan
• rasayan therapy.

**Significance Of Basti In Old Age**

Basti chikitsa is regarded as the prime treatment modality among the Panchakarma. It is having not only curative action but also preventive and promotive actions.

Basti is the principal treatment for Vatik disorders.

Vata is responsible for the formation, communication and spread of sweda, mala, mutra, kapha and other biological substances in the body. Basti being the principal treatment for such an important factor, is considered the therapeutic procedure of maximum importance. This is why Basti is said to be the Ardhachikitsa (half of the whole treatment) and sometimes a complete treatment.

It deserves a special place among the Panchakarma as being the most indicated procedure in Vridha and having wild range of benefits.

It is multifaceted and highly appropriate therapeutic measure in the conditions occurring in vridhas.

Types of basti that may be used in vridhas are:-

1. Niruha basti – due to its properties of vayasthapana and ayursthapana.
2. Yapana basti – due to its property of Ayu yapana.
4. Sneha/ Anuvasana basti – due to properties of vatahara and brimhana.
5. Matra basti – due to properties of Balya, Alpa agni sandhukshanaand special reference to vridhas.
7. Shamana basti – due to property of Dosha shaman.
8. Deepana basti – due to property of Agni sandhukshana.

**Special dosage of Niruha basti dravya** – 10 prasritas according to Charaka and 20 prakunchas according to Vagbhata, after 70 years of age, upto which the adult dose of 12 prasritas / 24 prakunchas is maintained.

**Dosage of Matra basti** - 60 ml. It can be given in Bala and Vridha everyday.

**Yapana Basti** - It is a special type of basti, which is having the property to support life and promote longevity.

If honey is added in basti it becomes more potent and enhances the shukra qualitatively and quantitatively. Due to yogavahi guna, when madhu is mixed with Vrishya yoga, it attains the qualities of Vrishya.

Taila is best drug for alleviation of vata due to ushna, guru, and snigdha properties.

A combination of both Madhu and Taila improves the excellence of shukra and alleviate vata.

Yapana basti can be given at any time.

Niruha is Lekhana and Anuvasana is Brimhana. Yapana basti is having both the actions and hence Anuvasan basti is not required. So Yapana basti can be given continuously. It has no complications.

**VARIOUS BASTI PREPARATIONS USEFUL IN JARA**

1. Mustadi Yapana basti – Sadhyo balajanan, rasayan
2. Erandmooladi Yapana basti – Sadhyo balajanan
3. Bala atibaladi Yapana basti – Rasayan, Sadhyo balajanan
4. Tittiryadi Yapana basti – Bala, Varna, Shukrajanan, Rasayana.
5. Godhadhimamsa Yapana basti (vrushya basti) – Balya, Rasayana.
6. Kurmadi Yapana basti – Vriddhanamapi bala jananam (gives power to old people)
7. Madhu ghritadi tail siddha Yapana basti – Veerya vardhak, Rasayana. Vatapitta nashak, mutrakruchanashak
10. Madhutailik basti – Rasayana, Brimhana, Bala varnakara,
Basti for a sadatura (such as a Vriddha)

1. Punarnavaerandadi Niruha and Anuvasan basti.
2. Baladi anuvassan basti.

Apart from the above mentioned bastis, many other combinations may be tried to suit the individual needs of the patient by using Yukti.

Disorders in Old age

Cardio-vascular disorders – Hypertension (Vyanabala vaisamya), Ischemic Heart Disease.
Endocrine Disorders - Diabetes mellitus (Madhumeha).
Respiratory diseases - Chronic bronchitis (Jeerna Kasa), Emphysema, Bronchial asthma (Tamaka svasa), Pulmonary tuberculosis.
Gastro-intestinal Diseases – Indigestion (Ajeerna), Constipation (Vibandha).
Musculo-skeletal diseases – Osteoporosis (Asthi sauseerya / Asthi dhatu kshaya), Osteoarthritis (Sandhigata Vata).
Genito-urinary diseases - Benign prostate hypertrophy (BPH) (Asetheela), Urinary incontinence.
Neurological / Neurodegenerative & Special senses disorders - Complications of Cerebro-vascular disorders viz. Paraplegia, etc. Parkinsonism disease (Kampavata/Vepathu)
Neuro-psychiatric disorders – Anxiety neurosis (Cittodvega), Depression (Manoavasada), Insomnia (Anidra or Nidranasa), Dementia (Smrti nasa) and Alzheimer’s disease
Woman specific geriatric diseases - Menopausal syndrome.
Cataract, Macular degeneration, High cholesterol, certain cancers are some of the common conditions.
Most of these problems are of degenerative nature and treatment has to be restorative, rejuvenative and rehabilitative.

DISORDERS IN OLD AGE AND ITS MANAGEMENT BY PANCHAKARMA

1. ARTHRITIS-

It is beneficial to treat the elderly patients with degenerative locomotor disorders like osteoarthritis and myopathies with Ayurvedic Panchakarma treatments for 2-3 weeks.
i. OSTEOARTHRITIS

80% of aged persons above 60 years will have some radiological evidence of degenerative pathology of joint.


a. Guduchi siddha Ksheerbasti – It is specially indicated in Sandhigatvata and can be applied in degenerative disorders like osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, etc.

b. Abhyanga with Mahamasha or Narayan tail followed by Swedana should be daily regimen.

c. Shaman drugs

d. Suitable pathya and apathya measures of vatavyadhi.

ii. RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS


a. Mrudu virechan with Erand sneha as required.

b. Niruha basti with dashamoola kwath.

c. Swedan- Valuka pottali swedan or nirgundi bashpa sweda.

d. Snehan with vishagarbha taila.

e. Shaman drugs – Erand sneha, guduchi, shunthi, suvarna and guggulu. Compound preparations like simhanad guggulu, etc.

2. STROKE

A stroke is defined as the sudden onset of a focal or global neurological impairment of over 24 hours duration or, leading to death. Typically it causes weakness on one side and may cause speech impairment.

a. Abhyanga with ksheerbala taila followed by swedan.
b. Yapana basti or sneha mrudu virechana.
c. Shirobasti with vatahara taila.
d. Shaman drugs – Brihat vata chintamani, ekangveer rasa with milk or balarista.
e. Suitable physiotherapy combined with Ayurvedic treatments speeds up recovery.

3. **HYPERTENSION**

Accepted criteria: A systolic blood pressure of 160 mm of Hg and / or more or diastolic pressure of 90 mm of Hg or more is taken as hypertension with following conditions.

- It is sustained on third and subsequent occasions.
- It is generally taken sitting.


a. Shirodhara with ksheer.
b. Parishek with chandanadi taila, etc.
c. Shaman drugs – eg.. Brahmi, sarpagandha and amalaki rasayana.
d. Satwavajaya practices like yoga, dhyana, etc. if done on a regular basis, is useful in maintaining blood pressure.
e. Restricted salt intake, sound sleep and regulated lifestyle are necessary in the management of hypertension.
f. Patients of hypertension, IHD and Hyperlipidemia can be treated with repeated interrupted course of Lekhan basti. Lekhan basti may be formulated by using lekhan drugs such as purified Vacha, Guggulu, Pushkarmula, etc.,

4. **DEMENTIA / CHRONIC CONFUSION**

Memory impairment is the most prominent symptom, especially recent memory. In severe cases long term memory is also affected. Impairment of abstract thinking can be assessed by testing the ability to interpret proverbs. Language is often impaired, it may become vague, stereotyped, imprecise or aphasic.
Chronic confusion can be caused by –

I. Reversible cause in about 20% of cases such as drugs, systemic illness, undernutrition, alcohol, etc.
II. Irreversible causes such as Alzheimer’s disease, Multi-infarct dementia, etc.

**Ayurvedic Management – Vyadhi Pratyanneka** – Since most of the signs and symptoms are identical to Apasmara, where in smrutibhransa is the main feature, the line of treatment of Apasmar can be applied in confusions with slight modifications.

   a. Mrudushodhana with aragwadh, etc.
   b. Navana nasya – with vacha taila.
   c. Niruha basti – with dashamool kwath.
   d. Anuvasana basti – with vacha, Devdaru and Erand taila.
   e. Shirobasti – with mahanarayan taila.
   f. Shirodhara with takra or milk.
   g. Shamana drugs – Vacha, govrrchana, brahmi, jatamansi, sankhapspi and other medhya dravyas.

5. **INSOMNIA**

26-45% of old age people complain of sleep disturbance. Sleep becomes shorter, lighter and more broken, with greater difficulty in getting back to sleep again.

Disturbing factors – Anxiety, depression, pain, constipation, nocturia, cough/breathlessness, etc.

**Ayurvedic Management – Vyadhi Pratyanneka** – Regulation of sleep timings, Dhara, Satwavajaya.

   b. Shamana drugs – regular use of medhya rasayanas like brahmi, jatamansi, sankhapspi, etc.
   c. Satwavajaya – methods like prayer, dhyana, in the evening promotes inner strength of the individual and bestows tranquility.
6. **PARKINSON’S DISEASE**

Motor neuron disease, Alzheimer disease and Parkinsons disease are common CNS degenerative diseases of the elderly for which there is nothing to offer in conventional modern medicine.

Panchakarma treatments followed by Rasayan therapy for several weeks several times a year yields perceptible effect in terms of improved locomotor ability, cognitive function and alertness.

**Ayurvedic Management – Vyadhi Pratyanneka** – The aim is to maintain mobility and self care capability. Yapana basti, Abhyanga, Pindasweda, Shirobasti, Shirodhara

a. Sarvaang abhyanga with ksheerbala or mahamasha taila daily for a considerable period.

b. Shastik shali pinda sweda – is beneficial after abhyanga.

c. Yapana basti.

d. Shirobasti and Shirodhara followed by rasayan therapy.

e. Shaman drugs – eg. kapikachhu

f. Physiotherapy - to improve muscle power.

7. **BENIGN PROSTATE HYPERETROPHY :-**

It has been observed that Patients of BPH and chronic urinary infections respond favourably to Basti therapy. A simple course of Purvakarma, Narayan tail basti for 2-3 weeks interrupted 3-4 times a year and simultaneous administration of Varuna sigru kwath for several months has been reported to reduce the prostate size, restoring the flow of urine besides inhibition of the urinary infection and improvement of tone of urinary bladder. Uttar basti can be used if required.

8. **DIABETES**

Diabetes is a Santarpana janya disease. There is loss of Ojas in Prameha. Agni is also depleted. Hence while managing diabetes, physician must take in account of Agni and Ojas status. Aam and meda also plays important factor in the samprapti of Prameha. So physician
should try on one hand to promote the Agni and ojas, and on the other hand should try to reduce Aam and Meda in the patient. Samshodhan may purify the srotamsi i.e. the channels which may have beneficial impact on the functioning of Agni, ojas, aam, and medas. Therefore it is advocated that a sthula pramehi (obese diabetic) should be subjected to full panchakarma therapy including deepana, pachana, preparatory snehana-sweedana, vanama, Virechan, Basti and Shirovirechan. The krush pramehi (thin diabetic) may not be suitable for sanshodhan.

CONCLUSION :-

Conventional medical therapy does not have health promoting agents for prevention of geriatric disorders. Ayurveda on the other hand has interventions and procedures that improves physiological processes that influence metabolic and immunological status.

Panchakarma plays a vital role in the preservation, maintenance of health and promotion of longevity. Panchakarma therapy eliminates vitiated doshas, enhances digestion and metabolism, cures diseases, restores the normal health. Sense organs, mind, intelligence and complexion becomes clear, person is not affected by old age and lives disease free long life.

In the old age, there is dominance of Vata dosha, so Basti chikitsa is regarded as the prime treatment modality among the Panchakarma. Basti is having not only curative action but also preventive and promotive actions. It constitutes half and sometimes whole of the treatment, especially in geriatric disorders. It deserves a special place among the Panchakarma as being the most indicated procedure in vridha and having wild range of benefits. Basti is multifaceted and highly appropriate therapeutic measure in the conditions occurring in vridhas.

REFERENCES


