



Review Article

Versatile Ayurvedic Approaches for Treating Migraine: A Review

Nisha*¹, Lokesh²

¹Department of Shalaky Tantra, Govt. Ayurvedic college, Rewa (M.P), India

²Department of Kaumarbhritya, Govt. Ayurved College, Rewa (M.P), India

Abstract

Migraine is described as *Ardhaavabhedhaka* in Ayurvedic classics. Migraine is the second most common cause of headache. In Ayurvedic Classics various procedures had been explained for treating Migraine. These therapies offer significant preventive measures of Migraine. As per Ayurveda *Nasya* is the best procedure to manage the migraine. Migraine headache attacks may be triggered by; allergic reactions, bright lights, loud noises, odors or perfumes, physical or emotional stress, changes in sleep patterns, smoking or exposure to smoke, skipping meals and alcohol. Ayurveda suggest various other approaches for the treatment of migraine including; yoga, healthy life style and utilization of herbal remedies. This article presents some conceptual approaches of ayurveda for the treatment of migraine.

Key words: *Migraine, Ayurveda, Ardhaavabhedhaka, Tridosha*

***Corresponding Author:** Nisha, Department of Shalaky Tantra, Govt. Ayurvedic college, Rewa (M.P), India. Email: nishaagrahari89@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Migraine is a very common disorder characterized by repeated attacks of headache usually unilateral with different intensity. It is a highly prevalent headache disorder over the past decade having considerable impact on the individual and society. It can involve brain, eye and autonomous nervous system. Migraine results from blood vessel enlargement and the release of chemicals from nerve fibers. Due to the modern lifestyle, people are facing hectic, competitive life. All these habits together will act as the causative factors for many

diseases including Migraine. These all involves severe pain [1] associated with symptoms such as nausea, sensitivity to light, sound or head movement. Females are 3 times more likely to have Migraine than Males. Migraine may occur at any age, but it is most common between ages 30 and 50. Migraine has been reported as a common health problem. Migraine may be accompanied with nausea, vomiting. Migraine constitute 15 % of primary headache and affects 10-20% of general population. Migraine may be triggered from various factors like; dietary, physical,

emotional, hormonal and genetic factors [2].

| Types | Dosha pacified | Indication |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Virechan nasya | Kapha | Headache, |
| Bruhan nasya | Vata | Neck stiffness |
| Shaman nasya | Pitta | Burning eyes |

Table 1 : Types of Nasya indicated in different Urdhwajatrugata Roga.



Figure 1: Unilateral presentation of migraine

Role of Amla

Phyllanthus emblica, commonly known as Amla is widely distributed in tropical and subtropical areas and has therapeutic potential. It is rich in vitamin C, polyphenols such as tannins, gallic acid, ellagic acid, flavonoids like quercetin and rutin. Due to the presence of such rich constituents Amla is beneficial for the treatment of many disease including migraine also. In migraine Amla control internal secretion of chemical and reduces chances of blood pressure which is a major cause of migraine. Amla along with other fruits as *Triphala* also work as rejuvenating aliments and ultimately help in regulating normal body function which is essential requirements for the treatment of migraine [3].

Gomutra

Cow urine proved many therapeutics responses for human body. It is the most effective natural remedy. It's contains all substances, which are naturally present in the human body. Thus utilization of cow urine maintains the balance of these substances and this all helps to cure diseases like migraine. It's cited in ancient holy texts like *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Vriddhavagabhatat*, *Bhavaprakash*, *Raja nighantu*, etc. Study suggests that *Gomutra* is capable of controlling blood pressure, blockage in arteries, which are major causes of migraine. In ancient Indian system of medicine, urine of cow was accepted, used almost as a broad spectrum antibiotic but recently it has been established as major tool of controlling disease related to blood flow. The maintenance of blood pressure and related diseases like migraine by cow urine has been proved scientifically also [4].

Combined Ayurvedic therapy for Migraine

Study shows the combined effect of *Shadbindutaila Nasya* along with *Shamana Yogas i.e; Abhrakabhasma, Prawalapishti, Godantibhasma, Shirahshuladivajra Rasa, Pathyadi Kwatha* in the management of *Ardhavabhedaka*. Significant relief was found in associated symptoms, and good improvement in stress was also seen [5].

Lifestyle as per Ayurveda for treating Migraine

In Ayurveda a disease is described as *Ardhavabhedaka*, in which excruciating or piercing type of headache felt in one half of the head. It occurs due to abnormality in *Vata, Pitta*, and *Kapha Dosha*. *Pathya Ahara* and *Vihara* play an important role to maintain homeostasis of all *Doshas* and prevention of diseases. The alternative approaches for prevention and management of migraine need to be explored like; healthy lifestyle. Irregular

lifestyle plays a significant role in precipitation of migraine.

Acharya Sushruta advised to take milk mixed with *Ghrita* daily in the morning, in case of *Ardhavabhedaka*. Positive changes in lifestyle such as avoidance of migraine triggers, maintenance of regular sleep patterns, eating and working habits all effectively contribute to migraine prevention. Various studies concluded that there is no permanent treatment for migraine, the non-pharmacological intervention in the form of regular observance of healthy lifestyle is best way for prevention and management of migraine (*Ardhavabhedaka*). Healthy lifestyle helps in decrease of severity, frequency and duration of migraine attack. Indication of *pathya ahara* and *vihara* along with contraindication of *apathya ahara* and *vihara* is mandatory to reduce the prevalence of migraine. The study also concluded that exercise protocol is effective in reducing pain and migraine related disability [6].

Role of some Ayurvedic formulations

Ayurveda suggest some unique combinational therapy for the treatment of migraine; one of the such Ayurvedic Treatment Protocol for migraine comprising five Ayurvedic medicines, namely *Narikel Lavan*, *Sootshekhar Rasa*, *Sitopaladi Churna*, *Rason Vati* and *Godanti Mishran* along with regulated diet and lifestyle. Study showed complete disappearance of headache and associated symptoms after taking above treatment protocol. Various studies established effectiveness of this combined Ayurvedic treatment protocol for migraine. Ayurvedic medications were also well tolerated by patients. Marked reduction of migraine frequency and pain intensity was observed in different studies suggest that Ayurvedic treatment protocol is very useful to manage the disease migraine [7].

Conclusion

According to Ayurvedic principles, migraine is a *Tridoshaja* disorder, out of the three doshas, *Vata* and *Pitta* dosha are the prominent factors. *Vata* imbalance arises due to improper metabolism, mental and physical stress, sleeplessness, etc. "*Pitta*" causes dilation of the blood vessels, which causes the onset of a migraine attack. The traditional science of Ayurveda considers migraine to be caused by deep-rooted problems, including a sensitive nervous system and impaired digestion.

Ayurveda believes in cleaning the body from within and eradicating the disease from its roots. Ayurvedic treatment of migraine therefore is centered on the pacification of *Pitta* Dosha, and restoration of digestive function in the body. Along with herbal therapy Ayurveda considers following as key factors to control migraine:

- Balancing the nervous system activity
- Use of diet to prevent *Tridosha* imbalance
- Stress management
- Exercise

Ayurveda also suggest utilization of some herbal medicines as well as customized diet and lifestyle plans to control migraine.

References

1. Naveen D, Praveen Kumar T, Ayurvedic Resolution to Migraine, J Homeop Ayurv Med, 2014; 3: 160.
2. D. Naveen, K. T. Praveen, Ayurvedic resolution to migraine, Altern Integ Med, 2013; 2: 10.
3. Sankaran Mirunalini, Velusamy Vaithyanathan, Mani Krishnaveni, Amla: A novel ayurvedic herb as a functional food for health benefits - A mini review, Int J Pharm Pharm Sci, 2014; 5: 1-4.

4. Ipsita Mohanty, Manas Ranjan Senapati, Deepika Jena, Santwana Palai, Diversified uses of cow urine, *International Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences*, 2014; 6: 3.
5. Ramachandra Nisargi, Mythrey R. C., A Clinical Study on the Management of *Ardhavabhedhaka* Vis-À-Vis Migraine Headache, *UJAHM*, 2013; 01 (03): 71-76.
6. S. Kumar, N. Nathani, J.S. Tripathi, A Clinical Study on Effect of Healthy Lifestyle in the Management of Migraine, *World Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences*, 2014; 3: 1065-1074.
7. Prakash Balendu Vaidya, Babu S. R. Vaidya, Sureshkumar K. Vaidya, Response to ayurvedic therapy in the treatment of migraine without aura, *International Journal of Ayurveda Research*, 2010; 1: 30-37.