

Original Review Article

A Review on Diet Therapy for Prevention and Management of Vataj and Pittaj Shiroroga through Ayurveda with Special Reference to Migraine

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	International Archives of Integrated Medicine, Vol. 6, Issue 12, December, 2019. Copy right © 2019, IAIM, All Rights Reserved. Available online at http://iaimjournal.com/ ISSN: 2394-0026 (P) ISSN: 2394-0034 (O)
	Received on: 02-12-2019 Accepted on: 06-12-2019 Source of support: Nil Conflict of interest: None declared.
How to cite this article: Vd. Archana D. Inchekar. A Review on Diet Therapy for Prevention and Management of Vataj and Pittaj Shiroroga through Ayurveda with Special Reference to Migraine. IAIM, 2019; 6(12): 65-72.	

Abstract

Shirashool is a painful disease which affects vital organ in i.e. *Marmasthan*. Chronic headache can be interpreted with Migraine, specially *Vataj* and *Pittaj* type of *Shirorogas* as mentioned in *Charak Sanhita*, An Ayurvedic text. There are classical treatments mentioned in Ayurveda as per *Vataj and Pittaj Shiroroga*. Ayurveda treatment includes not only combinations of medicines but diet therapy and life style modifications are also indicated (*Aushdha*, *aahar* and *Vihar Chikitsa*). *Pathya* has a specific role for treatment and prevention of a disease. It is described that a *vitiated dosha* and pathogenesis of a disease once cured can be occurred if *pathya* or selected diet & life style has been not followed. *Pathya-apathya* is a guideline about suitable and unsuitable diet and daily regimen for particular disease. Diet therapy for *Shiroroga* is effective along with medicines and *panchakarma* as indicated in texts. Diet is effective along with medicines and *panchakarma* as indicated in texts. Diet is selected according to *Anvshansh Kalpana* of *vitiated dosha* as vitiation by *guna*, *karma*, *gati*, etc. The Causes from dietary sources are indicated to avoid as spicy, sour food. Associated causes as stress, indigestion, irregularities in food timings, are considered so diet therapy suggests selected diet & timings which are effective to work on those associated causes. In Migraine or *Shirorog*, diet plays an important role for management and treatment as mentioned in Ayurveda texts.

Key words

Shiroroga, Migraine, *Vataj Pittaj*, *Shiroroga*, diet Therapy, *Pathya-apathya*, Ayurvedic *aacharchikitsa*.

Introduction

Migraine affects about 28 million women in the US and One billion worldwide. Migraine and other type of headache's prevalence range is 1.37% and 72% in India [1]. *Shirorogas* described in Ayurveda are mainly interpreted with *shiroshoola* or Headache [2].

It affects quality of life as pain is severe. In Ayurveda *Shiroroga* is classified in five types [3]. Another classification is according to pathogenesis and characteristics of pain. *Shirosthana* is a site of *prana*, known as *marmasthan* [4], a vital place. Any disease occurs in *Marmasthan* affects severely. Migraine is interpreted as *Shirashoola* as chronic headache with severity is a main characteristic.

Migraine is the third most common disease in the world. In a study conducted of Pakistan, almost 80% among studied sample indicates significant association between Migraine and anxiety and depression [5].

Ayurveda deals with holistic approach for *Shiroroga*. In hetus or causes of it, unwholesome diet, indigestion, anger, suppression of natural urges, excessive talk, sleep disturbances, excessive sleep or less sleep, seasonal variation, excessive cry etc. are mentioned. Pathogenesis according to Ayurveda includes *Tridosh* vitiation and *raktadushti* [6].

In management of a disease, *aahar*, *vihar* and *chikitsa* are mentioned. *Pathyapathya* is a guideline about suitable and unsuitable diet and daily regimen for a particular, disease [7].

To prevent recurrence of a disease, one should follow guidelines of *pathyapathya*. Diet which is able to control vitiated *dosha* and which gives strength to *dhatus*, can prevent recurrence of some disease is used as diet therapy.

Aim

- To study diet therapy for prevention and management of *vataj* and *Shiroroga* through Ayurveda with special reference to Migraine.

Objectives

- To study *Vataj Shiroroga* with causes and *pathyapathya*.
- To study *Pittaj Shiroroga* with causes and *pathyapathya*.
- To study *Sannipataj Shiroroga* with causes and *pathyapathya*.
- To study preventive role of diet for *Shiroroga* with special reference to Migraine.
- To study therapeutic role of diet for management of *Shiroroga* with special reference to Migraine.

Materials and methods

Collection and review of ancient Ayurvedic texts with commentaries and modern literature was done.

Results

Shiroroga in Ayurveda

Charak Has mentioned *Shiroroga* in *Trimarmiya Chikitsa* chapter in with reference of its site of *marma*. Headache is a main symptom having specific characteristics of headache according to specific *dosha*.

Shirasthana in Ayurveda

'*Shira*' is a vital organ mentioned as one of the three *marmas* by *Charakas*. It is a site of *Prana*, *indriyas* and Mind [8]. It holds control over all sensory and motor activities, activities of mind and intellect. It is highly vascular and predominance of nervous tissues i.e. *Rakta* and *Majja* dhuta.

Dosha Predominance is Shirasthana

Shira is a site of *Prana Vayu* [9], *tarpak Kapha* [10] and *Sadhak Pitta*. It mainly consists of *Khapha predominance*.

‘Ayurveda has mentioned it as *Uttamanga* is important among all parts and various guidelines are suggested for promotion of health and protection of various system and organs situated at head organ. Life style includes *nasya*, *Gandusha*, *anjana*, *Shirobhyanga* procedures along with proper diet, proper sleep pattern, exercise etc. Ayurveda texts have mentioned guidelines for prevention of disease of head and neck region (*urdwajatrugat roga*).

Shiroroga in Ayurveda

Shirorogas are mainly interpreted as *Shiroshoola*. In *Charak Sutrastana* five types of *Shirorogas* are described as *Vataj*, *Pittaj*, *Kaphaj*, *Sannipataj* and *Krimij*. Predominance of *doshas*, severity and characteristics of headache, associated symptoms are important for diagnosis and furthermore treatment of *Shiroroga*.

Shiroroga Causes

For the life style, many specific indications are given for specific seasons (*Rutuchrya*) and wholesome daily regimen (*Dinacharya*). Thus imbalance of *dosha-dhatu-malas* can be prevented. Human body, mind, their physiology consists a particular capacity to attain factors of life style as exercise, walking, eating, swimming, exposure to heat, cold, wind, froast, emotional factors as anger, anxiety, fear, etc. it is advised to be keep those factors in appropriate manner.

Those practiced in improper manner leads to *Shiroroga* Diet itself is an important factor for health and ill health when consumed in proper and improper way respectively. In causes of *Shiro-roga* many dietary factors are mentioned and it is essential to avoid them for prevention and treatment.

Causes of Shirorogas are mentioned as follows

- **Samanya Karan** or common causes

- **Vishesh Karan** or specific causes for doshas

Another classification of Shirorogas are as follows

- **Aaharaj** Causes related to diet and dietary perspectives.
- **Viharaj** causes related to life style physical, social, behavioral, mental activities.
- **Manas** causes related to mind activities.
- Environmental causes as heat, cold, wind, rain, froast etc.

Common causes mentioned in Ayurveda text *Charak Sanhita* are suppression of natural urges, alteration in sleep patterns as day time sleep, insomnia or awakening in night, talking loudly, heavy food, use of excessive cold water, *aama* formed due to improper digestion, excessive weeping or suppression of tears, exposure of wind from the front, cloudy weather, anomalous season, change in residence, *ruksha aahar*, excessive quantity of diet, excessive exertion, excessive intercourse, stress are causes of *shiroroga* [11].

In *Ashtang hridayam*, *Shiroroga* it's causes, types and treatment are mentioned in details. *Dhooma*, heat, profuse sweating, excessive sleep, lack of sleep, swimming, mental stress, suppression of tears, excessive weeping, *krimi* (worms) excessive water intake, consumption of alcohol, lack of massage and applying oil on body, looking and bending down for a long time, unpleasant smells, indigested food *aama*, excessive talking, lead to aggravation of *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* and thus disease occurs. *Shirorogas* occurs due to *pratishyaya* [12].

Nidanpanchak or Pathogenesis of Shiroroga

Ayurvedic fundamental theory for manifestation of any disease is made up of five etiological and Pathological steps as *nidanpanchak* [14]. As per **Table – 1**, causes of *Shiroroga* are responsible for *vata* and *Pitta* vitiation with *Rakta dushti* in *Shirosthana*.

Table - 1: Causes and symptoms of *Shiroroga* according to types.

Sr. No.	Types of <i>Shiroroga</i>	Causes of <i>Shiroroga</i>	Symptoms of <i>Shiroroga</i>
1	<i>Vataj Shiroroga</i>	Talking loudly, excessive talk, awakening till late night, exposure to cold wind, suppression of natural urges, fasting, trauma, excessive <i>vamana</i> or <i>virechana</i> , excessive weeping, grief fear, terror, excessive load carrying, severe emacination.	Severe pain in temporal [13] region, pain in neck, forehead, eyebrow, centre of eyebrow, severe cutting pain and dissonance in ear. Dizziness, sense of separateness in all joints, excessive throbs in blood vasculature, stiffness of neck pain relief by hot and unctuous things.
2)	<i>Pittaj Shiroroga</i>	Excessive use of pungent, sour, salty and alkali substances and wine, exposure to sun or heat, anger	Burning sensation and pain in the head desire for cold things. Burning sensations in eyes, thirst, giddiness and perspiration.
3	<i>Tridoshaj Shiroroga</i>	Causes of all <i>Doshas</i>	Pain, giddiness and tremors due to vata, burning sensation, intoxication and thirst due to pitta, heaviness and drowsiness due to kaphas
4	<i>Ardhavbhedak</i>	(Half sided headache or Pain in head) Causes related to <i>Vatajanya</i> . <i>Shiroroga</i> , as <i>ruksha</i> diet, indigestion, excessive exertion, exercise, intercourse.	Headache in half side of head. Onset and relieves by fifteen days or months

Hetus affects in many ways on *doshas*. *Vata vitiation* due to *sandharana* or suppression of natural urges leads to obstructive (*sanga*) disturbances in channels or *strotasas* leads to *vata* vitiation by its improper flow or *Pratiloma gati*.

Vata vitiation due to *ruksha guna*, *jagarana*, stress, excessive talking leads to *vata vitiation* due to *apatarpana* (*degenerative changes*).

Importance of causes

In Ayurveda, study of causes of a disease is important as avoiding causes is a part of treatment.

In *Nidana Panchak*, *Upashaya* or relieving or reducing disease by using diet, life style and medicines against *hetus*, disease are supposed to be used [15]. Thus specific *hetus* for specific disease are important to know.

For *Shiroroga* in this review study, dietary causes, life style related causes environmental and mental causes are collected, interpreted and studied from text. Certain significant causes are related to diet and diet related factors as time, quantity, combinations, irregularities and quality of diet. There are certain causes as chronic constipation, flatulence, indigestion which are indirectly related to onset of Headache.

Samprapti or Pathogenesis of *Shiroshoola*

In Common pathogenesis, above mentioned factors provoke *doshas* affecting *Rakta* in the head leading to *Shirorogas* with various symptoms [16]. In *Charak Samhita Chikitsa*, *Shiroshoola* or *Udweshanan* due to *Shiro-abhighat* is mentioned as a disease. In *Vataj Shirorshool* pathogenesis aggravated *vata dosha* affects vessels of the head region further provoked and produces severe pain in a head [17].

In *Pitta, Shiroroga, vitiated Pitta* affects a shirasthanana and develops *pittaj, Shiroroga* [18].

Aahar-Chikitsa or Diet Therapy in Shiroroga

To advise diet to prevent *Shirashoola* and to advise diet to treat *Shiroshoola* are roles of diet therapy.

Review of Ayurvedic literature and research based on it contains diet descriptions in details. *Pathya* is a term which is important guideline in Ayurveda for treatment of every disease.

Benefits of Diet Therapy

- It avoid *hetus* of *vataj* and *pittaj shirosoola*.
- It avoid *raktadushti*, indigestion, constipation it works as stress relieving factor.
- It strengthen *Shirosthana* and thus effective for prevention of *Shiroshoola*. It controls indigestion and thus *dosha* vitiation is controlled by selected diet.

Pathya

In *Ashtang Hridaya* it is mentioned that diet which protects health should be consumed and diet which relieves from disease and root of disease should be consumed [19].

In *Charak Samhita*, it is mentioned that to prevent recurrence of a disease, one should follow guidelines of *pathyapathya* Diet which is able to control vitiated *doshas* and which gives strength to *dhatu*s, which can prevent recurrence of same disease is used as diet therapy or *Aachar Chikitsa*.

Charaka has mentioned importance of selected diet and importance of avoiding unsuitable diet as it works as controlling vitiated *doshas* and it relieves from a severity of a disease [20].

It should be followed for a long time. This guidelines is specially given to prevent recurrence of a disease. This is preventive role of *Pathya*.

In *dashavidha Pariksha* of a patient, diet is one of an important *pariksha* mentioned as *satmya*. It is mentioned that Physician should not treat only with medicines or *yogas* but should consider ten factors among which one is diet [21].

Diet for Migraine as Vataj and Pittaj type of Shiroshoolas

As reviewed cause and symptoms, migraine can be interpreted as *Vataj and Pittaj* type of *Shirorogas*. *Ardhvbhedak* is another pattern develops from *Vataj Shiroshoola*. So diet which is able to control *Vat, Pitta* and which is able to prevent *shiroshoola* is suggested in texts.

Diet Therapy in Chikitsa-Sutra (guideline in treatment of Shiroshoola)

In *Vataj* type, it is advised to avoid *vata* provoking diet and to select *vata*-controlling diet as to take warm water, ghee, oils, milk, sweet, sour and salty i.e. *vata* subsiding diet, solid food and liquid diet is mentioned [22]. As ghee, oil, milk, are beneficial those are advised to take regularly according to individuals digestive capacity (Agni). Diet which keeps bowel habit regularly is said to be *vata-anulomak* diet. Ghee, which ten year old known as *Puran Ghrut* and advised to take for *Shiroshoola* [23]. Timings of food should be regular and gap between two intake should not prolonged.

Detailed diet therapy may be planned according to causative factors. *Vata* aggravation due to *ruksha, guna, jagarana, stress, varsha rutu, atibhashya* can be balanced by use plenty of ghee and milk, sweet, highly nutritious diet. Fruits as grapes, banana, almond, coconut, dates are useful.

Sesum seeds are advised in *Ashtang Hridaya* cow milk at bed time followed by head massage is advised. Green gram, Black Gram, Kulthi beans (*macrotyloma uniflorum*) are also advised [24]. Soups of those pulses with oil or ghee are useful. Afterwards milk is advised to drink. Ghee with sugar is used.

In typical *Vataj* type associated with *aam* or *udavaotaone* can consume, redish, garlic, Onion, Brinjal as those are advised to reduce congestion in *Pratishyaya*. Remedy for *Vaavyadhi* and for *pratishyaya* are advised to use for *Marmaparipalan* or indiseases for *vataj Shiroroga* [25]. Warm water, cow milk, Sugarcane are useful.

Fasting food in little quantity, having excessive gap, should be avoided.

Benefit

Such diet consists *Vatashaman* effect and gives strength to dhutas. Regulation of *vata* results in relief from *Shiroroga*.

Prevention by Diet

Vataj Shiroroga can be prevented by using diet mentioned above regularly. Some time common guidelines of diet as quantity, timings, methods to consume, hygiene, attention of mind during consuming diet, daily routine after diet are equally important to follow.

It is most important to avoid all *Vataj Prakopak* diet and other causes are as excessive exertion, intake etc.

Diet therapy in Pittaj Shiroroga

In *Pittaj Shiroroga* Ghee, food containing *Sheet* (Cool) Properties as sugar, milk, saffron are adviced [26]. Fresh coconut, Coconut milk, black grapes, sugarcane cow milk, sweet pomegranate, Indian gooseberry are advised as those *Pitta Shamak*.

Plenty of Cow Ghee [27], milk [28], with sugar is advised. Cold water kept in mud pot is useful.

In diet Ghee with rice, wheat, gren gram is useful. In *Charak Chikitsa*, *sheet*, *ghee*, *Chandana*, *Yashti*, *Usheer*, *bala* is advised to use.

It is important to avoid *Ushna*, spicy, sour, salty, *pitta* provoking diet as mentioned in causative factors of *Pittaj Shirorogas*.

Discussion

Modification in life style with diet patterns plays on an important role in management and prevention of *Shiroroga*.

Ayurveda texts have detail guidelines of dietetics with many aspects as health, diseases, seasons, *Prakriti*, age, occupation.

In *Shiroshoola* with reference to Migraine, *Vataj* and *Pittaj Shiroroga* are considered as per symptoms. Ayurveda clearly describes *aahar*, *vihar* and *Aushadhi* for treating disease along with life style modification for its prevention too.

Quantity and quality of food, method of consumption fresh and wholesome contents, hygiene all things are considered. Properties of diet as *doshaa* provoking and elimination of *doshas* are considered to choose diet. In *vataj* and *Pittaj* type of diet cow ghee and milk are highly effective as diet therapy other factors which mentioned above are also mentioned to use for management of *Shiroroga*.

Conclusion

Diet therapy for prevention and management of *Vataj* and *Pittaj*, *Shiroroga* through Ayurveda are reviewed and studied with special reference to Migraine.

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