



(REVIEW ARTICLE)



An Ayurvedic approach to the management of *Sandhishula* and *Sandhishotha*

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World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2022, 16(03), 1103–1107

Publication history: Received on 19 November 2022; revised on 26 December 2022; accepted on 29 December 2022

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2022.16.3.1483>

Abstract

One of the most prevalent issues among the aged population is joint pain. *Shula*, *shotha*, and *prasaarana-aakun chanayo pravruttscha vedana* are its clinical hallmarks. Ayurveda described a number of therapeutic techniques, including herbal medicine, *snehana*, *swedan*, *upanaha*, and *lepa*, for the management of joint pain. The branch of medicine known as *Kayachikitsa* deals with using ayurvedic medicines to treat a variety of illnesses. This branch also suggested using various natural medicines to relieve joint discomfort. The most popular medication used to treat the joint pain condition *Amavata* is *Guggulu* (*Comiphoramukul*). Similar to how different herbal formulations of *Ashwagandha*, *Rasna*, *Sunthi*, *Pippali*, *Gokshura*, and *Trivrut* are also advised in conditions involving joint pain. The importance of herbal therapy in treating joint pain is summarized in this article.

Keywords: Ayurveda; *Sandhishula*; *Sandhishotha* Joint Pain; *Shula*; *Vedana*

1. Introduction

Rheumatic arthritis (*Ama Vata*) and osteoarthritis (*Sandhigata Vata*) are the diseases which involve severe joint pain due to the cartilage destruction and inflammation. The vitiated pitta results joint inflammation while aggravated vata plays important role in overall cascade of joint pain. The malnutrition, injury, infection, congenital reasons and ageing etc. are some etiological factors associated with joint pain. As per ayurveda when Agni not working properly then toxins or ama produced which accumulate along with vitiated vata, this further leads *Ama Vata*^[1-4]. Consumption of excessively cold, dry, bitter and pungent foods, irregular pattern of life style, excessive travelling, stress, lack of sleep, traumatic event and genetic factors may be considered responsible for Vata aggravation. The aggravated Vata along with *Ama* move into the shrotas and affect most vulnerable part of body such as; joints. This cascade resulted deterioration of the soft tissues in the joints and bones. Similarly aggravated *Ama* block channels and reduces supply of nutrients to the joints leads to malnutrition, these all together resulted joint inflammation, stiffness, swelling and pain^[3-6].

Ayurveda the natural way of treatment recommended many traditional herbal formulations for the management of diseases related to joint pain. These drugs help to reduce inflammation, swelling, tenderness and stiffness of joint. The herbal medicine also possesses ability to pacify aggravated Vata and ama. Ayurveda also suggested some rasayana formulation to nourish joint tissues and Ojas. The ayurveda medicine not only helps to pacify ama & doshas but also boost functioning of agni hence thus reduces joint pain in early stages.

In joint vyana vayu is considered responsible for joint motion while apana vayu is responsible for health of bones. Therefore we can say that disturbed motion is a function of vyana vayu while joint damage is related to apana vitiation. Sleshaka kapha also considered responsible for synovial fluids; vitiation of sleshaka resulted excess fluid and thus swelling in the joint^[4-8].

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1.1. Samprapti

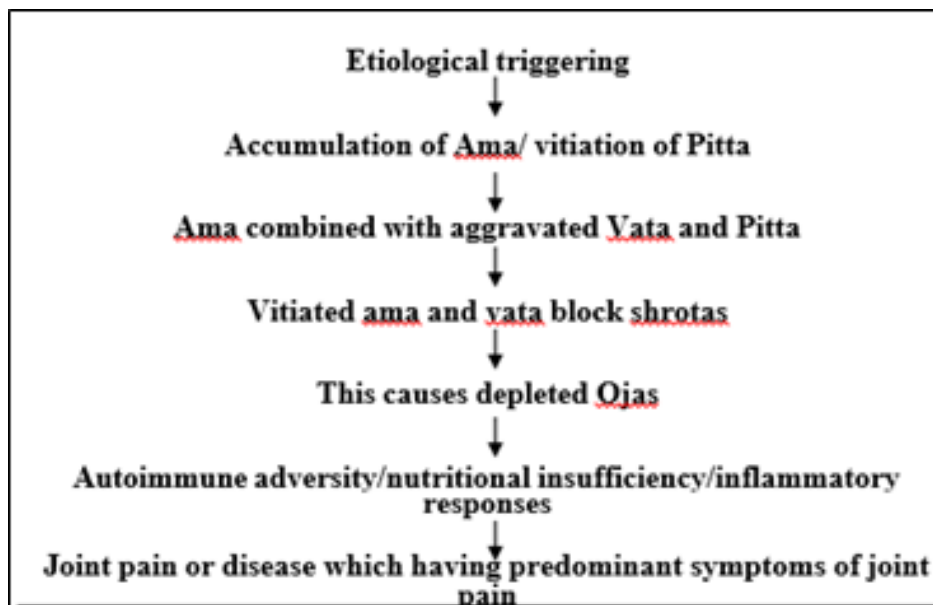


Figure 1 Etiopathogenesis of joint pain and swelling. (Samprapti)

2. Chikitsa of joint pain as per ayurveda

The basic line of treatment involves balancing of vitiated factors such as; normalizing agni, ama and vata. Herbs which possess analgesics and anti-inflammatory properties are used most commonly in the management of diseases related to joint pain^[5-7]. The basic line of treatment for diseases related to joint pain such as; amavata includes langhanam, swedanam, tiktam, deepana, katu drugs and sodhana procedure^[7-10]

- Formulation such as Rasnasaptaka kashayam, Maharasnadi kashayam, Dhanwantara kashayam and Sahacharadi kashayam offers beneficial effect in joint pain.
- Ksheera bala taila, Narayana taila, Gandha taila and Maha narayana taila offers lubrication of joints and strengthening of cartilage, muscles, ligaments and bones.
- Niruha (decoction-based) vastis are recommended; herbal medicines dashmoola and guduchi commonly employed in niruha vastis which offer beneficial effect in joint pain.

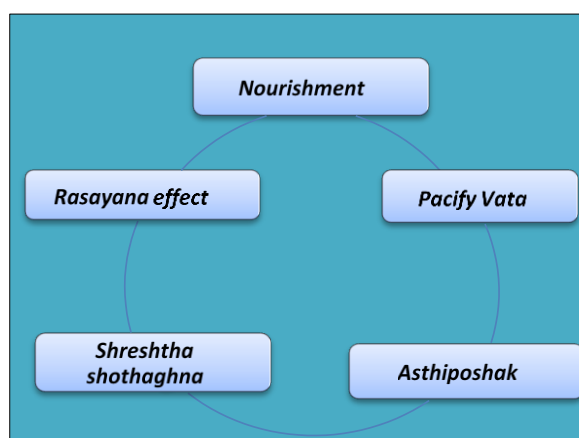


Figure 2 Sampraptibhanga of Sandhishula and Sandhishotha

2.1. Herbs/formulation helps in joint pain

- Castor Oil
- Guggulu

- Guduchi
- Nirgundi
- Turmeric
- Ashwagandha
- Shatavari
- Triphala
- Dashmool
- Shallaki
- Eucalyptus
- Devadaru

2.1.1. Castor Oil (*Eranda, Ricinus communis*)

Castor oil possesses astringent rasa, warm virya and pungent vipaka, it also offers purgative and analgesic action. It helps to normalize aggravated pitta and kapha, best for treating vata disease. Application of oils to the painful joints helps to aggravate inflammatory diseases.

2.1.2. Guggul (*Commiphora mukul*)

Guggul possess anti-inflammatory, dipana and pachana properties therefore help to reduce ama, vata and kapha. Guggul also help to lose weight which decreases extra burden to joint thus reduces pain. It also offers anti- microbial and analgesic properties which help to achieve symptomatic relief in joint pain. Guduchi (*Tinospora cordifolia*):

Guduchi pacifies all doshas, offers anti-inflammatory and analgesic effect. This herbs act as prophylactic anti- infective agent thus reduces chances of joint diseases associated with infections. Guduchi offers relief in joint pain associated with pitta-type arthritis.

2.1.3. Nirgundi (*Vitex negundo*)

Nirgundi has a bitter, astringent and pungent rasa and warm virya. It is light and rough, best for the kapha dosha but also pacify vata. It offers anti-inflammatory and analgesic effect in arthritis, nerve pains and back pains.

Nirgundi is most common herbs used in joints; it reduces swelling, control inflammatory response, offers anti- oxidant properties and hot potency of Nirgundi boost joints and muscles.

2.1.4. Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*)

Turmeric possesses bitter rasa and warm virya; it having light and rough quality. Turmeric acts as an antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory agent thus help to reduce pathogenesis and symptoms of joint pain. It inhibits production of prostaglandin thus calm down inflammatory cascade and also stimulates production of cortisol which relief arthritic symptoms.

2.1.5. Ashwagandha

Ashwagandha has anti-inflammatory properties, help to calm vata and nourishes muscle and bone tissues. Ashwagandha possess adaptogen action and relief pain caused by the stiffening and constant stress of joints and muscles.

2.1.6. Shatavari

Shatavari offer highly beneficial healing qualities and anti- inflammatory properties which help to reduce symptoms of joint pain and enhance joint flexibility.

2.1.7. Triphala

Triphala has anti-inflammatory (hreshtha shothaghna) effects and helps in healing process, it provides nutrients which strengthen bones and detoxify toxins (uric acid) which may cause inflammation. These all effect of Triphala provides great relief in gout, arthritis and other problems related to joint pain.

2.1.8. Yashtimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza Glabra*)

Mulethi or licorice offers beneficial effects in joint pain since it provides lubricating effect which supports joint tissues and improves flexibility. The reduction in joint pain is very significant during movement after the use of Mulethi.

2.1.9. Dashmoola

Dashmoola is a combination of roots of various herbs including; patala, gambhari, brihati and shalparni. It offers effective anti-inflammatory response and treats Vata Roga. Its anti-oxidant, analgesic and sedative properties also help to achieve symptomatic relief in joint pain.

2.1.10. Shallaki

Shallaki herb provides strength to joints, relieve joint pain, diminish swelling, increases mobility and pacify dosha which are responsible for joint disease.

2.1.11. Eucalyptus

Eucalyptus oil offers relief in arthritis, the tannins present in plant material help to reduce swelling and stiffness of joints. The aroma of oil offers calming effects and relieves joints pain.

2.1.12. Devadaru

It having Shothahara & vedana sthapan properties, therefore indicated in *jeerna sandhivata & Amavata*.

Table 1 Some Ayurveda formulation recommended in disease related to joint pain

Sr.No.	Formulation	Properties
1	<i>Punarnavadi guggulu</i>	<i>Shreshtha shothaghna, Asthiposhak</i>
2	<i>Shiva gutika</i>	<i>Rasayana Guna</i>
3	<i>Dashamula qwath</i>	<i>Shreshtha shothaghna</i>
4	<i>Dashamula taila</i>	<i>Alleviate vata</i>
5	<i>Punarnava mandoor</i>	<i>Asthiposhak, osteoprotective</i>

2.2. Role of medicine in joint pain pathogenesis

- Control deterioration of the cartilage and sub-chondral bone.
- Herbs help to pacify Vata and Kapha doshas, lessen srotovarodha, relieves pain, swelling, heaviness, stiffness and tenderness of joint.
- Use of Tikta-Katu Aushadis promotes agni, srotoshodana, reduces kapha and produces lightness in body.
- Deepana and Pachana medicines prevent formation of ama and nourish dhatu.
- Herbal medicine not only restores nutrition to diseased cartilage cells but also help to repair damage cartilage.
- Herbal drugs help to improve synovial fluid viscosity & concentration and strengthens bones; brumhanam effect.

3. Conclusion

Hence we can see how Sandhishula and Sandhishotha can be treated successfully by the above mentioned treatment. This treatment is effective in Sandhishula and Sandhishotha and provides good relief in patients.

4. Compliance with ethical standards

Acknowledgments

We express our gratitude to the Department of Kayachikitsa and Hospital Authority for giving us this opportunity to study this particular topic. An ayurvedic management of Sandhishula and sandhishotha with special reference to joint pain. Special thanks to Secretary of Maharashtra Arogya Mandal's Secretary, Hon'ble Mr. Anil Gujar, Hon'ble Principal

Dr. Nilesh Phule and Faculty members for co-operating, also thanks to the teachers Dr. Ritesh Damle, Dr. Kiran Ubhe, for guiding throughout to provide better management of the patient. Many thanks to my colleagues, as we got to learn many new things while studying the case and our knowledge regarding the subject has been increased.

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