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Literary review of Agni Karma in the management of Netraroga

BSMM Sooriyaarachchi ¹, Vidya NV ², Shraddha Chaudhary ³, DB Vaghela ⁴

^{1, 2} PG Scholar, Department of Shalakya Tantra, Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Gujarat Ayurved University, Jamnagar, Gujarat, India

³ Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Shalakya Tantra, Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Gujarat Ayurved University, Jamnagar, Gujarat, India

⁴ Associate Professor, HOD, Department of Shalakya Tantra, Institute for Post Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Gujarat Ayurved University, Jamnagar, Gujarat, India

Corresponding Author: **BSMM Sooriyaarachchi**

Abstract

Agnikarma (Cautery therapy) is one of the methods among *Anushastrakarma* (Para surgical procedure) mentioned in *Ayurveda* where the treatment protocol done by using fire or which is related to fire. It is said that *Agnikarma* would cure even incurable disease conditions and considered as a better treatment than *Ksharakarma*. *Acharya Sushruta* mentioned that disease conditions which are treated by *Agnikarma* would not recur. Amongst the sensory organs, eye is given the utmost importance as once the vision is lost, one will not be able to differentiate day and night and cannot enjoy the nature. Among *Netraroga*, *Agnikarma* is indicated in

Vartmagataroga, *Sandhigataroga* and *Sarvagataroga*. According to *Sushruta Samhita*, *Jambavosta*, *Suchi* or *Shalaka* can be used for *Agnikarma*. This study was conducted to appraise the importance of *Agnikarma* in the management of *Netraroga*. This conceptual study was done by assimilating and compiling relevant authentic text books of *Ayurveda*. At this present Era, most of people in the globe are shifting towards native medicine for their diseases and they have a lot of expectations from *Ayurveda* which is not only a system of medicine but rather the way of life, as it is available, toxicity free due to its holistic approach.

Keywords: *Netraroga*, *Anushastrakarma*, *Agnikarma*, *Ksharakarma*

Introduction

Agnikarma is one of the methods among *Anushastrakarma* (Para surgical procedure) mentioned in *Ayurveda* where the treatment protocol done by using fire or which is related to fire which can be use in some of the *Netraroga*. *Acharya Susruta* has mentioned that compared to *Ksharakarma*, *Agnikarma* is said to be more superior. Further *Acharya Susruta* explained that a disease treated with *Agnikarma* will not recur and diseases which are not curable by *Bheshaja*, *Sastra* and *Kshara* can be cured by *Agnikarma* ^[1]. *Agnikarma* can be compared with Thermal Cauterization in modern science. Amongst the sensory organs, eye is given the utmost importance as once the vision is lost, one will not be able to differentiate day and night and cannot enjoy the beauty of nature. *Acharya Sushruta* has explained 76 *Netraroga* ^[2] and *Acharya Vagbatta* ^[3] mentioned 94. *Netraroga* are classified into *Sandhigata Roga*, *Vartmagata Roga*, *Suklagata Roga*, *Krishnagata Roga*, *Sarvagata Roga*, *Drishtigata Roga* and *Bahya Roga* ^[4]. *Agnikarma* is indicated in *Vartmagataroga*, *Sandhigataroga* and *Sarvagataroga*. According to *Sushruta Samhita*, *Jambavosta*, *Suchi* or *Shalaka* can be used for *Agnikarma* in *Netraroga* ^[5].

Aim and objective

This study was conducted to appraise the importance of *Agnikarma* in the management of *Netraroga*.

Methodology

The study was done by assimilating and compiling relevant authentic texts of *Ayurveda* and Contemporary medicine.

Results

Table 1: Indication for *Agnikarma*

No	Disease	Indication
1.	<i>Lagana</i> ^[6]	If the <i>Lagana</i> is bigger in size, then its incision should be followed by <i>Kshara</i> or <i>Agnikarma</i>
2.	<i>Pakshmakopa</i> ^[7]	If the surgical treatment does not produce desired results, then <i>Agnikarma</i> is to be implemented.
3.	<i>Vartma Arbuda</i> ^[8]	After <i>Chedana</i> and <i>Anjanakarma</i> , it is said to have performed <i>Agnikarma</i> with <i>Shalaka</i> .
4.	<i>Bisa Vartma</i> ^[9]	If <i>Bisavartma</i> is not responding to <i>Bhedana Karma</i> and <i>Anjana</i> , it is advised to perform <i>Agnikarma</i> or <i>Ksharakarma</i>

Site for *Agnikarma* in *Vartma Roga*

In case of diseases affecting the *Vartma*, the eye should be covered by wet gauze piece and the *Romakupa* (roots of the eyelashes) of the eye should be burnt.

Types of *Agnikarma* ^[10]

- *Valaya* (round shaped resembling a circle)
- *Bindu* (dot)
- *Vilekha* (the lateral slanting lines)
- *Pratisarana* (the rubbing methods)

Table 2: *Agnikarma* use in *Vartma Roga* ^[11]

No	<i>Vartma Roga</i>	Type of <i>Agnikarma</i>
1.	In <i>Bisa Vartma</i>	The eye lid should be everted and the fold afflicted with the <i>Doshas</i> should be burnt.
2.	In <i>Slishta Vartma</i>	The eye lid should be everted and the fold afflicted with the <i>Doshas</i> should be burnt.
3.	In <i>Upapaksha</i>	It should be lifted with <i>Samdamsa Yantra</i> and <i>Agnikarma</i> should be done over <i>Roma Kupas</i> with <i>Suchi</i>
4.	In <i>Pakshmakopa</i>	The eye lid should be everted and the fold afflicted with the <i>Doshas</i> should be burnt.
5.	In <i>Krichronmeelana</i>	<i>Bindu</i> type <i>Agnikarma</i> should be done by using <i>Suchi</i>
6.	In <i>Lagana</i>	If <i>Lagana</i> is not responding to <i>Pratisarana</i> and <i>Anjana</i> , <i>Agnikarma</i> is the choice of treatment

Table 3: *Agnikarma* use in *Sandhigata Roga*

No	<i>Sandhigata Roga</i>	Type of <i>Agnikarma</i>
1.	<i>Puyalasa</i>	<i>Agnikarma</i> should be undertaken by using a <i>sukshma Shalaka</i> and it should be burn up to the level of <i>Mamsa</i>
2.	<i>Alaji</i>	<i>Bahya Alaji</i> should burnt with <i>Agnikarma</i>

Table 4: *Agnikarma* use in *Sarvagata Roga*

No	<i>Sarvagata Roga</i>	Type of <i>Agnikarma</i>
1.	<i>Vataja Abhisya</i>	<i>Agnikarma</i> should be done above Eyebrows
2.	<i>Vataja Adhimantha</i>	<i>Agnikarma</i> should be done above Eyebrows

Materials Used for *Agnikarma* in *Akshi Roga* ^[12]

Pippali, Excreta of goats, Teeth of cow, Arrow surgical instruments like *Shalaka* and *Jambavaustha*, instruments made from other metals, honey, jaggery and any oil substance

are the types of materials can be used for *Agnikarma*. Among them, *Acharyas* explained that instruments like, *Jambavostha*, *Suchi* or *Shalaka* should be used especially in *Netraroga*. The diseases of *Vartma* and *Linganasha* should be burnt by dipping in heated liquids like honey, bee wax, jaggery or other oily substances. Burning should be as deep as the blood vessels.

Table 5: Types of Burns and their depth ^[13]

No	Types of Burns	Features according to <i>Ayurveda</i>	Modern Comparison
1	<i>Plushta</i>	Discoloration without vesicle formation and extreme burning sensation	First-degree (superficial) burns. First-degree burns affect only the outer layer of skin, the epidermis. The burn site is red, painful, dry, and with no blisters.
2	<i>Durdagdha</i>	Eruption of a large vesicles or blisters, red color, excruciating pain, burning sensation, suppuration and takes a long time to heal.	Second-degree (partial thickness) burns. Second-degree burns involve the epidermis and part of the lower layer of skin, the dermis. The burn site looks red, blistered, and may be swollen and painful.
3	<i>Atidagdha</i>	Hanging down of muscular and connective tissue, destroyed veins, nerves and bone. Fever, burning sensation, thirst and fainting. There can be permanent disfigurement and discolored scar after healing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third-degree (full thickness) burns and Fourth-degree burns. • Third-degree burns destroy the epidermis and dermis. They may go into the innermost layer of skin, the subcutaneous tissue. The burn site may look white or blackened and charred. • Fourth-degree burns. Fourth-degree burns go through both layers of the skin and underlying tissue as well as deeper tissue, possibly involving muscle and bone. There is no feeling in the area since the nerve endings are destroyed.
4	<i>Samyak Dagdha</i>	Superficial burn with color-ripened fruit of <i>Tala</i> , not too much raised elevated skin	First-degree (superficial) burns. Long-term tissue damage is rare and often consists of an increase or decrease in the skin colour.

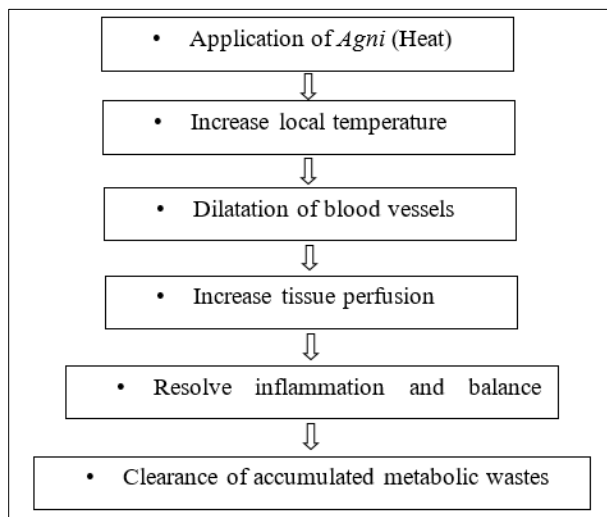


Fig 1: Possible Mode of Action of Agnikarma

Discussion

Agnikarma should be used with proper prophylaxis. Prophylaxis with Intramuscular Tetanus Toxoid should be done. There are some concerns regarding the practical usage of Agnikarma such as; reluctance of patients give consent to do Agnikarma due to undesirable pain and scar formation after the treatment.

It requires skills to perform Agnikarma especially in eye diseases. Proper training of physicians is mandatory.

Agnikarma indicated only in Vata and Kapha vitiated Netraroga. Agnikarma specially employed in the cases of extremely aggravated Vata lodged in the local twak, Mamsa, Sira, Snayu, Sandhi and Asthi. It is contraindicated in Pittaja and Raktaja vitiated disease conditions and persons with Pitta constitution (Pitta Prakriti). Also it is mentioned that in situations such as, if there is an internal visceral bleeding or injury to viscera or if the patient is suffering from a foreign body (Shalya) Agnikarma is contraindicated. Also if the patient is weak, old person or an infant Agnikarma should be avoided. It is necessary to consider the season before prescribing Agnikarma. Especially it is mentioned that Agnikarma should be avoided during summer and autumn seasons.

Conclusion

When all the other measures are at failure, it is recommended to do Agnikarma in relevant Netraroga as mentioned in Samhitha. As the disease treated with Agnikarma will not recur, it is advisable to do Agnikarma for recurrent Netraroga even after the surgery of the specific disease. At present Agnikarma is rarely used for eye diseases. It is suggested to promote Agnikarma in appropriate situations and improve its quality applicably to present Era.

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