



CAUTERIZATION (DAHANA) : IT'S THERAPEUTIC APPLICATION

Dr. Dilip Kr. Goswami

B.A.M.S , MD (Ayurveda) , Ph. D, Associate Professor, Agada Tantra and Vidhi Ayurveda (Toxicology and Forensic Medicine) Govt. Ayurvedic College, Guwahati, Assam, India

ABSTRACT

Cauterization is a therapeutic procedure that indicates and consists application of heat. This procedure is mostly used for haemostasis. Hot cautery is used to burn the ends of the bleeding capillaries in the cases where other methods of haemostasis are seemed to be failed. In modern medicine application of cauterization is not advocated in many conditions as in the Ayurvedic classics. Ayurvedic classics discuss Dahana (cauterization) as a beneficial therapeutic procedure. In different references cauterization is advised to use observing the special indications and said to be of miraculous benefit. Charaka and Susruta, the scholars and teachers of Ayurveda have discussed in detail about Dahana karma, even in some states of poisoning. It seems to be beneficial to discuss about this treatment procedure for its benefits and utilities.

KEYWORDS : cauterization, haemostasis, Ayurvedic classics, miraculous benefit, poisoning

INTRODUCTION :-

Cauterization is a process of application of heat for therapeutic purposes. Heat is being used by the human society for different purposes since time immemorial. In the cases of capillary bleeding cauterization is used as a measure for haemostasis. For the purpose hot, small head fine rods are used. In some other conditions, like chronic, unhealed ulcers also this process is used as a beneficial therapy.

In ancient time, as a traditional process, by the traditional healers, the process of cauterization in the form of application of hot fats (oil, ghee), hot fine rods (shalaka) were used for treatment of bleeding, wound, animal bite etc. which are said to be of great benefit.

In Charaka and Susruta Samhita cauterization is mentioned as a beneficial therapy for some states of poisoning like animal bite and snake bite.

It is felt necessary and beneficial to discuss the concept of Agnikarma (Dahana) (cauterization) specially in the cases of poisoning (Bisha) basing upon the descriptions of the great ancient Ayurvedic scholars Charaka and Susruta for the benefit of the human society.

The Concept Of Cauterization As Said By Charaka And Susruta :-

(1)Agnikarma (Dahana – cauterization) is mentioned in the 6th position among the 24 therapies for Bisha [1].

(2)In case of twak-mamsagata bisha (when poison effects the skin and the muscles after entry into the body) Dahana is said to be the beneficial therapy. It is said to destroy the Bishavega (effect of the poison)[2]

(3)In case of entry of poison through the Vatasthana (specially the anal route) then swedana is indicated as the 1st choice of therapy [3]. Swedana indicates application of hot fomentation which is nothing but indirect use of heat for therapeutic purposes.

(4)Agnikarma is said to be far superior among the therapeutic procedures viz. Kshara (application of alkalies), Aushadha (medicine) and Sashttra karma (instrumental interventions) because it completely reduces the chance of relapse and also this therapy can cure the diseases that can not be cured by the other three therapies, Aushadhaprayoga, Sashttraprayoga and Ksharaprayoga [4]

(5)The upakaranas for dahana karma (materials used as

cautery) are – Pippali (Piper longum), Ajasakrit (faece of goat), Danta (Godanta) (tooth of cow), Shara (arrow /an arrow shaped instrument), Shalaka (slim long instrument), Jambaboustha (an instrument probably of the shape of the mouth of bear), Swarna (instrument made of gold), Raupya (instrument made of silver), Tamra (instrument made of copper), Loha (instrument made of iron), Kshaudra (honey -in hot form), Guda (jaggary – in hot form), Toila (oil -in hot form) etc. [5]

(6)In normal situation Agnikarma should not be performed during the Sarad and Grishmaritu. If it seems to be emergency and no other therapy is helping the patient then this therapy can even be used in these seasons also with appropriate precautions [6]

(7)The indications of Agnikarma are – Twak, mamsa, sira, snayu, sandhi, asthigata ugrarujayukta roga (the painful diseases affecting the skin, muscles, veins, ligaments, joints, bones etc.) and granthi (glandular swellings), Arsha (piles), arbuda (growths-tumours), bhagandara (fistula), apachi (soft lymphatic swellings), sleepada (filaria), charmakila (growth in the skin), tilakalaka (moles), antravridhi (intestinal hernia), sandhiroga (joint diseases), sirachheda (cut veins), nadvirana (sinuses) and shonita ativrutti (excessive haemorrhage) [7]

(8)Contra indications of Agnikarma are – Pittaprakriti (the individual who is dominated by Pitta – the heat / temperature regulating force), antahshonita (when there is internal bleeding), bhinnakostha (perforated viscera), anudhritasalya (when the foreign body is not extracted), durbala (weak), bala (child), vridha (old), bhiru (coward), anekavranapidita (individual suffering from many injuries/ulcers) etc. [8]

(9)In case of Sarpadasta (snakebite) where Aristabandhana (tourniquet) cannot be applied there Achushana (sucking), chedana (excision /incision) and Dahana are indicated [9]

(10)In case of Mandali Sarpadashta (the snakes having multi coloured, innumerable number of lines on the body) Dahana karma should never be used [10]

(11)In case of Bishakta jantudasta (poisonous animal bite) dahana with hot ghee is recommended [11]

Modern Concept Of Cauterization :-

(1)Cauterization is a medical practice or technique of burning a part of a body to remove or close off a part of it. It destroys some tissue in an attempt to mitigate bleeding and damage, remove an undesired growth or minimize other potential

medical harm , such as infections when antibiotics are unavailable [12]

(2)The practice of cauterization was once widespread for treatment of wounds [13]

(3)Cautery was historically believed to prevent infection . But current research shows that cautery actually increases the risk of infection by causing more tissue damage and providing a more hospitable environment for bacterial growth [14]

(4)Actual cautery refers to the metal device , generally heated to a dull red glow , that a physician applies to produce blisters , to stop bleeding etc. [15]

(5)The main forms of cauterization used now -α - days are electrocautery and chemical cautery – both are used for removal of warts and stopping nosebleeds [16]

DISCUSSION :-

From the results of the search the following observations can be taken under consideration and discussion –

(1)Cauterization (Agnikarma) is a therapeutic procedure being used since time immemorial for treatment of some specific types of wounds and growths . Previously it was considered to have property to prevent infection . But the modern medicine is not agree with this concept for which further study is needed .

(2)Now-α-days, for cauterization, electro cautery is used. But the Ayurvedic classics mention a number of sthavara (non living objects -plant or mineral)and jangama (living objects) substances for the purpose. Specific indication for specific substance is mentioned in the classics .

(3)Extensive use of cauterization is seemed to be for the purpose of haemostasis. But Ayurvedic classics mention a long list of diseases where cauterization is indicated. For treatment of the type and site of the disease different type of cauterization materials are advised to use which indicate the extensive knowledge of the ancient scholars on the topic .

(4)Advice of use of cauterization in poisoning (bishapidita awastha) , specially in snakebite and animal bite is seemed to be the unique concept of the Ayurvedic scholars

Summary :-

The study and discussion can be summarised as follows –

- (1) Cauterization is a therapeutic procedure that has been in use since time immemorial .
- (2) As per the Ayurvedic samhitas it is an effective procedure that has superior position in respect of curing the disease in comparison to the other procedures .
- (3) In comparison to the modern description the Ayurvedic explanations about this therapeutic procedure are seemed to be more elaborate .

CONCLUSION :-

To conclude it can be said that , cauterization (agnikarma) may be proved to be an effective therapeutic tool for the physicians , specially for treatment of some “seemed to be incurable and critical diseases”.

Multidisciplinary Research On “agnikarma” Should Be Considered To Be The Need Of The Hour And Work Should Be Started With Co-operation And Open Mind .

REFERENCES :-

- [1] Charaka Samhita of Agnivesa , Sastri Satya Narayana , Part II , Edition 14 , 1987 , Chikitsa sthana , Chapter 23 , Sloka 35 – 37
- [2] Charaka Samhita of Agnivesa , Sastri Satya Narayana , Part II , Edition 14 , 1987,Chikitsa sthana , Chapter 23 , Sloka 45

- [3] Charaka Samhita of Agnivesa , Sastri Satya Narayana , Part II , Edition 14 , 1987 , Chikitsa sthana , Chapter 23 , Sloka 62
- [4] Susruta Samhita of Maharsi Susruta , Shastrri Ambikadutta , Part I , Edition 6 , 1987 , Sutrasthana , Chapter 12 , Sloka 3
- [5] Susruta Samhita of Maharsi Susruta , Shastrri Ambikadutta , Part I , Edition 6 , 1987 , Sutrasthana , Chapter 12 , Sloka 4
- [6] Susruta Samhita of Maharsi Susruta , Shastrri Ambikadutta , Part I , Edition 6 , 1987 , Sutrasthana , Chapter 12 , Sloka 5
- [7] Susruta Samhita of Maharsi Susruta , Shastrri Ambikadutta , Part I , Edition 6 , 1987 , Sutrasthana , Chapter 12 , Sloka 10
- [8] Susruta Samhita of Maharsi Susruta , Shastrri Ambikadutta , Part I , Edition 6 , 1987 , Sutrasthana , Chapter 12 , Sloka 14
- [9] Susruta Samhita of Maharsi Susruta , Shastrri Ambikadutta , Part I , Edition 6 , 1987 , Kalpasthana , Chapter 5 , Sloka 5
- [10] Susruta Samhita of Maharsi Susruta , Shastrri Ambikadutta , Part I , Edition 6 , 1987 , Kalpasthana , Chapter 5 , Sloka 7
- [11] Susruta Samhita of Maharsi Susruta , Shastrri Ambikadutta , Part I , Edition 6 , 1987 , Kalpasthana , Chapter 7 , Sloka 50
- [12] Wikipedia <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki> visited on 04/12/2022 at 6.00 pm
- [13] Wikipedia <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki> visited on 04/12/2022 at 6.00 pm
- [14] Wikipedia <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki> visited on 04/12/2022 at 6.00 pm
- [15] Wikipedia <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki> visited on 04/12/2022 at 6.00 pm
- [16] Wikipedia <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki> visited on 04/12/2022 at 6.00 pm