



KSHAR SUTRA: A CLASSICAL REVIEW

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KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION:

Kshar karma is one of the most important para surgical procedures. The word Kshara means concentrated or strong salts and alkalis made mainly out of herbs. Sometimes even minerals are used to prepare a kshar.

When applied locally, Kshar is capable of carrying out the function of incision, excision, and scraping, hence the name. Kshar karma is tridosha shamak, it subdues all the three vitiated doshas¹.

Kshara means strong caustics. Acharya Susrut has said that kshara is the best Anushashtra². Those disease that cannot be cured by any other medicine or in Subjects Where surgery is not possible this para-surgical procedure is the best option. Acharya Sushrut and also Acharya Vagbhata have dedicate one whole chapter in Sutrasthana for kshara³.

Preparation and kshara karma:

Kshara is of two types depending upon its rout of administration⁴—one paniya, for oral administration and the other is pratisaraneeya for local application. Pratisaraneeya Kshara is again classified into mridu, madhyama, and Tikshan depnedng upon its Strength.

Definition of Kshara :

Acharya Sushruta defines the kshara; the substance possessing Ksharana and Kshanan properties⁵. Explanation of these two words by Dalhana is as under :

Ksharana means one which mobilises and removes the deformed skin, flesh etc. or which removes the vitiated Doshas.

Although as Dalhana mentioned a few authorities considered the reference as Ksharan means Shodhan [purification]⁶. Probably these two groups of authorities intended to narrate the meanings of Ksharana and Kshapana as about Pratisaraniya and Paniya kshara respectively. Kshanan means which destructs the deformed Skin, Flesh etc.

Acharya Charaka defines kshara as one which scraps the abnormal tissue from the locating viscera and drags it down after dissolving because of its corrosive nature⁷.

day to day life since thousand years back.

Importance of Kshar :

Kshara means-

- To dislodge
- To melt away
- To kill
- To destroy

They are called Ksharas as they are capable of melting away or destroying the lesion.

Types of Kshar :

- Pratisaraniya (for external application)
- Paniya (for internal application)

Qualities of Kshar:

Acharya Sushrut has mentioned 8 gunas for detecting the best quality of Kshara-They are⁷-

1. should not be more Tikshna

2. should not be more Mridu
3. Shukla
4. Shlakhsna
5. Picchila
6. Avishyandi
7. Shiva
8. Shighra

Further, he also mentioned about some disqualities of Kshara-

Those are-

- Atimardava
- Atishaitwa
- Atitikhsna
- Atiusna
- Atipicchila
- Atisarpita
- Sandrata
- Apakkata
- Hinadravyata

INDICATIONS:**1. Pratisaraniya kshar:**

The Kshara for external application are used for the treatment of

- Kustha
- Kitibha
- Kilash
- Dadru
- Bhagandara
- Arbuda
- Arsha
- Dustavrana
- Nadi
- Charmakil
- Tilakalaka
- Nyaccha
- Vyangya
- Masaka
- Vahya vidradhi
- Krimi
- Visa
- Upajihva
- Adhijihva
- Upakusha
- Dantavaidarbha
- Three types of Rohini etc.

Paniya Kshar:

The kshar for internal used is used for the following

- Gara
- Abdominal swelling and other disorders
- Dyspepsia
- Indigestion
- Loss of appetite
- Constipation
- Urinary gravel and stone
- Deep seated abscess
- Worms
- Poisons and
- Piles

Contraindication of Kshar:

Those who should not be subjected to caustic treatment are as follows

- The weak
- The very young
- The very old
- The timid and those suffering from
- General Anasarca
- Abdominal diseases
- Hemorrhagic diseases
- The pregnant
- Menstruating woman
- Those having hyperpyrexia
- Urinary abnormalities
- The dehydrated
- Who got faint
- The impotent
- The cachetic due to chest lesion
- The thirsty
- Those having downward and upward displacement of the ovaries and uterus.

Preparation of kshar sutra:

It is surprising but truth that the pioneer authors of Ayurveda i.e. Acharya Charak, Sushrut & Vagbhatt didn't mention about kshar sutra in their classics though they provided a well and detailed description about Kshar, its properties, preparation, classification and its treatment procedures in various diseases. Still more surprising is the fact that while the effectiveness of the Ksharsutra is renowned in all over the world over the existing surgical method, Acharya Sushruta didn't even mention about Ksharsutra while giving the detailed surgical description of Bhagandar Chikitsa. The description of Ksharsutra that is available in Sushrut Samhita is in the chapter of Nadivran Chikitsa (Su.Chi.17/30-34) that is too in some limited cases where Bhagandara has been enumerated as one of the indications of this therapy (Su.Chi.17/32). But preparation method of Ksharsutra is available in nowhere of this classic. The first and foremost description of Ksharsutra preparation is found in Chakradutta in Arsha chikitsa prakaran on 11th century. Here, it was explained thoroughly about the preparative method of Ksharsutra by smearing Haridra churna in Snuhi Ksheera in a repetitive procedure on a tight thread, thus it can able to excise Arsha and Bhagandara (Chakradutta/ Arshachikitsa/ 148). Authors of later period i.e. Bhavamishra, Govind das sen etc also mentioned the same procedure for preparation of Ksharsutra.

Materials required

1. Barbour's linen thread No.20.
2. Freshly collected latex of Snuhi.
3. Prepared Apamarga Kshar.
4. Fine powder of Haridra.
5. Ksharsutra cabinet.
6. Ksharsutra hangers.
7. Sterilized Test tube.
8. Gauze piece.
9. Gloves

Method of preparation:

Firstly surgical linen thread was spread throughout the length of Ksharsutra hangers. Each thread on the hanger is then smeared with freshly collected snuhi ksheera with the help of gauze piece after wearing sterilized gloves in both hands. The hanger is then transferred to the ksharsutra cabinet and kept it there to be dry for 24 hrs. It should be noted that the temperature in the cabinet shouldn't be in a high mood which may lead to the distortion of the tensile strength of the thread.. Moderate temperature is enough for drying the thread. The process is repeated for 11 days. On 12th day, after smearing of snuhi ksheera the thread is coated with Nimba kshar. The same repeated for next 6 days. On 19th day, after smearing snuhi ksheera over the thread, fine powder of Haridra churna coated over it. The final three coating is done by the same procedure. Every efforts is made to maintain the hygienicity in the whole procedure.

After 21 days and exposure to UV rays, each thread from the hangers is cut out with a range of 1c.m. and sealed it in sterilized test tube. The test tube is broken at the time of use.

Probable mode of action:

As per the analytical study, linen thread supports the strength of ligation while the snuhi latex acts as a binding agent, having almost all

the apamarga kshara properties intact, which in fact liberates many fold of medicament having surgical actions like incision, excision debridation, scrapping and medical action like hemostatic, antiseptic, healing, etc., which act simultaneously to cure the arsha. According to research work, it is viewed that seven coatings of apamarga kshara on kshara sutra cauterize the tissue of the ligated masses indirectly by its ksharana guna[10] (corrosive properties). The action of turmeric powder provides the effect of bactericidal action with healing properties. All these three drugs do not contradict each other in their actions but rather support them by equal and desirable effects. Apamarga kshara sutra has the ability to perform incision with excision slowly by virtue of its control chemical cauterizing action. This has a controlled chemical cauterizing action on living tissue for destruction of the pile mass without producing any other injury if ligated by skilled persons.

The mode of action of kshara sutra starts immediately after contact with the tissue. Kshara invades into the cells of the lesion till the engorged tissue of the mass destruction occurs or up to the removal of the pile masses. During the cutting effect, there may be oozing of blood, which is ceased by the sclerosing effect of the kshara by its coagulating property of protein. Hence, there was no chance of bleeding during cutting of the mass. The chance of infection is least due to the sustained action of the antinfectives of kshara. The pressure effect made by the kshara sutra ligation creates mechanical strangulation of the blood vessels and tissue, which in fact causes the local necrosis of pile mass and, ultimately, forces falling out of the pile mass during defecation.

Conclusion:

Kshara sutra procedure can be performed at OPD level, takes less time .It is an ambulatory procedure; no primary and reactionary heamorrhage is caused. It takes less hospitalization time and there is least possibility of recurrence. All pile masses; both primary as well as secondary can be ligated at one sitting. It requires minimal expenditure and can be performed under local anesthesia. There is no adverse effect during the post-operative period, like anal stenosis/stricture, incontinence, bowel irregularities, etc. Kshara sutra ligation treatment is much more beneficial in comparison with hemorrhoidectomy at maximum pointIt requires less duration for completing the treatment. The patient can perform his/her daily routine work from the next day after the surgery. Antibiotic and anti-inflammatory drugs requirement are quite less. In the post-operative period, the patient feels less pain because no anal pack is required. After separation of the mass, the wound heals quickly and smoothly.. It can be concluded that kshara sutra ligation is a standard surgical treatment modality in the arsha (hemorrhoids), which is a low, cost-effective and affordable treatment for all classes of people in the society.

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