



UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE TEXT VAIDYATHARAKAM IN UNDERSTANDING KARAPPAN - A DISEASE AFFECTING CHILDHOOD

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ABSTRACT Ayurveda is considered as one of the oldest traditional systems of medicine. It has been a developing science since pre historic era and it has made significant progress through the ages. Regional contributions in this particular development of a science are also appreciable. Keraliya Ayurveda is unique for its contributions such as Keraliya pancakarma, Keraliya balachikitsa, etc. Vaidyatharakam written by Vaidyakalanidhi C.N Narayanan is a text, which encompasses a lot of knowledge particularly in the field of Ayurvedic paediatrics. The disease karappan, occur in children from birth up to the age of sixteen and it may be presented with many symptoms and also associated with other diseases. Eighteen types of karappan are elaborately explained in the text Vaidyatharakam. Other than that an entire chapter is dedicated for explaining the general treatment of karappan. Classification of disease may help in differential diagnosis and thus in proper management. This paper aims to highlight the unique contributions of Vaidyatharakam in understanding the types and symptoms of karappan - a disease affecting the childhood.

KEYWORDS : Karappan, Vaidyatharakam, Childhood disease

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is considered as one of the oldest traditional systems of medicine. It has been a developing science since pre historic era and it has made significant progress through the ages. Beginning from the scattered references in Vedic literature, it was well presented in the form of Samhitas. The development can be seen in general and particularly can be observed in the field of research now days. Regional contributions in this particular development of a science are also appreciable. Keraliya Ayurveda is unique for its contributions such as Keraliya pancakarma, Keraliya balachikitsa, etc.

The disease karappan, occur in children from birth up to the age of sixteen and it may be presented with many symptoms and also associated with other diseases. Causes of these diseases are explained as ahitaharaseva and viharas which leads to doshakopa of mother in garbhakala and rogabadha of parents. General features include symptoms such as fever, suppuratation of eyes, feeling of hotness over head, headache, swelling, blisters, suppuratation and bursting of blisters. The disease karappan is said to be the sole contribution of Keraliya Ayurveda. Books like Arogyakalpadruma, Balachikitsa grantha, etc mentions about various types of karappan affecting children.

Vaidyatharakam written by Vaidyakalanidhi C.N Narayanan is a text, which encompasses a lot of knowledge particularly in the field of Ayurvedic paediatrics. The book is written in Malayalam language and is in sloka form. It was first published in 1974 by Dr.M.N Shashidharan and printed at Nalathra printers, Kottayam. The author belongs to great Thiruvitamkur rajavaidya traditions who were specialists in balachikitsa. The book is written with priority given to balachikitsa, whereas other divisions of Ayurveda are also covered. This paper aims to highlight the unique contributions of Vaidyatharakam in understanding the types and symptoms of karappan - a disease affecting the childhood.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To identify the unique contributions of the text Vaidyatharakam in understanding the types and symptoms of karappan.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The text Vaidyatharakam was thoroughly read and analysed for identifying the unique contributions in the knowledge sphere of karappan.

OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS KARAPPAN

The disease named karappan, occur in children from birth up to the age of sixteen and it may be presented with many symptoms and also

associated with other diseases. Causes of these diseases are explained as ahitaharaseva and viharas which leads to doshakopa of mother in garbhakala and rogabadha of parents. They are eight in number - three due to ekadoshajya, three due to dvandadoshajya, one each due to sannipata and visha.

Clinical features:

General features include symptoms such as fever, suppuratation of eyes, feeling of hotness over head, headache, swelling, blisters, suppuratation and bursting of blisters.

Types and names:

Even though the number based on dosha is eight, for the purpose of treatment, they are classified and named into several by ancient physicians. Some opines that they are total ninety six in number and some others as fifty one in number. This is again reduced into eighteen types and name, symptoms and treatment are explained for the same. So for the purpose of easy learning the eighteen type of classification is accepted in the book Vaidyatharakam. The eighteen types of karappan are named as: akakarappan, purakarappan, nirkarappan, pannikarappan, shonithakarappan, karinkarappan, kuppikkarappan, vranakarappan, chilannikkarappan, muzhankalkkarappan, kantamalakkkarappan, kuzhikkkarappan, tontathamarakkarappan, nilakkkarappan, pithakkkarappan, tikkarappan, cenkkarappan and parunkikkarappan.

Signs and Symptoms of 18 types of Karappan

1) Akakarappan:

Fever may occur in one day interval or else may happen every day. This disease may be presented with symptoms such as body pain, severe weeping, constipation, diarrhoea, frothy greenish stools mixed with mucus and forceful expulsion in case of diarrhoea, retention of urine, crying, pushing and groaning at the time of urination, redness over mouth, anal region, eyes and joints, whitish patches over tongue, thirst, distension of abdomen, dyspnoea, difficulty in breathing and congestion of lungs. It becomes incurable if the disease is manifested with all the above said signs and symptoms; therefore early intervention is necessary before the manifestation of all the symptoms.

2) Purakarappan:

Always lying down without interest towards anything, retention of urine, sweating of face, weeping always with throwing of hands and legs, swelling in hands and legs and discolouration are the signs and symptoms of purakkarappan.

3) Nirkarappan:

Deafness, coldness all over body, weakness of hands and feet,

emaciation of waist, frequently rotating eyes, aversion towards breast milk and sunken eyes are the signs and symptoms of nirkkarappan in the initial stage. If it is not treated promptly at this stage, it will lead to the symptoms such as thirst and pallor which further leads to the formation of edema all over the body, especially in umbilicus and eyelids, distension of abdomen and constipation.

Cennirkkarappan:

This condition is characterised by symptoms such as edema and puffiness of face, headache, edema all over the body with slight reddish discolouration and dyspnoea.

Chuvappuniru-

a variety of nirkkarappan : The features of chuvappuniru are appearance of swelling in pada which fastly spreads towards upper parts of body, associated with fever, weeping and pain. It is said to be incurable by skilled physicians of paediatrics when it aggravates and reaches kanta.

4) Pannikkarappan:

In the disease pannikkarappan, the child will become obese rather than emaciated. It is characterised by signs and symptoms such as :- fever, retention of urine and faeces, increased thirst, blisters and fungal infection in mouth, slow and gradual manifestation and bursting and occurrence of other diseases due to amakapha doshas.

5) Shonithakarappan:

This variety of karappan will present with signs and symptoms such as fever, trembling, body pain, head ache, reddish discolouration all over the body, formation of coin shaped blisters which ruptures and leads to the formation of reddish ulcers and slimming of hands, legs and neck.

6) Karinkarappan:

Fever, weakness, difficulty in hearing, retention of urine and appearance of reddish blisters all over the body which may then turn to blackish scars with reduced burning sensation are the signs and symptoms of karinkarappan. Another variety of this may occur with signs and symptoms such as night fever and appearance of blackish blisters which are concave shaped in the centre with increased burning sensation and scaring.

7) Kuppikkarappan:

This condition manifests with signs and symptoms such as excessive retention of urine, thirst, diarrhoea, distortion of eyeballs and sudden appearance of blackish blister in any part of the body, which is equal to the size as that of a pepper seed.

8) Vranakkarappan:

This variety may present with signs and symptoms such as :- continuous fever, formation of blisters similar to that affected by fire which then turns to ulcers, thinning of waist, hands and legs and diarrhoea.

9) Chilannikkarappan:

Fever, head ache, itching all over the body including head followed by reddishness and oozing oedema, diarrhoea and fungal infection of tongue in some cases, appearance of symptoms at the time of weaning and contagious watery discharge are the signs and symptoms of chilannikkarappan. It causes various discomforts in children and often it occurs in region below the knee.

10) Muzhankalkarappan :

Even though this is a variety of chilannikkarappan, it can be considered as separate karappan due to difference in svabhava, lakshna, sthana and chikitsa. This include lakshanas such as bursting and suppuration all round and beneath the knee joints which may appear on one leg or without spreading to the entire leg, excessive itching which leads to discharge of blood, cracking with suppuration and slimy discharge and intermittent fever which do not subsides fastly. It may subside within the age of five or seven years of age, or may be before within age of five years and may also take up to sixteen years of age for curing.

11) Kantamalakarappan :

Necklace like appearance around the neck which is associated with redness and swelling, ulceration of throat, fever, debility of hands and legs, congestion, laziness, debility of eyes, decrease in lusture, constipation, headache, dizziness, swelling below the ears, dyspnoea and cough are the signs and symptoms of this variety.

12) Kuzhikarappan:

This condition presents with lakshanas such as fever, cough, trembling, retention of faeces and urine, appearance of blisters similar to that of burns followed by bursting, depression and discharge. The depth of depression gradually increases and pallor develops all over the body. It is classified into two, based on the colour of wound - karinkuzhi and cenkuzhi.

13) Thondathamarakarappan:

This disease which occurs due to genetic cause will show signs and symptoms such as :- difficulty in eating due to ulcers in mouth and throat, appearance of wounds which are red or white in colour in areas such as face, urinary orifice and anal orifice and fever. This disease when left untreated leads to obstruction of throat by kapha, dyspnoea, lagophthalmos, throbbing of hands and legs and expulsion of drunken milk through nose.

14) Nilakarappan:

This variety will present with fear, weeping, fever, thirst, blackish discolouration of body, retention of urine and faeces, appearance of coin sized blackish marks on body. The disease is said to be get cured after a long time if the blackish marks appears both in left and right parts of body.

15) Pithakarappan:

Pallor, weakness of upper and lower limbs, thirst, fever, cough, blurred vision, fungal infection of tongue and obstruction of throat by sputum are the clinical features of pithakarappan.

16) Thikarappan:

Severe temperature in the forehead, increased body temperature, pain, blisters similar as that of burns which may turn to black in colour after bursting, severe feeling of hotness over body, fever, retention of urine and faeces, anorexia and general oedema are the clinical features of tikkarappan. These are of three varieties, viz: - thvagashrita, raktashrita and pishitashrita which are curable, moderately curable and incurable respectively.

17) Chenkarappan:

Excessive vitiation of blood in foetus occurs due to pitha predominant raktadushti in mother, which further results in development of severe cenkkarappan. Clinical features include appearance of wounds all over the body, especially over the nine external orifices, hands and feet which is followed by peeling of skin and coppery discolouration of body and hair, hair fall, pallor, coin sized macular lesions all over the body, fever, weakness of voice and oedema all over the body.

18) Parunkikarappan:

Vatadi doshkopa occurs in mother along with raktadushtii, due to uterine ulcers and diseases of genital area which may transmit to the baby in foetal life itself, causes a severe disease named parunkikkarappan. It shows clinical features such as development of wounds all over the body with elevated edges and depressed centre (concave shaped), soon after birth or thereafter followed by peeling of skin over hands and legs, falling of scalp hair, heart diseases and mental deformities.

DISCUSSION

The traditional knowledge was often limited to some individuals or community. Some of the physicians have composed many independent treatises based on their clinical experiences. These treatises are included under regional literature and most of them are least explored. They are rich in knowledge and have some unique features such as special formulations, special procedures, etc. Eighteen types of karappan are elaborately explained in the text Vaidyatharakam. Other than that an entire chapter is dedicated for explaining the general treatment of karappan,

Arogyakalpadruma explains 51 types of karappan. The varieties of karappan such as karinkarappan, tikkarappan, nirkkarappan and cenkarappan are found in both the texts with similar names, but the symptoms and treatments explained are different. For example, nirkarappan is explained in both Arogyakalpadruma and Vaidyatharakam. Arogyakalpadruma explains it as development of swelling which is white, large in size and resembles the shape of water bubble associated with severe itching. Whereas the book Vaidyatharakam explains the clinical features of nirkarappan in a detailed manner which clearly describes the multisystem involvement. The approach of Vaidyatharakam can be said as more precise and deep.

This may help in accurate diagnosis and management of the disease karappan.

CONCLUSION

Karappan is a disease which is affecting the childhood causing severe discomfort. There are a lot of factors (genetic, immunity, etc.) which lead to the development of disease. The symptoms and severity depend upon the dosha vitiation. Classification of disease may help in differential diagnosis and thus in proper management. Contributions of the text Vaidyatharakam in karappan, are of inestimable worth. So this book can be used as a handbook for physicians dealing with paediatric skin disorders.

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