



Review of Literature: Detail explanation of *Raktamokshana* in *Shiroroga*

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ABSTRACT: *Shira* is considered to be the *Uttamanga* of body because it is the *sthan* of *prana* and *Indriyas*. All three *doshas* were located in the head, with the predominance of *kapha dosha*. It is one of the three major *Marmas*. *Acharya Sushruta* mentions 11 types of *Shiro Rogas*. According to WHO, headache is one among the five most common clinical disorder worldwide. A higher prevalence of headaches is mainly associated with greater social and economic stress and family burden. Analgesics, specific anti-migraine medications, and anti-emetics are used to treat headache. *Panchkarma* is an integral part of *Ayurveda*. Among the *panchkarma*, *Raktamokshana* is considered the best and specific procedure.

Raktamokshana- *Rakta* and *Pitta* vitiated in the head; therefore, *Raktamokshana* is indicated, particularly in rough scalp, scalp hardness, dark pigmentation of the scalp, hair loss, eczema of the face and scalp, and *Rakta* (Blood) vitiated disorders. These *Shodhana* therapies act on the root sites of vitiated *Dosha*, removing dosha from the body. *Raktamokshana* is a unique para-surgical measure indicated in various diseases caused by *Rakta* and *Pitta*. According to our ancient literature, the *kshaya* and *vriddhi* of *dhatu*s depend on the *rakta*. It is the pillar of the entire body.

KEYWORD: *Raktamokshan*, *jalauka*, *jalaukaavcharan*, *Siravedha*, *ghatiyantra*, bloodletting.

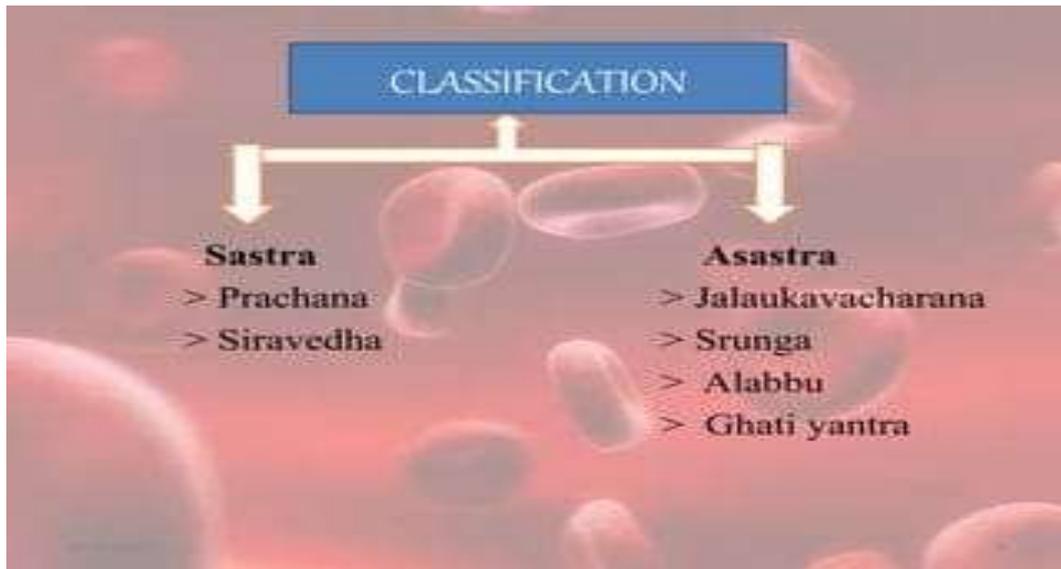
INTRODUCTION

Acharya Sushrut, the father of Indian surgery, has mentioned several surgical and parasurgical procedures in various contexts. *Raktamokshana* (bloodletting) is one such example.^[1]

The *dhatu*s (tissues) are entities that retain the body, mind and *prana* (life). *Rakta* is the second *dhatu* formed in sequence. Few *acharyas* consider *rakta* a fourth *dosha* (physiological humor necessary for life) keeping in mind its significance in sustaining life.^[2] *Doshadhatuasraya- ashrayibhava* accredited to *Acharya Vagbhata* says that *vata* resides in *asthi*, *pitta* resides in *rakta* & *sweda*, *kapha* resides in the rest of the *dhatu*s. *Anushansheeta* is sweet; unctuous, red in colour, heavy and has a characteristic smell. *Rakta* is a *teja* and *jalamahabhuta* predominant *dhatu*. *Acharyas* dictate maintenance of life processes and support the body as the main function of the *rakta*. To further emphasize the importance of *rakta*, it is considered a *pranayatna* (seat of life) by the *acharyas*.^[3] It means something essential for sustaining life.

Raktavahastrotas play an important role in metabolism of *raktadhatu*. The principle organs were the *yakritra* and *pleeha*.^[4] *Strotas* are obligatory for unrestricted circulation of blood. Any vitiation in between leads to *strotodushiti* in form of *atipravritii*, *sang*, *siragranthi*, and/or *vimarg-gaman* (leaving their own channel and entering an unusual channel).^[5]

TYPES



Samprapti of Shiroroga

Shira is a *sthana* of many *siras*, and in *samprapti* doshas are accumulated in *shira* through *siras*, so there is mainly *rakta* involvement. *Chakrapani* mentioned that *Rakta* is responsible for all *Shirorogas*.^[6]

LEECH THERPY

Technique of *Jalauka* Application

A. *Purva Karma* (Pre-Procedure)

1. Proper *snehana* (oleation) and *swedana* (sudation) of the patient.
2. Cleansing of Leech by pouring the Leech in water mixed with turmeric powder.
3. Site of application preparation: Cleaning of part of the body to which leech is going to be applied.

B. *Pradhana Karma* (Chief Procedure): Prick the skin with a sharp and sterile needle before application of leech so that drop of blood comes out and then apply the Leech through. It was covered with a wet cotton cloth. Apply *madhu* (honey), *ghrita* (ghee), or butter if leech does not suck blood from the site.

C. *Paschata Karma* (Post Procedure): After sucking sufficient blood, they separate from the area on their own. 3-4 leeches are typically applied to the effected area. If the patient feels pricking, itching or discomfort at the site of leech application, it indicates that leech has started sucking fresh blood. This is when leeches should be removed from the site.^[7]

Application of *Siravedha* in modern day:

Venesection should be performed by trained *Ayurvedic* physicians only, as it can have complications if not suitably performed. The Procedure includes internal and external *snehana* (oleation) by medicated ghee or oil. Subsequently, generalised or localised *swedana* (sudation) is performed depending upon the condition. A liquid or light semi-solid diet with rice and water in a 1:6 ratio was provided to the patient before the procedure.^[8]

For main procedure, a day is selected when weather is favourable neither too hot nor too cold as it may interfere with vasoconstriction or dilatation. The patient is asked to lie down. After selecting the proper vein, area is sterilised by spirit swab, tourniquet is applied so the vein become prominent. Needle No. 18 or scalp needle was used to puncture the vein, and blood was allowed to flow.^[10]

METHODOLOGY

The present study is conducted after thoroughly undergoing

1. Critical reference of *ayurvedic* texts especially *brihatrayee* in relation to *rakta* and *raktamokshan* as a modality.
2. Recent advancements in procedures by which bloodletting can be done.
3. Relevant internet search like NCBI, researchgate, and google were conducted using the keywords *Raktamoshan*, *jalauka*, *Siravedha*, *Ghatyantra*.
4. Various articles concerned with bloodletting therapy and its applicability in today's world.

A correlation is made between *Ayurvedic* and contemporary concepts of bloodletting. A compilation made in light of modern view of *raktamokshan*. The role of bloodletting therapy as adjuvant in the management of blood-borne diseases is well appreciated.^[11]

Mode of Action of Raktamokshan

While enumerating the six *Kriyakala* types, *Susrutha* emphasizes on the role of *Rakta* in the third and the most important stage called *Prasara*^[12] *Prasara* step is crucial for the *Doshas* to get disseminate across various planes of the body and *rakta* become vehicle in this phase. Henceforth *Uttarothara dhathu* penetration of morbid *doshas* is restricted.^[13]

Rakta is considered one among the *dasha pranayatan* of body by *Acharya charak* and it provides *jivana*, when *dushita rakta* is removed, there is enhancement of *shudha rakta*.^[14]

Raktamokshana improves venous circulation thus *raktāgtatavāta* is relieved, and relief in pain is observed instantly.^[15]

CONCLUSION

Raktamokshana is one of the best treatments for *Shiroroga*. *Siravedha* is a of the purification therapy in which where the disease-causing factor, vitiated *Doshas*, is expelled from the body in addition to relief from disease symptomatology and without recurrence of the disease. Hence it is considered a complete treatment.

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