

Treatment of Poison in Ancient India

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ABSTRACT

Human evolution from initial time to modern time, as per time different types of poison creates by nature and human being. For surviving the human, they were using different types of treatment. Different poison and their treatment are varied from time to time as per need and surviving the human. Ayurvedic medicines were commonly prescribed in ancient time. So that time number of ayurvedic treatments were commonly used for poison condition

Keywords: Ayurvedic Medicine; Human evolution; Ancient time; Mantra, Poison.

INTRODUCTION

From 18th century onwards, the growing specialization of science gave rise to newer understanding about science and scientific thoughts, which accelerated changes both in theories and in methods. In India, specifically since 19th century, different scientific discoveries profoundly altered scientific thoughts and their application for human welfare, which ultimately led to the material development of society. Therefore, it is well accepted that it is only through the history of the treatment of poison that one can understand the origin, growth, development, controversies and successive changes that ultimately shape the new procedure in treatment of poisoning in its fullest meaning. ^[1]

In the development of the history of science, the histories of the treatment of poison have played a remarkable role. With regard to the subject, there are specific approaches whose advantages and disadvantages are also important role of the discipline. Undoubtedly, the developments of the treatment of poisoning have not only marked turning point in the development of knowledge but also new theoretical perspective of the known facts were preceded by an extensive historical context. ^[1]

However, a range of poisons and concept of treatment were evolved with the passing of time, different substances of plant, animal and mineral origin, moreover, man-made ones, were used deliberately, accidentally or unintentionally as poisons. The concept of treatment of poison was changing in line with the progress of medicine and understanding of the mechanism of how poison works. From this perspective, the history of treatment of poison may be considered as the quintessence of changes within toxicology. ^[2]

The present attempt of the history for treatment of poison in India examines developmental consequences and development how new medicine and antidotes are emerged in treatment of poison in toxicology science. (P, 2016)

MATERIAL

A general principal of treatment of poisoning is explained in Charak Samhita, Sashruta Samhita, Ashtanga Sangrata and Ashtanga Hridaya in form of Vishavega- their manifestation of treatment. Charak Samhita has mentioned the manifestation and treatment of Sthavara Visha (Inanimate poison), Vega and Jangama Visha (Animated poison), but Sushruta Samhita, Ashtang Sangraha and Ashtang Hridaya describe Sthavara Visha Vega, its manifestation and treatment at one place,

Jangama visha vega, its manifestation and treatment in Sarpavisha (snake poison)

Charak Samhita has explained Chaturvishmshati Upakrama (24 modalities) of treatment of poisoning, which is also in different visha vega and its treatment.

These are twenty-four principles of treatment of poisoning mentioned by Charak can be used as unique eternal principles of ancient India and they are as follows

Mantra (Hymn)

Mantra chikitsa is most useful treatment in Jangama visha(animated poison), specially snake bite. Mantra chikitsa should be practised by an individual who refrain from wine, women and meat. The person should take little food, maintain hygiene of body, and should sleep on a mattress made of kusha grass.^[1,3]

Arista/ Venikabandhana (Torniquet Ligature)

The spread of venom on limbs is arrested by application of tourniquet ligature four fingers above the site of bite with help of cloth or bark of tree or any other soft material. ^[1]

Utkartana (Incision)

In this method an incision is made at the site of bite avoiding marmas (vital points) and joints to remove unabsorbed poison from the site of bite. ^[3]

Nishpeedanam (Compression)

Poison is removed by squeezing the area of bite where incision is not advisable.^[3]

Chushana (Suction)

The physician's mouth is filled with dry sand, ash, or dried powder cow dung and he is directed to suck venom along with blood by using his lips, through an incision made below the Arishtabandhan at site of bite. This method is specially adopted for fleshy parts. ^[3]

Agnikarma (Cauterization/ Burning)

Except Mandali snake bite all other snake bites should be burnt by heated rods of gold, iron, etc. ^[3]

Parisheka (Sprinkling)

Sushruta has described Parisheka after Raktamokshan in poisonous condition. In snake bite, affected part or organ can be irrigated by water medicated with Chandana and user. Contact or local poisons are also washed with cold/ lukewarm/ medicated water. ^[3]

Avagahana (Immersion Bath)

Immersion or dipping of affected part or whole body in a medicated decoction.

Raktamokshan (Bloodletting)

Bloodletting eliminate the poison from blood and minimized the manifestation of poison. Bloodletting should be done immediately in cases where poisoned area becomes discoloured, rigid, swollen, and painful.

Vamana (Emesis)

Ingested poison should be eliminated by emesis which means if the poison is in stomach.

Virechana (Purgative)

Purgative are indicated when patient suffers from burning sensation and pain in koshtha (abdomen), andhman (distension of abdomen), retention of urine and stool, flatus, dysuria and deranged pitta.

Upadhan

The path of kapha is vitiated by poison and causes obstruction in the channels. Due to this, the movement of vata gets obstructed and patient breaths like he is going to die soon. During this stage incision should be made on the scalp of patient, resembling a crow's leg, and paste of charmaksha (picrorhiza kuruo) or meat of goat, cow, buffalo, or cock with blood in one bilva quantity should be applied on the incised area.

Haridayavarana (Protection of Heart)

The heart is spreads all the poison in the body, causing death of patients. Hence the heart is primarily protected by consuming Madhu (honey), ghee, majja, milk, gairik, gomaya rasa, ikshu rasa, kakand juice, blood of goat and other animals, ash mixed with water or soil mixed with water,

Here administration of ghee, immediately after poisoning or animal bite, slows down the spread of poison and we get more time for treatment. This principle is known as Hridayavarana. ^[3]

Anjan (Collyrium)

Anjana is indicated in poisoning when eyes

are oedematous, patient feels sleepy, there is discolouration of the eye and blurred vision. Pippali, Marich, Yavakshara, Vacha, sandhavya, and shigru macerated with bile of Rohita fish and applied Collyrium helps to destroy poison in the eye. After the use of strong nasal drops and collyrium, ghee should be drunk in large quantity because poison by its penetrating property.

Nasya (Nasal Medication)

Due to poisoning if obstruction occurs at nose, eye, ear, tongue, and throat then nasal medication is given in which a fine powder of Brhiatkantakari, Beejpur, Jyotishmati etc, is used. When the effect of poison is seen head then nasal medication is given with juice of Bandhujiva, Bharangi, and Black Tulsi, or powder of pippali, hingula, vrishikali, manashila, shirishbeej, apamarga lavana.

Dhuma (Medicated Fumigated)

Tagar, Khushtha, Head of Bhujang snake and Shirish flower is mixed with ghee and Dhumaagad is prepared. It is used for medicated fumigation to alleviate all types of poison and swelling due to poison.

Leha (Linctus)

Dryness of throat and mouth is common in poisoning. In such condition immediate medication should be administered to avoid the adverse effect of poison. But it should be in a palpable, easily digestible form. So Lehya (linctus) are preferred as Anupana and for this purpose honey and ghee are used separately or in mixed form with medicine as Anupana.

Oushadha (Medicine)

All the medicines which are used internally in the treatment of poisoning and its complication can be included under this module e.g-Ajitagad, Ksharaagad.

Prashamana (Suppressive drug and Procedure)

Complication like mada, Murch, Vishada, Hridrava are relieved by cold procedure like blowing of air with help of a fan until poisonous person does not show straitening of body hair.

Pratisarana (Rubbing of Medicated Powder)

Rubbing medicine powder use for poisonous condition. If proper blood is not coming through bloodletting, rubbing of fine powder of sunthi, Maricha, Pippali, Haridra is done.

Prativisha (Antidote)

Poison is the best antidote to neutralize the effect of poison. After the biting of venomous animal, he should be given inanimate poison as a part of treatment. When the effect of poison does not subside by mantra and oushadha chikitsa, then after 5th vega and before 7th vega Prativish should be administered.^[4]

Sadnyasthapana (Resuscitation)

Gopitta, Haridara, Manjishtha in small quantity is given with water. We can also utilize Teekshana Dravya Nasya, Upadhana Karma, as part of the resuscitation treatment.

Lepa (Pest)

Gandhahastinamagad is applied for lepato destroy the effect of Vishadagdha, Kshata, Leedh, Dashta and peeta visha vega.

Maritasanjivana Agad

Sprikka, Plava, Sthouneya etc. are taken in small quantity and in fine powder form prepared a pill known as MRITASANJIVANAAGAD. MRITASANJIVANAAGAD IS USED IN ALL TYPES OF POISOING IN THE FORM OF NASYA, DHARANA ETC.^[4,5,6]

DISCUSSION

Ancient methods in treatment of poisoning were used in different poisoning conditions is same treatment found in modern era like incision, compression, suction, antidote. etc...

Mantra and Agni karma - ancient methods are totally obsoleted in modern methods in snake poisoning condition.

Ancient treatment methods were used various types substances like ghee, honey, cow's dung, milk etc.... natural ingredients were used for poisoning.

Medicines of ancient time were prepared from vegetable, mineral and animal kingdom.

- Vegetable kingdom substances -Tulsi, Pippali, Hingu, Tejpatra, Guggal.
- Mineral Kingdome substance- Gold, Iron, Copper and Silver
- Animal kingdom substance- Blood of Goat, Bile of Rohita fish.

CONCLUSION

Advancement of science is based on history of that science. New technology and new instruments are making smoothness in work and give accurate result. Base of New modern treatment for poisoning treatment is based on our Indian traditional methods.

Still research is required on Snake poisoning which our Indian traditional system was using mantra and tantra. Limited number of substances were using in ancient time but recently science is expanded and new molecule and combination of various chemical make new poison which is not be recover by ancient methods.

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