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RESEARCH ARTICLE

APPLIED ASPECT OF VATA : AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

Health is that state in which the structure and function of a particular individual is operating optimally and the individual is in a state of physical, mental, and spiritual equilibrium. Disease is a state of inequilibrium of the doshas, dhatus, agnis, and malas; the individual is out of harmony both internally and with relation to the environment and experiences unpleasant sensations and misery in some form (duhkya). Vata governs all movement in the mind and body. It controls blood flow, elimination of wastes, breathing and the movement of thoughts across the mind. Since Pitta and Kapha cannot move without it, Vata is considered the leader of the three Ayurvedic Principles in the body. It's very important to keep Vata in good balance. Basti karma is the most powerful of the five main procedures of Panchkarma, as Acharya Charaka has considered Basti as Ardha Chikitsa taking into account that in case of vitiated Vata dosha and Vata is the controller of all other Doshas, Dushyas, Malas and their functioning.

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Introduction:-

Ayurveda asserts the truth of the principle of svabhavoparamavada, which states that every living being has an inherent tendency to move in the direction of self-healing and balance. The balance toward which we naturally move is our prakriti or our unique and natural proportion of Vata, Pitta, and Kapha inherited by us at birth. The disease state is known as vikriti, which represents a deviation from that natural proportion of the doshas.

In Ayurved, Health is described as:

1. All the three doshas are in equilibrium with regard to the individual prakriti
2. All seven tissues, dhatus, are in the proper state of strength and integrity
3. The digestive fires, agnis, are balanced resulting in proper appetite, digestion, and assimilation
4. The waste materials, malas, are being produced and eliminated in a regular manner
5. The sense organs, indriyani, are functioning normally and the mind is undisturbed
6. The individual is experiencing happiness and contentment

The Vata dosha is the most important of the three doshas. This is for two reasons. First, if Vata becomes imbalanced for long time period and sufficiently enough, it can also cause the other two doshas (Pitta or Kapha) to become vitiated. It can cause both Pitta and Kapha to become imbalanced; this is called a Tridoshic imbalance and is the most difficult condition to manage. Secondly, Vata is the main leader of the body, including the other two doshas, all the tissues (dhatus) and all of the waste products (malas).

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Following are the five types of vata dosha described in Ayurvedic texts:

Prana Vata: Responsible for senses, creative thinking, reasoning, enthusiasm, leader of all 15 categories of Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

Udana Vata: Responsible for Quality of voice, memory, movements of thought.

Samana Vata: Responsible for Movement of food through digestive tract.

Apana Vata: Responsible for elimination of wastes, sexual function, menstrual cycle.

Vyana Vata: Responsible for blood flow, heart rhythm, perspiration, sense of touch.

Vata is the controller of all movement in the mind and body. It controls blood flow, elimination of wastes, breathing and the movement of thoughts across the mind. Since Pitta and Kapha cannot move without it, Vata is considered the leader of the three Ayurvedic Principles in the body. It's very important to keep Vata in good balance.

To check out the balance/imbalance state of vata dosha in our body, given below are some conditions :

1. Is your skin dry, rough, thin?
2. Are you underweight?
3. Is your mind constantly in a whirl?
4. Do you worry incessantly?
5. Are you constantly restless or agitated?
6. Do you experience constipation?
7. Do you suffer from insomnia?
8. Do you suffer from vaginal dryness?
9. Do you have spells of forgetfulness?
10. Do you experience discomfort in the joints?

If most of the answers come to "yes", then we need to balance the vata dosha in the body.

Management of Vata -Vyadhi

In Ayurved, Basti karma is the most powerful of the five main procedures of Panchkarma, as Acharya Charaka has considered Basti as Ardha Chikitsa taking into account that in case of vitiated Vata dosha and Vata is the controller of all other Doshas, Dushyas, Malas and their functional aspects.

Basti treatment is used to promote elimination of the vitiated vata dosha out through the rectum. As vata is mainly located in the colon and bones, it is more helpful in disorders of bones (like osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis, etc.) and gastro intestinal tract (like gastritis, indigestion, constipation, etc.) .

Indications

1. Niruha (Asthapan) - Evacuative type of medicated enema is specially useful in Neurological disorders, paralysis, Diseases in pelvic region, retention of flatus-stool-urine & semen, Diminution of strength-muscle tissue-complexion & semen and menses, morbidity of strength-complexion-muscle tissue and semen, Numbness of limbs, Parasitic infestation of the intestine, joint pains, burning sensation, splenic disorders, colic pain, heart disease, anal fistula, headache, stiffness of the back and lumbar region, tremors, excessive heaviness or lightness in the body, amenorrhoea, irregular digestion; pain, atrophy and stiffness of the muscles, knee-joint, calf area, thighs, ankles, heels, feet, genitals, arms, fingers, teeth, nails, all joints, bones; intestinal gurgling, pricking pain in the abdomen, voiding stool in small quantities frequently with noise and foul smell, certain urinary conditions and all vitiated vata related disorders. For the above mentioned ailments, niruha basti is the foremost medication. As a tree gets destroyed by cutting its roots, similarly the above mentioned diseases get cured by the administration of niruha basti.
2. Anuvasana basti (oil enema) It is specially indicated for the person having ununctuousness, sharp power of digestion and diseases caused by vata dosha only, i.e. not associated with ama. In this conditions anuvasana basti is the foremost therapy. As sprinkling of water at the root prevents withering out of the tree, similarly, administration of anuvasana basti cures diseases in the body of the person.

3. Uttara Basti (urethral douche in men & urethral douche and vaginal douche in women) is used for selected semen disorders and disorders affecting ovulation. It is also useful in diseases of the urinary bladder. In female it is useful in prolapse of uterus, excruciating pain in uterus, gynaecological disorders, menorrhagia, anuria, dribbling of urine, etc.
4. Matra Basti (low dose of anuvasan basti) the dose of matrabasti is equal to minimum quantity in which anuvasan basti is prescribed to be administered. It can be safely administered in all the seasons. Matra basti is always useful for persons emaciated by karma , carrying heavy load, long way –faring , riding vehicles or indulging in sexual intercourse , and for persons who are weak and who are afflicted with vataj vyadhi, etc.
5. Karma Basti (schedule of 30 bastis; 18 anuvasan + 12 niruh),
6. Kala Basti (schedule of 15 bastis; 9 anuvasan + 6niruh)
7. Yoga Basti (schedule of 8 bastis; 5 anuvasan + 3 niruh)
8. Bruhana Basti (nutritional enema) is used for providing deep nutrition in selected conditions. Highly nutritive substances have been used, such as warm milk, meat broth, bone marrow soup and herbs like shatavari and ashwagandha.

Discussion:-

Vata dosha is the most important causative factor of diseases in peripheral tissue elements , viscera of the thorax and abdomen, vital spots including joints, upper part of the body, covering the entire body and individual parts of the body. Also Vata dosha is responsible for the separation and combination of stool, urine, pitta, kapha including other excreta and tissue element. When it gets exceedingly aggravated there is no best therapy other than basti for its alleviation. Therefore, Basti chikitsa is considered to be half of the entire therapeutic measures. Benefits of Basti-Chikitsa are:

1. It prevent ageing process of the body
2. It promotes happiness, longevity, strength, intellect, voice and complexion
3. It enhances power of digestion and metabolism,.
4. It is harmless for infants, old persons and youth
5. It helps in curing all diseases
6. It helps in drawing out faeces, kapha, pitta, vayu, and urine.
7. It promotes sturdiness of the body
8. It enriches semen and promotes strength etc.

It is specifically useful in following types of conditions (vata vyadhi):

1. Stiff and contracted limbs
2. Lameness
3. Fractures and dislocations
4. Limbs afflicted by the movement of different types of aggravated vayu.

Basti is an excellent therapy for women who are affected with the complications of vata dosha, unable to conceive. It is also useful for men having seminal debility and emaciation of the body.

Mode of action

Niruh basti lodged in the colon, by its potency, draws morbid doshas from all over the body just as the sun situated in the sky absorbs all the moisture from the earth. And only morbid matter gets eliminated by niruh basti from the body like as a piece of cloth soaked in the water mixed with the powder of kusumbha(a vegetable dye) sucks up only the pigments.

Anuvasan basti plays role just as a tree irrigated with water at the root produces blue leaves, becomes beautiful with tender leaves and during the course of time grows to produce flowers and fruits. Similarly, a person becomes young and beautiful with procreative power by the administration of anuvasana .

1) General Contra-Indications for Basti Chikitsa

Enema therapy should not be used if the patient is suffering from diarrhea, bleeding of the rectum, chronic indigestion, breathlessness, diabetes, fever, emaciation pulmonary tuberculosis, old age or for children below the age of seven years. for oil enemas: diabetes, obesity, indigestion, low agni, enlarged liver or spleen, unconsciousness, tuberculosis and cough. for decoction enemas: debility, hiccough, hemorrhoids, inflammation of anus, piles, diarrhea, pregnancy, ascites, diabetes and some conditions involving painful or difficult breathing.

for nutritional enemas: diabetes, obesity, lymphatic obstruction, ascites.

for urethra or vaginal enemas: diabetes.

Conclusion:-

Vata is a very active principle in pathogenesis. If we can control vata through the use of basti, we have gone a longway in going to the root cause of the vast majority of diseases. Vata is the main etiological factor in the manifestation of diseases. It is the motive force behind the elimination and retention of feces, urine, bile and other excreta. Basti chikitsa is the best method used to promote elimination of the vitiated vata dosha out through the rectum. As vata is mainly located in the colon and bones, it is more helpful in disorders of bones (like osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis, etc.) and gastro intestinal tract like gastritis, indigestion, constipation etc.

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