



NECK PAIN: AN ANCIENT VIEW

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ABSTRACT

Neck pain is one of the very common complaints across the globe. Common neck pain occurs due to problems in the neck muscles, ligaments and discs due to faulty neck postures and daily neck misadventures accounting for more than 80% of neck pains around the globe. Conventional treatment methods which include drugs, physiotherapy, exercises & operative care have their own limitations and are not entirely effective. Alternative therapeutic approach could complement or supplement the existing treatment methods especially the conservative management. Alternative therapies include ayurveda and yogic sciences which consist a vast description of neck pain and its treatment.

Keywords: Neck pain, veda, purana, ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

Neck is a most important part of the human body. It serves as a pillar in between head and trunk part of the body, without which human being cannot be picturized. Though we find many options in treating neck pain according to modern medicine. Particularly in psychosomatic diseases, they are less effective. Hence here, an attempt is made to find out what the ancient scriptures say about neck pain.

As per the ancient scriptures, the term greeva is considered as the neck. The nape of the neck or posterior part of the neck is said as manya (Neck region) and the disease manyastambha occurs in manya region associated with pain and stiffness in the neck region. It is one of the vatavyadhi.

Vyutpatti And Nirukti

Manya is a stree linga sabda. In sabdakalpadruma, it is said as manya is the seat of stambha (stiffness) & dukha sorrow or pain and so on.

Amarakosha defines manya as the vessels which traverse behind the neck region and Greeva, the region of cervical vertebrae.

Synonyms

Shirodhi- that which carries shiras or head

kandhara - pillar to the head

stambha – stiffness

Manyastambha - Manyastambha (stiffness of the neck) is one of the vātavyādhi.¹

Dictionary Meanings

Manya - Nape or back of the neck or knowledge.

Greeva - The neck, back part of the neck, tendon of the trapezium muscle, neck of a bottle.

Stambha - To become stiff, rigid or immovable.³

NECK PAIN IN VEDA'S AND UPANISHAD'S

In Atharva veda, we find some of the references such as kikasa, anuka & greeva denoting spine or vertebral column which includes even cervical region. Here, anuka denotes spine. No reference is available either in yajurveda or samaveda regarding neck or spine and also in Upanishad's.⁴

In Puranas

In Agni Mahapuram, we find the reference of manya, its related ailments and cikitsa. A reference of vatavyadhi lakshanas and cikitsa is also available with specific treatment to stambha. In case of swelling & stiffness of the vessels in the neck kati taila abhyanga should be done A person suffering from vitiation of vata dosha should be given

buttermilk constantly.⁵

Garuda Mahapuram also describes manyastambha same as of Agni Mahapuram in detail, importance of **vata dosha**, its' gunas and the diseases caused by it.⁶

Hatha yoga pradipika In hata yoga pradipika we can find kukkutasana which is said as it strengthens the arm and shoulder muscles and gives the sensation of levitation.⁷

NECK PAIN IN AYURVEDA

In Ayurveda we find the detail description of neck pain and its treatment which can be correlated to manyastambha based on the features. Manyastambha is one of the vatavyadhi caused due to vitiation of vata dosha, there fore the causes, pathology and general treatment is same as that of vatavyadhi, with some specific features and specific treatment.

Caraka, in caraka samhita, sutrasthana 20th chapter, named Maharogadhyaya 8th sloka says manya is the pratyanga of greeva and in 11th sloka quotes both the terms manyastambha and greeva stamba under the 80 nanatmaja vikara's of vata dosha (which is caused by only vata dosha). In Caraka siddhi sthana, 2nd chapter 22nd sloka, we find the definition of greeva roga which is defined as, the disease occurring in greeva or neck region. Cikitsa sthana, 28th chapter of caraka samhita describes the disease greeva hundana (can be taken as cervical spondylosis) and in 22nd sloka greeva stamba as its laksana or symptom⁸. In Indriya sthana, the term greevavamarda or greevapida (pain in the neck) is explained in the concept of Arista laksana bheda (the signs of imminent death).

Sushruta quotes the term manyastambha for the pain and stiffness occurring in neck region found in vatavyadhi cikitsa of nidana sthana which is said to be due to vata vitiation associated with kapha dosa. Apart from samanya vatavyadhi cikitsa, specific nidana, samprapti and cikitsa for the disease is also explained. But the the word grivastamba is not mentioned anywhere.

Astanga hradayakara vagbhata calls manyastambha or the neck pain as antarayama, a vatavyadhi with addition of some more laksanas or symptoms. In Madhava nidanam, the lakshana's of manyastambha is explained same as of Sushruta.⁹ Sharangadhara samhita in his prathama khanda also mentions the disease manyastambha as antarayama as vagbhata.¹⁰ Bhavamishra, author of Bhavaprakasha samhita interprets manyastambha same as of Sushruta except the

cikitsa part which he has elaborately given.

Nidana (Aetiological Factors)

Nidana of manyastambha is the vatadosha prakopa in which vayu gets aggravated by the following Intake of ununctuous, cold, scanty & light food,

- Excessive sexual indulgence
- Remaining awake at night in excess,
- Inappropriate therapeutic measures,

Administration of therapies which cause excessive elimination of tridoshas & rakta dosha, excessive fasting

- Excessive swimming,
- Resorting to wayfaring, exercise Resorting to wayfaring, exercise & other physical activities in excess,
- Loss of dhatu (tissue elements), excessive emaciation because of worry, grief & affliction by diseases,
- Sleeping over uncomfortable beds & sitting over uncomfortable seats, anger, sleep during day time fear & suppression of natural urges, formation of ama,

Samprapti (Pathology)

Because of the above mentioned factors, the aggravated vayu, while filling up the channels of circulation which are empty or have become weak in quality due to lack of unctuousness etc produces different kinds of ailments affecting the whole body or apart thereof.⁸ By day-sleep, sitting and standing (in a fixed position) and gazing obliquely, the same (vayu) covered by kapha dosha causes manyastambha (stiffness & pain).¹¹ Astanga hrdayakara vagbhata calls manyastambha as antarayama.¹²

When vata aggravated gets localized inside the manya dhamani's (arteries & nerves present in the sides of the neck) cause their stiffness & them spreads to all parts of the body, constricts the shoulders, they make the body bent inwards like bow produces boils of convulsions, loss of movements of the eyes, more of yawning, grinding of teeth, vomiting of kapha, pain in the flanks, catching of speech, catching pain of the lower jaw, back & head. He gives cikitsa same as that of Caraka, the vatavyadhi cikitsa.¹³

Samprapti Ghataka's

Dosha	Vata Pradhana Kapha Dosha
Dushya	Dhatu Rakta Mamsa Meda Asthi
Upadhatu	Snayu Sira Kandhara
Agni	Jatharagni Dhatvagni
Srotas	Vatavahasrotas
Srotodusti	Sangha
Udbhavasthana	Amapakvashayasammuttha
Sanacharasthana	Rasayani
Vyaktasthana	Manya
Adhisthana	Manya
Rogamarga	Madhyama Roga Marga

Samanya Chikitsa (General Treatment)

Ghee, oil, muscle fat marrow, fomentation, massage, medicated enema, fomentation accompanied with oleation, residence in windless place, covering the body with blankets meat soup, different types of milk, food ingredients which are sweet, sour & saline & such other measures which are nourishing - all these are beneficial for the patient suffering from diseases caused by the aggravated vayu.⁸

Vishesha Chikitsa (Specific Treatment)

In manyastambha, application of snuffs alleviating vata & kapha dosha should be given along with rough sudation.¹¹ In manyastambha use of decoction of either dashamula or of pancamula, dry fomentation & nasal medication should be administered. The neck should be anointed & massaged with oil or ghee, then covered with leaves of arka or eranda and then fomentation given many times. Yolk of hens egg, saindhava & ghee mixed well, made warm & applied in the neck and massaged, this relieves stiffness of the neck.¹³

Pathya Ahara

Annavarga	Godhuma, Masha, Raktashali, Kulattha
Dugdhavarga	Gau-Aja Dugdha, Ghrita, Kilatam etc.
Jalavarga	Ushna Jala, Shritashita Jala
Madyavarga	Sura, Madira, Surasava, Amlakanjika
Mamsavarga	Kukkuta, Mayura, Chataka, Tittir, Nakra,
Mutravarga	Go, Avika, Ashva, Hasti Mutra
Phalavarga	Draksha, Badara, Amra, Madhuk etc
Rasavarga	Shakavarga Patola, Shigru, Rason, Jivanti
Snehavarga	Taila Vasa Majja, Ghrita,

Pathya Vihara

Atapa Sevana, Mridushayya, Ushnodaka Snana etc.

Apathya Ahara

Annavarga	Yava, Kodrava, Shyamaka, Nirava, Chanaka, Kalaya
Dugdhavarga	Gadarbha Dugdha
Ikshuvarga	Madhu
Jalavarga	Nadi,samudra, Tadagasya jalam, Shita Jala, DushitaJala
Madyavarga	Navamadya, Atimadyapana
Mamsavarga	Kapota, Paravat, Kulinga, Shuka, Shushka Mamsa
Mutravarga	Ajamutram
Phalavarga	Jambu, Kramuka, Kasheruka, Lavali, Parpataki Phalaetc.
Rasavarga	Katu, Tikta, Kasaya Rasa, Kumuda, Kamalanala, Palakya, Udumbara

Apathya Vihara

Chinta, Jagarana, Vega Sandharana, Shrama, Anashana, Vyavaya, Vyayama, Pravata, Chankramana, Kathin Shayya, Yana Gamana etc.

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