

Effect of Nasya in the management of Trigeminal Neuralgia – A Single Case Study

Anamika Singh¹, Dr. R.S. Unadkat²

¹PG Scholar, Dept of Shalakya Tantra, ITRA, Jamnagar

²Reader, Dept. of Shalakya Tantra, ITRA, Jamnagar

ABSTRACT

Trigeminalⁱ neuralgia is a long term pain disorder that effects the trigeminal nerve. Severe and recurrent pain in the distribution of one or more branches of Trigeminal Nerve is called trigeminal neuralgia. Trigeminal nerve supplies face with its three branches. Any pathology leading to compression or demyelination of nerve causes pain. Patient usually complain of severe episodic pain leads to depression and many times leads to suicidal tendency. In modern science no effective treatment is available and also has many side effects. *Ayurvedic* literature full of references where management of various diseases explained with minimal adverse effects. Ayurveda therapy is based on *tridosha* and all treatments are based on *dosha* involvement in diseases.ⁱⁱ *Anantavata* is a disease explained under *urdhava jatrugata vikara* has maximal similarity with Trigeminal neuralgia. Treatment modalities explained for it are diet management and *Panchkarma*. *Panchkarma* is *Shodhana pradhan chikitsa*.ⁱⁱⁱ *Nasya* is one of procedures explained with it *lepa*,^{iv} *raktamokshana*, *snehapan* also indicated in *Anantavata*. In the present case female patient presented under it for management of *Anantavata*. It specially acts on diseases related to brain. Along with typical symptoms of trigeminal neuralgia. She was treated with *Nasya* for 15 days and she recovered fully with decreases recurrence.

KEYWORDS: Trigeminal neuralgia, *Anantavata*, *Panchkarma*, *Nasya*.

INTRODUCTION

Trigeminal neuralgia usually presents with sharp electric shock like pain in face or mouth lasting for brief period of seconds to minutes after which there is refractory period for which pain can not be reinitiated for a period of time. Pain is commonly evoked by trivial stimuli including washing, shaving and smoking etc. It is called as Tic Douloureux, Trifacial neuralgia.

Classification is of many types in different texts most important one is :

1. Typical nature
2. Atypical

Typical

Caused by blood vessels compressing the trigeminal nerve root

- Pain lasts for seconds to 2 minutes.
- Pain is electrical, intense, sharp, stabbing.
- No clinical neurologic deficits.

Atypical

It is stage of progression of typical neuralgia.

Pathology

Most common pathology is atherosclerotic blood vessels pressing on the root of trigeminal nerve. Which ultimately leads to demyelination of trigeminal nerve which causes hyperexcitability of nerve fibres and thus episodes of intense pain.

The disease progresses with time, refractory period decreases and pain becomes more frequent, epidemiologically incidence of this disease is 4 in one lakh, females are mostly affected with it. It is mostly unilateral and affects right side in 60% patients.

Clinical features

Pain which is sharp, shooting and electric shock type in nature. Elicited by slight touch. Some times burning and hypersensitivity is also noticed. Usually confined to one part. Last for few seconds to minutes. Motionless or mask like face. Rarely crosses the midline. Depression and weight loss is often associated. Pain is triggered by chewing, talking, brushing and stimulation of triggering zone. Triggering zone are specific areas specially in face vermilion border of lip, ala of nose, cheek, chin and around the eyes. Generally no evidence of sensory or motor impairment. Apart from pain other features are itching, sensitivity of face.

Diagnosis is mainly based on clinical features but trigeminal nerve examination, MRI, EEG and microneurography is also helpful. Management includes pharmacological and surgical procedures.

In *Ayurvedic* literature trigeminal neuralgia can be compared with.^v *Anantavata* due to maximum similarity in their sign and symptoms. *Anantavata* is a disease caused by *Tridosha* but still *vata dosha* is predominant. *Nidana* of the disease as explained by *Acharya Charaka* are *upavasa* (fasting), *ati shoka*, *sheeta bhojana* (cold food), *atiruksha bhojana* (dry food). *samparapti* as explained by *Acharya Charaka* and *Sushruta* is that three *dosha* simultaneously vitiated and makes *adhishtana* in *manya*, *netra*, *bhru*, *shankha pradesha*, that leads to severe pain and causes *kampa*, eye disorders, *hanugraha*.

Management explained by different texts is *Siramokshana*, *Snehana*, *Swedana*, *Lepa*, *Anjana*, *Nasya*, *Seka*, *Virechana* and *Vatashamaka diet*.

Case study:

A female patient 48 years old came to OPD with

- C/ O Pain in right side of face x 3 months.
- C/O burning sensation and difficulty in opening mouth due to pain x 3 months.
- H/O tooth extraction one year back on right side last molar.
- No H/O HTN, DM, PTB.

On further enquiry she explained that pain was localised to one side of face, severe, sharp in nature. Initially episodes of pain were for one or two minutes after that duration increased and pain became continuous. She explained that pain occur usually after brushing, cleaning face and after taking food.

Treatment:

1. *Nasya* with *Anu taila* (for 15 days)
2. *Ashwagandha churna* 3 gm BD with milk. (15 days)

3. *Triphala churna* 5 gm with luke warm water HS (15 days)

Diet and life style modification.

Follow up: After one month.

Result: pain reduced after 7 days of *Nasya* so it was continued for 15 days.

After fifteen days of *Nasya* pain was completely cured as patient stopped taking pain killers which she was taking regularly since one month. she also explained that pain during opening of mouth reduced 90 %. Burning sensation was also completely cured.

After one month follow up she explained that she had one episode of mild pain once with no associated symptoms.

Mode of action

Nasya: *Nasya* is one of major five procedures of *Panchkarma*. In this procedure after *sthanik abhyanga* and *swedana of urdhva jatrugata pradesha* drug is administered in the nostrils.

It is said that *Nasya* is way to *Shirah pradesha* and *Nasya* is considered best *chikitsa upakrama* for *urdhva jatrugata vikara*. Drug administered goes directly to brain and removes morbid *dosha* and *vata shamana*. In *ayurvedic perspective Anantavata* is caused by *Tridosha*. *Nasya* first of all removed these morbid *dosha* and then causes *vata shamana*.

Anu taila is considered as one of the best drugs for *Nasya* because it has *tikshna* effect along with *vata shamaka properties*.^{vi}

Triphala given to patient causes *vatanulomana* and also considered as *rasayana*.^{vii} *Ashwagandha churna* is again potent *vata shamaka* and stress reliever. As stress is one of major factors causing Trigeminal neuralgia.

Discussion

Trigeminal neuralgia is a disease of trigeminal nerve. Which causes severe pain and disturbed life of the patient. It may be caused by many reasons but compression and demyelination of nerve is major cause. Pain is so severe that patient become depressed and some times causes suicidal tendency.

In *Ayurveda* it is compared with *Anantavata* disease explained as one of *shirah shoola*. It is considered *vata pradhana tridoshaj vyadhi*. Acharya Sushruta has mentioned 11 *Shirorogas*, among them *Ardhавabhedaka* and *Anantavata* is having half-sided headache as chief complaint, only difference is *Ardhавabhedaka* is *pittapradhana* and *Anantavata* is *Vatapradhana*. Hence *Vatahara* and *Brihamana* line of treatment was adopted.

Management in modern science is pharmacological and surgical but not effective as recurrence is very common. In *Ayurveda Anantavata* is managed according to *dosha* and their *adhishtana*. *Anantavata* is *urdhva jatrugata vikara* for which *nasya* is considered best modality.

Nasya causes *tridosha* and *vata shaman* simultaneously which leads to treatment of disease. Along with it *vatanulomana* with help of *tripphala* is given. *Ashwagandha* given as *vata shamaka* drug.

Diet modification includes hot and *vata shamaka* meals like *ghrita*, *dughdha*, *halwa* etc. Patient advised not to stay awake in night and take frequent meals thus reducing fasting hours.

Conclusion

Trigeminal neuralgia is a disease which is very common with severe ill effects. In modern science no effective

tive treatment is available. *Ayurveda* is a science which causes treatment of disease with holistic approach and no side effects.

Panchkarma along with oral medications is considered best among all *Ayurvedic* treatment modalities. *Nasya* given to the patient proved effective as patient was cured fully.

So from this case study it can be concluded that *Nasya* along with drugs can be given to the patients of Trigeminal neuralgia to cure the ailment.

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