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Ayurvedic Therapeutic Approach in Guillain-Barre Syndrome with Special Reference to Sarvanga Vata: A Case Report

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ABSTRACT

Background: Guillain-Barré syndrome is a condition where the immune system attacks the nerves. This causes Guillain-Barré syndrome to make the muscles get weaker and weaker. People with Guillain-Barré syndrome also have problems with their senses and other parts of their body. With the best care some people with Guillain-Barré syndrome take a long time to get better and they are left with some problems.Ayurveda says that Guillain-Barré syndrome is, like something called Vata Vyadhi, which is also known as Sarvangavata.

Objective: The goal is to see how well Panchakarma and Shamana Chikitsa work for helping patients with Guillain–Barré Syndrome get better and recover.

Materials and Methods: A male patient of 33 years old diagnosed with Guillain–Barré Syndrome had problems with weakness in all four limbs, numbness, tingling, difficulty walking, constipation and overall weakness. The patient was treated with methods which includes Panchakarma procedures like Abhyanga (body massage), Swedana (steam therapy), kostha sodhana (cleansing of the digestive system), Basti (medicated enema) and Salisathik pinda sweda (therapeutic application of warm poultices). The treatment also involved physiotherapy and internal medications that help reduce Vata increase strength and promote well-being.The patients condition was evaluated before. After treatment using muscle strength tests, functional ability assessments and neurological exams evaluation was done. Guillain–Barré Syndrome patient showed improvement with interventions and physiotherapy.The treatment helped the patient, with Guillain–Barré Syndrome to regain muscle strength and improve functioning.

Results: Significant improvement was seen in muscle strength.The patient also got better at walking.Sensory symptoms got better.The patient could do tasks more easily.The patient became more independent in tasks. Neurological deficits decreased after treatment ended.

Conclusion: Panchakarma and Shamana Chikitsa can really help people with Guillain-Barré Syndrome. These treatments may help fix the problems with Vata Dosha that are making things worse. They can also improve how the nerves and muscles work together. This can make a difference in the quality of life for people with Guillain-Barré Syndrome.. Shamana Chikitsa are all, about helping people with Guillain-Barré Syndrome feel better.

KEYWORDS: Guillain–Barré Syndrome, GBS, Sarvangavata, Vata Vyadhi, Panchakarma, Basti, Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

Guillain Barré syndrome is a disorder where the immune system attacks nerve cells of the peripheral nervous system (1). The cause of Guillain Barré syndrome is still unknown. Usually it occurs a days or weeks after a person has had symptoms of a viral infection like a cold or stomach flu (2). The syndrome can occur at any age. It is most common in people of both sexes between 30 and 50 years old(3). Guillain Barré syndrome is the common cause of paralysis that is not caused by an injury. 20 - 30 percent of patients may experience life-threatening respiratory failures.Prevalence of Guillain Barré syndrome is 2.7 per 100,000 people per year (4). More men, than women are affected by Guillain Barré syndrome. It has seasonal fluctuations.

GBS usually starts after an infection that overstimulates the system. This overstimulation causes the bodys immune response to mistakenly attack the nerves. The immune system gets confused between the infection and the nerve cells leading to an autoimmune response. This response targets the nerves and their spinal roots (5). Guillain-Barré syndrome mostly affects the covering of the nerves called the myelin sheath. Damage to this covering is called demyelination. When demyelination happens nerve signals move slowly. If other parts of the nerve get damaged the nerve can stop working One to two weeks after the stimulation symptoms start to show. The symptoms begin with a worsening motor paralysis. This paralysis can happen with or without disturbances. A typical symptom is ascending paralysis. This is when weakness starts in the feet and hands and moves, towards the trunk.Weakness, numbness and tingling are common (6). In cases the symmetrical weakness and abnormal sensations spread to the arms and upper body.The weakness and sensations usually affect both sides of the body equally. People may experience symptoms but weakness and paralysis are often the main concerns.

People with Guillain Barre Syndrome often get weak. This weakness gets worse over a few hours or days. It usually starts in the parts of the body like the legs, more often than the upper parts, like the arms. Sometimes the nerves that control the face and head can be affected too. Other things that can happen include feeling sensations like tingling, having problems, with automatic body functions and having trouble breathing. Most people get the symptoms within two to four weeks (7). Guillain Barre Syndrome has two main types, one where the covering of the nerve called the myelin sheath is damaged and another where the actual nerve fiber, called the axon is damaged.

Intravenous Immonoglobulins(IVIg) (8) and plasma exchange (9) have shown they can help with the management of Guillain-Barre Syndrome. With these treatments some patients still get very weak do not recover fully and have a lot of pain and fatigue. The disease can also last for a time. One big problem with these treatments in poor countries is that they are very expensive. A lot of people with Guillain-Barre Syndrome, 4 to 7 percent do not survive even with the latest treatments (10). This is often because they have trouble breathing get lung problems or have health issues. It can take a time from months to years for people to recover from Guillain-Barre Syndrome. During this time the immune system gets weaker. The nerves do not heal properly. When people do recover from Guillain-Barre Syndrome they are often left with permanent disabilities that affect their daily lives and overall quality of life. Intravenous Immonoglobulins and plasma exchange are still used to treat Guillain-Barre Syndrome. They are not perfect solutions. Guillain-Barre Syndrome is a serious disease that can have a big impact, on people lives (11).

In Ayurveda the symptoms of GBS can be understood as a type of Vata Vyadhi. Muscle weakness is called Gatra Shaithilya, Loss of movement is known as Cheshta Nivritti, Numbness is referred to as Supti, Tingling sensation is called Toda, Loss of strength over the body is Sarvanga Bala Hani. These

symptoms show that Vata is imbalanced.Basti treatment is considered best for Vata disorders, like GBS. The GBS symptoms are treated with Basti. GBS is a Vata Vyadhi & Vata Vyadhi is treated with Basti.

PATIENT INFORMATION

Demographic Data

- **Age**: 33 years
- **Gender**: Male
- **Occupation**: Private Employee
- **Marital Status**: Married

Chief Complaints

- Weakness of all four limbs
- Difficulty in walking
- Tingling sensation in upper and lower limbs
- Numbness
- Muscle stiffness
- Generalized fatigue

History of Present Illnesses

A 33 year old male patient went to the panchakrma OPD. The patient was really healthy six months before he came to the hospital. He started to feel a tingling feeling and his lower limbs became stiff then he felt weak in all his arms and legs. He also had bad constipation and he did not want to eat.Over time it became harder for him to walk and do things. As his condition was severe, he was admitted in the hospital for allopathic treatment. The doctors diagnosed him as a case of Guillain–Barré Syndrome and they gave him the treatment, which helped a little bit. After the treatment the patient still felt weak and had trouble doing things so the doctors decided to try Ayurvedic treatment.

CLINICAL FINDINGS

General Examination

- Conscious and oriented
- Pulse: 78/min
- Blood Pressure: 140/90 mmHg
- Temperature: Afebrile

Neurological Examination

- Muscle tone: Reduced
- Deep tendon reflexes: Diminished
- Muscle power:
- Upper limbs: 3/5
- Lower limbs: 2/5
- Sensory disturbances present
- Difficulty in independent walking

Assessments were done at various time points like 1st, 6th , 13th, 27th, 47th, 60th , 90th day of intervention.

Sensory system assessment like tingling, pricking and numbness were assessed through

visual analogue scale (0–10)
Power was graded (0–5)
Reflexes (0-++)

Ayurvedic Assessment

- Dosha: Vata predominant
- Dushya: Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Majja
- Srotas involved: Rasavaha, Mamsavaha, Majjavaha
- Vyadhi: Sarvangavata (Vata Vyadhi)

DIAGNOSIS

Modern Diagnosis

Guillain–Barré Syndrome

Ayurvedic Diagnosis

Sarvangavata

THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION

Panchakarma Procedures

1.Deepana pachana	**panchakol phanta+ pathyadi vati**	**5 days**
2. Kostha suddhi	**Eranda taila 20 ml with 1/2 cup milk at night**	**7 days**
3. Sarvanga Abhyanga	**Oil: Bala Ashwagandhadi Taila**	**7 days along with kostha suddhi Duration: 30 minutes daily**
4.Bashpa Sweda	**Dashamoola kwatha**	**Along with Abhyanga Duration: 15–20 minutes daily**
5. Salisathik pinda sweda		**14 days**
6 .Kala Basti Schedule	**Anuvasana Basti -Sahacharadi Taila 60 ml Niruha Basti- Baladi raj yapan basti**	**Duration: 16 days**
7. Physiotherapy	**- passive and active exercises - Muscle strengthening - Gait training**	

Shamana Chikitsa

Internal Medicine

1. Brihat Vata Chintamani Rasa – 125 mg Ekangaveera Rasa- – 125 mg	**twice daily with ghee before food**
2. Ashwagandha Churna – 5 g Godanti bhasma - 250 mg Giloy satwa -250 mg	**twice daily with warm milk after breakfast**

3. Yogaraja Guggulu – 500 mg	**twice daily with luke warm water after breakfast**
4. Dashamoola Kwatha– 40 ml	**twice daily after breakfast**
5. Ksheerabala 101 Avarti – 10 drops	**twice daily in morning**
6. Palsinueron	**1 cap twice**

Duration: 90 days

OUTCOME OF MEASURES

Muscle Power Grading

Parameter	Before Treatment.	After Treatment
Upper Limb Power	3/5	4/5
Lower Limb Power	2/5	4/5
Walking Ability	Assisted	Independent
Tingling Sensation	Severe	Mild
Numbness	Moderate	Minimal
Daily Activities	Dependent	Independent

Before Treatment

After Treatment

RESULT

The patient got better and better during the treatment. Muscle strength improved a lot in both arms and legs. The patient had tingling and numbness.The patient became more independent. Could walk on their own again. There were no side effects, during treatment.

Rationality behind the selection of panchakarma Procedures

The treatment of GB syndrome according to medicine includes the use of painkillers certain antidepressants, steroids and so on. We need a treatment that's affordable improves the patients quality of life and has no or minimal side effects for this disease.

There is no mention of this disease in our classic texts. However based on the symptoms we can determine the Dosha and Dushyas and provide treatment accordingly. In GB syndrome the predominance of Vata dosha is much appreciated.

The definition of Vata is "Vaagati gandhanayoh". Here Gati refers to motor functions and Gandhana refers to functions of the nervous system. Vata is also considered the prime Dosha that governs the system.

The manifestations of Vata vyadhi are of two types: Upastambhita and Nirupastambhita. By analyzing the pathology and symptoms most of which can be compared to Kaphavruta vyanalike Vedana we can select a treatment protocol.

- In Avarana conditions the Avaraka dosha, which is Kapha dosha is treated first using Shamanoushadhis.
- Then treatment for Avruta dosha, i.e., Vata dosha is done. For Vatavyadhi Brimhana among shad Upakramas is highly indicated.

Bastikarma has been doing wonders in the treatments of Vata vyadhi. From the description it is understood that Brimhana type of Basti along with Shasthtika shali pinda sweda and Brimhana nasya plays a major role.

Hence RajaYapana Basti is selected for the study. The drugs present in Raja Yapana Basti are cost-effective easily available and without any known side effects.

The treatment of GB syndrome mainly requires a cost- Brimhana chikitsa that improves the patients quality of life with no or minimal side effects. This is the need of the hour, in managing Gillian Barré syndrome.

DISCUSSION

Guillain-Barré Syndrome is a condition where the immune system damages the nerves. This damage leads to problems with the nerves. Can cause muscle weakness, numbness and disability.

From the perspective of Ayurveda these symptoms are similar to a condition called Sarvangavata. When Vata is out of balance it affects the muscles, tendons and nerves which can cause loss of movement and feeling.

Massage or Abhyanga helps to nourish the tissues and calm Vata with its warming properties. Steam treatment or Swedana helps to reduce stiffness improve blood flow and relax the muscles and nerves. Basti is a treatment that targets disorders and works throughout the body.

The herbs in Dashamoola have properties that reduce inflammation and protect the nerves. Ashwagandha is a herb that helps to strengthen and rejuvenate the muscles and nerves. Yogaraja Guggulu helps to clear blockages while Ksheerabala supports the nourishment and regeneration of nerves.

Using Panchakarma and Shamana Chikitsa together likely helped to restore movement improve sensation and enhance the quality of life.

Shashtika shali pinda sweda is a type of treatment that has an soothing effect. It contains acids like methionine and tyrosine vitamin B and manganese and has antioxidant properties. It is mainly used to treat muscular disorders, muscle wasting and to improve muscle strength.

Nasya, with Ksheera bala 101 is a type of treatment that targets Vata dosha and helps to nourish and balance it.

CONCLUSION

This case shows that using Panchakarma procedures and the right Shamana Chikitsa can really help people with Guillain-Barré Syndrome get better.

People with Guillain-Barré Syndrome got better in terms of muscle strength. The way they walk.Their senses got better. They could do daily things more easily.This means that using medicine can be a big help when people are recovering from nerve problems.
We need to do research with a lot of people to see if this really works and to make a standard plan, for treating people with Guillain-Barré Syndrome.

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