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#### **Case Study**

# A CASE STUDY OF SUCCESSFUL AYURVEDA MANAGEMENT IN THE PATIENT OF MIGRAINE (ARDHAVABHEDAKA) AND MOTION SICKNESS

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Migraine is a type of Headache characterized by moderate to severe throbbing pain, generally associated with nausea, vomiting and light sensitivity. It can be correlated to Ardhavbhedaka, which according to the Ayurvedic science is caused by simultaneous vitiation of all the three *Doshas* viz. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*. Motion sickness is also a common disorder wherein patient suffers from symptoms like nausea, vomiting, increased salivation, dizziness, upon getting triggered by certain movements. In this case study, a female patient of middle age group (Madhyam Ayastha) suffering from long standing migraine and motion sickness since past 15 years (on and off), hampering her day to day activities, was administered with the treatment protocol as per Ayurveda resulting in significant relief to her symptoms. The treatment, planned according to her pulse diagnosis and clinical examination, was based on herbal supplements, Panchakarma (detoxification) in the form of Virechana, home remedies, Marmaa therapy, dietary and lifestyle modifications. The treatment was focused on removing the toxins (Aam) from the body with the help of detox (Virechana). This also resulted in alleviation of the vitiated Vata and Pitta Doshas and restoration of the *Jatharagni* (digestive fire). The treatment modality has been effective to reduce the episodes significantly.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Migraine is a disorder characterized bv headache causing moderate to severe pain which is throbbing or pulsating in nature. It is also accompanied with photophobia, phonophobia and vomiting lasting from 4 to 72 hours. It mostly affects about 20% of females and 6% of males. The phase of headache in migraine is associated with vasodilatation of the extracranial vessels and relayed by hypothalamic activity. It is usually identifiable from the history of the patients. The allopathic treatment of migraine includes symptomatic relief using simple analgesia with aspirin, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory paracetamol or medications.[1]

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Motion sickness is a disorder in which the person suffers from vertigo, nausea, vomiting during transportation by sea, car and plane.[2]

According to Ayurveda, migraine can be correlated with a disorder called *Ardhavbhedaka* which is a type of *Shiroroga* (disorders of the head). The common causes of *Ardhavbhedaka* mentioned by *Acharya Charaka*, *Acharya Sushruta* and *Acharya Vagbhata* are as follows [3,4,5]:

S.No	Aaharaja Hetu	Dietary causative factors of migraine
1	Rukshashana	Excessive consumption of dry food
2	Adhyashana	Overeating or binge eating
3	Atyambupana	Excessive consumption of water
4	Ati-Madyapana	Excessive consumption of alcohol

S.No.	Viharaja Hetu	Lifestyle causative factors of migraine		
1	Dhumatapatushara	Exposure to smoke, sunlight, dew drops and snow		
2	Ambukrida	Excessive exposure to water or long hours of swimming or playir in water		
3	Atiswapna	Excessive sleep		
4	Atijagara	Staying awake for long time during night		
5	Utsweda	Excessive sweating		
6	Aadhi	Irritation of mind/anxiety		
6	Purovata	Easterly breeze		
7	Bashpa Nigraha	Suppressing the tears		
8	Rodanai	Excessive crying		
9	Krimi	Worms		
10	Vega Dharana	Suppression of the natural urges		
11	Upadhana	Incorrect posture of the head while using a pillow		
12	Mruja Dwesha	Unhygienic surroundings		
13	Abhyanga Dwesha	Aversion towards oil massage on the head		
14	Adhapratatekshanai	Continuous downward gazing of the eyes		
15	Asatmya Gandha	Continuous exposure to unpleasant smell		
16	Dushta Aam	Consumption of contaminated water or Aam Dosha		
17	Ati Bhasya	Excessive talking		

## The Samprapti (pathogenesis) of migraine according to Ayurveda can be understood in the following manner

Due to the consumption of the above-mentioned dietary items and lifestyle factors, the *Aam Dosha* and *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha Doshas* are aggravated in the body. The *Vata* and *Pitta Doshas* predominantly vitiate the *Rakta Dhatu*. Due to the increased *Pitta Dosha* and *Aam Dosha*, the blood vessels first constrict, followed by dilation. It releases prostaglandins, serotonin, and other inflammatory substances that cause the pulsation to be painful. The *Aam Dosha* causes obstruction in the nervous system and diminishes blood circulation in the head. It further vitiates *Pitta Dosha* causing the inflammatory process. This is known as a migraine. [6]

Improper diet and stressful lifestyle

Vitiation of the three *Doshas, Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha*Predominantly the *Vata* and *Pitta* influence the *Rakta Dhatu* 

Increased *Pitta Dosha* and *Aam*, the blood vessels clamp down or constrict, followed by dilatation which produces severe pain in the head, neck, eyebrow, temples, ear, eye or forehead

*Aam Dosha* causes obstruction in the nervous system and diminishes blood circulation in the head.

Further vitiated *Pitta Dosha* increases the inflammatory process

### Migraine (Ardhavbhedaka)

#### **Case Study**

This case study includes a middle-aged female patient who visited the Ayushakti Ayurveda Pvt Ltd, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai, branch clinic on 20/12/2022 with the primary complaint of migraine including severe episodes of throbbing pain in the head, nausea, vomiting and motion sickness. She also had developed sensitivity to light and sound and mental irritability. Occupationally, she is a software consultant. The symptoms appeared 15

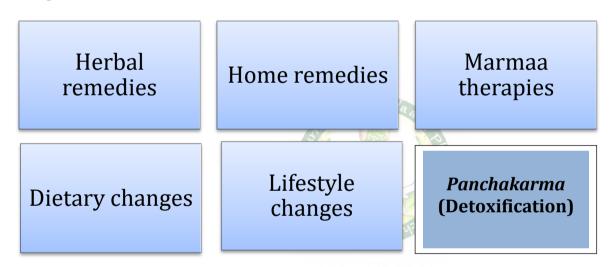
years before coming to the OPD. The patient had gone to a sea voyage for holidays in the first week of November. After returning back, her condition got worse and she started suffering from motion sickness. The travel by any type of vehicle also triggered her condition resulting into nausea, vomiting and migraine. The patient was not able to travel for her daily work place due to this condition. This was affecting her personal and professional life.

Patient had taken allopathic pain-relieving medications like Tablet Dolo-650 during the episodes of pain. There was only temporary relief in the pain which reoccurred after few days. She had also undergone different kinds of therapies but none was effective for long term. On examination, the blood pressure was 120/80mm of Hg. The BMI (body mass index) was 20. The menstrual history was normal. There was no history of diabetes, hypertension or any other CNS abnormality.

The case was evaluated based on the history and physical examination including the *Ashtavidha Pariksha* (eightfold examination) including the pulse diagnosis described in *Yogaratnakar* [7]. The demographic data collected included the age, gender, personal and medical history with duration and onset of the condition. The treatment that was administered included the herbal remedies, the *Marmaa* therapy, home remedies and diet and lifestyle changes. The assessment was done before and after the treatment.

#### **Treatment Protocol**

The treatment protocol followed in her case was mainly herbal remedies, *Panchakarma* (detoxification) in the form of six healing tools like *Virechana* treatment, home remedies, *Marmaa* therapies, dietary and lifestyle changes.



The patient was given internal medicines (Table1) tablet *Shirashoolhar* for digestion of the *Aama Dosha* in the body and increasing the blood circulation in the head region by subsiding the throbbing pain (Table 5). *Virechan* Tablet was given as a laxative to be taken daily to flush out the toxins from the body and pacify the *Pitta Dosha* in the body (Table 6). *Mahatikta Ghrita* was also given to the patient for *Abhyantar Snehapana* (internal oleation) to reduce the inflammation process in the body by pacifying the *Pitta Dosha* and *Rakta Dhatu*. The home remedies (Table 2) were also given to the patients to digest the *Aama Dosha* in the body and to stimulate the digestive fire. The *Marmaa* therapy (Table 3) was also given to the patients to balance the *Doshas* and reduce the stress and tension in the body. The dietary and lifestyle changes (Table 4) were advised to balance the *Dosha, Dhatu* and *Malas* in the body and avoid reoccurrence of the disease. The patient was explained the whole procedure and the informed consent were taken before doing the detoxification.

#### The detoxification process included the following steps

- **1.** *Purvakarma*/Pre-Procedure: The body was first prepared for *Virechana* by doing initial internal and external oleation i.e., *Snehana* and hot fomentation i.e., *Swedana* procedures. The medicinal herbs were given for *Deepana* (stimulating the digestive fire) and *Pachana* (digestion of the toxins).
- **2.** *Pradhanaarma* / **Procedure:** The *Virechan* (purgation) was done in this to remove the excess of *Pitta Dosha*.
- 3. **Paschat Karma/Post Procedure:** After the *Virechana Karma*, the patient was kept on a strict diet following the *Manda*, *Peya* and *Vilepi* that form the *Samsarjana Krama* that is the diet that is followed after the detoxification.

#### Table 1

S.No.	Name of the medicine	Dose	Duration	Before/After food	Anupana
1	Tablet Shirshoolhar	2 tablets twice daily	3 months	After food	Warm water
3	Tablet Virechana	2 tablets once daily	3 months	After food at night only	Warm water
4	Mahatikta Ghrita	10ml ghee once in the morning empty stomach	3 months	Empty stomach in the morning	Warm water

#### Table 2

S.No	Home remedy	Procedure	Duration	
1	1 tsp Cumin + 1 tsp coriander +1 tsp fennel seeds powder	Boil the ingredients in two glass of water and then when it is reduced to glass of water	Drink the warm water two times, once in the morning and once at night.	
2	2 10 black raisins Soak overnight in one glass water and mix all		Take in the morning on empty stomach.	
3	Nabhi Purana	Purana Pouring 1 tsp of cow's ghee in the belly button Before going to bed		
4	Pada Abhyanga Oil massage on the soles of the feet for 10 minutes each Before going to bed		Before going to bed	

#### Table 3

S.No	Marmaa therapy	Location	
1	Krikatika Marmaa	Two inches below the occipital region	
2	Manya Marmaa	Half inch downward, backward of the triangular corner of the jaw line	
3	Shiro Marma	Applying ghee on the temporal lobe in a gentle and circular manner for 5 minutes daily before bed time	

#### Table 4

S.No	Pathya (To follow)	Apathya (To Avoid)
1	Stay in fresh air, pleasant atmosphere, and a place with proper sunlight and water	Wheat, meat (especially red meat) and refined sugar, raw food
2	Cooked vegetables	Sour foods such as tomatoes, all sour fruits, vinegars and hot spices like chilies
3	Pulses like mung and split mung beans, tur dal and red lentils	Fermented foods such as yogurt, alcohol, cheese (especially old and hard ones) and yeast containing foods such as soy sauce and beer
4	Grains including rice, oats, rye, maize, millet, amaranth, quinoa	Raw vegetables, sprouted beans and salads
5	Pranayama and light exercise daily Keeping the surroundings clean	Ice cold foods and drinks, readymade, tinned and microwave foods

#### **OBSERVATION AND RESULTS**

The case study was assessed after one months of treatment with the herbal supplements, home remedies, *Marmaa* therapies, diet and lifestyle changes (Table 1, 2, 3, 4) were obtained as shown in the diagram after administering the treatment.

The patient followed the treatment protocol for 1 month continuously. There was drastic reduction in the throbbing pain of the head and significant improvement was observed in all the patients. The patients followed the dietary and lifestyle changes strictly and this helped to reduce the inflammation process and balance the vitiated

*Dosha, Dhatu, Malas* in the body. The motion sickness was completely gone. The patient can travel daily without any difficulties. The symptoms of nausea, vomiting sensitivity to light have reduced by 90%.

Table 5: Tablet Shirshoolhar

S.No	Sanskrit name	Latin name	Properties
1	Godanti Bhasma	Calci sulphus	It is useful in headache, <i>Pittaja Jwara</i> (high grade fever), <i>Shirashool</i> (headache), <i>Raktapitta</i> (bleeding disorders). [8]
2	Bibhitaki Ghan	Terminalia belerica	It is useful as a laxative and in <i>Chhardi</i> (vomiting). <sup>[9]</sup>
3	Haritaki Ghan	Terminalia chebula	It is used as a laxative, carminative, antioxidant action. [10]
4	Amlaki Ghan	Embelica officinalis	It has anti-inflammatory, neuroprotective, antioxidant, analgesic property. [11]
5	Haridra Ghan	Curcuma longa	It has anti- bacterial, anti- parasitic, anti-inflammatory, neuroprotective, antihistaminic and antioxidant effect. [12]
6	Kalmegh Ghan	Andrographis paniculata	It has analgesic, antibacterial, antipyretic effect. [13]
7	Guduchi Ghan	Tinospora cordifolia	It has analgesic, anti-inflammatory, cardio protective, hepatoprotective and <i>Rasayana</i> effect. [14]
8	Rasna Ghan	Pluchea lanceolata	It has analgesic and anti-inflammatory effect. [15]
9	Vetas Ghan	Salix caprea	It has antioxidant, anti-acetylcholinesterase, anti-inflammatory, neuro protective and anti-migraine effect. <sup>[16]</sup>

Table 6: Tablet Virechan

S.no.	Sanskrit name	Latin name	Properties	
1	Haritaki Ghan	Terminalia Chebula	It has purgative property [17]	
2	Aragvadha Ghan	Cassia fistula	It has laxative, analgesic, anti-inflammatory property. [18]	
3	Sanay patra Ghan	Cassia angustifo <mark>lia</mark>	It has laxative property [19]	
4	Nishottar Ghan	Ipomoea turpent <mark>hum</mark>	It has analgesic, anti-inflammatory, and hepatoprotective effect.[20]	

#### DISCUSSION

The female patient belonging to the Madhyama Vaya Avastha (middle age) which is a Pitta Dosha predominant age period<sup>[21]</sup>. In these patients, according to the pulse diagnosis, the Pitta Dosha was increased along with heat level. As Pitta Dosha and Rakta Dhatu are directly related to each other, the vitiation of Pitta Dosha also directly affects the vitiation of *Rakta Dhatu* in the body.<sup>[22]</sup> Therefore the treatment in these female patients of migraines was planned on these lines of treatment principles. Godanti Bhasma is cool in nature and preferably used to balance the Pitta Dosha in the body [23] Triphala which is the combination of the three fruits of Haritaki, Bhihitaki and Amalaki works as a Rasayana by correcting the movement of Apana Vata Dosha and balancing the heat of the Pitta Dosha in the patients of migraine.[24] The formulations work on the Sama Pitta in the body and thus helps in balancing the *Pitta Dosha* in the body. Sama Pitta produces the symptoms like increased acid formation, increased sourness and heat in the body, burning sensation which fastens the inflammation process in the body. [25] In the case of this patient, she was suffering from the symptoms of migraine and motion sickness due to the formation of Aam (toxins), Sama Pitta and low digestive fire. The ingredients in *Shirashoolhar* pacify the increased heat, inflammation, acid formation in the body of the patients. Mahatikta Ghrita contains a large number of medicinal herbs which are bitter in nature. Tikta Rasa (bitter taste) is very useful in balancing the Pitta Dosha. Ghee is also the best medicine as well as food item to balance the Pitta Dosha.[26] Therefore the administration of *Mahatikta Ghrita* in patients of migraine in the form of internal *Snehapana* (internal oleation) empty stomach in the morning is instrumental in reducing the heat of the Pitta Dosha and thus balancing the vitiated *Pitta Dosha* in the body. The formulation *Virechana* contains herbs that are laxative in nature. Virechana is described as the best medicine for balancing the *Pitta Dosha*.<sup>[27]</sup> This helps in mild form of purgation therapy in the patients to correct the movement of Vata Dosha and Pitta Dosha and removal of the excessively increased Pitta Dosha from the body. [28] The Marmaa are vital points on the body which when applied sufficient pressure in the scientific manner help to remove blocks in the Srotasa (energy channels). It corrects the movement of Vata Dosha in the body and creates physical, mental and

emotional flexibility. The home remedies, dietary and lifestyle changes together help to correct the vitiation of the three *Doshas, Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha,* helps to eliminate the *Aam Dosha* (toxins) in the body and thus helps in migraine.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The proper intervention using six healing tools like herbal remedies, *Marmaa Chikitsa*, home remedies, *Panchakarma* in the form of *Virechana*, diet and lifestyle as per the imbalance of the *Dosha*, *Dhatus* and *Malas* can provide significant relief to the patient of chronic migraine (*Ardhavbhedaka*) and motion sickness.

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