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LOCAL THERAPIES (STHANIKA CHIKITSA) USED IN STREEROGA.

¹Darshana Yelne, ²Rita Makim, ³Asokan V. ⁴Minakshi Singh

¹PG Scholar, 3rd Year, ² Guide & Professor, ³ HOD & Professor, ⁴PG Scholar, 3rd Year

¹Prasutitantra & Streeroga Department,

¹ Parul Institute of Ayurved, Limda Vadodara, Gujarat, India

Abstract: *Sthanika Chikitsa plays an important role in the management of many Yonivyapadas. In Ayurveda, given equal importance to Abhyantara as well as Sthanika Chikitsa. In the context of yonivyapada Chikitsa, it is mentioned that the local treatment should be done and must be followed by shodhana therapy (panchkarma).¹ Sthanika Chikitsa in Streeroga includes yoni pichu, yoni dhavana, yoni dhoopan, yoni varti, yoni pooran, yoni lepana, Yoni Parishek, kshara karma and agni karma. In the present study all these local therapies are explained in brief and in simpler way.*

Key words: *Ayurveda, Sthanika Chikitsa, local therapies in Streeroga, yonivyapada.*

INTRODUCTION

I. The health of women in family is of prime concern as the health of whole family depends on her. Women in her reproductive life is vulnerable to many gynecological problems like vulval itching, white discharge, burning micturition, dyspareunia and vaginal infections. In *Ayurveda* many local therapies i.e *Sthanika Chikitsa* are described for the management of common gynecological disorders. *Sthanika Chikitsa* helps to relieve vulval itching, vaginal discharges and its foul smell, pain and burning sensation, vaginal infections and inflammations.

II. The mode of action of *Sthanika Chikitsa* is yet to be proven scientifically, the hypothetical probability is that vaginal epithelium absorbs water soluble or lipophilic active principles. The drugs may help restoring acidic pH which is a protective shield against various vaginal infections. The drugs may restore or enhance the growth of natural vaginal flora preventing the growth of pathogens.²

AIM:

To introduce in brief, all the local therapies (*Sthanika Chikitsa*) used in *Streeroga*.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To study and use all the known *Sthanika Chikitsa* with skill in the management of various *Streerogas*.
- 2) To motivate most of the *Ayurveda* gynecologists for the use of *Sthanika Chikitsa* in day to day practice by providing them all the information in brief.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

This is a conceptual study so all the ayurvedic texts relating to the topic are studied. References from *Bruhatrayis*, articles and thesis work on the topic are studied.

The various *Sthanika Chikitsa* used in *Streeroga* are as follows:

1) YONI PICHU:

Definition: Vaginal tampon made of cotton or gauze soaked in *taila/ghrita/kshara/kashaya* is termed as *pichu*, when placed in vagina it is called *yoni pichu*.

The drug administered through *pichu* stays for a long time facilitating better absorption. It moistens and softens dry vagina. The medications restore the pH of vaginal flora thereby reducing vaginal infections. *Taila* or *Sneha* alleviates *Vata dosha*. *Pichu* soaked in various *kashyas* have cleansing property and arrests discharges.³ *Pichu* can be circular (1-inch length & breadth) or elongated (4 Finger length & 1 Finger Breadth) for shallow and deep insertion inside vagina respectively.⁴

2) YONI DHAVANA:

Definition: *Yoni Dhavana* or *Prakshalana* means cleansing of vagina.⁵

It is one among sixty types of *vrana Chikitsa*. It is used in various conditions where the discharge is slimy, thick, fibrous, sticky, purulent and offensive. *Kwath*, *kshirpaka*, *siddha jala*, & oil can be used for *yonidhavana*.⁶ Various *Kashaya* used for this purpose in accordance to *doshas* or characteristics of discharge are as follows.

In *vata dosha* involvement- *triphala*, *guduchi kashaya* or *sarala mudgaparni kashaya* should be used.

In *pitta dosha* involvement- *panchvalkala* or *panchtikta kashaya* should be used.

In *kapha dosha* involvement- *aragwadhadi* or *nimbadi kashaya* should be used.

In thin, slimy discharge- *triphala kashaya*

In fibrous, sticky white discharge- *dashmula* or *triphala kashaya*

In offensive, mucopurulent discharge- *Chandana* or *Iodhradi kashaya*.

3) YONI DHOOPAN:

Definition: *Yoni dhoopan* means vaginal fumigation.⁷

It is done by strewing *dravyas* in *dhoopana yantra* on *nirdhuma agni* after *yoni dhavana*.

Probable action of Dhoopan:

a) *srotoshodhana*- *dhuma* causes *swedana* of *yoni* which opens up minute or tiny pores thereby cleansing the *yoni*.

b) *kaphaghna* and *kledaghna*- *dhoopana* is *ushna*, *ruksha*, *tikshna*, *sukshma* hence it reduces the secretions and act as *kaphaghna* and *kledaghna*.

c) *rakshoghna*- bacterial and antiseptic are well known actions of *dhoopan karma*.

Commonly used drugs in *dhoopana karma* are *guggulu*, *dhatu patra*, *kushta*, *agaru*, *haridra*, *shatapushpa*.

4) YONI VARTI:

Yoni varti means vaginal suppository. It can be considered as a modified form of *varti kalpana* specially made to be used in *yoni pradesha*.⁸

A vaginal suppository is a drug delivery system where it dissolves and gets absorbed in deeper tissues.⁹ It is made using *shodhana dravyas* like *Ashoka twak*, *lodhra*, *jiraka*, *kanjika*, *kshara*, *saindhava*, *lavana*. The drugs selected possess qualities like astringent, hygroscopic, antiseptic and wound healing. The size or thickness of this *varti* should be like that of thumb or forefinger. *Varti* can be left in vagina for a short period or as needed or in the case of dissolving type can be left in situ.

5) YONI PURANA:

Definition- *Yoni purana* or *yoni dharana* means filling the *yoni* or retaining *dravyas* in the vaginal canal.¹⁰

The *dravyas* may be in the form of *churna*, *kalka*, *veshvara*, *pinda*, *bolus* etc. made into compact mass and inserted into the *yoni*. The active principles are absorbed through vaginal or cervical epithelium thereby producing the necessary action. It is not much in practice.

6) YONI LEPANA:

Definition- Fresh drugs are made into a paste and used externally for an ointment or *lepa*, when used in *yoni*, it is termed *yoni lepana*.

Acharya Sushruta mentions that just as water extinguishes fire instantly likewise *lepana* cures *vrana shula*, cleanses wound or infection, reduces swelling or inflammation and quickens suppuration.¹¹ The drug gets absorbed through glands and capillaries and vessels.^{12,13}

TYPES-

- a) *Pralepa*-thin paste is applied.
- b) *Pradeha*-very thick paste is applied.
- c) *Alepa*-medium thick paste is applied.¹⁴

7) YONI PARISHEKA:

Definition- Hot fomentation to vagina is *yoniparishek*.

Parishek is done on external part of vagina for 5 to 10 minutes. Medicated oil or lukewarm water is poured from the height of 4 to 5 inches over the vagina. It reduces *yonishotha* & *yonishoola*.¹⁵

8) KSHARA KARMA:

Definition- The vitiated *mamsa* is excised or removed, or the vitiated *kapha* is removed from its *ashaya* and shed downwards and expelled by *kshara karma*. *Kshanana* means destruction of vitiated unhealthy tissues hence it is termed as *kshara*.

Among all the *shastras* and *anushastras*, *kshara* is considered the best as it can perform *chedana*, *bhedana* and *lekhana karma*.¹⁶ It is *tridosahara*. Moreover, it can reach places which are inaccessible by instruments and can be administered both internally and externally. It is both *Soumya* (action) and *tikshna* (*prabhava*) and can be used even on *marma sthana*. *Kshara* is made from several drugs hence it alleviates *tridoshas*. It is white in colour and though *Soumya* in nature it performs *dahana*, *pachana*, *darana* due to its *agneya guna*. *Kshara* is *katurasa*, *ushna virya*, *tikshna guna*, *vraha sthotha pachaka*, cures *dushta vrana*, suppurated *shuddha vrana*, dries up an oozing *vrana*, arrests *rakta srava*, *lekhana* of firm muscular growth, *krimi*, *aama-kapha-kushta-visha-meda nasha*.

Kshara can be divided into two:¹⁷

- a) *Pratisarniya kshara* (external)- it is used in the form of *ksharodaka*, *kshara sutra*, *kshara pichu*, *ksharanjana* etc. in *Streeroga kshara prayog* is an emerging entity and yet to catch up. *Kshara* when used externally causes coagulation of proteins, disintegration of blackish brown discharge, sloughing and re-epithelization.
- b) *Paniya kshara* (internal)- it is used in the form of *kshara vati*, *gulika*, *kshara ghruta* or *taila*, *kshara avaleha*, *churna*.

9) AGNIKARMA OR DAHANA KARMA:

Definition- The literal meaning of *dahana* is to burn or cauterize.

According to *Ayurveda*, *agnikarma* is *anushastra karma*. The diseased tissue is treated by inflicting burns on the tissue surface directly by using different materials called *dahana upkarana*. Even in modern surgery the principles of *agnikarma* has been adopted with advanced technology like laser, cryo.

Acharya Vagbhata mentions that the diseases which do not subside with surgery or *kshara* are alleviated by *agnikarma*.

Various *dravyas* used in *agnikarma* are *jamboshtha*, needle, *salaka*, *ghee*, *guda*, *madhu taila*, *vasa*, gold, copper, iron, silver.

In classics, for skin diseases materials used for *dahana karma* are *pippali*, *ajaskrt*, *godanti*, *salaka*, *varti*; for muscle diseases *lauha*, *Suvarna*, *tamra*, *kamsya* are used. In case of deeper tissue like bone, ligaments, tendon, vessels, *madhu*, *guda*, *vasa*, *ghruta*, *taila*, *maducchista* are used. *Dhatushalaka* has been used for *dahana karma* irrespective of structure involved or the pathology. Nowadays electric thermal cautery machine has taken the place of *shalaka*.

Probable Mode of Action:

Dahan karma pacify *Vata* and *Kapha dosha* as it is *Ushna*, *Tikshna*, *Sukshma*, *Ashukari guna*.¹⁸ The heat transferred acts by removing the obstruction in the *srotas* and increases the blood circulation to the affected site thereby increasing the cellular activity and metabolism. However, it is postulated by some authors that afferent nerves stimulated by heat has an analgesic effect.

DISCUSSION

Each and every *Sthanika Chikitsa* explained in this study works on one basic principle i.e. vaginal route for has a higher bioavailability compared to oral route. The vaginal wall is very well suited for the absorption of drugs since it contains a vast network of blood vessels.

Moreover, the anatomically backward position of the vagina may help itself retaining of the drug thereby holding it in situ for a longer duration.

The drugs used for *Sthanika Chikitsa* acts by exerting its antiseptic, antimicrobial, antifungal, anti-inflammatory and analgesic actions.

Hence proper *Sthanika Chikitsa* with proper drugs gives potentially good result in *Streerogas*.

CONCLUSION

Sthanika Chikitsa plays an equally important role as *Abhyantara Chikitsa* in the management of various *Streeroga*. One should be knowing in detail about all the local therapies used in *Streeroga* for better results while treating the patients. *Ayurveda* the ancient form of medicine, has explained each and every aspect of treatment of

common gynecological problems faced by a woman. Modern treatment like vaginal douching, vaginal suppository, vaginal painting, cauterization are modified form of *Sthanika Chikitsa* which are already explained in *Ayurveda*. Each *Sthanika Chikitsa* holds its own importance and shows marvellous results when applied with proper indications strict aseptic precautions and extreme carefulness.

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