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## AGNIKARMA & PAIN MANAGEMENT

**Dr. Sandeep kumar Dubey. Preliminary M.S. (Ayu.) scholar, Department of Shalya Tantra, Major S.D. Singh P.G. Ayurvedic Medical College Farrukhabad (U.P.)**

### Abstract:

Efficient pain management has always been a hurdle. A pain-free life is the longing of everyone. Pain may be due to many pathologies. It may be either acute or chronic. It may be originating from muscle, tendon, ligament, joint, bones etc. Few of them are osteoarthritis/degenerative joint disorder, spondylosis etc. *Agnikarma* is a thermal, minimally invasive parasurgical procedure for all these kinds of pain. This involves the creation of controlled, pointed, therapeutic burns over the most tender part of the painful region.

**Key words:** *Agnikarma*, pain management, *Dahanopakarana*, *Shalaka*,

### Introduction:

*Agnikarma* is ideal for curing painful ailments such as sprains, heel pain, headaches, sciatica arthritis etc. It is usually done for 2 to 3 minutes.

### What is *Agnikarma*?

According to *Ayurveda*, *Agnikarma* is a superior para surgical procedure. This procedure aims at management of various afflictions by inflicting burns on the tissue surface directly by using different materials known as '*Dahanopakaranas*' (tools of cauterization).

### Why *Agnikarma*?

Simple and safe

Suits Muscle/tendon/ligament/joint/bone pain (musculoskeletal pain)

Cost-effective

Day-care procedure - No hospital stay

Routine unaffected

Drugless therapy (without medicines)

No side effects if performed skilfully and technically

Effective results in 2-4 weeks on an average (1 sitting per week)

Avoids/postpones surgery

Made in India

**What are tools of *Agnikarma*?**

These are different materials subjected to heat and used for therapy in different conditions. The specificity of tools of cauterization depends on the disease status concerned. For superficial conditions, materials used are of minimum latent heat, whereas in deeper tissues used objects are with maximum latent heat. On this concept, in classics, for the diseases of skin surfaces the materials used for *Agnikarma* are *Pippali* (Piper longum), *Aja Shakrit* (feces of Goat), *Godanta* (Teeth of Cow), *Shara* (Arrow), *Shalaka* (Probes), *Varti* (Wicks), *Suryakanta* (Variety of stone) etc. Likewise, for the diseases of muscles *Loha* (Iron), *Swarna* (Gold), *Tamra* (Copper) and *Kamsya* (bronze) are used. In deeper and strong tissues like bones, ligaments, tendons, vessels etc., *Madhu* (Honey), *Guda* (Jaggery), *Vasa* (Fat), *Ghrita* (Ghee), *Taila* (Oil), *Madhucchishta* (Bee wax ) are used.

**What are all the conditions treated with *Agnikarma*?**

Painful conditions of bones and joints

Joint stiffness

Muscle spasm

Tennis elbow

Calcaneal spur

Plantar fasciitis

Osteoarthritis

Headache

Sciatica

Early stages of Hernia

To remove the wart

To excise the corn from the heel

To excise the external piles

Disc prolapse

Low back ache

Trigger thumb

To remove the mucocele of lip, tongue etc.

To excise some extra growths of skin and muscle

For the excision of fistula tracks, etc.

## How *Agnikarma* (cauterization) helps to relieve the pain?

Here the heat, which is transferred to skin acts by removing the obstruction in the *Srotas* (minute channels) and increases the blood circulation to the affected site. The rate of any metabolic activity is increased by a rise in temperature. From the therapeutic point of view with an appropriate rise in temperature, all cell activity increases, including dilatation of vessels, cell motility, synthesis and release of chemical mediators. More blood circulation flushes away the inflammation and patient gets relief from the symptoms. Afferent nerves stimulated by heat are having an analgesic effect by acting on the gate control mechanism.

1. Improves local blood circulation.
2. Stimulation of regional nerves.
3. Increases tissue metabolism.
4. Decreases infection.
5. Stimulation of local inflammatory response (temporarily).
6. Reduces joint stiffness.
7. Muscle relaxation.

### Is there any contraindication for *Agnikarma* (cautery)?

Persons of *Pitta prakruti*, emaciated, children, old aged, sensitive, pregnant, multiple ulcers in the body, anaemic, obese, indigestion, alcoholic, poison affected, low immunity etc. are not recommended for this therapy.

### Is there any complications?

Improperly performed *Agnikarma* will lead to severe burning sensation, increased pain, destruction of tissue, suppuration, bleeding, non-healing ulcer formation etc.

Properly performed *Agnikarma* by skilled surgeon will give excellent result in several conditions. On the other hand improperly performed will lead to many complications.

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