



Case Study

## ROLE OF PANCHAKARMA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SURYAVARTA

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### ABSTRACT

*Suryavarta* is a classical Ayurvedic disease categorized under *Shiroroga*, characterized by a headache that intensifies with the rising sun and subsides after sunset. It bears a close resemblance to migraine in contemporary medicine. The etiopathogenesis of *Suryavarta* primarily involves vitiation of *Vata* and *Pitta Doshas* affecting the *Shirah*. Modern management often relies on analgesics, which provide temporary relief but fail to address the root cause, leading to recurrence and chronicity. Ayurveda offers a holistic approach, emphasizing *Shodhana* (bio-purification) therapies, particularly *Panchakarma*, to eliminate vitiated *Doshas* and restore homeostasis. The present study evaluates the effectiveness of *Panchakarma* therapies in a diagnosed case of *Suryavarta*. A 32-year-old female patient suffering from recurrent headache for five years was treated with a structured protocol including *Deepana-Pachana*, *Snehapana*, *Virechana Karma*, and *Nasya Karma*, followed by *Shamana Chikitsa*. Clinical assessment showed marked improvement in intensity, duration, and frequency of headache, along with relief in associated symptoms like photophobia and nausea. This case study highlights the significant role of *Panchakarma* in not only alleviating symptoms but also correcting the underlying *Dosha* imbalance, thereby preventing recurrence.

### INTRODUCTION

Headache disorders are among the most common neurological conditions worldwide, affecting individuals across all age groups. Among these, migraine is particularly debilitating due to its recurrent nature and associated symptoms such as nausea, photophobia, and phonophobia. Ayurveda describes several types of headaches under the broad category of *Shiroroga*, among which *Suryavarta* is a distinct clinical entity.

*Suryavarta* is described in classical Ayurvedic texts such as Sushruta Samhita and Ashtanga Hridaya. The condition is characterized by a headache that begins mildly at sunrise, gradually intensifies as the sun ascends, reaches peak severity at midday, and then

subsides as the sun sets. This diurnal variation is a hallmark feature distinguishing it from other types of *Shiroroga*.

“सूर्योदयात् प्रवृद्धोऽर्के मध्याह्ने चातिदारुणः, सायं शमं गच्छति।”

(Sushruta Samhita, Uttara Tantra 25)

The pathogenesis involves vitiation of *Vata* and *Pitta Doshas*, which localize in the *Shirah* (head region) and disturb normal physiological functions. Aggravated *Pitta* is particularly responsible for the burning sensation and worsening of symptoms with sunlight exposure, while *Vata* contributes to the throbbing and pulsatile nature of pain.

In modern medicine, migraine is understood as a neurovascular disorder involving trigeminovascular pathways, cortical spreading depression, and release of inflammatory mediators. Despite advances in pharmacotherapy, many patients experience incomplete relief and adverse effects.

Ayurveda provides a comprehensive management approach focusing on *Nidana Parivarjana* (avoidance of causative factors), *Shodhana*

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(detoxification), and *Shamana* (pacification). *Panchakarma* therapies play a crucial role in eliminating vitiated *Doshas* and restoring equilibrium.

## AIM AND OBJECTIVES

### AIM

To evaluate the significance of *Panchakarma* in the management of *Suryavarta*.

### OBJECTIVES

- To assess the clinical efficacy of *Virechana* and *Nasya Karma*.
- To evaluate improvement in symptoms such as headache intensity, duration, and frequency.
- To study the role of *Panchakarma* in preventing recurrence.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Study Design

Single case study

### Study Setting

Ayurvedic clinical setup

### Patient Selection

A diagnosed case of *Suryavarta* based on classical signs and symptoms was selected.

### Patient Information

- Age: 32 years
- Gender: Female
- Occupation: Teacher
- Socioeconomic Status: Middle class

### Chief Complaints

- Recurrent headache for 5 years
- Pain aggravated during daytime
- Photophobia
- Nausea and occasional vomiting
- Relief after sunset

### History of Present Illness

The patient reported episodic headache beginning in the early morning, gradually increasing in intensity, and reaching peak severity around noon. The pain was throbbing in nature, predominantly localized in the frontal and temporal regions. It was associated with intolerance to light, irritability, and nausea.

She had been taking conventional analgesics intermittently, which provided temporary relief but did not prevent recurrence.

### Personal History

- Diet: Predominantly spicy and irregular
- Sleep: Disturbed
- Bowel habits: Irregular

### Examination

#### General examination

- Pulse: 78/min
- BP: 120/80 mmHg

### Ashtavidha Pariksha

- *Nadi: Vata-Pittaja*
- *Jihva: Coated*
- *Mala: Irregular*
- *Mutra: Normal*
- *Shabda: Normal*
- *Sparsha: Slight warmth*
- *Drik: Photophobia*
- *Aakruti: Moderate*

### Dashavidha Pariksha

- *Prakriti: Vata-Pitta*
- *Vikriti: Vata-Pitta Dushti*
- *Sara: Madhyama*
- *Samhanana: Madhyama*
- *Satva: Madhyama*

### Diagnosis

Based on clinical features and Ayurvedic examination:

### Suryavarta (Vata-Pittaja Shiroroga)

### Treatment Protocol

#### 1. Purvakarma

##### Deepana-Pachana

- *Trikatu Churna* for 3 days  
Purpose: To enhance *Agni* and digest *Ama*

##### Snehapana

- *Go Ghrita* in increasing doses for 5 days  
Purpose: Oleation and preparation for *Shodhana*.

#### 2. Pradhana karma

##### Virechana karma

- Drug: *Trivrit Lehya*
- Dose: As per *Koshta* and *Bala*
- Observations: 12 *Vegas* achieved

### Rationale

*Virechana* is the best therapy for *Pitta Dosh*. It eliminates accumulated *Pitta* from the body, thereby reducing the burning sensation and inflammation associated with *Suryavarta*.

### Nasya Karma

- Drug: *Anu Taila*
- Dose: 6 drops per nostril
- Duration: 7 days

### Rationale

*Nasya* is the prime therapy for *Urdhvajatrugata Rogas*. It directly acts on the head region, clears channels, and nourishes sense organs.

#### 3. Paschat Karma

- *Samsarjana Krama* (graduated diet)
- Light and easily digestible diet

#### 4. Shamana Chikitsa

- *Sutshekhar Rasa* – 250mg twice daily for one month
- *Godanti Bhasma* – 250mg twice daily empty stomach with lukewarm water for one month
- *Brahmi Ghrita* – 5ml bed time with milk for one month.

**Assessment Criteria**

Parameter	Before treatment	After treatment
Headache intensity	8/10	2/10
Frequency	Daily	Once/week
Duration	6–8 hours	1–2 hours
Photophobia	Present	Absent
Nausea	Frequent	Rare

**RESULTS**

The patient showed significant improvement after completion of therapy:

- Reduction in headache intensity by 75%.
- Decrease in frequency from daily to once weekly.
- Marked relief in associated symptoms.
- Improved appetite and digestion.
- Better sleep quality.

No adverse effects were observed during the treatment.

**DISCUSSION**

- *Suryavarta* is primarily a *Vata-Pittaja* disorder with dominance of *Pitta*. The aggravation of symptoms with sunlight indicates the role of *Ushna* and *Teekshna* properties of *Pitta*. *Vata* contributes to the pulsatile nature of pain.
- *Panchakarma* therapies may influence neurovascular pathways involved in migraine. *Virechana* possibly reduces systemic inflammatory mediators, while *Nasya* may enhance drug delivery through olfactory pathways, influencing central nervous system activity. This integrative perspective strengthens the scientific validity of Ayurvedic interventions.

**Role of Panchakarma*****Virechana Karma***

*Virechana* is the most effective therapy for *Pitta* elimination. By removing vitiated *Pitta* from its main seat (small intestine), it reduces systemic *Pitta* levels, thereby alleviating symptoms like burning sensation and photophobia.

***Nasya Karma***

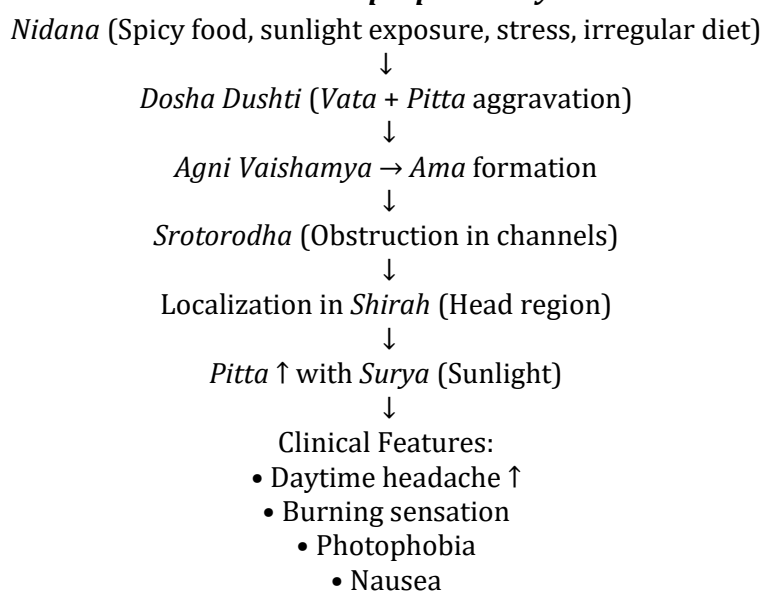
*Nasya* directly targets the *Shirah* region. It helps in clearing *Srotorodha* (channel obstruction) and enhances oxygenation and nourishment of brain tissues.

***Snehapana***

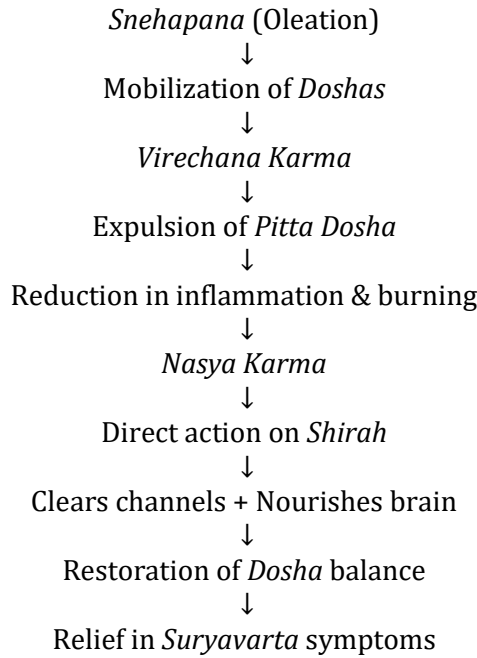
*Snehapana* pacifies *Vata* and prepares the body for effective elimination of *Doshas*.

**Probable Mode of Action**

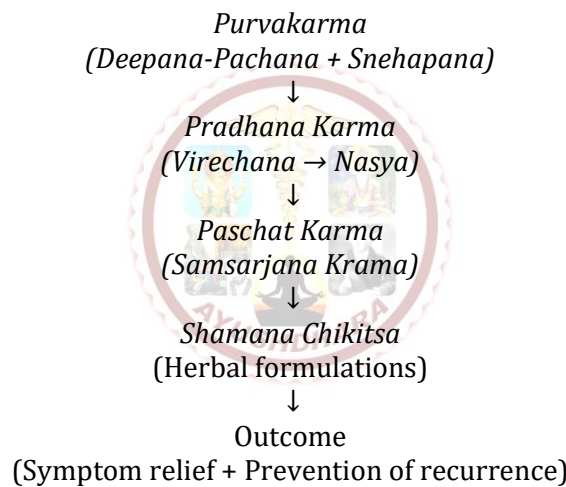
- Detoxification of accumulated metabolites
- Regulation of neurovascular mechanisms
- Reduction of inflammatory mediators
- Balancing of *Doshas*
- Improvement of mental and physical health

**Flow chart 1: Samprapti of Suryavarta**

**Flow chart 2: Panchakarma Action Mechanism**



**Flowchart 3: Treatment Protocol Overview**



**Before Treatment**

- Severe headache
- Daily frequency
- Photophobia
- Nausea

**Panchakarma Intervention**

**After treatment**

- Mild headache
- Reduced frequency
- No photophobia
- Improved quality of life

**CONCLUSION**

This case study demonstrates that Panchakarma therapies, particularly Virechana and Nasya, are highly effective in managing Suryavarta. The treatment not only reduces symptoms but also addresses the root cause, preventing recurrence. Ayurveda thus provides a safe and holistic alternative in the management of migraine-like disorders.

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