



Case Study

PATRA PINDA POTTALI SWEDANA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF GRIDHRASI

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ABSTRACT

In Ayurveda, *Gridhrasi* word denotes an abnormal gait resembling vulture gait. It comes under the eighty *Vataja Nanatmaja Vyadhi*. *Gridhrasi* describes a condition in which *Stambha* (stiffness), *Ruk* (pain), *Toda* (pricking pain), *Spandana* (tingling sensation) extends downwards from *Sphika*, *Kati*, *Prustha* (gluteal region, pelvic and lumbosacral region) towards *Janu*, *Jangha* and *Paada* (knees, legs and feet) respectively. In modern medicine, it can be correlated with sciatica. Sciatica is the lumbar spinal root pain that radiates from the lower back to hips, posterior part of legs, knees and feet. In this study, 42-year-old male patient complaints of acute severe lower backache radiating to left lower limb with restricted range of motion since last 15 days. The disease was diagnosed as *Ghridhrasi* (sciatica). As general treatment protocol of *Vaat Vyadhi*, *Snehana* and *Swedana* can be used in *Gridhrasi* treatment. As mentioned in *Samhita*, *Swedana* has *Sheeta*, *Shoola*, *Stambha*, *Gauravata Hara* properties. *Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana* is a type of *Sankara Sweda* which comes under *Saagni Swedana*. The patient was treated with *Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana* for a period of 7 days. The treatment protocol had given significant relief. This case highlights the potential of Ayurvedic intervention in the management of *Gridhrasi* (sciatica).

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, sciatica is correlated with *Gridhrasi* which is a *Vataja Nanatmaja Vyadhi*. It is of two types based on *Dosha* involved- *Vaataj*, *Vaat-Kaphaj*. Symptoms of *Vaataj Gridhrasi* include *Stambha* (stiffness), *Ruk* (pain), *Toda* (pricking pain), *Spandana* (Tingling sensation) in *Sphik Poorva*, *Kati*, *Prustha*, *Janu*, *Jangha* & *Paada* respectively whereas in *Vaat-Kaphaj Gridhrasi* symptoms may also include *Tandra* (drowsiness), *Guruta* (heaviness in body) and *Aruchi* (anorexia).^[1] The treatment modalities for *Gridhrasi* as a type of *Vataj Vyadhi* includes *Snehana* and *Swedana*^[2].

Sciatica is a common complaint that affecting a major proportion of the population with a lifetime incidence of 10% - 40%.

Annual incidence rate is between 1%-5% with peak incidence occurs in fourth decade of life. Any condition which is structurally impacting or compressing the sciatic nerve may cause sciatica. Sciatic nerve is the largest and longest nerve in the body with a diameter of up to 2cm which roots from L4 to S3. The sciatic nerve provides direct motor function to the hamstrings and lower extremity adductors and indirect motor function to calf muscles, anterior lower leg muscles, and select intrinsic foot muscles. The terminal branches indirectly contribute to the sensation in posterior and lateral lower limb and planter aspect of foot. Sciatica is the lumbar spinal root pain that radiates along the sciatic nerve, running from the lower back through hips and extending downwards to legs, knees and below with paraesthesia in foot.^[3] The most common cause of sciatica is herniated or bulging lumbar intervertebral disc.

In the present case, the patient complained of acute severe lower backache radiating to left lower limb with restricted range of motion, which was diagnosed as *Gridhrasi* (sciatica) as per Ayurveda and treated with a seven-day treatment protocol involving *Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana*. *Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana* is a type of *Sankar Saagni Sweda*^[4] derived

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from the words *Patra* (leaves), *Pinda* means bolus, *Swedana* means sweating. As mentioned in *Samhita*, *Swedana* has *Sheeta*, *Shoola*, *Stambha*, *Gauravata Hara* properties^[5], *Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana* is the sudation performed by a specially prepared bolus of medicinal leaves (*Arka*, *Nirgundi*, *Eranda*, *Shigru*, *Dhatura* etc.) which have *Vatakaphashamaka* properties. This case report highlights the effect *Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana* in *Gridhrasi* management.

Patient Information

A 42-year-old male patient, came to the outpatient department of Ayurvedic Hospital on February 06, 2026, with the complaint of lower back pain which was acute in onset and radiates to left lower limb with painfully restricted forward bending since last 15 days. He was having history of heavy weightlifting. There was no history of HTN, T₂DM, PTB or any surgical intervention. He was taking non-vegetarian diet once a week, have normal appetite, regular bowel movements and disturbed sleep due to pain.

Clinical Findings

On General examination, patient was well oriented to time, place and person, memory was intact. Blood pressure– 146/96 mmHg, pulse Rate– 88 bpm ®, respiratory rate– 20/min.

On Systemic examination, patient was presented with antalgic gait, tenderness presented at left paravertebral area of L4-L5 region. Restricted range of motion of lower back with painful flexion and extension. Muscle tonicity and bulk was normal with power of 5/5 in both upper and lower limbs. On special examination, the Straight Leg Raise (SLR) test came out 40° for left lower limb, Pump Handle Test (PHT) came out Positive in left lower limb.

Dashvidha Pareeksha (tenfold examination of the patient)

Patient was having *Kaphaj Prakriti* (physical constitution), *Lakshaya Nimitaj Vikriti* (cause to effect vitiation) with *Madhyam Satva* (medium psychic condition), *Madhyama Saara* (medium tissue elements), *Madhyama Samhanana* (medium compactness or tissues or organs), *Sarvarasa Saatmaya* (superior adaptability to diet), *Madhyama Pramaana* (medium measurement of body constituents), *Madhyama Vaya* (middle age), *Madhyama Aahara Shakti* (medium power for intake of food) and *Madhyama Jarana Shakti* (medium digestive power) and *Avara Vyayama Shakti* (low power of performing exercise).

Timeline

The patient came to the hospital on 6th February 2026 and *Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana* was done for a period of 7 days.

Diagnostic Assessment

The patient was assessed based on Clinical features (pain), Visual Analogue Scale (VAS),^[6] SLR, PHT, range of motion. Assessment was done on day 1, before the treatment and on day 7 after the completion of the treatment.

Therapeutic Intervention

The treatment modality for *Vaatvyaadhi* as mentioned in the Ayurvedic texts includes *Snehana* and *Swedana*. A treatment plan of 7 days, having *Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana* as intervention was planned based on the pathology.

Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana

Purvakarma

Collection of essential materials for *Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana*

1. *Patra* (leaves) - *Nirgundi* (*Vitex negundo* L.), *Shigru* (*Moringa oleifera* Lam.), *Eranda* (*Ricinus communis* L.), *Arka* (*Calotropis procera* Linn.), *Dhatura* (*Datura metel* L.)
2. Other material required– *Nimbu* (lemon)– 2 pieces, *Haridra* (turmeric)– 10gm, *Saindhava*– 10gm, *Rasona* (garlic)– 50gm, *Yavani* (carom seeds)-10gm, *Methika* (fenugreek seeds)-10 gm, medicated oil (*Murrivena* oil).



Preparation of Pottali– All the available leaves were thoroughly washed and cut into small pieces. In a heating vessel, 100ml of the *Murrivena* oil added, followed by adding *Nimbu* by cutting it into small pieces and fry until it attains brownish red colour. Then *Rasona*, *Yavani*, *Methika* paste was added to it. The ingredients were fried until the mixture turns into light brown shade. Next, chopped leaves were added and shallow fried until they were well incorporated. After frying, *Saindhava* and *Haridra* added to it. Once all the ingredients got blended thoroughly, the mixture was transferred to a clean cotton cloth and a *Pottali* was formed out of it. The *Pottali* was then dipped in *Murrivena* oil, and a gentle massage was performed over the affected area.



Preparation of the Patient- The patient was seated comfortably with his legs extended on the table. *Murrivena* oil [7] applied for *Abhyanga* over lower back and left lower limb for approximately 10 minutes. This helps to relax the body, improves circulation, and prepare the patient for the *Swedana* procedure.

Pradhana Karma- After doing *Purvakarma*, the prepared *Pottali* was heated in *Murrivena* oil in a hot iron pan until it reached the temperature between 42°C to 46°C. Before application, gently press the *Pottali* against the dorsal side of the hand to check the temperature. Once it got reached the ideal temperature, therapist apply the *Pottali* with mild pressure over the lower back and left lower limb. On joints the *Pottali* was moved in a circular motion. *Pottali* started with light pressure, progressed with deeper pressure which can be tolerated by the patient. Throughout the procedure *Pottali's* temperature was maintained by reheating it when necessary. Duration of the procedure was 30 min for 7 days.

Paschat Karma- After the procedure, the affected area was wiped off using a clean cloth. It was advised to avoid prolonged exposure to wind which may aggravate the condition. Used *Pottalis* were discarded after every 2 days and new *Pottalis* were made for procedure.

Outcome

After the completion of treatment, there was improvement in pain, tenderness and range of motion.

Outcome

S.No.	Parameter	Before Treatment	After Treatment
1	Pain	VAS 7	VAS 0
2	Tenderness	Present	Absent
3	Lumbosacral spine flexion (using Goniometer)	20°	60°
4	Lumbosacral spine Extension (using Goniometer)	10°	30°
5	SLR	40°	90°
6	PHT	Positive	Negative

DISCUSSION

Gridhrasi is a *Vataj Nanatmaj Vyaadhi*. As mentioned in Ayurvedic texts, treatment protocol of *Vaata Vyaadhi* includes *Snehana* and *Swedana* therapy. This report details the case of a patient diagnosed as *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) who underwent 7 days of Ayurvedic *Panchakarma* treatment. The treatment protocol incorporates *Sthanika Abhyanga* and *Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana* aimed at alleviation of pain, tenderness and range of motion.

Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana is a type of *Snigdha Swedana* appropriate for *Vata* disorder^[8,9]. It is a specialized ayurvedic therapeutic procedure, provides an *Ayurvedic* approach in managing musculoskeletal and joint disorders, particularly those linked to imbalance of *Vata* and *Kapha Dosha*. This treatment utilized medicinal leaves and other ingredients whose properties are mentioned below:

Ingredients	Rasa	Guna	Veerya
<i>Nirgundi</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Eranda</i>	<i>Madhura, Kashaya</i>	<i>Snigdha, Tikshana, Sukshma</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Arka</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshana</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Shigru</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshana</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Datura</i>	<i>Tikta, Katu</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha, Vyavayi, Vikashi</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Rasona</i>	All Rasa except Amla	<i>Snigdha, Guru, Tikshana, Sara</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Methika</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Snigdha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Yavani</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshana</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Saindhava</i>	<i>Lavana</i>	<i>Sukshma, Laghu, Snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>
<i>Nimbu</i>	<i>Amla</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Haridra</i>	<i>Tikta, Katu</i>	<i>Ruksha, Laghu</i>	<i>Ushna</i>

With all these properties, the ingredients help in alleviation of *Vata Dosha*. Leaves of the *Nirgundi* plant have analgesic, anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory, antihistaminic properties and is a muscle relaxant^[10]. *Dhatura* leaves have anti-inflammatory properties and vapours helps in relieving rheumatism and gout pain^[11]. *Shigru* leaves are known to reduce severe pain^[12]. *Eranda* leaves have *Vatahara* properties^[13]. *Arka* leaves have anti-inflammatory, analgesic, detoxifying properties^[14].

Murivenna contains 9 herbal ingredients (*Palandu, Arka, Karanja, Kumari, Shatavari, Shigru, Paribhadra, Tambula, Vasuka*) along with coconut oil. It is very effective in acute injuries, relieving pain and joint inflammation. Properties of *Murivenna* oil ingredients are mentioned as:

Ingredients	Rasa	Guna	Veerya
<i>Palandu</i>	<i>Madhura, Katu</i>	<i>Guru, Snigdha, Teekshana</i>	<i>Isat Ushna</i>
<i>Karanja</i>	<i>Tikt, Katu, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu, Tikshana</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Arka</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshana</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Shigru</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshana</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Kumari</i>	<i>Tikta, Madhura</i>	<i>Snigdha, Picchila</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>
<i>Shatavari</i>	<i>Madhura, Tikta</i>	<i>Snigdha, Guru</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>
<i>Paribhadra</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Tambula</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu, Tikshana, Vishada, Kshara</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Vasuka</i>	<i>Madhura, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>
Coconut oil	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Guru, Snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>

Patra Pinda Pottali Swedana, is a *Snigdha Sweda* where *Snehana* works by lubricating and softening the tissues, while *Swedana* which have properties like *Ushna, Teekshana, Sukshama, Sara*, increases the metabolic rate of the body. *Ushna Guna* dilates the capillaries and increases the circulation

which helps in more elimination of waste products and more absorption of *Sneha* or drugs through skin. *Sara* and *Sukshama Guna* causes *Leenadosha* to liquify and come out through micropores of sweat glands and causes *Strotoshodhana*. *Swedana* cause opening of bodily channels, provides symptomatic relief from pain

and stiffness. It also promotes overall detoxification and rejuvenation of the body.

CONCLUSION

This case report highlights the potential of Ayurvedic treatment in alleviating *Gridhrasi* (sciatica) symptoms. This study shows satisfactory improvement in the symptoms (pain, tenderness, range of motion) of *Gridhrasi* (sciatica). The patient shows significant improvement in symptoms, VAS score after 7 days of Ayurvedic treatment. Further research, particularly large-scale RCTs are necessary to validate these findings.

Declaration of Patient Consent

Patient has given his consent for reporting the case along with the clinical information in the journal. The patient understands that his name and initials will not be published and due efforts will be made to conceal his identity, but anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

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