



## Review Article

### A BIRD'S EYE VIEW ON AHARAJA NIDANAS IN GRIDHRASI

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#### ABSTRACT

*Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) is one among the *Natamaja vata vyadhis*. It is most commonly seen in the society as an eminent problem. The patient is unable to perform his daily routine activity easily. Symptoms seen are *Toda* (pain), initially affects *Sphik* (gluteal region) as well as the posterior aspects of the *Uru* (thigh), *Janu* (knee), *Jangha* (calf) and *Pada* (foot). Though *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) is the *Vata Vyadhi* but *Kapha* is the *Anugata Dosha*. So it is classified into 2 types, *Vataja* and *Vata-Kaphaja*. *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) is one among the severe debilitating disease. *Acharaya Sushruta* mentioned most of the *Hetus* (etiology) for *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) from which *Vata Vaigunya* is important to cause disease. *Vata* is the main culprit in this disease and other *Dosha* may be involved. *Gridhrasi* is more common among 30 to 50 years of age group. *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) can be correlated with Sciatica in contemporary science. Sciatica is the name given to pain caused by irritation of the sciatic nerve. The sciatic nerve is the longest and widest nerve in the human body. It runs from the lower back, through the buttocks, and down the legs, ending just below the knee. In the present article it's been highlighted regarding the disease *Gridhrasi* and its *Aharaja Nidanans* (dietetic causative factors) as per the scattered references available in the various classical texts.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the oldest and traditional medicine. Ayurveda gives equal importance to preventive and curative aspects of the disease. According to Ayurveda, physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being can be considered as *Arogya* (Health).

The name *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) is given because gait of the patient resembles like gait of "Vulture"<sup>[1]</sup>. *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) is *Vataja nanatamaja vyadhi* and the main culprit behind this is *Vata Dosha*. Acharya Charaka in *Chikitsa Sthana* describes *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) as mainly of 2 types *Vataja* and *Vatakaphaja*. The cardinal features are *Ruk* (pain), *Toda* (pricking sensation), *Muhur-spandana* (twitching) and *Sthambha* (stiffness) in *Sphik* (buttocks), *Kati* (lumbar), *Uru* (thigh), *Janu* (knee), *Jangha* (calf) and *Pada* (foot) in order and *Sakthna Ksepha Nighrahat*<sup>[2]</sup> i.e., restricted lifting of the leg.

In modern parlance the above condition is described in which pain is experienced along the course and in distribution of Sciatic nerve. It is known as Sciatica. Sciatic nerve runs from the lower back, through the buttocks, and down the legs, ending just below the knee.<sup>[3]</sup> Radicular pain in the distribution of the sciatic nerve, resulting from herniation of one or more lumbar intervertebral discs, is a frequent and often debilitating event. The lifetime incidence of this condition is estimated to be between 13% to 14%.<sup>[4]</sup> It is a common condition affecting over 3% of the population at any one time.

#### Aims and Objectives

1. To understand the *Nidana panchakas* of *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica).
2. Detailed understanding of the possible *Aharaja Nidanans* (Dietetic factors) of the disease, *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) as per various classical references.

## Materials and Methods

### Source of Data

- Literary source
- Classical text books of Ayurveda
- Text books of contemporary science
- Authenticated website
- Research journals

### Review of Literature

#### Etymological Derivation of *Gridhrasi*

##### *Vyutpatti*

The word *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) is in feminine gender which is derived from the *Dhatu* "Gridhu" that means to covet, desire, and strive after greedily or eager for.

The word *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) indicates typical character of pain and also gait of patient. The patient walks like the bird "Gridhra" (Vulture) and patient legs become tense and slightly curved as that of vulture. So the term *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) might be given to the disease.

#### *Nirukti* According to Different Acharyas

Following derivations are taken from different text books in Sanskrit literature substantiates the same.

- *Gridhramapisyati, 'Syati'-as- 'Kshepana'*
- "Urusandhau Vatarogah"<sup>[5]</sup>
- "Gridhramiva Syati Gacchati"

The disease *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) is said to cause an abnormal throwing action of affected leg. In Sanskrit word *Syaati* in *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) means throwing action.

The reference from *Shabdha Kalpa Druma* states that, the word *Grudhra*<sup>[6]</sup> refers to desiring, greedily, eager for, great desire for.

In Monier Williams, Sanskrit-English dictionary it is said that, *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) is

**Table 1: Types According to Different Acharyas**

<i>Gridhrasi</i> type	<i>Charaka</i>	<i>Vangasena</i>
<i>Vataja</i>	<i>Stambha</i> (stiffness), <i>Ruk</i> (pain), <i>Toda</i> (pricking sensation), <i>Spandana</i> (tingling sensation)	<i>Dehavakrata</i> (increase in normal curvature of spine), <i>Sandhisuran</i> (throbbing pain in joints) <i>Stabhddata</i> (stiffness)
<i>Vata kaphaja</i>	<i>Tandra</i> (drowsiness), <i>Gaurava</i> (heaviness), <i>Arochaka</i> (anorexia)	<i>Staimitya</i> (freezing sensation), ( <i>Mukhapraseka</i> (excessive salivation) <i>Vahnimardava</i> (sluggishness of <i>Jataragni</i> ), <i>Bhuktadwesa</i> (aversion towards food)

#### *Nidana* Panchakas of *Gridhrasi*

##### (*Vata Vyadhi*) According to Acharya Charaka

*Nidana*: The *Nidana* (etiology) can be classified into 2 types i.e.,

Rheumatism affecting the loins. Similar reference is also found in "Vaidyaka Shabha Sindhu."

#### Synonyms According to Different Acharyas

Following are the synonyms of *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica)

##### • *Ringhini*<sup>[7]</sup> (*Vachaspathi*)

The word *Ringhini* means the disease that cause to creep or crawl or that makes a person to move slowly.

##### • *Randhrini*<sup>[8]</sup> (*Dalhana*)

The word *Randhrinee* indicates point or rupture.

##### • *Radhina*<sup>[9]</sup> (*Aadmalla and Kaashirama*)

The word *Radhina* indicates pressing, compressing or destroying.

#### Views on *Gridhrasi* by Different Acharyas

• **Acharya Charak**: In *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) pain starts in *Kati* (Lumbar) and descends to *Nitamba* (gluteal region), *Uru* (posterior aspect of thigh), *Janu* (knee), *Jangha* (calf), *Padam* (foot) in order of sequence.<sup>[10]</sup>

• **Acharya Sushruta**: It is described that *Kandara* (tendons) *Dusti* of leg occurs due to vitiated *Vata* and involves from the part of *Vankshansandhi* (hip joint) to leg, unilateral or bilateral.<sup>[11]</sup>

• **Acharya Vagbhata**: Describes same as that of *Acharya Sushruta*.<sup>[12]</sup>

• **Acharya Madhava**: Describes same as that of *Acharya Charaka* but has given additional symptoms like *Dehasyapravakrata* (increase in normal curvature of spine), *Bhaktadvesha* (aversion towards food) and *Mukhapraseka* (Excessive salivation).<sup>[13]</sup>

• **Yogaratanakar**: Follows *Acharya Charaka's* description.

*Aharaja Nidana* (dietetic factors) and *Viharaja Nidana* (behavioral causes).<sup>[14]</sup>

**Aharaja Nidana:** The food which we consume like *Sheeta* (cold), *Ruksha* (dry) etc.

**Viharaja Nidana:** The improper activities like *ati plavana* (excessive swimming), *Ativyayama* (excessive exercise), and *Ativyayama* (excessive sexual intercourse).

**Poorvarupa:** The premonitory symptoms are *Avakata Lakshanas* (not seen).<sup>[15]</sup>

**Rupa:** The symptoms along are *Sphik* (gluteal region) *Purva Kati* (lumbar) *Prushta* (back), *Uru* (thigh) *Janu* (knee) *Jangha* (calf) *Padam* (foot) *Kramata* (in order) i.e., *Stambha* (stiffness), *Ruk* (pain), *Toda* (pricking Sensation), *Gruhanati spanadata muhur muhur* (feeling tingling sensation on and off).<sup>[16]</sup>

**Samprapti**<sup>[17]</sup>

*Nidana Sevana* [*Ruksha* (dry), *Sheeta* (cold)]



*Dosha Dushya Sammurchana* occurs (*Vata* and *Kapha Dosha*) [*Rasa* (liquid), *Asthi* (bone), *Dushya*]



*Sroto Dushti* occurs due to *Sneha Guna Abhava* and *Vata* gets accumulated in *Srotas*



*Gridhrasi*

**Upasaya:** The one which elevates the disease like *Sarpi* (ghee), *Vasa* (muscle fat) and *Majja* (bone marrow) etc.<sup>[18]</sup>

**Aharaja Hetu in Gridhrasi**

The word 'Nidana' (etiology) is used in Ayurveda classics in a broad sense. This word is derived from Sanskrit *Dhatu* 'Ni' which carries the meaning to determine (*Ni-Nishchaya Deeyate Jnanam*). This word either refers to

etopathogenesis of disease in general or the aetiology of the illness in the particular.

Since *Gridhrasi* is regarded as *Vatyavyadhi* of *Nanatmaja* type, the factors that precipitate *Prakopa* of *Vata* can also be taken as the *Nidana* (aetiology) for *Gridhrasi* (*Sciatica*).

Dietetic factors play major role as causative factors for the pathogenicity of various diseases. Henceforth will be explaining in detail regarding possible *Aharaja nidanas* (dietetic factors) responsible for the pathogenicity of the disease *Gridhrasi* (*Sciatica*).

**Aharaja hetu:** The causative dietetic factors included under this group have been again subdivided into the following 8 groups:

- **Dravyatah:** In this group all the *Aharaja Dravyas* (dietetic factors) responsible for *Vata Prakopa* has been included.
- **Gunatah:** This group includes the *Ahara Dravyas* (dietetic factors) possessing *Gunas* (quality) like *Ruksha* (dry), *Sheeta* (cold) etc.
- **Rasatah:** The *Ahara Dravyas* (dietetic factors) possessing various tastes like *Katu* (pungent), *Tikta* (bitter) and *Kashaya* (astringent) responsible for *Vata Dosha Prakopa*.
- **Karmatah:** Excessive use of *Vishtambhi Ahara* (food which is cause for constipation) leads to a *Prakopa* of *Vata*.
- **Veeryatah:** or instances, *Ahara Dravyas* (dietetic factors) possessing *Sheeta Veerya* (cold potency) cause *Prakopa* of *Vata*.
- **Matratah:** The quantity of *Ahara* (food) can be considered.
- **Kalatah:** The *Vata Prakopa* occurs at the end of digestion (*Bhukte Jeeryati Bhojane Cha*).

The following *Aharaja Hetus* (dietetic causes) from various classical texts are taken *Charaka* (C.S), *Sushruta uttartastra* (S.U), *Astanga Sangraha* (A.S), *Astanga Hrudaya* (A.H), *Bhava Prakasha* (B.P)

**Table 2: Aharaja Hetu (Dietetic causes)**

	C.S.	S.U.	A.S.	A.H.	B.P.
<i>Adhaki</i> ( <i>Cajanus cajan</i> )	-	+	-	-	-
<i>Bisa</i> ( <i>Nelumbo nucifera</i> )	-	+	+	-	-
<i>Chanaka</i> ( <i>Cicer arietinum</i> )	-	-	+	-	-
<i>Chirabhata</i> ( <i>Cucumis melo</i> )	-	-	+	-	-
<i>Harenu</i> ( <i>Pisum sativum</i> )	-	+	-	-	-
<i>Jambava</i> ( <i>Eugenia jambolena</i> )	-	-	+	-	-
<i>Kalaya</i> ( <i>Lathyrus sativus</i> )	-	+	+	-	-
<i>Karira</i> ( <i>Capparis decidua</i> )	-	-	+	-	-
<i>Kalinga</i> ( <i>Holarrhena antidysentrica</i> )	-	-	+	-	-
<i>Koradusha</i> ( <i>Paspalum scorbiculatum</i> )	-	+	-	-	-

Masoora ( <i>Lens culinaris</i> )	-	+	-	-	-
Mudga ( <i>Phaseolus mungo</i> )	-	+	-	-	-
Nishpava ( <i>Dolichos lablab</i> )	-	+	-	-	-
Neevara ( <i>Hygroryza aristata</i> )	-	+	-	-	-
Shaluka ( <i>Nelumbium speciosum</i> )	-	-	+	-	-
Shushka shaka (Dry vegetables)	-	+	-	-	-
Shymaka ( <i>Setaria italic</i> )	-	+	-	-	-
Tinduka ( <i>Diospyros tomentos</i> )	-	-	+	-	-
Trunadhanya (Grassy grain sp.)	-	-	+	-	-
Tumba ( <i>Lagenaria vulgaris</i> )	-	-	+	-	-
Uddalaka (A Variety of <i>Paspalum scrobiculatum</i> )	-	+	-	-	-
Varaka ( <i>Carthamus tinctorius</i> )	-	+	-	-	-
Viroodhaka (Germinated seeds)	-	-	+	-	-

**Gunataha**

Rukshana (Ununctous diet)	+	+	+	+	+
Laghvanna (Light diet)	-	+	+	-	+
Gurvanna (Heavy diet)	-	-	+	+	-
Sheetanna (Cold diet)	+	-	+	-	-

**Rasataha**

Kashayanna (Astringent taste)	-	+	+	+	+
Katvanna (Acidic taste)	-	+	+	+	+
Tiktanna (Bitter taste)	-	+	+	+	+

**Kalataha**

Adyashana (Eating before digestion of previous food)	-	+	-	-	-
Jeernanta (After digestion)	-	+	+	+	+
Pramitashana (Taking food at improper time)	-	-	+	+	+

**Matrataha**

Abhojana (Fasting)		+	+	-	-	+
Alpashana (less intake of food)		+	-	+	+	-
Vishamashana (intake of food in improper time irrespective of quantity)		-	+	-	-	-

**Karmataha**

Vishtambhi (diet cause for constipation)	-	-	+	-	-
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**Veerayataha**

Sheeta (cold potency)	-	-	-	-	-
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**Table 3: Summary Chart of Aharaja Nidan**

Ayurveda Samhita	Dravyatah	Gunatah	Rasath	Karmath	Veeryath	Matrath	Kalatah
Charaka	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
Sushruta	13	2	3	0	0	2	2
Astanga Sangraha	12	4	3	1	0	1	2
Astanga Hridaya	0	2	3	0	0	1	2
Bhava prakash	0	2	3	0	0	1	2

## DISCUSSION

Now a day's younger and elder people population is falling prey to *Vatika* diseases. *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) is one among the *Vataja Nanatamaja Vyadhi*. *Vatadosha* plays vital role in *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica). Among five types of *Vata*, *Apana* and *Vyana Vata* play a vital role in causing *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica). *Apana Vayu* resides in the lower part of the body especially *Kati* (low back), *Basti* etc. Because of various *Hetus* (causes), *Vyana Vayu* gets vitiated. *Gridhrasi* is a painful condition; it hampers normal activity of the person, to both lower extremities and any one extremity. Almost all signs and symptoms of *Gridhrasi* can be correlated with Sciatica.

In *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica), *Sakthi Utkshepa Nigrahat*<sup>[19]</sup> is the main sign i.e., lifting of the lower extremity is affected. *Pakwasaya* is the *Udbhava Sthana* as it is *Vataja Nanatamaja Vyadhi*. The vitiated *Dosha* affects the *Khandara* (tendons), there is pain in the leg radiating to *Sphik* (buttocks), *Prushta* (lumbar), *Uru* (thigh), *Janu* (knee), *Jangha* (calf) and *Pada* (foot). *Vata Vyadhi Nidana* should be taken as *Gridhrasi Nidana* (sciatica causes) separate *Nidanas* (*hetus*) are not explained.

*Acharya Charak* states that for treatment of disease it is important to take proper history of patient and know the *Nidanas* (aetiology) of the *Vyadhi* (disease). *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) have only *Samanaya Nidana* (common etiology). *Rasa* (liquid), *Rakta* (blood), *Meda* (muscle fat), *Asthi* (bone) and *Majja* (bone marrow) are involved in the development of the disease.<sup>[20]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

*Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) is the painful condition in which patient is unable to perform his routine activities properly due to the pain. As due to the predominance of *Vata Dosha* especially *Vyana* and *Apana*, *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) is described under *Nanatamaja Vyadhi* by *Charaka*. *Gridhrasi Hetus* (Sciatica causes) which are described in various *Samhitas* are mostly of *Vatadosha* dominant rather than other two *Doshas* i.e., *Pitta* and *Kapha*. *Vata* can be aggravated by *Swanidana* (Intake of dietetic factors which causes disease), *Dhatukshaya* (Decrease of fundamental structures which supports body) and *Margaavarodha* (Obstruction of pathway).

*Acharya Sushruta* mentioned most of the *Hetu* (causes) which causes *Gridhrasi* (sciatica) *Katishula* (low back pain) is the main alarming symptom in most of the disease. In contemporary science *Gridhrasi* can be correlated to Sciatica.

Nowhere in the classics can we find specific *Nidanas* (Causes) mentioned for the disease *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica). Thus it can be concluded that above mentioned *Aharaja Nidanas* (dietetic factors) explained under *Samanya Vatavyadhi Nidana* play main role in causing the disease *Vataja* and *Vata-Kaphaja Gridhrasi* (Sciatica).

*Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) being a *Vata vyadhi*, *Samanya poorvarupa* of *Vata vyadhi* is been explained as the *Poorvarupa* of *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica). *Acharya charaka* has explained *Avyakta Lakshanas* as *Poorvarupa* of *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica).

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