



## Review Article

### A CRITICAL REVIEW ON MANAGEMENT OF ARSHA (HEMORRHOIDS) IN AYURVEDA

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*Arsha, Hemorrhoids, Ano-rectal diseases, Nidana, Samprapti, Chikitsa.*

#### ABSTRACT

The *Shalya tantra*, a prime branch of *Astanga Ayurveda* is rich in much aspect of modern surgical concepts. *Sushruta* elaborately described the advances of the *Tantra* in various Ano-rectal diseases, as *Arsha* is one among them. The term '*Arsha*' is derived from "*Ru Gatau*" *Dhatu* with the suffix "*Asun*", gives the meaning of as violent as enemy. It is the commonest ano rectal disease and affects anyone at any time. In Ayurveda, the sufficient descriptions are described regarding etiology, pathology, symptomatology, types and management or treatment measures of *Arsha*. All the classics of Ayurveda enumerate that the present sedentary life style, irregularities in food intake, taking junk, spicy, non-fibrous foods, inactive occupation and mental stress etc., are causative factors for '*Arsha*' (Hemorrhoid) and that leads to hypo function of digestive enzymes, which in turn leads to constipation, itching, burning sensation and pain in the region of *Guda* and finally bleeds and thus *Arsharoga* originates. *Acharyas* described various *Chikitsa* modalities of *Arsha* critically for prevention and cure of *Arsha* along with avoiding causative factors (*Nidanaparivarjana*). *Acharya Sushruta* has described four dimensions of the treatment for *Arsha*, all these are applied on the basis of *Dosha* involvement and stages of *Arsha* like *Bheshaja Karma*, *Shastra Karma*, *Kshara Karma*, *Agni Karma*, similarly *Snehana*, *Swedana*, *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Asthapana* and *Anuvasana Basti* for *Vataja Arsha*, *Virechana* for *Pittaj Arsha*, *Aharadravya* mixed with *Sunthi* and *kulatha* for *Kaphaj Arsha* and *Shamana Chikitsa* for *Raktaj Arsha* etc.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the science of life since time immemorial and has been showing the ideal way of living which promises a disease free, healthy and long life. The *Shalyatantra*, a prime branch is rich in much aspect of modern surgical concepts. *Acharya Sushruta*, the father of surgery elaborately described about the *Arsharoga* in his treatise and considered as one among the *Mahagada* and indefinitely curable. *Arsha* as the dreadful disease can affect anyone, anytime, anywhere. In present era, each individual in his/her life time would have suffered from any one of the complaint of hemorrhoids. *Arsha* is defined as the fleshy projection which creates obstruction in anal passage, kills the life like

enemy.<sup>[1]</sup> The cardinal etiological factors of *Arshas* are binge and sedentary lifestyle that leads to hypo function of digestive enzymes, which in turn leads to constipation, itching, burning sensation and pain in the region of *Guda* and finally bleeds and thus *Arsha roga* originates<sup>[2]</sup>. *Arsha* occurs in *Guda* region, which is undoubtedly a *Marma* (vital part). Manifestation of the disease occurs due to many factors ex., improper diet intake, prolonged standing or sitting, faulty habits of defecation etc, which results in derangement of *Jatharagni* leading to vitiation of *Tridosha*, mainly *Vata dosha*. These vitiated *Doshas* get localized in *Gudavali* and *Pradhana Dhamani* which further vitiates *Twak*,

*Mansa*, and *Meda dhatus* due to *Annavahasrotodushti* leads to development of *Arsha*.<sup>[3]</sup> *Arsha* may be compared with Hemorrhoids, which is the dilatation of the haemorrhoidal plexus of veins; situated in the lower portion of the rectum and in the sub epithelial region of anal canal.<sup>[4]</sup> *Sushruta*, the pioneer of surgery, described four principle therapeutic measures in the management of *Arsha* i.e., *Bhesaja chikitsa*, *Kshara karma*, *Agni karma*, and *Shastra karma*, these measures in definite order are suggestive of similar methods to be preferred first.<sup>[5]</sup>

### Aim and Objectives

- To review the literature of *Arsha* in Ayurvedic texts.
- To collect the information regarding the drugs mentioned as *Arshoghna* and to find out various methods for management of *Arsha*.

### Nidana of Arsha

*Charaka* has described the causative factors in detail.<sup>[6]</sup> The unwholesome behaviour of parents and the past deeds are responsible for *Sahaja Arshas*<sup>[7]</sup>. *Sushruta* also specifies the role of improper *Ahara* and *Vihara* in the causation of *Arshas*.

*Vagbhata* incorporated the views of both *Charaka* and *Sushruta*.<sup>[8]</sup> The etiology can be broadly categorized as followings.

- On the basis of Dietic factors- Incompatible diet such as *Guru*, *Madhura*, *Sheeta*, *Abhishyandi* etc. excessive or less intake.
- On the basis of Habits –Suppression of natural urges or excessive straining, excessive sexual indulgence.
- On the basis of Local irritation factors– Defective sitting, uneven or hard seats, excessive vehicle riding.
- On the basis of *Mandagni- Arshas*, *Grahani* and *Atisara* are causative factors for each other.
- On the basis of therapeutic abuses- Excessive oleation therapy, improper evacuation therapy, improper administration of *Vastikarma* etc.
- On the basis of genetic factor- Genetic factor has also been considered an etiology of *Sahaja arsha*.
- Other causes– Pregnancy.

*Charaka* has described specific etiological factors for each in the following table:

<i>Vataj Arsha</i> <sup>[9]</sup>	<i>Pittaj Arsha</i> <sup>[10]</sup>	<i>Kaphaj Arsha</i> <sup>[11]</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Excessive intake of <i>Kashaya</i>, <i>Tikta</i>, <i>Katu rasa</i> and <i>Ruksha</i>, <i>Sheeta</i> and <i>Laghuguna Aharadravyas</i></li> <li>✓ Frequently taking diets in extremely less quantities</li> <li>✓ Intake of less quantity of food.</li> <li>✓ Intake of <i>Ruksha madya</i></li> <li>✓ Excessive sexual indulgence</li> <li>✓ Excessive exposure to wind.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ More intake of pungent, sour, salty <i>Rasas</i>, <i>Kshara</i> and <i>Ushna</i>, <i>Tikshna guna Aharadravyas</i></li> <li>✓ Excessive exercise</li> <li>✓ Exposure to sunlight and fire hot place and time</li> <li>✓ Anger</li> <li>✓ Excessive intake of alcohol.</li> <li>✓ Excessive intake of food having <i>Vidahi</i> properties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Excessive intake of sweet, salty and sour <i>Rasas</i> and <i>Snigdha</i>, <i>Sheeta guna</i> of <i>Ahaara dravyas</i></li> <li>✓ Lack of exercise and day time sleeping</li> <li>✓ Exposure to eastern wind,</li> <li>✓ Cold place and time.</li> <li>✓ Mental inactivity</li> </ul>

### Samprapti (Pathogenesis) of Arsha

*Sushruta* has described the pathogenesis of *Arshas* as the *Nidanas* resulting in the vitiation of *Doshas* in single, combination of two or more along with *Rakta*, *Dosha* move downwards through the *Mahadhamani* reaching *Guda* and affecting the *Gudavalitraya* producing *Arshas* to the individuals suffering from *Mandagni* and other local causes<sup>[12]</sup>. *Charaka* has opined that *Arshoroga* is produced due to vitiation of all the *Doshas*, follows *Bahya* and *Abhyantararogamarga* and affecting the *Gudavalitraya*.<sup>[13]</sup> According to *Vagbhata*, vitiation of *Doshas* leads to *Mandagni* and vitiation of *Apanavayu* resulting in stagnation of *Mala* in *Gudavali* and the prolonged contact of *Mala* leads to the development of *Arshas*<sup>[14]</sup>. The description of *Samprapti* of *Arshas* according to *Ayurveda* indicates that this disease is a local manifestation of systemic derangement in the equilibrium of *Doshas*.

### Sampraptighatakas

- *Dosha- Tridoshaja*, dominantly *Vata*
- *Doosha- Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Medas* and *Twak*
- *Shrotas- Raktavaha*, *Mamsavaha* and *Purishvaha*
- *Srotodushti- Sanga*, *Siragranthi*
- *Udbhavasthana- Ama-pakvasayotbhava*
- *Avayava Vikriti - Gudavalitraya*
- *Rogamaarga- Bahya* and *Abhyantara*
- *Agni- Jataragnimandhya*

### Classification of Arsha

#### 1. On the basis of the origin<sup>[15]</sup> - Basically *Arsha* is of two types.

- I. *Sahaja Arsha* (Hereditary - Congenital)
- II. *Kalaja* i.e. acquired one after birth.

#### 2. On the basis of the character of bleeding<sup>[16]</sup>

- I. *Ardra (Sravi)*-Bleeding piles due to vitiation of *Rakta* and *Pitta Dosha*.

II. *Shushka*- Non bleeding piles due to vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha Dosh*a.

**3. On the basis of site**<sup>[17]</sup>

- I. *Bahya* (*Samvarani*)
- II. *Abhyantara* (*Visarjini, Pravahani*)

**4. On the basis of prognosis**<sup>[18]</sup>

- I. *Sadhya* (Curable)
- II. *Yapya* (Palliative)
- III. *Asadhya* (Incurable)

The common clinical features of *Arsha* are described as loss of appetite, pain in the anal region, difficulty in passing the stools, edema of the body, anxiety, headache, vomiting and inactivity, bleeding per rectum, backache and emaciation.<sup>[19]</sup>

**Stages of Arsha**

- Grade I: No Prolepses. Just prominent blood vessels.
- Grade II: Prolepses upon bearing down but spontaneously reduce.
- Grade III: Prolepses upon bearing down and require manual reduction.
- Grade IV: Prolapsed and cannot be manually reduced.

**Chikitsa of Arsha**

In Ayurveda the basic principle of management for every disease is to avoid the etiological factors that help in *Samprapti vighatana* (breaking of etiopathogenesis). *Acharya Sushruta* has described four dimensions of the treatment for *Arsha*<sup>[20]</sup>, these are applied on the basis of *Dosha* involvement and stages of *Arsha*.

1. *Bheshaja Karma* (Drug Therapy)
2. *Shashtra Karma* (Surgical Management)
3. *Kshara Karma* (Cauterization with Chemical)
4. *Agni Karma* (Cauterization)

On the basis on *Dosha* involvement in the pathogenesis of the disease, following treatment is given.<sup>[21]</sup>

- I. *Vataja Arsha*- *Snehana, Swedana, Vamana, Virechana, Asthapana and Anuvasana Vasti*
- II. *Pittaja Arsha* - *Virechana*
- III. *Kaphja Arsha* - *Ahara dravya* mixed with *sunthi* and *kulatha*.
- IV. *Raktaja arsha* - *Shamana*
- V. *Sannipataja Arsha*- Mixed treatment of all *dosha*.

**Bheshaja Chikitsa**- *Bhesaja Chikitsa* (Medical management) is described as very first line of treatment of *Arsha*. It is statistically good effective in 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> degree of disease prognosis<sup>[22]</sup>. The ingredients having *Ushna Veerya, Katu Vikaka, Deepana, Pachana, Vatanulomaka, Srotosodhana, Sronitsanghata Bhinnakara Guna* are capable to *Samprapti Vighatana* and cure the disease<sup>[23]</sup>, and on the basis of that various preparations are mentioned for management of *Arsha*.

**Local Measures**

There are many preparations which are to be applied locally. Most of these preparations are helpful in eliminating the painful manifestations of *Arsha* as mentioned.

**Abhyanga** - Medicated oil processed with *Chitraka, Yavakshara Bilwa* etc.

<b>Rasa aushadha</b>	<b>Churna preparations</b>	<b>Asava-aristha</b>	<b>Vati/Guda/Lehya</b>
<i>Arshakutha Rasa</i>	<i>Lavannothamadi Choorna</i>	<i>Abhayarishta</i>	<i>Kankayana Gutika</i>
<i>Nityodit Rasa</i>	<i>Nagrodharadi Choorna</i>	<i>Dantyarishta</i>	<i>Triphala Guggulu</i>
<i>Chakrakuthar Rasa</i>	<i>Keshar Choorna</i>	<i>Durlabharishta</i>	<i>Bahisal Guda</i>
<i>Bolbadha Rasa</i>	<i>Samangadi Choorna</i>		<i>Hareethakyadi</i>
<i>Bolparpati</i>	<i>Hareetaki Churna</i>		<i>Lehyam</i>
<i>Prawalpisti</i> etc	<i>Triphala Churna</i>		<i>Arshoghni Vavti</i>

**Swedna** - *Swedna* with *Vijyapinda, Rasoonpinda* etc

**Avagahan**- *Avagahan* with *Triphla, Arka, Agnimanth, Kanji* etc.

**Virechana** - in *Pittaj Arsha, Virechana Karma* has been mentioned as one of the main treatment modalities<sup>[24]</sup>.

**Basti** - *Chitrakadi Tailabasti, Kasissadi Tailabasti, Yastimadhu Taila*.

**Dhoopana**- *Dhoopana* with *Vidanga, Devdaru, Pippali, Ghee* etc.

**Lepa** - *Haridrachurnapra Lepa, Pippalyadipra lepa, hartaladi Pralepa, Snuhiksbeer mixed Haridra Choorna Lepa*.

**Varnaropak** - *Jatyadi Tail* for local application.

**Hot Sitz bath** - The Patient is advised to take Sitz bath with *Triphala Kwath/Panchavalakala Kwatha / Tankan Bhasma / Sphatika Bhasma*.

**Shashtra Karma (Surgical Management)**

Various surgical interventions are used for management of *Arsha* if conservative measures show ineffectiveness. Hemorrhoidectomy is one among them which is basically indicated in high degree of disease manifestations, prolapsed and internal Hemorrhoids<sup>[25]</sup>. *Shashtra karmas* are associated with some incidence of complications like bleeding, infection, incontinence, anal strictures and retention of urine. Hemorrhoidectomy is having

higher rates of bleeding as a complication when comparing other ano-rectal procedures<sup>[26]</sup>.

### **Ksharakarma**

*Kshara* is an alkaline caustic chemical obtained from the ashes of medicinal plants. It is the superior most among the sharp and subsidiary treatments because of performing *Chhedana* (excision), *Bhedana* (Incision), *Lekhana* (Scraping) and *Shamana* of the *Tridoshaja* disorders<sup>[27]</sup>. It is versatile, because it can be used in such places that are difficult to approach by ordinary measures. It can be administered both internally and externally.

### **Ksharasutra (Surgical ligature)**

It is a special technique of excision without the use of knife but by means of mechanical pressure and chemical action. *Sushruta* has indicated the use of *Ksharasutra* in *Nadivrana* but he has not indicated its use in *Arsha*. *Chakradatta* has indicated application of *Ksharasutra* in *Arshobhagadara*<sup>[28]</sup>. Further has said it is to be prepared by smearing latex of *Snuhi* and *Haridra* powder. In *Bhavaprakasha*, *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* and *Gadanigraha* also we find the same description. It is minimal invasive procedure and can be practiced on an outpatient level.

Anesthetic arrangement is not required. So it is more cost effective as contrast to *Shastra Karma* of hemorrhoidectomy. There is negligible hemorrhage (reactionary or secondary), which performs *Chhedan* (Excision), *Bhedan* (Incision), *Lekhan* (Scraping), *Stambhan* (Haemostatic), *Shodhan* (cleaning) and *Ropan* (Healing) properties. The relapse of the disease and disturbance in bowel function, formation of anal stricture after ligation of *ksharasutra* are not observed<sup>[29]</sup>.

### **Agni karma (Thermal therapy)**

*Agni karma* is an important Para surgical measure. *Agni Karma* is said to be superior *Karma* due to non-recurrence of diseases. It can be useful in such diseases which are incurable even by drugs, instruments and *Kshara*. It is used extensively in the surgical practice in modified form by way of electric heat cautery and freezing.

### **Pathy-apathya of Arsha**

#### **Pathya**<sup>[30,31]</sup>

1. **Anna Varga:** *Godhuma, Yava, Rakthashali, Shastika, Kulattha, Priyangu.*
2. **Shaka Varga:** *Surana, Nimba, Patola, Vartaka, Punarnava, Shigru, Balamuli.*
3. **Ksheera Varga** *Aja Ksheera, Takra.*
4. **Phala Varga:** *Amalaki, Kapittha.*
5. **Ahara Upavarga:** *Palandu, Nagara, Maricha.*
6. **Mansa:** *Mruga Mansa.*

### **Apathya**

Fishes, oil cakes and the food stuffs made of rice, *Bilva*, fibrous root of lotus etc, are *Apathya* for the *Arsha* patients.

1. **Ahara** – *Viruddha Ahara, Vishtambhi Ahara, Guru Ahara, Anupa Mansa, Dushta Udaka* etc. etiological factors.

2. **Vihara** – *Vegavarodha* suppression of natural urges), *Atistri-sanga* (over indulgence in sex), *Utkatasana* (defective sitting posture), *Prishtha Yana* (riding), bathing in the sun, improper management of *Vamana* and *Basti* etc.

### **CONCLUSION**

*Arsha* is a common problem related to sedentary life style, age occupation and dietary factors where anal pain, anal lump and rectal bleeding are very common complain. It is a very terrible condition. Patient is afraid of defecation because of pain and bleeding per rectum. Thus Ayurveda has ultimate management modalities to get rid of that kind of crippling conditions, which are already described in various classical texts.

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