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A CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF *GRIDHRASI* W.S.R TO SCIATICA

Review article

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ABSTRACT

Society typically views the illness *Gridhra* as a serious problem. *Gridhrasi* is one among the *Nanatmaja vatavyadhi* which is characterised by *Stambha* (stiffness), *Ruka* (Pain), *Toda* (Pricking Sensation) and *Spandana*, initially affect *Sphika* (buttock) as well as posterior aspect of *kati* (waist) and then gradually radiates to posterior aspect of *Uru* (thigh), *Janu* (knee), *Jangha* (calf) and *Pada* (foot). As a further sign of *Gridhrasi*, *Acharya Susruta* also cited *Sakthishepana Nigrahanti* (limited movement of the lower limb). *Tandra* (drowsiness), *Gaurava* (heaviness), and *Aruchi* (anorexia) may be symptoms in *Vata-Kaphaj Gridhrasi*. *Gridhrasi* can be compared to the condition sciatica in modern medicine based on its symptoms. It is caused by irritation of the spinal nerve and is characterised by sciatic nerve distribution pain. Sciatica occurs more frequently than 40% of the time, with a lifetime incidence of low back pain of 50–70%. However, only 4-6% of people have sciatica from lumbar disc prolapse. The goal of *Ayurvedic* treatment is to rectify the underlying functional imbalance in order to restore harmony. *Ayurvedic Gridhrasi* remedies focus on restoring the exacerbated *Vata* or *Vata Kapha* to equilibrium and, consequently, to a healthy state. It's essential to seek pain treatment right away in order to resume your daily activities. *Gridhrasi* is thoroughly explained in *Ayurveda* Classics together with *Nidana* (Cause), *Samprapti* (Pathophysiology), and *Chikitsa* (Treatment). Depending on the presence of the *Dhatus* and the presence of the morbid doshas, several management strategies for acute and chronic *Gridhrasi* disorders are given. Despite the adoption of many cutting-edge technology and treatment options, the incidence and prevalence rate of diseases related to *Gridhrasi* are still on the higher side. A comprehensive overview of *Gridhrasi* and its *Chikitsa* modalities as practised by the ancient *Acharyas* is given in an effort to enlighten the understanding and to present a broad overview of *Gridhrasi*.

Key word : *Gridhrasi*, Sciatica, *Nidana*, *Samprapti*, *Chikitsa*

INTRODUCTION: *Gridhrasi* is a *Vatavyadhi* that is distinguished by *Stambha*, *Ruk*, *Toda*, *Grahanati*, and *Spandana*. This begins predominantly in the *Sphik pradesha* region and radiates

downward through the *Prushtabaga* of *Kati*, *Uru*, *Janu*, *Jangha*, and *Pada*¹. *Tandra* (drowsiness), *Gaurav* (heaviness), and *Aruchi* (anorexia) may also be present in *Vata-Kaphaj Gridhrasi*². *Sakthishepana*

Nigrahanti (restricted lower limb movement) was also mentioned by *Acharya Susruta* as an additional symptom of *Gridhrasi*³. *Gridhrasi* is an excruciating condition that hinders a person's normal activity by preventing him from sitting and walking normally. Nearly all symptoms and indicators of *Gridhrasi* resembles of sciatica, as described in modern texts. Its detailed symptomatology has been described in *Ayurvedic* texts for more than 5,000 years, while modern medicine only became aware of this condition two centuries ago. It is possible that the condition was given the name *Gridhrasi* because the patient moves like the bird *gridhra* and develops stiff, slightly arched legs. The lifetime incidence of low back discomfort ranges from 50 to 70%, with sciatica incidence exceeding 40%. Sciatica resulting from lumbar disc prolapse occurs in only 4-6% of the population⁴. As a result of changes in lifestyle, Low Back Pain is now a prevalent complaint among people of all ages in India and around the world, and its prevalence is on the rise. Modern medicine has no specific treatment for sciatica; therefore, an extensive study was conducted to gain a thorough understanding of the concept of sciatica in *Ayurvedic* terms. *Gridhrasi* is the most stubborn and prevalent of the eighty kinds of *nanatmaja* disorders. As the disease is not described in detail in *Ayurvedic* texts, it has been observed that treating such patients is challenging. In order to comprehend the concept of the disease *Gridhrasi* and develop an appropriate treatment protocol, the present study has been conducted.

ETIOLOGICAL FACTORS OF GRIDRASI (NIDANA)

The unique *Gridhrasi Nidana* was not mentioned in Classics. As a result, the

Samanya Nidana of the *Vatavyadhi* are impacted factors for the disease *gridhrasi*, and the *Gridhrasi* is one of the *Vataja Nanatmaja Vyadhi*. The following captions provide more detail on each of the etiological causes for *Vata Vyadhi* and *Vata Prakopa*.

1. *Aharaja Nidana* (Food related Factors)
2. *Viharaja Nidana* (Lifestyle Factors)
3. *Manasika Nidana* (Psychiatric Factors)
4. *Anya Hetuja* (Other like Accidental factors)

1. AHARAJA NIDANA

Ruksha (Dry food), *Sheeta* (Refrigerated food, Cold drinks) *Laghu Anna* (Eating light food which gets digested in short time), *Alpa Anna* (Eating less amount of food), *Katu* (more spicy), *Tikta* (Bitter), *Kashaya Rasa* (Astringent), *Langhana* (fasting), *Abhojana* (Not eating food). If the aforementioned eating characteristics are continued, the person may develop *Vatavyadhi*.

2. VIHARAJA NIDANA

Ativyayama (Excessive Exercise), *Ativyavaya* (Absorbs quickly), *Atiprajagara* (Not sleeping in night hours), *Vishama Upachara* (Improper life style), *Plavana* (hyper activity), *Diwaswapna* (Day sleep), *Vegadharana* (Suppression of natural urges).

3. MANASIKA NIDANA

Chinta (Excess thinking), *Shoka* (Crying/Sadness always), *Krodha* (more anger) & *Bhaya* (Fear).

4. ANYA NIDANA

Ati Asruk Sravana (More Loss of Blood), *Dhatukshaya* (Depletion of body tissue), *Varsharutu* (Rainy season), *Marmabhighata* (Injury to vital spots), *Margavarana* (Obstruction), *Rogatikarshana* (Depletion due to chronic Disorder).

PURVARUPA

The *Purvarupa* of *Gridhrasi* description is not found in the classics. *Avyakta Lakhana* is the *Poorvaroop* of *Vata Vyadhi*⁵, as stated by *Acharyas*. When making a statement about the word "*Avyakta*," *Chakrapanidatta* states that a few minor symptoms should be recognized as the *Poorvaroop*⁶. *Ruk*, *Toda*, *Stambha*, and *Spandhana* are therefore minor *Gridhrasi* symptoms.

RUPA

The four primary symptoms are *ruk*, *toda*, *stamba*, and *muhuspandana*. To be more specific, the pain extends from *Sphik Pradesha* to *Kati*, *Pristha*, *Uru*, *Janu*, *Jangha*, and *Pada* eventually ending at *Pada*. *Tandra*, *Gaurava*, and *Arochaka* are present in *Vata-Kaphaja Gridhrasi*¹. According to our *Acharya*², "*Sakthikshepanigraha*" is another prominent sign in *Gridhrasi*.

SAMPRAPTI OF GRIDHRASI

ROLE OF VATA IN GRIDHRASI

Gridhrasi is one of the eighty *Nanatamaja Vata Vyadhis*, which denotes that the sole root cause is vitiated *Vata*. As a result, the main signs of the sickness, such as *Shoola*, *Supti*, and *Stambha*, were determined to be *vataprakopaka Lakshanas*. It might be assumed that, depending on *Karma* & *Sthana*, *Apana* & *Vyana Vayu Dusti* can be valued in *Gridhrasi*. *Gati* (movement), *Prasarana* (extension), *Akunchana* (flexion), *Utkshepana* (lifting), etc. are among *Prakrut Vyana Vata*⁷ acts. According to *Sakthikshepa Karma*, *Vyana Vayu Dusti* is present. The of *Apana Vayu*⁸, in *Sphika*, *Kati*, and *Pristha*, is the *Kandara* of the leg and is impacted by the *Sthanasamshraya* in *Gridhrasi*. *Vata* can get vitiated due to two main sources. *Margavarodha* and *Dhatukshaya*⁹ are them. The identical *Nidanas* yield different

Vata Vyadhis according to the *Samprapti Vishesha*. This is because the sickness manifests differently depending on the *Sthana* where *Dosha-Dushya Sammurchhana* is carried out. *Khavaigunya* is a crucial factor in this disease's progression. Poor posture, jerky driving, carrying heavy objects, and other factors contribute to *Sthanaigunya* in *Gridhrasi*, which might occasionally result in spinal cord injuries at *Kati*, *Sphika*, *Pristha*, etc. If they have enough *Vyanjaka Hetu* (excited reason), they might be able to generate the disease even if they might not be able to do it immediately away.

SADHYASADHYATA OF GRIDHRASI (PROGNOSIS)

Vata vyadhi that lasts more than a year or is chronic is described as being challenging to treat or regarded as incurable (*asadhya*)¹⁰. *Acharya* classified *vata vyadhi* as a *mahagada*¹¹ because of its propensity to be fatal or incurable. In addition, he claims that issues such as *shunam* (edema/inflammation), *Suptatvacha* (tactile senselessness), *Bhagna* (fracture), *Kampa* (tremors), *Adhmana* (distention of the abdomen with discomfort), and pain in the internal organs¹² are the root causes of *Asadhya*.

CHIKITSA OF GRIDHRASI (MANAGEMENT)

SAMANYA CHIKITSA

Gridhrasi is one of the *vataj nanatamaja vyadhis* and can be treated using the standard *vata vyadhi* course of therapy. In addition to *nasya*, *abhyanga*, and *parisheka*, one may provide *dravya* that includes *madhura*, *amla*, *lavana*, *snigdha*, *ushna guna dravya* and *snehana*, *asthapana*, and *anuvasana basti*. The *ushna gunayukta dravyas* should employ more *vata-kapa hara vihara*¹³ in the case of *Vatakapaja Gridhrasi*.

VISHESHA CHIKITSA SPECIFIC TREATMENT

The *Siravyadhana*, *Bastikarma*, and *Agnikarma Chikitsa* are described by *Acharya Charaka* as the main courses of

treatment in the *Gridhrasi*. Whereas the remaining *Acharyas* anticipated the same^{14,15}. However, the course of treatment varies from patient to patient depending on the *Doshas* involvement.

PATHYA APATHYA¹⁶ (WHOLESOME & UNWHOLESOME DIETARY REGIMEN)**TABLE NO. 1: PATHYA (WHOLESOME DIETARY REGIMEN)**

PATHYA (DIETARY REGIMEN)	YOGARATNAKAR TEXT (AUTHOR)
<i>Rasa</i> (taste)	<i>Lavana</i> (Salt)
<i>Shuka Dhanya</i> (Cereals)	<i>Godhuma</i> (Wheat), <i>Raktha Shali</i> (Red rice)
<i>Simbi Dhanya</i> (Pulses)	<i>Masha</i> (Black gram), <i>Kulattha</i> (Horse gram)
<i>Mamsa Varga</i> (Meat)	<i>Kukkuta</i> (Chicken), <i>Chataka</i> (Sparrow), <i>Jangala Mamsa</i> (Meat)
<i>Shaka Varga</i> (Vegetables)	<i>Patola</i> (Cucumber), <i>Kushamanda</i> (Wax gourd), <i>Shigru</i> (Drum stick), <i>Mulaka</i> (Radish)
<i>Phala Varga</i> (Fruits)	<i>Dadima</i> (Pomegranate), <i>Badara</i> (Jujube), <i>Draksha</i> (Grapes)
<i>Any Dravya</i> (Other Substances)	<i>Lashuna</i> (Garlic), <i>Punarnava</i> (Hogweed), <i>Jeeraka</i> (Cumin Seeds)
<i>Karma</i> (Procedure)	<i>Abhyanga</i> (Oliation or Body massage)

TABLE NO.2 : APATHYA (UNWHOLESOME DIETARY REGIMEN)

APATHYA	YOGARATNAKAR
<i>Rasa</i> (taste)	<i>Kashaya</i> (Astringent), <i>Tikta</i> (Bitter), <i>Katu</i> (Pungent)
<i>Simbi Dhanya</i> (Pulses)	<i>Mudga</i> (Greengram), <i>Kalaya</i> (Indian pea), <i>Chanaka</i> (Chana)
<i>Shaka Varga</i> (Vegetables)	<i>Bimba</i> (Beans), <i>Kareera</i> (Bitter gourd)
<i>Vihara</i> (lifestyle)	<i>Chinta</i> (worry), <i>Prajagarana</i> (Nightouts), <i>Vegadharana</i> (Suppression of natural urges), <i>Shrama</i> (Excess work)
<i>Karma</i> (Procedure)	<i>Chardi</i> (Vomiting), <i>Langhana</i> (Fasting)

DISCUSSION

- The descriptions of sciatica and *Gridhrasi* in modern texts are comparable. Despite the fact that the *Ayurveda* writings have thorough descriptions of its symptoms dating back 5000 years, modern medicine only learned about this ailment two centuries ago. The term "*Gridhrasi*" may have been applied to this ailment because the patient's legs were constricted and somewhat curled, and the patient's gait resembled that of a vulture.
- Currently, 80–90% of people experience low back discomfort, and 5%

of those persons develop sciatica. It typically affects both sexes and occurs between the ages of 30 and 40. Since people's lifestyles are gradually moving away from healthy living, several diseases are becoming more common. The primary contributing factors for sciatica are sedentary lifestyle, stress, poor posture, continuous jerky movements, long travel, etc. These factors place the most pressure on the spine and lower area of the pelvis. In modern medicine, anti-inflammatory medications, muscle relaxants, and tractions are typically used to treat sciatica

pain. However, anti-inflammatory medications have a number of negative side effects, including rashes, ulcers in the upper gastrointestinal tract, perforations, and bleeding. If relief is unsuccessful, surgery is advised. Surgery has a high price tag and its own unique set of postoperative consequences. Despite the enormous annual expenses of back pain to society, the field of low back pain has few well-controlled clinical trials.

- As a result of the *Vataja Nidana Sevana*, *Margavarana* or *Dhatukshaya* do the *Samprapti* of *Gridhrasi*. In *Dhatukshaya* *Samprapti*, *Vata Dosha Prakopa* causes incorrect *Dharana* (Nurture) of *Rasadi Dhatu*, followed by *Uttarotara Dhatu Kshaya Avastha* that results in *Sroto Rikatata* that results in *Vata Dosh Prakopata* at *Kati Pradesh* that results in *Gridhrasi*. When *Vayu* is constrained by *Kapha*, *Ama* is caused by *Mandagni*, which results in *Amarasa Utpatti*, and other *dhatu*s are not properly nourished, this results in *Margavarana* *Samprapti* of *Gridhrasi*.

- *Gridhris* clinical signs include The *ruk*, *toda*, *stamba*, and *muhuspandana* are the four main symptoms. To be more precise, the discomfort begins at *Sphik Pradesh* and travels through *Kati*, *Pristha*, *Uru*, *Janu*, *Jangha*, and *Pada* before coming to an end at *Pada*. *Vata-Kaphaja* has *Tandra*, *Gaurava*, and *Arochaka*. *Gridhrasi* are simple to evaluate. According to our *Achary*, "*Sakthikshepanigraha*" is one of the common signs noticed in *Gridhrasi*. The raising of the lower leg is the primary indicator. It is comparable to the Straight Leg Rising test, one of *Gridhrasi*'s diagnostic instruments, in the present day.

- Using *Panchakarma* procedures like *Snehana*, *Swedhana*, *Basti*, *Siravyadhana*, and *Agnikarma*, *Ayurveda* offers a unique technique of treating the aforementioned symptoms.

- *Snehana* and *Swedana* are the first lines of defence in the management of the *Gridhrasi* because the *gridhrasi* is primarily brought on by the aggravation of the *vata dosha*, and to ride over *vata* the *snehan* and *swedana* are very beneficial. Since *Vata* is composed of the qualities *Ruksha*, *Sheeta*, *Laghu*, and *Khara*, while *Taila* is composed of the qualities *Snigdha*, *Usna*, *Guru*, and *Pichila*, *Snehan*, or *Taila*, is thought to be the finest for *Vata*. As a result, *Taila* reduces *Vata* while also not raising *Kapha* because it is *Ushna*. *Snehana Karma* aids in *srotoshodhana* and brings *Mruduta* into the *Shareera*, *Agni Dipana*, and removes *Mala Sanghata*. *Swdana* produces perspiration by eliminating *sthambata* (stiffness), *Gauravata* (heaviness), and *Sheetaghna* (reduces coolness that encourages the production of sweat). The body also experiences *Srotoshodhana* with the aid of all these *swedana* components. The *Badhadosha* (*Mordbid doshas*) will subsequently undergo *snehana* and *swedana*-induced *Vilayana* (liquification), pass through the *Srotas*, and eventually expel out from its closest root. Similar to how *Sthambata*, *Shoola*, and *Gauravata* symptoms are present in *gridhrasi*, we can get better results through *snehana* and *swedana*^{17,18} before receiving the appropriate medication.

- The *Acharyas'* explanation of a particular line of treatment hinges on how the table No. 3's detailed description of the *doshas* is implicated.

TABLE NO 3: SPECIFIC TREATMENT METHODS

SL.NO	TREATMENT METHOD	INVOLVEMENT OF DOSHA	SYMPTOMS
1	<i>Basti Karma</i>	<i>Vataja & Vatakaphaja</i>	<i>Stamba, Gauravata, Dhatukshayata, Shaktikshepanigraha.</i>
2	<i>Siravyadhana</i>	<i>RaktavritaVata</i>	<i>Dahayukta Shoola at Kati Pradesha & Pada.</i>
3	<i>Agnikarma</i>	<i>Kevala Vataja</i>	<i>Rukshata, Stambata, Shoola</i>
4	<i>Katibasti</i>	<i>Vataja</i>	<i>Stambata.</i>

• The idea of choosing a *Basti Karma*, or *bastikarma*. *Basti* is the most crucial *Karma* for treating *Vata Vyadhi*. *Vata Vyadhis* almost invariably indicate it. The *Vata "Ardha Chikitsa"* or "*Purna Chikitsa*" is another name for *Basti Chikitsa*. The only *Chikitsa* having the capacity to contain and control *Vata's* potency is *Basti*. *Basti Dravya* is also used, depending on how the *doshas and dhatus* are active. The body should first be purged with *Shodhana Karma* for the optimum outcomes while doing any type of *basti*. Benefits of this practice include *Vaya Sthapana*, *Dhrudata* in *Dhatus*, increased *Ayu*, *Agni*, and *Medha*; *Swara & Varna Prasadhana*; increased *Shukra & Bala*; and removing vitiated *Dosha* from the body¹⁹. When the *Basti Dravya* enters the *Pakvashaya* by its *Virya*, the vitiated *Doshas* present throughout the entire body, from the foot to the head, are eliminated, much like how the sun in the sky dries out the moisture from the ground^{20,21}. The *basti dravya* can be varied depending on the circumstance, such as in cases of *Atirookshata* (Disc dehydration), *Brihana basti*, *Avaranajanya* (inflammatory), *Kshara Basti*, and *Kevala Vataja* (*Erandmoola Niruha basti*) may be utilized. The *Sirvyadhana Chikitsa* was used in the instance of the *Avaranajanya* Pathology. The *Siravyadhana* should be chosen when there is *Dahayukta Shoola*

(Burning sort of Pain) along with all associated symptoms.

• When *Kevala Vata dosha* is in play, *atirookshata* is there and *stambata* is present, *Agnikarma Chikitsa* should be adopted as it has the properties like *Ushna* and *Shoolahara* and opposite *Gunas* of *Vatadosha*.

CONCLUSION

Because of the illness's tight relationship to the locomotor system, sciatica is a severe clinical disease that affects the locomotor system, causing the patient to feel extremely uncomfortable and have his or her typical activities interrupted. The current situation calls for a different management strategy because sciatica is becoming more common. Pain, inability, and dissatisfaction with the therapeutic options that are accessible. It will be a fantastic accomplishment if we are able to treat such a painful condition using the guidelines set forth by our eminent Acharyas. *Gridhrasi* is thoroughly covered in the classical Ayurvedic texts *Nidana* (causes), *Samprapti* (pathogenesis), *Lakshana* (clinical features), *Chikitsa* (conservative care), *Agnikarma* (Intentional Burn), *Siraveda* (Intentional Blood Letting), and *Panchakarma*. With the treatment of both acute and chronic diseases using *Ayurveda*, patients with *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica) appear to have hope. High-quality studies in the area may aid in

the broad acceptance of Ayurvedic treatment for sciatica.

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