

AYURVEDIC CONCEPT OF PAIN

Divya¹

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ABSTRACT

As per *Ayurved*, the internal functions of the body are controlled by three *doshas*. When these *doshas* are imbalanced, they lead to various disorders. Pain is the result of imbalanced *Vata dosha*. WHO defines pain as an unpleasant sensory or emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage or described in terms of such damage child may experience acute to chronic pain. Due to developing systems, infants and children may be at greater risk than adults for protracted pain sensitivity. *Ayurvedic* science refers *Shoola* as any type of pain. There are many medicines in modern science for relieving the pain in children but they may have adverse effects on the body also. In *Ayurveda*, there are many therapeutic procedures and herbal formulations, which relieve the pain in children and have no adverse effect at all. After going through various *Ayurvedic* literatures, Journals and Articles, here we are proposing many herbs, *Ayurvedic* formulations and various procedures like Yoga, Meditation, *Panchkarma* therapy, *Snehana*, *Svedana*, which alleviates the pain in children.

Keywords: Pain, *Shoola*, *Dosha*, Yoga, *Panchkarma*

INTRODUCTION: According to the basic principle of *Ayurved* the five elements in the body merge in pairs to form *doshas*, named *vata doshas*, *pitta dosha*, and *kapha dosha*. The internal functions of body are controlled by these *doshas*. When these *doshas* are imbalanced they lead to ill health. Pain is the result of these imbalanced *doshas*.

As per IASP (International Association for the Study of Pain) pain is an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage¹. WHO defines pain as an unpleasant sensory or emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage or described in terms of such damage². Pain is a protective body mechanism which alerts the person about the harmful condition that occurs in body. Pain can be somatogenic or psychological. The somatogenic pain

occurs due to physiological causes or external injuries and psychological pain does not have any physical causes but it occurs due to the some disturbance in the mind.³

No matter however mild the pain is anywhere in the body it lands you in a state of discomfort and affects your day to day activities. Perception of pain in pediatrics is complex, and entails physiological, psychological, behavioral, and developmental factors. Child may experience acute to chronic pain. Due to developing systems, infants and children may be at greater risk than adults for protracted pain sensitivity.

Ayurvedic science refers *shoola* as any type of pain. *Shoola* can appear as roop or upadrava of a disease. *Shoola* is classified as *Swantantra Shoola* (vyadhi itself) or *Partantra Shoola* (updrava of a disease). *Shoola* and *Roga* both have same meaning

that is pain giving. There are many medicines in modern science for relieving the pain in children but they have many adverse effects on the body. In *Ayurveda* there are many therapeutic procedures and herbal formulations which relieve the pain in children and have no adverse effect at all. Acute pain measurements and management in children are difficult to achieve in modern science. In my opinion infant and smaller child cannot speak or we cannot understand their language when they are in pain. We cannot understand their site of originating pain. But *Acharya Kashyapa* describes features of different type of pain. In modern science there is no specific treatment to pacify pain in children, but in *Ayurved* there are many ways to treat pain in children. These methods are very effective in children without any harmful effect on children.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE: *Acharya Sushruta* has explained *Shoola* as abdominal pain in his *uttaratantra*; he has also explained *shoola* as the *upadrava* of *gulma* in the same chapter. *Madhavkar* has explained about *shoola* in his *Madhava Nidanam*. We get reference of *shoola* in *Kashyapa Samhita khil sthana*.⁴

MATERIAL & METHODS: Acute pain measurement and management in children are difficult to achieve in modern science. After going through various *Ayurvedic* literatures, journals, articles we are proposing here many herbs, *Ayurvedic* formulations, and various procedures in *Ayurved* like *yoga*, meditation, *Panchkarma therapy*, *Snehana*, *Svedana*, which alleviate the pain in children. The literature search is also conducted with a variety of data bases, including *Psycho Info*, *Pub Med* etc. In children who are below 5 year it is difficult to measure the

pain as most of children cannot speak their problem. In *Kashyapa Samhita* which is the most authentic book of *Ayurved*, *Acharya Kashyapa* described many symptoms of diseases. On the basis of these symptoms we can diagnose diseases of children. With the help of these symptoms we can diagnose nature and cause of pain also.

Etiopathogenesis of Shoola: Due to agitation, fright, over study (constant sitting in special posture) abnormality caused by overdrinking of water during time of hunger, suppression of natural urges, excess movement on vehicles, presence of *ama*, unmetabolised *rasa* and undigested food, falling down and eating of dry cereals, the aggravated *vayu* producing cutting, stretching, pricking (type of pain), tremors and flatulence entering the abdomen getting associated with and excited *Pitta* and *Kapha* produces colic.⁵

Accurate pain measurements in children are difficult to achieve. Three main methods are currently used to measure pain intensity: self report, behavioral, and physiological measures. Self-report measures are optimal and the most valid. Both verbal and nonverbal reports require a certain level of cognitive and language development for the child to understand and give reliable responses. Children's capability to describe pain increases with age and experience, and changes throughout their developmental stages. Although, observed reports of pain and distress provide helpful information, particularly for younger children, they are reliant on the individuals completing the report. Behavioral measures consist of assessment of crying, facial expressions, body postures, and movements. They are

more frequently used with neonates, infants, and younger children where communication is difficult. Physiological measures include assessment of heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, oxygen saturation, palmar sweating and sometimes neuro-endocrine responses. In *Ayurved* very scientific characteristic of different *Shoola* described by *Acharyas*. Some of the characteristics are described below-

Shoola due to Vata: Increases very severely of the one who is hungry and during severe episode causes arrest of respiration⁶. Such type of pain is found in peptic ulcer etc.

Shoola due to Pitta: Appears after digestion of food is associated with trouble of perspiration, burning sensation and thirst⁷.

Shoola due to Kapha: Appears immediately after eating, causes less trouble, is fixed, localized and due to upward movement of *kapha* produces rigidity and nausea.⁸ It is found in acute pancreatitis, after eating ,inflammatory bowel disease ,peptic ulcer disease.

Shoola due to combination of all doshas: Features of all the three *doshas* are present which is unbearable and incurable.⁹

As a child cannot narrate his trouble, thus it is to be diagnosed on the basis of specific features. *Kashyapa* described specific features of various diseases. On the basis of that features we can diagnose the diseases of children. Some features of those diseases are described below-¹⁰.

Features of Shoola of Head: In event of headache the child rolls the head too much, closes the eyes, and becomes dull and insomniac¹¹. Headaches in children are caused by an infection, high levels of stress or anxiety, or minor head trauma, migraine. Pain may be occur in whole or

half of the head. Pain in one half of the head may also appear as a symptom in various conditions viz. *anyatovata (netraroga)*, *vata-paryayam (netraroga)* and *ardditavata (vataroga)*. *Nasya karma* and *Ghritapaan* is beneficial in migraine.¹² *Nasya* may be *anu tail* , *Ksheerabala tail* or other medicated oil.¹³

Features of Earache: One should know about earache when the child touches ears with both hands, rolls head too much, has dullness, anorexia and insomnia.¹⁴ Earache can be caused by otitis media , sinusitis, dental problem , toothache, mastoiditis, fluid behind the ear drum, ear infections, especially after upper respiratory infections etc.

Features in diseases of Mouth: In diseases of mouth excessive salivation, aversion to breast, dullness and pain.¹⁵ Diseases of mouth include oral thrush, mouth ulcer, cold sores etc.

Features of Pain in Throat & Ardita: Child suffering from throat pain and *ardita* (facial palsy) ejects the ingested milk, suffers from constipation on taking *slesma*, has mild fever, anorexia and languor.¹⁶ Pain in throat caused by tonsillitis , infective mononucleosis etc.

Features of Kanthsoth (Inflammation of Throat): In *kanthsoth*, there is itching and inflammation, fever, anorexia and headache.¹⁷ Inflammation of throat found in sore throat (pharyngitis) etc.

Prodromal features of Fever: Before onset of fever the child flexes the body parts repeatedly, yawns, cough frequently and suddenly clings to wet nurse ,does not like to hold breast ,has salivation, heat, discolouration ,excessive warmth.¹⁸ Common causes of fever are such as follows- respiratory infections due to a virus, such as colds or flu,

gastroenteritis due to virus. Certain bacterial infections, particularly ear infections (otitis media), sinus infections, pneumonia, and infections, anorexia and coldness of feet.

Features of Diarrhea: Discolouration of body, uneasiness in mouth, languor, insomnia, absence of functions of *vayu* (flatus) etc. features develop before manifestation of diarrhea.¹⁹ Diarrhea may be caused by any infections, celiac disease, malabsorption syndrome etc.

Features of Colic: In colic child rejects the breast, cries, sleeps in supine position, has stiffness in abdomen, (feeling) of cold and perspiration of face.²⁰

Features of Dysuria: In case of dysuria there is horripilation, shivering of body parts and pain during urination (the child) bites the lips and touches the urinary bladder (region) with hand.²¹ Dysuria may be due to infectious causes, urethritis, cystitis, balanitis and balanoposthitis, Vaginitis and cervicitis, pyelonephritis, pelvic inflammatory disease, nonspecific (chemical) urethritis, local trauma, urinary stones.

Features of Piles: The emaciated child suffering from piles has well formed solid stool or stool with blood, feeling of compression of anal region, itching and pricking pain in anal region.²²

Features of Vesical Calculus: There is voiding of excessive urine with gravel and dysuria, constantly weeps and is weak, these are said to be the features of vesicle calculus.²³

Prodromal features of Erysipelas: Appearance of red patches, thirst, burning sensation, fever, discomfort and palliation from sweet and cold articles.²⁴

Features of *Visucika* (gastroenteritis): Children have burning sensation in body parts, sensation like being pricked with needles and being broken, difficult respiration and increases pain in cardiac region.²⁵

Features of *Alasaka* (meteorism): Child unable to hold the head, has twisting of the body, repeated yawning, does not suck the breast for long, also vomit knotty material, gloom, tympanitis and anorexia are also the features of *alasaka* in a child.²⁶

Features of diseases of Eyes: Difficulty in looking, pricking pain, inflammation, pain, excessive lacrimation, redness and the eyes get smeared during sleep.²⁷

Features of Itching: The child suffering from dry itching during sleep, weeps and likes rubbing but the rubbing causes swelling and then discharge occur, this wet itching has increased pain and burning sensation.²⁸

Features of *Ama*: Looking in to these symptoms the physician should know about future affliction of disorder of *ama*. These are stiffness, anorexia, excessive sleep, pallidness of body, dullness continuous aversion from play, food & sleep.²⁹

Features of Anemia: There is swelling around the umbilicus, whiteness of eyes, deformity of nails, loss of appetite and swelling in both eye pits.³⁰

Yellowness of eyes, nails, face, feces and urine is found in children suffering from jaundice. In both conditions child become apathy and loses digestive capacity and desires for blood.

Features of Insect Bite: When healthy child does not sleep well in the night and has appearance of red spot over the body,

it should be considered as having insect bite.³¹

Principle of Treatment of Pediatric Ailment: *Dosas*, *dusyas* and *malas* and also disorders which are in adults are entirely the same in children with the only difference that their quantity is less. Emesis etc are avoided in children looking to their delicacy, dependence on others and incapability in respect of speech and movements. The learned physician should administer drugs to children in smaller dose according to disease and mostly sweet, astringent, with latex and soft ones cautiously. Excessively unctuous, rough hot, sour, pungent in *vipaka* and heavy drugs, food and drugs are contraindicated for children.³²

Management of *shoola* should be based on all these character like frequency, location, age, duration, intensity and also the associated symptom.

Management of Shoola according to Dosha is as follows:

Management of Shoola due to Vata-

Panchkarma- First *snehan* that is massage of the body with oleaginous substances after that all sudation with tub bath, *poultices*, bolus sudation with hot decoction or paste of drugs or with hot *paayasa* (rice cooked with milk and sugar) capable of suppression pain due to *vata*.

Ahar- Use of meat soup of *ena* (a variety of deer) etc and lava etc wild animals' birds mixed with rock salt. Unctuous, hot and sour substances or hot milk cooked with drug capable of suppressing the *vata*. Oil, vinegar, supernatant water of curd and *sauviraka* (fermented sour drink made with barley and wheat) mixed with *sauvarcala salt* should be given for drinking to the one suffering from *shoola*.

Aushadha: After making fine powder of *syama*, *sunthi*, rocksalt, *tumuru*, *hingu*, *ksara* (*svarjikasara*), *yava suka* (*yavaksara*), *vida* (salt), *pravarahwa* and *sati* it should be drunk with luke warm water in *shoola* due to *vata*.³³

Management of Shoola due to Pitta-

Vihar-Touch (wear) either the garlands of pearls or *pankaja* (lotus) which are white like conch shell, *kunda* (jasmine flower) and moon, or the pots made with either silver, bronze, *sphatika* or gold filled water and cooled by mixing *candra* (camphor).

Aushadha- One should drink cold, tisane or decoction made with *hrdya* (beneficial for heart or palatable), cold, sweet and purgative drugs mixed with honey and powdered sugar.³⁴

Management Shoola due to Kapha-

Panchkarma: First cleansing with desired emesis should be done with hot water mixed with rock salt. After emesis then lengthy fasting should be given after this digestive hot decoction of *pippalyadi* group of drugs with *hingu* and good quantity of *ksara* for drinking then cereals be given in regular order.³⁵

Aushadha: General herbal medicines that are used for Oleation (*snehan* -for internal use) with oleaginous substances. Some example of oleation are-*Sadha sneha yoga*, meat soup which is made from ghee, *peya* fried with oleaginous substance, curd malai mixed with jiggery.

General Management of Shoola-

Role of Yoga and Meditation- Yoga and meditation may also helpful in eradication of *shoola*, *atopa*, *tympanitis* and *gulma* etc diseases.³⁶

Role of Sneh (oleaginous) substance in Shoola: *Sneh* also pacifies pain. There are four main *sneh* in *Ayurved*. These are *ghrita*, *tail*, *vasa*, and *majja*. Marrow and

fat especially suppress *vayu*. Being wholesome to strong person provide progeny, strength and longevity.³⁷

Charak says muscle fat is beneficial for fracture, injuries, gynecological disorders, disease of head and ears and increases virility should be given after exercise.³⁸ *Ghrita* improve complexion, strength, longevity strength, intellect and *indriya*, suffering from poison injured from weapons. Small dose of *sneh* should be given in children.

Role of Sudation: Sudation is also beneficial for pain in children. The physician should use eight type of sudation to children from birth onwards considering the period (season), (state of) diseases and (strength) of body. Sudation indicated in child after gradual disappearance of delicacy and appearance of toughness, the sudation of these children should be increased. *Avasthika* sudation (domestic sudation that is sudation inside the house) is beneficial to the emaciated and medium built children. During sudation eyes and cardiac region should be protected with *Kumuda*, *Utpala*, *Padam* and *soft* cloth. Cardiac region protected by *Mukta*, *Chandrakanta* (moon stone) has dipped in cold water or pot filled with cold water.³⁹

Role of Enema: Enema also pacify pain. For the children and adults the enema is just like nectar, to the physician for money and fame, to the child for the longevity and to the father for the progeny however improperly used medicine destroys these three together.

Importance of Enema: There is no other treatment capable of bringing pleasure to the parts of body than application of enema what so ever disease are situated in extremities, internal organ, whole or half

body, no other etiological factor is present for their development except *vata*. To win the increased *vata* there is nothing else than enema. Amongst all the treatments of *vata* it is the half treatment. **Enema of phala tail** should be used as unctuous enema in those having stiffness of chest, pain in sacral region, backache, pain in anal and groin region, Splenomegaly, *Udavarta* and *Gulma*.⁴⁰

Role of Medhya Rasayana in management of psychological disorder:

In psychological pain child may complain headache, stomachaches or may be pain in any part of body. Some psychological disorders in which child complain pain are ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), depression etc. Herbal formulations that nourish our brain should be used. Some herbal formulation are-

Astang Ghrit: One *pala* each of *vacha*, *bakuchi*, *mandukparni*, *shankhpushpi*, *shatavari*, *brihma*, *vidhara*, *giloye*, *brahmi* are boiled in one *prasth ghee* and milk that is 4 times of herbs. This ghee improves speech & intelligence.

Saraswat Ghrit *Harad*, *trikatu*, *patha*, *vacha*, *shobhanjna* and *saindhav* boiled in goat milk. Which improve speech, intelligency, retaining power, and also improve appetite.

Samanga, *triphala*, *brahmi*, both the *balas* and *citraka* be used with honey and *ghrta* for increasing intellect, longevity and strength.

Ghrta cooked with *kustha*, leaf buds of *vata*, *gauri* (yellow mustard) *pippali*, *triphala*, *vaca* and rock salt is good for generating intellect.

CONCLUSION: There are many drugs in modern science to pacify the pain in children but they have much bad effect on children like difficulty in bowel

movements, nausea, vomiting, itching etc. Children may feel drowsiness. Morphine can have more serious side effects on the child health. In *Ayurved* there are many herbal drugs and procedures which pacify pain as well as have no bad effect on the child health. Herbs remove the pain from the root. Children have *heena satva* (the children who cannot tolerate even small intensity of pain), so in the management of children should be very careful. In management of *shoola* disordered *dosas*, *dusyas* and *malas* should be recognized and clinical features described by *Kashyapa* in *Vedanaadhyaya* helps in diagnosis of diseases. After that dose should be considered according to age and physical activity and then treatment mentioned above should be given.

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