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Review of *Mooshika Visha* (Rat Poison) : Ayurvedic Concept

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an ancient Indian system of medicine having eight important branches. *Agada Tantra* is one of them which deals with *Visha* (poison) its manifestation and its treatment. In Ayurvedic texts *Mooshika Visha* is described well. There are eighteen types of *Mooshika*, signs and symptoms of their bite and its treatment is described by *Sushrutaacharya* and *Vaagbhataacharya*. There are five modes of spread of *Mooshika* (rat) poison. Semen, faeces, urine, scratches by nails and bites with teeth of *Mooshika* are poisonous. In case of *Mooshika* bite, bite site should be cauterized and blood letting should be done. After this various drugs paste should be applied on bite site. Various putrifactory therapies should be given e.g. *Vamana* (Vomiting), *Virechana* (Purgation), *Nasya* (Nasal medication), *anjana* (Collyrium) etc. Various drug preparations like medicated ghee, decoctions, paste of drugs, juice of drugs are described. Ayurvedic treatment of *Mooshika* poisoning can be given in all diseases where source of infection is rat.

Key words: *Visha, Jangam Visha, Mooshika, Agada Tantra.*

INTRODUCTION

There are two types of *Visha* i.e. *Akritrim & Kritrim* are explained in *Agada Tantra*. *Acharya Susruta* in *Kalpa Sthana* of *Susruta Samhita* and *Acharya Vagbhata* in *Uttaratantra* of *Ashtanga Hridaya*, moreover in other classics and regional texts have recited concerning the origin of *Visha* and *Mooshika Visha*. *Acharya Sushruta* described *Mooshika Visha* under *Jangama Visha* & explained 18 types of *Mooshika*. *Laalan, Putraka, Krishna, Hansira, Chikkira, Chuchundra, Alasa, Kashaayadanta, Kulinga, Ajita, Chapala, Kapila,*

Kokila, Aruna, Mahakrishna, Mahashweta, Mahakapila, Kapota are the eighteen types of *Mooshika*.^[1] There are five modes of spread of *Mooshika Visha*. Semen, faeces, urine, scratches by nails and bites with teeth of *Mooshika* are poisonous. *Mooshika* semen is most poisonous. Contact with semen of *Mooshika* directly or indirectly (Substance contaminated with semen of rat) can cause poisoning.^[2]

AIMS AND OBJECTIVE

To study about types of *Mooshika* and discuss about *Mooshika Visha* their symptoms, effect on body & treatment.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

It is a literary review to study the *Mooshika Visha* and its management from all text and contemporary text (especially *Sushruta*) including website.

Literature Review

- According to *Sushrutacharya* there are 18 types of *Mooshika*: *Laalan, Putraka, Krishna, Hansira, Chikkira, Chuchundra, Alasa, Kashaayadanta,*

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Kulinga, Ajita, Chapala, Kapila, Kokila, Aruna, Mahakrishna, Mahashweta, Mahakapila, Kapota.

- According to *Prayogsamucchaya* there are 16 types of *Mooshika*: *Kulachandrana, Karagan, Vishathi, Bayanakan, Ugran, Krooran, Bhootakan, Teekshanan, Meghanaathanh, Kumudhan, Simharyan, Ekachaari, Sunasan, Sudantan, Subalan, Sugarbhan.*^[3]

Symptoms of Mooshika bite

Vitiation of blood, pallor, lumps, swelling, rashes and red discharges on skin, giddiness, loss of taste, fever with rigors, severe pain, debility, shivering, arthralgia, horripilation, exudations, fainting of long duration and repeated vomiting of large quantity of mucoid material appearing like young ones of rat.^[4]

Incurable signs

Fainting, Oedema all over body, discolouration of skin, exudation, loss of hearing, fever, heaviness of head, excess of salivation, haematemesis, retention of urine, discolouration of lips, body covered with small nodules resembling rat, body emitting smell of rat.^[5]

General treatment of Mooshika Visha

- Cauterization of bite site and blood letting from bite site should be done.^[6]
- Drugs for local application after cauterization and blood letting;
 - Paste of *Shireesh* (*Albizia lebeck*), *Haridra* (*Curcuma longa*), *Kushtha* (*Saussurea lappa*), *Kesar* (*Crocus sativus*), *Guduchi* (*Tinospora cordifolia*) should be applied on the bite site.^[6]
 - Paste of *Trivrutta* (*Operculina trupethum*), *Shweta Aparajita* (*Clitoria ternate*), root of *Bilva* (*Aegle marmelos*) and *Guduchi* (*Tinospora cordifolia*) should be applied on bite site.^[7]
- Vamana* (Vomiting)

Paste prepared by maceration roots of *Shireesha* (*Albizia lebeck*), *Katutumbi* (*Langenaria vulgaris*), fruit of *Madana* (*Randia spinosa*) and *Devadali* (*Luffa echinata*) along with curd and consumed to induce vomiting. This is useful in all types of rat bite.^[8]

4. Virechana (Purgation)

For purgation use the paste of *Trivrutta* (*Operculina terpeethum*), *Danti* (*Baliospermum motanum*) and *Triphala* (*Terminalia chebula, Terminalia bellerica, Emblica officinalis*).^[9]

5. Nasya (Nasal medication)

Fruits of *Shireesha* (*Albezia lebeck*) are used for preparing drugs for nasal administration.^[9]

6. Anjana (Collyrium)

Juice of cow dung mixed with *Trikatu* (*Zingiber officinale, Piper nigrum* and *Piper longum*) may be used for making preparation of collyrium.^[10]

7. Drugs useful in Mooshika bite

- In case of *Mooshika* (rat) bite when there is fever decoction of following drugs should be given.
- Kiratiktika* (*Swetia chiraita*), *Amruta* (*Tinospora cordifolia*), *Manjishtha* (*Rubia cordifolia*), *Arjuna Twak* (*Terminalia arjuna*), *Palasha* (*Butea frondosa*), *Kashmarya* (*Gmelia arborea*), *Kshirvidari* (*Imomoea digitata*).^[11]
- Kapitha* juice (*Limonia acidissima*) and juice of cow dung along with honey should be given.^[12]
- Paste of *Ativisha* (*Aconitum heterophyllum*) along with honey useful.^[12]
- Tanduliyaka* ghee (*Amaranthus spinosus*) is effective in *Mooshika Visha*.^[12]

Treatment of poison which is remaining in the body for long time

The poison remaining in the body may be aggravated on cloudy days. Due to seasonal changes also the toxicity may increase. The treatment should be given as per *Dooshivisha* treatment.^[13]

Table 1: Symptoms and treatment of Mooshika Visha^[14]

| SN | Types | Symptoms | Treatment |
|----|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | <i>Laalan</i> | Salivation, hiccup, vomiting | <i>Tanduliyaka</i> (<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>) with honey. |

| | | | |
|----|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2. | <i>Putraka</i> | White discoloration and weakness of body, appearance of small nodules on body resembling <i>Mooshika</i> . | Paste of <i>Shireesha</i> (<i>albizia lebbbeck</i>) and <i>Ingudi</i> (<i>balanites aegyptiaca</i>) with honey. |
| 3. | <i>Krishna</i> | Swelling, haematemeis. | Decoction of <i>Shireesh</i> fruit (<i>Albizia lebbbeck</i>) and <i>Kushtha</i> (<i>Saussurea lappa</i>) with ash of <i>Palaash</i> flower (<i>Butea frondosa</i>). |
| 4. | <i>Hansira</i> | Aversion to food, yawning and horrilations. | Patient should be made to vomit well by use of drugs and then drink the decoction of <i>Aargvadhadi Gana</i> . |
| 5. | <i>Chikkira</i> | Headache, swelling, hiccup, vomiting. | Patient should be made vomit by drinking the decoction of <i>Jalini</i> (<i>Langenaria vulgaris</i>), <i>Madana</i> (<i>Randia spinosa</i>) and <i>Ankota</i> (<i>Alangium salvifolium</i>). |
| 6. | <i>Chuchundara</i> | Thirst, vomiting, fever, debility, stiffness of neck, loss of sense of smell and gastroenteritis. | Decoction of <i>Chavya</i> (<i>Piper cheba</i>), <i>Haritaki</i> (<i>Terminalia chebula</i>), <i>Shunthi</i> (<i>Euphorbia nerifolia</i>), <i>Vidanga</i> (<i>Emblia ribes</i>), <i>Pippali</i> (<i>Piper longum</i>), <i>Ankota</i> along with honey. |
| 7. | <i>Alasa</i> | Stiffness of neck, pain at bite site and fever. | <i>Mahagada</i> with honey and ghee. |
| 8. | <i>Kashayadanta</i> | More sleep, dryness of region of heart emaciation. | Powder of <i>Shireesh</i> bark and fruit (<i>Albizia lebbbeck</i>) with honey. |
| 9. | <i>Kulingaka</i> | Pin and swelling at bite site. | <i>Mudgaparni</i> (<i>Phaseolus trilobus</i>), <i>Maashparni</i> (<i>Termnus labialis</i>) |

| | | | |
|-----|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | and <i>Sinduvaara</i> (<i>Vitex nigundo</i>) along with honey. |
| 10. | <i>Ajita</i> | Black discolourtion of body, vomiting, fainting. | Paste of <i>Paalindee</i> (<i>Operculina turpethum</i>), <i>Manjistha</i> (<i>Rubia cordifolia</i>) macerated in milky sap of <i>Snuhi</i> (<i>Euphorbia nerifolia</i>) along with honey. |
| 11. | <i>Chapala</i> | Vomiting, fainting and thirst. | Powder of <i>Triphala</i> (<i>Terminalia chebula</i> , <i>Terminalia belerica</i> , <i>Emblca officinalis</i>), <i>Devadaru</i> (<i>Cedrus deodara</i>), and <i>Jatamansi</i> (<i>Nordostachys jatamansi</i>) along with honey. |
| 12. | <i>Kapila</i> | Ulcers with suppuration, fever, development of tumors, thirst. | <i>Shweta Aparajita</i> (<i>Clitoria ternate</i>), <i>Shewta punarnava</i> (<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i>) along with honey. |
| 13. | <i>Kokila</i> | Tumors, high fever, burning sensation. | Ghee prepared from <i>Punarnava</i> and <i>Nilinee</i> (<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>) |
| 14. | <i>Aruna</i> | Causes aggravation of <i>Vata Dosha</i> and causes development of tumors, discoloured patches with small eruption and swelling. | Blood letting, putrifactory therapies and medicated ghee prepared by using <i>Gunja</i> (<i>Abrus precatorious</i>) and <i>Kakmachi</i> (<i>Solanum nigrum</i>) is useful. |
| 15. | <i>Mahakrishna</i> | Causes aggravation of <i>Pitta Dosha</i> and causes development of tumors, discoloured patches with small eruption and swelling. | Same as <i>Aruna</i> type of <i>Mooshika Visha</i> treatment. |

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|-----|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 16. | <i>Mahashweta</i> | Causes aggravation of <i>Kapha Dosha</i> and causes development of tumors, discolored patches with small eruption and swelling. | Same as <i>Aruna</i> type of <i>Mooshika Visha</i> treatment. |
| 17. | <i>Mahakapila</i> | Causes aggravation of <i>Rakta Dosha</i> and causes development of tumors, discolored patches with small eruption and swelling. | Same as <i>Aruna</i> type of <i>Mooshika Visha</i> treatment |
| 18. | <i>Kapota</i> | Causes aggravation of <i>Tridosha</i> and <i>Rakta</i> and causes development of tumors, discolored patches with small eruption and swelling. | Same as <i>Aruna</i> type of <i>Mooshika Visha</i> treatment |

Concept of Vega

Concept of *Vega* (phase) and *Vegaantara* (inner phase) is a special consideration of *Agada Tantra*. A membrane separates each seven tissues and transversing each membrane poison creates a phase.^[15] In context of *Mooshika Visha*, *Samhitas* don't give any such description. In *Prayoga Samucchya* book tells about different phases of *Mooshika Visha*.

Table 2: Symptoms and treatment of Mooshika Visha.^[15]

| Phases | Symptoms | Treatment |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1 st | Pain, itching | <i>Kalka of Shireesha Panchaka</i> with milk |
| 2 nd | Burning sensation, lump all over body | <i>Jalaukavacharana</i> & milk |
| 3 rd | Head ache, yellowish | <i>Ankola Twak</i> & milk |

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| | discoloration | |
| 4 th | Pain in joints | <i>Nasya</i> with <i>Shireesh Swarasa</i> grinded with bed bug. |
| 5 th | Fainting, thirst, vomiting, pain all over body, chance of death afterwards. | <i>Nasya</i> with <i>Vishaghna Taila</i> . |

DISCUSSION

Acharya have described the various types of *Mooshika* and the way of spread of *Mooshika Visha* is mainly through the semen of *Mooshika* (rat). *Mooshika Visha* is difficult to cure because it is spreading in nature and is relapsing because poison may remain in the body and aggravated on cloudy days. *Acharyas* have mentioned the treatment protocol to reduce the *Dosha* aggravation thus resulting in better prognosis. The treatment modalities also give flexible protocol as per *Dosha* predominance. Thus by using all methods described in *Samhitas* one should get better treatment for *Mooshika Visha*.

CONCLUSION

By studying above it seems that *Mooshika Visha* causes more manifestation in man. The treatment is more important. In *Kerala* much research and development has been done in the Ayurvedic management of animate poisoning. Ayurvedic treatment methods and medicinal plants are still being practiced by *Vishavaidya* in *Kerala*. Ayurvedic treatment of *Mooshika* poisoning can be given in all disease where source of infection is rat.

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