CASE REPORT

MANAGEMENT OF KNEE OSTEOARTHRITIS THROUGH AYURVEDA: A CASE STUDY
KHUSHAL KAMESHWAR NIKODE¹ VAISHALI KUCHEWAR²

Summary:

Knee osteoarthritis is the most common type of arthritis and is a major cause of disability. Its prevalence in India is 22% to 39%. In Modern medicine, OA is generally treated with Acetaminophen, aspirin and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) as pain relief medicines. Excessive use of NSAIDs can lead to gastric complications. Total knee arthroplasty (TKA) is widely employed in the treatment for end-stage osteoarthritis but Pneumonia is one of the most common complications after knee arthroplasty. It is the major cause of readmission and death after surgery. In Ayurveda, Osteoarthritis can be correlated with sandhigata vata because of its resemblance in clinical features. This is a case of knee Osteoarthritis who was advised arthroplasty. He was successfully managed with internal medication & some external therapy. Osteoarthritis is routinely treated by Ayurveda practitioners but from this case study. It can be concluded that severe osteoarthritis may be managed with Ayurvedic intervention

Keywords: - Osteoarthritis, Sandhigata Vata, Internal medication, External therapy, Ayurvedic intervention

¹JR III, Dept. of Kayachikitsa, ²Associate professor and Head of Dept. Kayachikitsa, Mahatma Gandhi Ayurved College Hospital & Research Center, Salod, Wardha, Maharashtra.

Corresponding Email id: khushaln6@gmail.com Access this article online: www.jahm.in

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INTRODUCTION:

Knee osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common type of arthritis and is a major cause of disability which reduced the quality of life [1]. The prevalence of it is 22%-39% in India [2]. More than 50% of the population around the world (>65 years) show X-ray evidence of OA in one of the joints, thus demonstrating the high incidence of this disease. Though OA is equally present in men and women, it appears to be more common among younger men (<45 years) and in the older women (>45 years) [3].

According to Piramal Healthcare Limited in a nationwide campaign against chronic diseases, India is expected to be the chronic disease capital with 60 million people with arthritis by 2025. Currently in OA affected persons, 80% are having some movement limitation and 20% are unable to perform major activities of daily living [4].

In Modern medicine, OA is generally treated with Acetaminophen, aspirin and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) as a pain reliever. Excessive use of NSAIDs can lead to gastric complications like ulcers and increased risk for hospitalization [5]. In Some patients, upper gastrointestinal (GI) side effects are so severe that they require discontinuing the medication.

The most drastic treatment of knee OA is partial or total knee replacement. Total knee arthroplasty (TKA) is widely employed in the treatment for end-stage osteoarthritis (OA). This surgical procedure allows for the improvement in patient’s clinical symptoms and quality of life, but complications related to TKA represent a major problem for orthopedists. Pneumonia is one of the most common complications after total knee arthroplasty [6]. It is the major cause of readmission and death after surgery. In addition, atelectasis and pleural effusion are also common after total joint arthroplasty, which may adversely affect the outcomes of patients [7].

The clinical features of Sandhigatavata is described in various Ayurvedic ancient text which is characterized by shula (joint pain), shotha (swelling), prasaarana-aakunchanayo pravruttischha vedana (painful joint movement) resembles with Osteoarthritis [8, 9].

Acharya Bhavamishra in Bhavaprakasha nighantu described treatment like snehana (oleation), swedan (sudation), upanaha (poultice) and lepa (topical application) for sandhigata vata [10]. Multiple Medicines are also described in Ayurvedic texts which are being prescribed routinely from many years.

Following case of Knee osteoarthritis was successfully treated by using above said treatment principles.

CASE REPORT –

A 67 year old male patient came in Kayachikitsa OPD of Mahatma Gandhi Ayurved College, Hospital & Research Center, Salod, with the complaints of severe pain and swelling over left
knee joint & difficulty in walking since 2 months. He was taken allopathic treatment, but did not get relief and suggested knee replacement. He was not willing for surgery so he preferred to take Alternative treatment. Patient was clinically examined & decided to admit for some procedures. On clinical examination, we got following findings.

In consideration with the findings of clinical examination & investigations (Given in Observation & Result), following treatment was given. As he was also suffering from Hypertension, Amlodipin 5mg was continued.

**Table no. 1– Management plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Dose</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><em>Punarnavadi guggulu</em></td>
<td>500 mg twice a day after meals</td>
<td>30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><em>Shiva gutika</em></td>
<td>500 mg twice a day</td>
<td>15 days Next 15 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>250 mg twice a day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><em>Cap. Ascofol-C</em></td>
<td>1 capsule twice a day</td>
<td>30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><em>Dashamula qwath</em></td>
<td>20 ml twice a day with Lukewarm water</td>
<td>30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Local <em>Snehan &amp; swedan</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with <em>Dashamula taila</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><em>Janudhara with</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Dashamula taila</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td><em>Tablet. Asthiposhak</em></td>
<td>1 tablet twice a day</td>
<td>For next two months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td><em>Punarnava mandoor</em></td>
<td>500mg twice a day</td>
<td>For next two months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After completion of one month of above medicines, following medicines were given for continuous two months:

Table no. 2- Ingredients of above compounds

| 1) *Shiva gutika* | Shilajeet processed in Triphala |
| 2) *Ascofol-C*    | *Praval pisti* -125 mg          |
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Godanti bhasma -125 mg
Shukti bhasma -25 mg
Lauha bhasma -25 mg
Mandroor bhasma -75 mg
Amalaki (Emblica officinalis)-75 mg

3) Tablet. Asthiposhak
Kukkutandatvak bhasma -100 mg
Asthishrunkhala (Cissus quadrangularis)-100mg
Arjuna (Terminalia arjuna) 50 mg
Amalaki (Emilca officinalis) -50 mg
Aswagandha (Withania somnifera) -50 mg
Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia) -50 mg
Guggulu (Commiphora mucul) -50 mg
Bala (Tinosphora cardifolia) -50 mg
Babul kwath (Acacia arabica)

OBSERVATION & RESULT

Table no. 3 - Assessment on Day 1, 15 & 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Assessment parameters</th>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 15</th>
<th>Day 30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hemoglobin percentage</td>
<td>9.3 gm %</td>
<td>9.6 gm %</td>
<td>10 gm %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Measurement of Swelling of left knee joint</td>
<td>Middle margin</td>
<td>38 cm</td>
<td>36 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper margin</td>
<td>38.5 cm</td>
<td>37 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Walking distance</td>
<td>50 meter with support of stick (Painful)</td>
<td>100 meter without support (Mild pain)</td>
<td>500 meter without support (No pain)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 1- X-ray left knee joint

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before treatment</th>
<th>After treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(On dated 01/11/2015)</td>
<td>(On dated 16/02/2016)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Still patient is coming to us for follow up. He has no pain or swelling on left knee and he can walk the distance approximately one kilometer without pain. There are also significant changes in the radiographs of left knee. (Fig. 1)

**DISCUSSION:**
The treatment given in this patient was in accordance with following properties of medicine.

*Punarnavadi guggulu* – It was used for local swelling & pain. *Punarnava* is the main ingredient of *punarnavadi guggulu*. It is known as ‘shreshtha shothaghna’ (anti-inflammatory). In one study of *Boerhaavia diffusa*, it was found to be Anti-inflammatory and diuretic[11].

*Guduchi* – It is one of the ingredients of *punarnava guggul & Asthiposhak*. In *ayurvedic* texts, it is described as *Rasayan* (Rejuvanator). It is proved to stimulate growth of osteoblasts, increases the differentiation of cells into osteoblastic lineage and also increases the mineralization of bone[12].

*Devadaru* - It is included in *punarnavadi guggul* because of its *Shothahara* (anti-inflammatory) & *vedana sthapan* (pain relievers) properties. It is specifically indicated in *jeerna sandhivata & Amavata*. The volatile oil extracted by steam distillation of the wood of devadaru was found to possess anti-inflammatory & analgesic activity against acetic acid induced writhing and hot plate reaction in mice[13].

*Haritaki* – It is known as *Mrudu virechak* (mild laxative) as well as *strotoshodhak*. In this case, there was huge swelling due to accumulation of synovial fluid. *Haritaki* may be helpful to alleviate swelling by its *strotoshodhan* property. It is also proved to be an anti-oxidant[14].

*Gomutra* - Recent study have proved that cow urine could be a potential source of natural...
antioxidant that could have greater importance as supportive therapy in preventing or slowing oxidative stress related degenerative diseases\textsuperscript{[15]}. 

**Guggul** – It is the ingredient of punarnavadi guggul & Asthiposhak. In Ayurveda, it is described as *vedanasthapan, Shothahara & Rasayan*. It contains two highly effective compounds, guggulesterone and myrrhanol A. In arthritis there are high levels of certain inflammatory protein. Guggulesterone neutralizes this protein and decreases level of inflammation. Myrrhanol A relieves pain by blocking pro-inflammatory COX enzymes. Many studies showed Antiinflammatory & antiarthritic activity of guggul\textsuperscript{[16]}.

**Shiva gutika** which contains *shilajeet* is useful in multiple diseases because of its Rasayan property. *Shilajit* enhances the bioavailability of other herbs. It contains more than 84 types of minerals. Fulvic acid is one of them which helps in the transportation of nutrients into the deep tissues and removes deep-seated toxins from the body. *Shilajit* reduces the recovery period of injured muscles and bones\textsuperscript{[17]}.

Capsule *Ascafol C* is having the ingredients which are hematinic as well as osteoprotective. It was advised to increase hemoglobin level & to protect the bones.

Dashamoola qwath was given as a *Vatashamak* medicine. Some of its ingredients have been evaluated in experimental models of inflammation and pain and have shown to possess anti-inflammatory and analgesic activities\textsuperscript{[18]}.

**Snehan** with *dashmula taila* was given to alleviate *Vata* by its *Snigdha* (unctuous), *guru* (heavy), and *mridu* (soft) properties. According to modern studies, massage stimulates blood circulation and help in elimination of waste throughout the body. The medicines used for massage are absorbed through the skin\textsuperscript{[19]}.

**Swedana** was advised as it decreases *stambha* (stiffness), *gaurava* (heaviness) and *shula* (pain)\textsuperscript{[20]}. *Janudhara* with *Dashamula taila* was done to alleviate *vata* & may be helpful to prevent further degeneration.

Patient was on Tablet *Asthiposhak* and *punarnava mandoor* for next two months. *Asthiposhak* contains *Kukkutanatvak bhasma, asthishrunkhala* and *arjuna* which are osteoprotective.

*Amalaki, aswagandha, guduchi* and *bala* are *rasayan* to prevent further degeneration of bones.

*Punarnave mandoor* was given to treat the anemia.

**CONCLUSION:**

To treat osteoarthritis is a routine practice of *Ayurvedic* practitioners, but for end stage OA,
we generally uncertain to manage. From this case study, it can be concluded that severe osteoarthritis may be successfully managed with Ayurvedic intervention. This study will be helpful for further collaborative research with modern medicine in the cases of end stage osteoarthritis.

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