A CASE - HISTORY OF
SCIATICA (GRIDHRASEE)

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Introduction:

Vata Vyadhies are generally considered intractable and despite treatment cause much suffering, disability and deformity. Gridhrasee (Sciatica) is one of the eighty diseases caused by the humour wind (Vata). It is of two kinds. One is caused by the humour wind (Vata) only and the other is caused by the humour wind (Vata) and the humour Phlegam (Kapha) combined. Sudden and repeated attacks of severe pain and cramps and stiffness in lower limb are its main characteristics.

Definition:

'That condition is said to be sciatica, where first the hip and then waist, back, thigh, knee, calf and the sole of the foot are gradually affected with stiffness, pain and pricking sensations and associated with frequent twitching due to the humour wind (Vata). If this condition is due to the humour wind (vata) and the humour Phlegam (Kapha) combined, there will be additional symptoms of torpor, heaviness and anorexia'.

ch. chi. 28, 56-56½.

Aims and objects:

Though the disease is common and not very difficult to diagnose, it is common experience that it is not easily amenable to the treatment which aims at relieving pain. So the aim of this case report is to emphasize that (1) the line of treatment which is both “Dosha Vipareeta” i.e. pointed to the provoked doshas and which is “Vyadhi Vipareeta” i.e. causes Samprapti Bhanga is better suited in such cases. (2) The treatment should

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not be in piece meal but should cover all the aspects of treatment i.e. not only drugs (Aushadha) (but diet)-Anna and daily routine (Vihara) should also receive our due attention.

Means, Methods and Materials:

As this is the clinical study the patient is occupying the central place. Observation of the course of his disease from the very beginning to the end of treatment and follow up for two years is recorded. Method of treatment is as prescribed in cha. chi. chapter 28 Verses-185 and 215, 216. Materials used are very simple-Boild water, oil, ginger, garlic, black pepper, electric Heater etc.

Sciatica (Gridhrasee)

Name of the Patient: Dr. Jaswantrai M. Shah, M.B.B.S.
Age: About fifty five years.
Occupation: A consultant physician.
Address: Jai Hind medico-Surgical home, Ghogha gate,
Bhavnagar. PIN: 364001. Date 14-1-1971

Complaint of the patient:

Severe pain in the distribution area of the Sciatica nerve of the left leg, resembling the typical pain of the Sciatica neuritis.

Interrogation of the patient:

Interrogation of the patient reveals that on the date 14-1-1971, the onset of pain was felt immediately on getting out of the bed in the early morning. Because of the excruciating pain he was not able to leave the bed.

A few days before the onset of pain the days were of extreme cold. During that severe cold wave he was obliged to go to Ahmedabad twice
in a motor car. Since then there was mild pain with the tingling sensation. Immediately, the patient began to take the Allopathic medicines such as the analgesic, muscle-relaxant, B Vitamins orally as well as by the injections. Because of the side by side symptoms of cold and coryza also Vicoral tablets also, were taken. Two drops of Nasola also were instilled in the nose. This treatment was continued for eight days. After that, taking the advice of some good doctors and having the experience of the often failure of the Allopathic treatment in the cases of Sciatica he decided to take the treatment of Ayurveda.

**The examination of the patient:** physical signs:

**Examination by the eye:**

I saw that the patient was lying on the bed.

**Examination by touch:**

By palpitating from the back of the patient to the sole of his foot, there was severe pain felt by the patient in the whole Sciatica nerve.

(2) The left leg was colder in comparison with the right leg.

**Symptoms:**

(1) The left leg was felt heavier in comparison with the right leg.

(2) There was severe pain felt by the patient along the course of the whole Sciatica nerve.

**Prodromal Symptoms:**

The tingling sensation and some pain also was felt by the patient before the manifestation of the Symptoms.

**The homologatory signs:**

The adverse homologatory signs were the exacerbation of pain, coldness and heaviness of the affected leg during the cold hours of the night and the early morning.
The agreeable homologatory signs were the abating of all the above symptoms during the hot hours of the day.

The etiological factors:

Coli blasts of wind was the primary factor and the physical exhaustion felt by the patient during the repeated journey to Ahmedabad was the secondary factor in causing this disease.

Pathogenesis (SAMPRAPTIHI):

(1) The number (Sankhya)

Sciatica is of two kinds.

(2) Minutia (Vikalpaha):

This case of Sciatica is a case of 'couple' (Dvandvam); because two humours are involved in it.

More minute classification:

The property of cold (Shaityam) of both these humours is morbidly increased and the property of heat (Ushnatvam) of the humour bile (PITTA) is simultaneously decreased.

The property of stability (Sthairyam) of the humour Phlegam (Kapha) is morbidly increased and the property of movement (Chalatvam) of the humour wind (Vata) is simultaneously decreased.

The property of heaviness (Guruta) of the humour Phlegam (Kapha) is morbidly increased and the property of lightness (Laghtuta) of the humour wind (Vata) is simultaneously decreased.

Predominance (Pradhanyam):

In this Sciatica, the symptom of pain is most outstanding. Therefore the humour wind (Vata) is Predominant here. It is said that never is there any pain without the morbidly increased humour wind (Vata).
This disease has taken place not as a complication of or in sequence of any other disease but by itself.

**Time of exacerbation of the disease** (Bala-Kala-Vishesh)

Pain always increases during the cold hours of night and day. This indicates the period when the humour wind (Vata) and the humour Phlegam (Kapha) always increase in every living being physiologically as well as pathologically.

**The Place (Sthana) of the disease:**

The morbidly increased humour wind (Vata) named Vyan occupying the channels & tissues in the lower limb and the morbidly increased humour phlegam (Kapha) named Shleshaka obstructing & interfering in free movement of Vata, have jointly given rise to this disease in the left leg.

**The movement (Gati)**

The movement (Gati) of both the involved humours who have migrated to shakha abnormal out of order and transverse affecting siras and snayus of the parat.

**The covering** : (Avarana)

The morbidly increased humour phlegam (Kapha) has covered the morbidly increased humour wind (Vata).

**Diagnosis :**

The diagnosis of this disease was quite evident, sciatica.

**Note :**

As soon as I spoke the signs and symptoms of sciatica, all comprising in a verse of only three lines, the academician in the Doctor-patient was very much pleased. He said 'These three lines of Ayurveda describe all that is written in half a page of the Allopathic text.'
Prognosis:
Prognosis was favourable because

(1) This disease was caused by the humour wind (Vata) associated with, "covered" by the humour phlegam (Kapha)

(2) Also, because it was quite recent. Generally speaking, the diseases less than one year old are easy to cure.

(3) Also, because this patient had all the four qualifications needed in a patient.

SEE:
“(1) Recollection, 2) Obedience to instructions, (3) Courage and (4) Ability to describe his ailments are considered the tetrad of desiderata in a patient.” Ch. Su. 9-9

THE TREATMENT:
Dieteting treatment:
The patient was advised to observe absolute fasting. No tea, coffee, fruits, milk, glucose—anything nutritive was to be taken by him, till the pain abated considerably.

He was advised to drink only boiled water, and that too as less as possible, boiled with dry ginger (shunthee). It was to be taken some what tepid.

Hygienic treatment:
He was given the perspiration-creating treatment by using an electric heater all the time. The ceiling fan was not to be used at all, and all the windows were to be kept closed in order to increase the room temperature.

Medicinal treatment:
(1) Nux Vomica Powder (VISHA TINDUKA)
(Prepared by myself according to the ancient Ayurvedic method) and (2) Black Pepper powder (MARICHAM) well mixed together were administered to him three times a day.

**DOSE:**

Each dose consisted of NUX VOMICA (VISHATINDUKA) Powder= 125 Mgm. and Black pepper (MARICHAM) 375 Mgm.

Day to day report:

After twenty-four hours:

The patient's pain had definitely abated somewhat.

After forty-eight hours:

The patient's pain was decreased by nearly twenty-five Pc.

Dietetic treatment changed:

Now the patient was allowed to take a tablespoonful of rice mixed with four ounces of very thin soup prepared from MOONGA (Latin Name: Phaseolus Mungo Linn) and a tablespoonful of MOONGA (Latin Name: Phaseolus Mungo Linn) with six knots of raw garlic daily, twice.

After eight days:

The patient was nearly cured.

Dietetic treatment changed:

The quantity of the same articles of food was now to be taken according to the appetite of the patient.

Massage treatment:

Now the massage treatment was given to the patient. Sesamum oil boiled with raw garlic, was to be used as oil to be massaged. Immediately after the massage, hot fomentations were to be applied upon the Sciatica region.
On date 2-2-1971

By now, the patient was completely cured. Therefore, he began to do his routine work:

**Complications:**

There were absolutely no complications.

**Follow-up:**

The patient reported after two years that at times during very cold nights of winter or the monsoon season, the pain of Sciatica had recurred nominally.

On the date 15-4-1978 the patient reported that he was perfectly alright and he had nothing to complain about his Sciatica.

**My immense gain:**

Naturally enough I had not to take any fees for my treatment from a brother medical practitioner. But I received much more from him - gentleman's friendship. It is said:

'From somewhere money, from somewhere spiritual gain, from somewhere friendship, from somewhere fame and from somewhere experience of the treatment, - the treatment of the patient is never without some gain to the Doctor' : ch. su.

**Discussion & Comments:**

**Approximate Cost of medicines used:**

1. Black Pepper (MARICHAM) Rs. 5-00
2. NUX VOMICA (VISHATINDUKA) 2-00
3. Garlic 4-00
4. Oil 20-00
5. Dry ginger 9-00

Rupees Forty only Rs. 40-00

( It may be noted that his food-bill has been much reduced)
SAMPRAPTIBHANGA:

The aim of any treatment is to cure the disease by bringing down the provoked doshas to their normal level & normal sites and channels. Here in sciatica the ‘covering’ (Avarana) humour phlegam (Kapha) must be broken, to begin with; because, only then the ‘covered’ humour wind (Vata) will become free from its bondage and will be able to move freely, in its normal channels.

The Processes applied:

(1) The heat (USHNATVAM) (of the electric heater) will remove the cold (shaityam) property of both the concerned humours. And it will remove the properties of heaviness (Gurutvam) and stability (sthairyam) also of the humour phlegam (Kapha).

(2) The fasting treatment:

This treatment will do all that the heat will accomplish. And that will restore to the affected limb, its former heat, lightness and movement.

(3) Water boiled with dry ginger also will accomplish the same.

(4) Hygienic treatment also will accomplish the same.

(5) Anti-Vata & Anti Kapha treatment Externally:

Oil used for massage:

Oil is having the properties which are antagonistic to the humour wind (Vata) in toto. The regular use of oil subdues the humour wind (Vata) on account of its possessing unctuous, hot and heavy qualities; for the humour wind (Vata) possesses the qualities of dryness, coldness and lightness, of the opposite nature.

(Chāraka Samhitā: Vimana Sthana: Chpt. 1 Para 14)
Internally

(6) Garlic

It is said that Garlic is the best medicine for the diseases caused by the humour wind (Vata). It is said that; next best to garlic is onion to cure the diseases caused by the humour wind (Vata).

(Ashtanga Sangraha: Uttara Tantra: chpt. 49)

(7) Strychnine (Vishatinduka) and Black Pepper (Marich) also do the same.

Summary:

Heat, fasting, Oil, water boiled with dry ginger, strychnine, black pepper and the closed windows of the room are anti-humour (Dosha-Vipareeta) as well as anti-disease (Vyadhi-Vipareeta) treatments. The anti-etiological (Nidan-Vipareeta) treatment has been given by keeping the patient resting in bed. The anti-place (Ashaya-Vipareeta) treatment has been given by giving the heat-treatment and the massage treatment.

The anti-susceptible body element (Dooshya-Vipareet) treatment has been given by the massage and the heat treatment upon the Sciatica nerve itself.

Conclusion

This way the anti-humour antisusceptible body element-place-etiological factor and the anti-disease (Dosha Dooshya-Sthana-Nidan-Vyadhi) Vipareeta treatment has been given to the Patients with the desired result.