

Role of *Pichha Vasti* in the Management of Ulcerative Colitis

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Abstract

Ulcerative colitis is one of the common Gastrointestinal (GIT) disorders encountered by clinicians in day-to-day life. It is a type of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) that usually involves the mucosa of rectum and extends proximally to involve all or part of the colon. A westernized environment and lifestyle is linked to the appearance of ulcerative colitis which is associated with smoking, unhealthy diet, medication use, stress etc. In Allopathic system of medicine drugs like 5 –Aminosalicylates, Glucocorticoids, anti-TNF therapy etc. are used for its treatment but they have many side effects like headache , nausea, vomiting ,hypersensitivity reactions due to Sulfasalazine ,osteoporosis due to use of Glucocorticoids etc. On the other hand *Ayurveda* is the Science of life in which Humoral balance is emphasized. Use of *Deepana*, *Pachana* drugs and *Pichha Vasti* is quite effective in this. Role of *Pichha Vasti* in Ulcerative colitis is discussed in detailed in the article.

Keywords

Ulcerative colitis, Pichha Vasti, Rectum



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INTRODUCTION

Ulcerative colitis (UC) is a form of inflammatory bowel disease that causes non – granulomatous inflammation and ulcers in the rectum and colon. Its incidence is rising especially in Northern India, due to erroneous dietary habits and faulty lifestyle. This is substantiated by the fact that urban areas have a higher incidence of Ulcerative colitis than rural areas, and high socio-economic classes have a higher prevalence than lower socio- economic classes.¹ The peak age of onset of UC is between 15 and 30 yrs. A second peak occurs between the ages of 60 and 80 yrs. The male to female ratio for UC is -1:1.² The etiological factors of UC are Genetic Susceptibility, Defective Immune regulation, Exogenous factors and Environmental factors. The major symptoms of UC are diarrhoea, rectal bleeding, tenesmus, passage of mucus, crampy abdominal pain often related to defecation, anorexia and weight loss. Thus, the disease is quite cumbersome for the patient. It disturbs the daily routine of the patient, reduces personal productivity. Moreover, it poses a challenge for Medical health professionals due to its high morbidity and mortality. The highest mortality is during the first years of

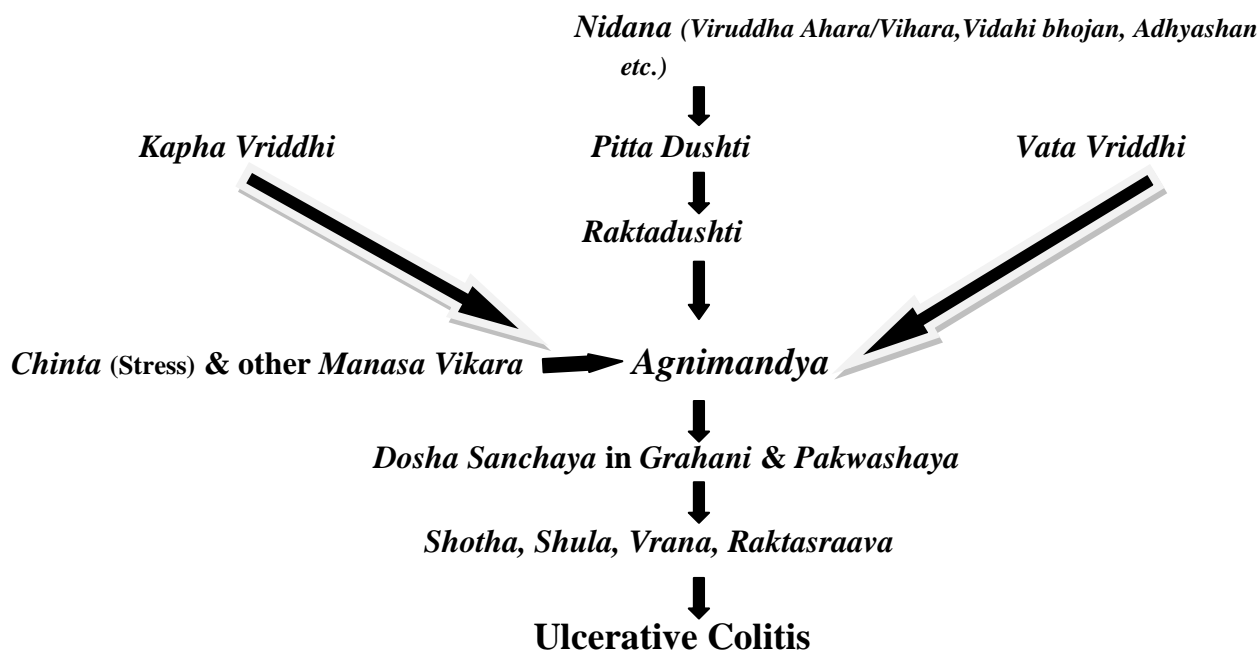
disease and in long duration disease due to risk of colon cancer.³ Ayurvedic system of medicine is very beneficial in the treatment of Ulcerative colitis. The various conditions described in *Ayurveda* like *Raktaatisara*, *Kshataj Grahani* and *Sangrahani* resemble to Ulcerative colitis due to similarity in symptoms. *Acharya Sushruta* has described *Raktaatisaar* as advanced stage of *Paittik Atisaar*. Its symptoms like *Shulam*, *Vidaaham*, *Gudpaaka* & *Raktapravritti* can be compared with rectal pain, inflammation, rectal ulceration and bleeding of ulcerative colitis.⁴ *Kshataj Grahani* described by *Acharya Gananathasen* is characterized by frequency of liquid stools and passing of mucous and blood mixed stool due to *Kshat* (ulcers) in *Grahani* (intestine). Similarly, *Sangrahani* described by *Acharya Madhav* also has symptoms similar to Ulcerative colitis. Vitiation of *Agni* (*Agnimandya*) is the main cause of all these conditions. Thus, *Deepana-Pachana Chikitsa* forms the mainstay of the treatment. Along with this *Pichha Vasti* is considered best among all of the *Vastis* by *Acharya Charak* for the treatment of *Sangrahani*, *Raktaatisara* etc.

UNDERSTANDING ULCERATIVE COLITIS FROM AYURVEDIC POINT OF VIEW

From Ayurvedic point of view Ulcerative colitis can be considered as a *Pitta Pradhan Tridoshaj* disease of *Purishavaha Srotasa*. *Nidana Sevana* leads to vitiation of *Pitta* along with *Vridhhi* of *Kapha* and *Vata*. *Vridhha Kapha* and *Vata* cause the vitiation of *Agni* leading to *Agnimandya*. Excessive consumption of *Pittaj - Ahara* (*Pitta*

aggravating foods) and *Pitta* aggravating regimen leads to vitiation of *Pitta Dosha* which further cause the vitiation of *Rakta Dhatu*. *Dosha Sanchaya* takes place in *Grahani and Pakwashaya* (Rectum and Colon) which results in *Shula* (abdominal pain), *Shotha* (inflammation of intestine), *Atisara* (Diarrhoea), *Vrana* (Ulcers) and *Raktasraava* (bleeding per rectum) etc. Vitiated *Kapha* blocks the channels causing further inflammation, mucous accumulation and oedema.

Pathogenesis of Ulcerative Colitis



PICHA VASTI

Piccha Vasti is named so because of its *Picchil* property which means it is sticky or lubricant. Because of this property it has

ulcer healing effect. Moreover, it is *Agnideepak* and *Sangrahi* due to its contents.



Pichha Vasti- Indications

Acharya Charaka has described *Piccha Vasti* for the treatment of *Pravahika* (~Dysentery), *Gudabhransha* (~Rectal prolapse), *Raktasraava* (~Bleeding per rectum) *Jwara* (~Fever),⁵ *Pitta-Atisaar*, *Shotha* (Inflammation), *Gulma*, *Jeerna-Atisaar* (~Chronic diarrhoea) and *Grahani Dosha*.⁶ *Acharya Sushruta* has also given the similar indications of *Pichha Vasti*.

1. पिच्छाबस्तिरयं सिद्धः सघृतक्षौद्रशर्करः |

प्रवहिकागुदभ्रन्शरक्तस्रावज्वरापहः ||

(च.चि.14/228)

2.

पित्तातिसारज्वरशोथगुल्मजीर्णातिसारग्रहणीप्र
दोषान् |

जयत्ययं शीघ्रमतिप्रवृद्धान्

विरेचनास्थापनयोश्च वस्तिः || (च.चि.19/67-

68)

3. अल्पाल्पं बहुशो रक्तं सरुग्य उपवेश्यते |

यदा वयुर्विबद्धश्च पिच्छाबस्तिस्तदा हितः ||

(सु.उ.40/111)

Contents Of Pichha Vasti⁷

1. *Mocharasa* -50 gm

2. *Dugdha* (Milk) -2 litres

3. *Ghrita* -80 ml

4. *Til Taila* -20 ml

5. *Mulethi Kalka* -40 gm

PROCEDURE OF ADMINISTRATION OF PICHHA VASTI

• The procedure involves the *Poorva Karma*, *Pradhana Karma* and *Paschat Karma*.

• *Pichha Vasti* can be given for 30,16 or 8 days in *Karma*, *Kaal* and *Yoga Vasti* pattern i.e. *Pichha Vasti* is given in *Vyatyasa Krama* (alternately) with *Anuvasan Vasti*.

• Duration of *Vasti* cycle for 30, 16 or 8 days depend on the severity of disease and *Bala* of the patient.

• Patient is explained about the *Pathya- Apathya Ahara- Vihara* (Do's & Don'ts) before the *Vasti* treatment.

Poorva Karma

It involves *Snehana* of abdomen, back, thigh and legs followed by *Nadi Sveda*.

Pradhana Karma

i. Patient is asked to lie down in the left lateral position.

ii. *Sukhoshna Sneha* is applied in the anal region and on the *Vasti Netra*.

iii. *Vasti Netra* is introduced gradually & patient is asked to breath in.



- iv. *Vasti Dravya* is pushed into the rectum till a little quantity is remained in the *Putaka* (to prevent *Vayu* to enter into the *Pakvashaya*)
- v. Withdraw the *Netra* gradually.

Paschat Karma

- i. Patient is asked to keep lying for 3-4 mins for better absorption of drug from anal region.
- ii. Patient is advised to take light diet.
- iii. After completion of complete cycle patient is advised to follow the *Sansarjan Karma*.

Probable Mode of Action of *Purva Karma*

- *Snehana* and *Svedana* prior to *Vasti* do *Anulomana* of *Apaan Vayu* and thus, *Vasti* becomes more efficacious.
- *Abhyanga* also cause vasodilatation in skin and muscle by stimulating receptors of sympathetic nervous system. Vasodilatation increases blood flow and helps to remove toxins.
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PROBABLE MODE OF ACTION OF *PICHA VASTI*

Possible actions of *Piccha Vasti* are –

- a) *Shothahara* & *Vrana-Ropaka* (Anti-inflammatory & Ulcer-healing)
- b) *Raktastambhaka* (Haemostatic agent)

- c) *Sangrahi / Stambhan* (Anti-diarrhoeal)
- d) *Pitta Shamaka*
- e) *Agnideepaka*

These actions are due to contents present in it.

Following are the properties of its contents:

1. *Mocharasa* (Resin of *Salmalia malbarica*)

- Due to its *Kashaya Rasa* and *Sheeta Virya*, it has *Vranropaka* (Ulcer-healing) property.⁸
- *Achyarya Charaka* has kept it in *Shonitsthapana Gana*,⁹ thus, it checks bleeding (haemostatic agent).
- Latest researches also prove its anti-diarrhoeal effect. The polyphenols and tannins present in *Salmalia Malbarica* provide strength to intestinal mucosa, decrease intestinal secretion, intestinal transit and promotes balance in water transport across the mucosal cells.¹⁰
- It is *Picchil* (sticky or lubricant) in nature thus, forms protective film over Intestine and avoid friction over mucosa.
- *Shalmali* resin (*Mocharasa*) exudates contain Gallic and Tannic acids. From various researches done recently throughout the world it has been shown that both Gallic acid and Tannic acids have Anti-oxidant and Anti-inflammatory actions. Gallic acid



inhibits Histamine release and Pro-inflammatory Cytokine production in Mast cells.¹¹

2. Ghrita

▶ *Ghrita* helps in stimulating *Agni* and it also has a *Balya* and *Vrana Ropana*¹² (healing effect).

▶ In *Ayurveda* classics it is mentioned that *Ghrita* is best *Pitta Shamak Dravya*.¹³ *Pitta* is responsible for inflammation and ulceration process.

▶ *Sneha* forms an impervious coating over entire colon. There will be no loss of electrolytes and prevent direct attack of inflammatory mediators on mucosa and hence thereby reduce inflammatory process and facilitate healing.

3. Sesame Oil (Taila)

▶ Its *Sukshma* property also helps the drug to reach into the microcellular level.

▶ Oil helps in protecting intestinal mucosa from the irritating substances.

▶ *Ghrita* and oil also help in forming homogenous mixture.

▶ Moreover, Sesame oil contains high level of natural antioxidants namely sesamol, sesamol, sesamin and asarinin. They play an important role in health-promoting effects.¹⁴

▶ Sesamin is a lignin with potent anti-inflammatory and antinoceptive properties.¹⁵

4. Milk (Dugdha)

▶ It makes the *Vasti Mridu* and alleviates *Pittadosha*.

5. Mulethi (Glycyrrhiza glabra)

▶ *Mulethi* is *Vata-Pitta Shamak* and has *Shothahar* property.¹⁶

▶ Liquorice (*Mulethi*) has anti-inflammatory, analgesic, anti-oxidant and ulcer healing properties.¹⁷

▶ It also has *Rasayana* property; it helps in increasing the potency of other drugs and general condition of patient.

DISCUSSION

Ulcerative colitis is a chronic disease with recurrent symptoms and significant morbidity. The precise etiology of ulcerative colitis is not well understood but as told above the current hypothesis suggests its causes as Genetic Susceptibility, Defective Immune regulation, Exogenous factors (Infections by *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, *Campylobacter* etc.) and Environmental factors (Smoking, indiscreet use of antibiotics etc.). These factors cause T-cell activation in mucosa of rectum and colon



followed by release of inflammatory cytokines such as IL-1, IL-6 & TNF. With mild inflammation mucosa is erythematous and has a fine granular surface that resembles sandpaper. In more severe disease, the mucosa is haemorrhagic, oedematous and ulcerated.¹⁸ According to *Ayurveda* vitiated *Pitta* and *Rakta* are responsible for inflammation and ulceration. Based on the probable mode of action of *Picchha Vasti* described above the role of *Piccha Vasti* can be summarised as below:

Raktastambhaka Theory:

- ▶ Ingredients of *Piccha Basti* owing to their *Kashaya Rasa* and *Sheeta Veerya* act as *Raktastambhaka* (Haemostatic agent) .
- ▶ *Pitta* is the dominating *Dosha* responsible for bleeding per anum. Because of *Madhura, Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa* of the ingredients of *Piccha Basti* it is *Pittashamaka* .So it pacifies vitiated *Pitta Dosha* and as well *Rakta*.

Vranaropaka \Shothahara action

- ▶ In ulcerative colitis intestine gets inflamed and sensitized, when food passes through intestine and makes contact with its mucosa.
- ▶ *Vasti* drugs reach upto the Rectum and Colon and form protective film over it,

avoid friction over mucosa, inflammation subsides and mucosa becomes normal

- ▶ Due to its different contents it has *Shothahara* and *Vranaropak* property.

Agnideepaka action

- ▶ From Ayurvedic point of view *Agnimandya* is the root cause of Ulcerative Colitis so *Agni Deepak* property of *Pichha Vasti* helps in breaking the pathogenesis of the disease.

Sangrahi action

- ▶ Simultaneously *Pichha Vasti* also has *Sangrahi* property which reduces the bowel frequency and there will also be no loss of electrolytes and protein losing **enteropathy**.

CONCLUSION

Ulcerative colitis is a challenging medical problem. Its incidence is increasing due to unhealthy dietary habits. In modern medical science, though many remedies are available, like the use of Sulphasalazine and the other 5-ASA agents, Glucocorticoids, Anti- TNF Therapy, but they have many side-effects. Due to the nature of disease it results in degradation of health and disturbs the daily routine life of the patient thus, making him emotionally stressed. Based on

the discussion, it can be said *Pichha Vasti* is quite effective in treating Ulcerative colitis.



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