The Ayurvedic Concept of Kshavathu as Related with Western Concept of Allergic Rhinitis – A Review

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Authors’ contributions  
This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Individuals with Kshavathu for chronic periods develop long-standing complications which affect the immune system manifested as respiratory diseases. Poor life style habituates such as physical inactivity, exposure to mist, wind, dust, sleep disruption increase are the factors responsible for nasal disorder symptoms and their severity. As allergic rhinitis may results from an IgE mediated or a non- IgEmediated immune response, it is also important to have an anti-allergic strategy to make the patient symptom-free for a longer period. The attempt is made to minimize the allergic rhinitis features related to kshavathu such as paroxysmal sneezing, its crucial feature. Kshavathu not only indicates simple sneezing but a vast pathology exists behind this clinical condition. Kshavathu also is associated with several conditions that affects the patients day- to-day life pressuring the need to understand and identify the interventions that could help in managing the risk factors, especially with healthy individuals who are at risk of immune impairment. The Ayurveda protocol includes Nasya (nasal drops) and internal medication as possible interventions to reduce the risk of complications and improve immune response. Treatment modality emphasizes the tolerance of nasal mucosa to the aerial allergens to keep the patient symptom-free. Nasya with Vata Kapha Hara medication and internal medicine which addresses both the factors Agni and

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elimination of the Doshas should be administered. Therefore, this review paper attempts to explain various consequences of Kshavathu mentioned in classic texts and also enlists the management of its complications.

Keywords: Sneezing; Brimshathu; Brishakshavam.

1. INTRODUCTION

Allergic rhinitis is a common condition produced by IgE mediated and non IgE mediated responses of nasal mucosa to air borne allergens. It affects 20% and 47 % respectively of the offspring if one or both parents suffer from allergies. It is a common type of chronic rhinitis. The allergic response may affect not only the nose (allergic rhinitis) but also every respiratory pathway (allergic bronchitis, allergic pharyngitis, allergic sinusitis, etc.). Ciliated epithelium which is present in all airways consists of goblet cells that secrete mucous, filter the incoming air and protect the structures. The sub-mucosa of both tracts has mucous glands and inflammatory cells. Evidence shows the allergen present in the upper airway will affect the lower airways leading to the inflammatory condition [1]. Severe allergic rhinitis has been associated with significant impairments in quality of life, sleep, and work performance. When the person suffers from allergic manifestation, improper medication and irregular dietary habits lead the disease into a chronic phase. This chronicity is difficult to manage completely. The clinically acute and late phases of an allergic response may coexist together. The acute phase within 5 – 30min, consists of sneezing, rhinorrhea and nasal blockage. Late phase 2-8hours after exposure to an allergen leads to swelling, congestion and thick secretion of the nasal mucosa. Allergic signs are manifested in structures like eye, ear, pharynx and larynx. Finally, it leads to complications like recurrent sinusitis, nasal polyps, serous otitis media, and bronchial asthma [2]. As practically 20% of the population suffer from allergiesone or another sometime in life. Avoidance of allergen, antihistamines, oral and topical steroids are control measures, while Desensitizing Immunotherapy is the curative strategy that requires longer duration. The acute phase of allergic rhinitis symptoms is compared with Kshavathu, while the Dosha Dustiprescribes a treatment protocol to get relief from acute symptoms. Kshavathu is one of the most common clinical presentations in a general consultation. It is enumerated as one among the Nasarogas in Brihatrayees. Acharya Charaka and Susruthaare termed as Kshavathu while Vaghbatacharya termed it as Brisha Kshavam, and to be understood purely on a Yukthi basis. The term Brisha Kshavathu itself denotes repeated sneezing. A single Vega presentation of sneezing should not be considered, as a clinical condition and also the Kshavathu mentioned in the Navaparthisayya should not to be taken in-to account. For some individuals, before sneezing there will be some pricking type of pain inside the nasal cavity and then emerge the output sneezing. Sometimes, the discharge will be there from the nose and eyes. More often it may exist for some time or even more. So, the Kshavathu explained in Thridoshaja Pratisayya should be considered and treatment should be advocated accordingly [3]. Various factors like pollution, global warming, seasonal variation, use of junk foods will lead to Kshavathu in human beings. The contemporary approach will not be a complete cure or satisfactory to patients always, so classical medicine is economically cost-effective and rectifies to break pathogenesis with better relief of clinical features and gradually preventing complication.

1.1 Aim of the Study

This review study has been undertaken with the following aim and objectives.

1. To review the literature related to the concept of Kshavathu available in different Ayurveda classics
2. To explore the treatment principles regarding the concepts of Kshavathu found in different classical text

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Extensive literary work has been conducted with the help of different Ayurveda classical texts such as CharakSamhita, SushrutaSamhita, AstangaHridayam, Yogaratnakara and BhaishajaRatnavali. Literary material also included references regarding the concepts of Kshavathu along with its management available in the Ayurveda classics. Different electronic databases such as Pub Med, Google Scholar
etc., and different online and print journals were also used as the source of data collection during the study.

3. REVIEW ON KSHAVATHU

Kshavathu – Ksu + Athu means sneezing, Ksavathu (sneezing) is a disease where in sneezing is the crucial feature. Individuals with kshavathu for chronic period develop long standing complications which affect the immune system and respiratory diseases. Poor life style habitudes such as physical inactivity, exposure to mist, wind, dust, sleep disruption increase are the factors responsible for nasal disorder symptoms and its severity. Ksavathu is one among major diseases in the present era, which is mainly induced due to the inevitable pollution, climate variation and lifestyle change mainly due to vatakapha predominating .Inhaling strong smell like chillies, tobacco, exposure to sunrays, inserting threads, grass etc. in to the nose and other causes which aggravates Vata, when the cartilage of the nose gets scratched, Vata getting obstructed , moves upwards to Srngataka(Shiromarma) and getting dislodges from that spot , gives rise to too much of sneezing, Bhrsaksava also known as Kshavathu. This is the Samprapthi explained by Vagbatacharya [4].Charaka, when the Vata residing overhead deviated its path and reach NasasrithaMarma it causes intense sneezing [5].Susrutha explained Kshavathu is of 2 types Doshaja and AganthujaKshavathu.

DoshajaKshavathu (due to imbalance in the doshas) is chronic in origin caused due to imbalance in the Doshas. The vitiated Vata and Kapha Doshas get lodged in the nose due to Sroto-Vaigunya caused by indulgence in the causative factors of NasaRoga. The aggravated Doshas settled in Nasa vitiate the vital points i.e. the Marmas and exhibits the symptom of the disease i.e. sneezing[7]. Due to paroxysmal sneezing, there will be an alteration in the nasal secretion that leads to nasal blockage. In this chronic stage, the Agni (digestive fire) is impaired and leads to the accumulation large amount of Ama (unmetabolized waste which cannot be used by the body). AganthujaKshavathu is due to usage of strong/pungent-smelling substances like chilly, mustard, dry ginger, long-pepper, etc. or due to exposure to sunlight for aprolonged time or due to inserting threads in to nasal region causes trauma to the nasal cartilages and SrinkatakaMarma and causes Sneezing. Sushrutaalso mentioned one more NasaRoga with similar pathology, it is known as Bhramsathuand it is due to the Kapha which had accumulated in the head earlier getting liquified by the heat of pitta, flows out of the nose in great quantity often in the form of thick, half- ripe and salty liquid [8]. Sushruta and Bhavaprakasha only narrated about Doshaja and AganthujaKshavathuand treatment also should be considered accordingly.Sushruta explain the mechanism of sternutation sneezing as ‘Pranoadanosamonastapravartateshabda’ which means both Prana and UdanaVayu move in an upward direction towards the head and are thrown via nose with sound and that is known as sternutation (sound of sneezing)[9]. Differential diagnosis of this condition includes Pratishyaya and DushtaPratishyaya.

4. PRATISHYAYA

Pratishyaya is NasagataRogadescribed as a cause for KasaRoga, as a Purvarupa of Rajyakshma and as a symptom of VegaVidharaj, Kshayaja as well as VishhamasanajaYakshma. This disease is also known for its recurrence and chronicity if not treated from its root. A sedentary Life style like having exposure to cold weather, Air conditioner and cooler and food habits like consuming junk foods, ice cream, cold drinks, curd, sour items like pickles, sauce are the major causative factors of this disease. Createsheadaches, fatigue, limits routine activities, interferes with sleep and results in poor work performance. Vatadi Doshaa long with

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Table 1. Samanya Nidana of Doshaja Kshavathu [6]</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aharaaj &amp; Viharaja Nidana</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ajeema, Sheeta Ambu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ati Ambupana</td>
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<td>Vega Sandharana, Rajah Sevan, Dhooma Sevana</td>
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<td>Ratrijaragana, Ati Divaswapana</td>
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<td>Avasyaya</td>
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<td>AtiJalaKrida, Neechaatiucchaupadhan, Peethana Anyana Varina</td>
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Rakta got vitiated due to exposure to Avashyaya (morning mist), Purovata (type of wind) and Raja (dust). Apathya Aharaviharas resulting in Pratiomagati of Vata and Doshas getting lodged over the head leading to Pratisyaya. Samparpti can be explained as follows in which Sama Avastha of Kapha/Pitta/Rakta is there but a vitiation of Vayu is present. Here the causative factors are mainly Vata, Vardhaka like Vega Dhara, Tapa, Sevana, Manasika. Secondly Kapha/ Pitta/Rakta Pradhana causative factors lead to its vitiation, whereas Vata is in Sam Avastha. Finally Vata and Kapha/Pitta/Rakta are individually vitiated by their etiological factors. In all the three types of Samparpti, the Gati of Vata (Udana) is obstructed by Kapha/Pitta/Rakta causing its Avarana. Pratiskansa Syathi Ethi Pratishyaya which means the individual will be having perpetual Gamana of Doshas and there by continuous sneezing along with running nose. This condition is known as Pratishyaya which has Vata, Pitta, Kapha, Rakta and Sannipathaja variety. Premonitory symptoms are sneezing, heaviness of the head, general body malaise and horripilation. In Vataja Pratishyaya, along with sneezing, nasal blockage, thin nasal discharge, dryness in throat, lips and palate region, throbbing pain in the temple region and hoarseness of voice are explained. Pittja Pratisyaya’s clinical features are thirst, Fever Furuncles in the nose, Giddiness, Inflammation of the tip of the nose Hot & yellow nasal discharge. In Kaphaja Pratishyaya the symptoms are anorexia, Difficulty in breathing, Vomiting, Heaviness in the body, Swetness in the mouth, itching and Whitish nasal discharge. Raktaja Pratishyaya features are stiffness in the chest, Copper-colored eyes, foul breathing, itching in the ear, eye and nose. In Sannipataja Pratishyaya Symptoms are Sarvaja Lakshana, Akasmatvridhishanti [10]. Management for navapratisyaya is Kanji swedana, Amlapathartha, usnaahara, adarakaswarasa with ksheera and Guda. Pakva Pratishyaya with shirovirechana. Varthi should be made with VyoshadiVatakam, Pancha Lavana Ghrita, Nasya and Ardita Chikista such as Navana, Mooordhini Thaila, Upanaha, Nadi Sweda. In Pitta and Rakta Pratishyaya the drugs application, Nasya Thaila was prepared out of Triphala, Yasli, Tilvaka, Nisa and Ksheera. Sushruta explain Nasya with Surasadi Gana and Dhoomapana because of its Krimighna property. Kaphaja Pratishyaya treated with gaurasarsapalepam, snehapana follow by vamana, nasyathaila with patu, vyosa, jiraka and goats urine. In SannipatajaKatu, Tiksha drugs are used for Nasya and Kavala. Oral administration of VyoshadiVatakam, Dasamoola Kashyam [11]. When it’s not treated timely may lead to complications and act as a Nidanarthakara Roga for Dushta Pratishyaya.

5. DUSHTAPRATISHYAYA

All Pratishyaya when neglected lead to Dushta Pratishyaya, leading to torment all the organs of the body. Symptoms include indigestion, fever, dyspnoea, cough, pain in the chest and flanks gets greatly aggravated without any reason, produces foul-smelling mouth and swelling of the face, drying of the moisture of the nose, opening and blocking of the passage of the nose often, discharge of fluid resembling pus, black and red in color and nodular, in this fluid long, unctuous, white and minute worms develop. In all of them, the Pakwa Lakshanas is the feel of Angalaghavam, subsiding sneezing, fluid discharge starts to unctuous and yellow and inability to understand taste and smell [12]. Sushruta explains nose becomes very moist or very dry again and again, gets swollen sometimes and widened sometimes, there is a bad smell during both inspiration and expiration and he does not recognize the smell. Sadhayasadhhyata of Dushta Pratishyaya is Yapya or Asadhya. Treatment principles are Rajayakshama and Krimi Nashanachikitsa. Varthi should be made with Vyosa, Krimijit, Pootimatsya, flower of Agramanththa, Aswavit, Aswamootram, Gajamootram for Dhooapanam. Nasya, Ghrkapan, Vamana, Virechana, Dhoomapan, Kavalagraha.

6. DISCUSSION

Considering the above matters, in this stage it is important to plan the treatment which addresses both the factors Agni and elimination of the Doshas. Importance of the treatment to have an anti-allergic effect to make the patient symptom-free for a longer duration. Treatment starts with Nidan-Parivarjan (avoiding the cause), along with external therapies oral medication is also necessary which helps to remove the pathology and improves body immunity. Samanya Chikista includes, the patient should reside in a room devoid of cold ventilation/breeze and depending on the Avastha of Doshas he can resort for Sneha-Sweda-Vamana-Dhooona-Gandoosha along with Laghu Amla-Snigdha-Ushana Bhojanam and a tie a warm band of cloth around.
his head to avoid further exposure from cold/windy atmosphere [13]. Whereas in VisheshhaChikitsa for Kshavathu includes PradhamanaNasya, Swedisham follow by SnaikhikaDhoomapanaka are mentioned along with symptomatic treatment. Nasya is the procedure where administration of oils, ghee and medicated fresh herbs through nasal route. Nasya in which the medicine administered through the nasal route reaches SringataMarmaka and the potency of the drug spreads through the Siras of Nasa, Akshi, Karnaka and does Shodhana of the Shiras. It helps mainly in Urdhwa Jatragata Vyadhika, helps in Sukha Uchwasu Nishwasu, Kshavathu, SukhaSwapnakaPrabhdodana and does ShirasVadanaka IndriyaVishuddhi [14]. Nasyapurvaka karma is Abhyanga and Swedishana are done. Abhyanga makes Murduta of Doshas and Swedishana brings Vilayana (liquefaction) of accumulated Doshas. Contemporary science explains Abhyanga increases the local blood supply and Swedishana liquefies the mucous. It increases the permeability of blood vessels due to vasodilatation, which makes the drug absorption faster. In Pradhanaka Karma, the drug in Swarasa, Churna, Thailaiform is administered into the nostrils in the head-low position of the patient. Administered drugs reach the Shringataka and travel through different Siras, it spreads to parts of head like Netra, karna and removes the alleviated doshas. Based on drug property, it causes Srotoshuddhikarma is Srotoshuddhik and makes the AnulomanaGati of Vayu (mitigation of Vayu). UrdhvangaAbhyanganaka and Swedishana help to remove the doshas and bring SrotomukhaVishodhana in Pashchata karma. Various medicated drugs are used in Nasya therapy depending upon the chronicity of disease. Nasya therapy gives nourishment, pacify or eliminates the alleviated doshas, and clears the sinus cavity, ear, throat, and head region. It balances tridoshas especially Vata and lubricates the nasal passages, improves voice and performs the function of detoxification. Specific treatment modalities like Nasya are great advantages in the management of Kshavathu. Types of Nasya such as VirechanaNasya in which dry medicated powders were blown into the nose. BruhmanaNasya such as medicated ghee, milk, oil is administered through the nose which pacifies VataDosha. ShamanaNasya medicated decoctions, oils, juice of fresh herbal leaves are used in this therapy [15].

ShuntyadiTailaNasyam which has Sunthi, Kusta, Kana, Vella, Draksha drugs are indicated. Even though it is Theeksha in nature, Taila Moorchanam with specific medicines makes this oil compatible with the Vata Kapha condition [16]. PippalayadiTaila which contain Sunthi, Kusta, Kana, Bilva, Draksha is used for NasyaPryyaga, ChitrakaHaritaki which is capable to promote the power of digestion which will be given internally in upper respiratory conditions [17]. Bhavaprakasha explains Kshavathu Nasaka Taila which is made up of decoction with dried Sunthi, Kushta, Kana, bark of Bilva and raisins (335geach). Prepare Kalka out of the same ingredients by taking them in a measure of 20g each add 500 ml of sesame oil and the same quantity of cow’s ghee. Combine all these materials and the oil thusobtained is used for Nasya daily to cure Kshavathu. Internal medication advised in Pratyshiyaya Chikista is taken such as Vyoshadivatamak, ChitrakaHaritakilehyam where drugs are Vata Kapha Hara property. Charaka, explains Pathyapathya, includes Vartaka, Kulaka, Shunti, Pippali, Maricha, Mudga, Kulatha, Yusha, Ushnajalapanaka, Langhana, NirvataSyana and Asana, Chesta, Guru Ushna, VastraDharrana, TeekshnaDrayayuktairicchana and Nasya, Dhumapanaka, RukshaPardarthaSevana, Yavanna and Yushasevanna. Apathya (to be avoided) are Sheetajalapanaka and Snana, SheetavayuSevana, Exposure to dust, smoke, AdhikaVyayama, Vyavaya and Vegadharana. Ghritapanaka and Snehananasuya is Varjya in Nava Pratyshiyaya, Anupamamsa, Dadi, Masha, KulaabhaArvarjya [18].

7. CONCLUSION

Kshavathu is one of the major diseases in the present era, which is mainly induced due to the inevitable pollution, climate variation and lifestyle change mainly due to Vata Kapha predominating. Special attention should be given to ama while treating the disease as improper treatment will leads to complication and more difficult to treat. These severe phases make the patient in animmuno-compromised state. So Ayurvedic formulations and Pathyapathya can be adopted for more effective treatment. Nasya helps to control acute or sub-acute exacerbation of the symptoms of Kshavathu.

NOTE

The study highlights the efficacy of “Ayurveda” which is an ancient tradition, used in some parts of India. This ancient concept should be carefully evaluated in the light of modern medical...
science and can be utilized partially if found suitable.

CONSENT
It is not applicable.

ETHICAL APPROVAL
It is not applicable.

COMPETING INTERESTS
Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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