



A Conceptual Study of Mode of Action of Matra Basti.

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda's Panchakarma Therapy is a composite and unique therapeutic system. The therapeutic oil or herbal decoction is administered through the anal route in Basti Karma. Ayurveda considers Basti Chikitsa to be one of the most important Panchakarma treatments. It contains both therapeutic and preventative as well as promotional properties. The rectum is used to administer herbal decoctions and therapeutic oils to the colon. Vatahara, Shulahara, Shothahara, Srotoshodhaka, Yogavahi, Agnideepaka, and Rasayana are some of the roles that Basti Dravyas can play. Matra Basti is an oil/unctuous substance- free therapy. Abhyanga (therapeutic oil massage) and Swedana are performed before to it (sudation). The current article summarises the ayurvedic perspective on Matra basti and its mode of action.

Keywords: *Basti, Matra basti, Mode of action.*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda's Panchakarma therapy is a composite and unique therapeutic system . One of the most successful Panchakarma treatments is Basti Chikitsa, or Medicated Enema Therapy. Matra Basti is a specific type of Basti [1] Animal bladders were used to execute this procedure in the past. As a result, the method is called Basti Karma. Basti karma can be seen of as a type of therapeutic enema. Medicated decoctions, ghee, and oil are delivered in the body through anus using a particular device designed for the Basti process. Basti is a therapy that churns up the stool, including all other morbid matter found there, while moving in the

umbilical region, lumbar region, sides of the chest, and pelvic region, and suitably eliminates them with ease after nourishing the body. Basti literally means "one who keeps the urine," referring to the urinary bladder[2]. Basti have been classified into different varieties based on the sort of substances used and the amount of Basti. The medicines/ingredients used in Basti Karma are chosen based on The administration of treatment depends on both the seriousness of the illness and the patient's overall health condition. Matra Basti, a specific type of Anuvasana Basti, is administered in very small quantities. This minimal dosage approach makes it especially practical in modern- day scenarios. According to classical Ayurvedic texts and all major Acharyas, Matra Basti is considered both safe and beneficial, even in situations where other forms of Basti might not be suitable. It is particularly used in managing various disorders associated with Vata imbalance. The term "Basti " or "Vasti " literally means Bladder. Animal bladders were used to execute this procedure in the past. As a result, this method is called as Basti Krama. Based on the composition of the medicine, Basti are of two types- Asthapana basti and Anuvasana basti [3]. The medicine being administered which predominantly contains decoction of herb in Basti, is called Asthapana Basti, and mainly the use of Sneha in Basti is called as Anuvasana/ Sneha Basti. Mainly, the Sneha in the form of medicated Taila, Ghrita, Vasa and Majja is administered through rectal canal into the colon. Matra Basti is the subtype of Anuvasana Basti[4]. It is given in very little doses, making it in incredibly convenient for today's world. It does not cause any complication and it can be administered at any time to any age of person. The site of action of Basti karma is Pakwashaya i.e lower gastrointestinal tract, which is the main site of vata Dosha . The dose of Matra Basti is very less i.e. 1 1/2 pala [72ml] as compared to that of Matra Basti. Vagbhata has defined the Matra Basti as the Basti in which the dose of Sneha is equal to Hrasva matra of Snehapana. [5]

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

A conceptual study on mode of action of matra basti.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Material related to Matra Basti is collected from Ayurvedic text including Bahatriye, Laghutrye, text book of modern medicine and medical journals respectively. The available commentaries of Ayurvedic sahitas has also referred to collect relevant matter.

Importance of Matra Basti:

Charaka emphasizes the significance of Matra Basti, highlighting its user- friendly nature and the absence of dietary or lifestyle limitations during its administration [6]. This form of Basti is considered suitable for regular application across all seasons. He uses the term "Sukhopachaya", implying that the procedure is effortless and convenient to perform.

Further supporting this perspective, Astanga Samgraha affirms that Matra Basti, like Madhutailika Basti, is universally applicable, regardless of time or individual condition. Unlike Anuvasana Basti, Matra Basti is especially beneficial for individuals with weak digestive capacity (Alpagni), the elderly (Vruddha), and children (Bala), making it a more versatile therapeutic option. Importantly, this Basti requires no post- therapy restrictions (Parihara)[7].

Echoing these views, Astanga Hridaya also describes the treatment as "Sukha", reinforcing its comfort and ease of use. Commentator Hemadri interprets this term to mean free from complications (Vyapad Rahita), suggesting its safety and simplicity [8].

Additionally, Arunadatta, while explaining the term "Nishparihara", states that "Aniyantrana" reflects the idea that individuals undergoing Matra Basti can carry on with their routine activities without interruption or special precautions Conceptual study:

Matra Basti is a form of Sneha Vasti, which involves the administration of medicated fats through enema. This therapeutic procedure is widely esteemed for its diverse and extensive benefits. The quantity used in Matra Basti is half that of Anuvasana Basti— typically half of three pala, or six tola (around 72 grams). Classical Ayurvedic texts such as those by Charaka and Vagbhata describe the dosage of Matra Basti as being equivalent to the smallest recommended amount of fat intake (Hrisva Sneha Matra) used for oral administration.(11,12)

Matra Basti's attributes:

1. Balya
2. Srushta vegakruta
3. Discusses the Brimhana effect.
4. Treats Vyadhi Vata.
5. The Doshaghanta.
6. Varnya (produces a healthy complexion) 9,10

Mode of Action:

The human colon has an estimated mucosal surface area of approximately 2000 cm². However, its actual capacity for absorption is significantly higher due to the dual function of colonic crypt cells, which both absorb and secrete substances. The absorption efficiency of any drug administered rectally depends on various factors such as its chemical and physical characteristics, formulation, and method of delivery. In the rectum, medications can cross cellular membranes through several mechanisms: passive diffusion, facilitated diffusion, active transport, or pinocytosis. Additionally, certain globular proteins present in the mucosal matrix can serve as receptors, assisting chemical entry into cells[13].

In Ayurvedic medicine, Acharya Charaka emphasized that Basti (medicated enema) is the most effective therapy for pacifying Vata dosha, as described in the phrase “Bastihi Vataharanam.” The large intestine (Pakvashaya) is considered the primary site of Vata, and since the Basti reaches this location first, it can influence Vata throughout the body. The Purishadharakala, a membrane associated with fecal matter, is situated in the colon, and according to Dalhana's commentary, this structure is identical to Asthidhara kala[14]. Basti treatments are believed to directly affect such internal tissues.

Classical texts, including those by Acharya Sushruta, explain that successive Basti treatments nourish different bodily tissues (Dhatu): the sixth benefits Mamsa Dhatu (muscle), the seventh supports Meda Dhatu (fat), the eighth strengthens Asthi Dhatu (bone), and the ninth nourishes Majja Dhatu (marrow)[15]. Thus, Basti is not only calming to Vata but also rejuvenative (Rasayana), making it beneficial for conditions classified under Vatavyadhi (Vata-related disorders). It promotes both the balance of Vata and the lubrication (Snehana) of bodily tissues.

From a modern biomedical perspective, the rectal mucosa has rich vascular and lymphatic networks, which allows for systemic absorption of substances similar to how drugs pass through lipid membranes. Therefore, medications

Administered via Basti can have effects throughout the body. They may influence the nervous system, stimulate gastrointestinal receptors, or enhance secretion of local enzymes and neurotransmitters. Additionally, Basti can alter gut microbiota, potentially increasing the production of nutrients like vitamin B12 and vitamin K.

Before administering Matra Basti (a type of Basti), oil massage (Abhyanga) is often used to strengthen muscles. This practice targets the skin (Tvacha), ligaments (Snayu), and blood vessels, which are integral parts of the Mamsavaha Srotas (the channel system associated

with muscle tissue). By massaging these areas, Abhyanga enhances the health of these systems and nourishes deeper tissues.

Furthermore, Swedana (therapeutic sweating or fomentation) is used to clear blockages in the body's microchannels (Srotas), stimulate digestive fire (Agni), and counteract the effects of Kapha and Vata. The heat from Swedana can also provide pain relief by redirecting sensory input and reducing stiffness (Sthambha).

Indications for Matra Basti [16] Vyayama karshita – People who have become weak due to too much exercise. Karma karshita – People who are weak due to excessive work or strenuous activities. Bhara karshita – People weakened by lifting heavy weights. Adhwa karshita – People exhausted from walking long distances. Yana karshita – People tired from too much traveling.

Stree karshita – Weakness caused by excessive sexual activity.

Durbala – General physical weakness.

Vatabhignata – People suffering from diseases caused by imbalance of Vata dosha

Contraindications for Matra Basti [17]

Poor digestion and sleeping during the day.

Diarrhea, dysentery, and rectal bleeding.

Diabetes.

Severe anemia.

Breathlessness or pulmonary tuberculosis.

Low protein levels (hypoproteinemia).

Infant health issues.

Old age- related weakness (senile debility), etc.

DISCUSSION

Matra Basti holds a distinct and esteemed position among all types of Basti therapies, primarily due to its flexibility— it can be administered at any time without leading to complications. Since the quantity of Sneha (medicated oil or ghee) used is minimal, the likelihood of adverse effects is very low. The oil remains in the colon for an extended duration, thereby delivering its intended therapeutic benefits effectively [18].

There are no strict restrictions or limitations concerning the frequency or timing of Matra Basti. Additionally, unlike other types such as Niruha Basti Matra Basti does not necessitate

specific dietary or lifestyle modifications (Pathya), nor is there any mention of a required recovery period (Parihara Kala) post- administration.

In conditions like Amavata, classical Ayurvedic texts such as Bhavaprakasha recommend using Brihata Saindhavadi Taila for oral intake (Pana), massage (Abhyanga), purgation (Virechana), and enema (Basti). This formulation is also cited in Bhaishajya Ratnavali for its therapeutic role in Amavata. Its inherent properties— Ushna (hot), Tikshna (sharp), Suksma (subtle), and Snigdha (unctuous)— help in pacifying aggravated Vata, Kapha, and Ama[19], making it an ideal choice for Matra Basti, especially as a treatment focused on Vata disorders.

As per Acharya Charaka, Matra Basti is particularly suitable for individuals weakened by strenuous activity, excessive travel, heavy lifting, overindulgence, or chronic Vata- related conditions. This form of Basti enhances physical strength, supports the elimination of waste products like Mala (stool) and Mutra (urine), and does so without the need for stringent dietary controls.

CONCLUSION

In today's rapidly evolving work and leisure environment, poor posture while sitting in offices and factories, continuous physical strain, and abrupt movements during travel and sports activities can place excessive stress on the body. This leads to common conditions like lumbar disc disease, sciatica, and even paralysis, particularly during the most productive years

of one's life. While these conditions are rarely life- threatening, they can severely impact daily routines. Modern medicine offers various treatments, including painkillers, sedatives, physiotherapy, and surgical procedures; however, the likelihood of these issues recurring remains high. Recent studies suggest that Ayurvedic therapies, especially Matra Basti, provide a more effective solution for such ailments, as they not only help strengthen the body but are also easy to administer.

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