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## Ayurvedic management of *Gridhrasi* W.S.R.T. sciatica: A case report

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### Abstract

Sciatica refers to pain that travels along the path of the sciatic nerve. The sciatic nerve travels from the lower back through the hips and buttocks and down each leg. Sciatica most often occurs when a herniated disk or an overgrowth of bone puts pressure on part of the nerve.

Herniated disc is common cause of sciatica. In this condition patient experiences maximum pain in unilateral direction, which gets aggravated with prolonged standing or lumbar extension. The distribution of pain in the lower extremities is dependent on site of nerve compression but feels relief while at rest. According to *Ayurveda*, based on resembling clinical manifestation this condition can be co-related with *Gridhrasi*.

**Aim:** To understand the efficacy of *Ayurveda* treatment protocol in the management of Sciatica (*Gridhrasi*).

**Materials and Method:** A 43 years old female suffering from complaints of *Katishoola* (lower back pain), radiating to right lower limb, which increased while sitting, over standing, and walking since past 3-4 years on and off, presented in the OPD of SDACH, Chandigarh. The above complaints exasperated over the last 1 month. Based on clinical presentation and X-Ray findings, the condition was diagnosed as *Gridhrasi* (Sciatica). A multimodal therapeutic intervention as per *Ayurveda* with *Katibasti*, *Nadi Swedana*, *Matrabasti*, *Shaman Chikitsa* was prescribed for 21 days. Clinical assessment was done before and after treatment, based on Oswestry low back disability index.

**Observation and Results:** Before treatment Oswestry disability index score was 26 and after the complete treatment patient reported relief in symptoms of *Ruk* (pain), *Stambha* (stiffness), *Spandan* (cramping), distribution of pain significantly reduced and score was only 4.

**Conclusion:** The present case study revealed that the multiple *Ayurveda* treatment modalities including *Shamana* and *Shodhana Chikitsa* (palliative and purification therapies) were effective in curing the disease, *Gridhrasi*.

**Keywords:** Ayurveda intervention, *Gridhrasi*, sciatica, Kati Basti, Matra Basti

### Introduction

Sciatica presents insidiously with leg discomfort on walking. Common cause of disease is aging, trauma, disc bulge, spondylolisthesis, regional tumor, arthritis of spine. Stenosis or spinal column narrowing results in backache with restricted or painful movements of the back and walking difficulties affecting walking speed and gait. It develops when the spinal cord is compressed by a bone or an intervertebral disc bulge, a bony protrusion into lumbar spinal canal and hypertrophy of ligamentum flavum, and distribution of pain in lower extremities, depends on site of compression.

According to ancient *Ayurveda* literature, *Gridhrasi* shows similar symptoms as Sciatica. Such *Vyadhis* (diseases) are considered as *Vatavyadhis* (diseases cause by vitiation of *vata*). Taking all these factors into consideration, in present case study specific *Ayurvedic* treatment protocol including *Kati Basti*, *Nadi Swedha*, *Matra Basti* has been decided.

### Case report

A 43 years old female came to Shri Dhanwantry Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Chandigarh, OPD, with complaints of (*Katishool*) lower back pain, pain radiates to right lower limb, pain increases while sitting, over standing, and walking over last 3-4 years, but since last 1 month, she experienced more pain and discomfort while standing as her working profile was of standing in nature.

**On examination**

General condition of patient was good, No pallor seen  
Pulse-86/min  
BP: 120/70 mm of CVS: S1, S2 Normal  
CNS: Conscious, well oriented RS: AEB/L clear  
P/A: Soft, non-tender

**Medical history**

H/O received allopathy medicines and physiotherapy for above complaint with minimal relief.  
NO H/O DM, HTN, Thyroid disorder, IHD.

**Personal history**

Diet-Non-vegetarian  
Time and frequency of intake-irregular  
Appetite-normal  
Sleep – Disturbed  
Addiction-no specific addiction  
Bowel-irregular occasionally constipation

**Ashtavidha Pariksha**

*Nadi* (pulse)-*Vataj*  
*Mala* (bowel habits)-occasionally hard  
*Mutra* (urine)-NAD  
*Jivha* (tongue)-*Nirama*  
*Shabdham* (voice of patient)-NAD  
*Sparsham* (touch) - *Samshitoshna* (temperate)  
*Drika* (eye & vision) – NAD



X-ray findings shows intervertebral disc space reduced at L4-L5, L5-S1 levels

**Diagnosis**

Gridhrasi was diagnosed based on symptoms, Oswestry Low Back disability questionnaire and X-ray findings.

**Assessment criteria**

As criterion of assessment, it was decided to use of 'Oswestry Low back Disability Index.' It contains questionnaire for low back pain and disability which is important tool to measure patient's functional disability and it is considered as 'Gold standard' scale for low back pain functional outcome tools, this contains 10 sections (questions). Each question is rated on 6 points (0-5) scale measuring daily activities like walking, personal care, pain intensity, sitting, walking, lifting etc. Assessment was carried out before and after the treatment.

*Akrti* (body building)-*Madhyama* (medium)

**Clinical Examination**

**Inspection:** No muscle wasting, no change seen in curvature of spine.

**Gait:** Antalgic

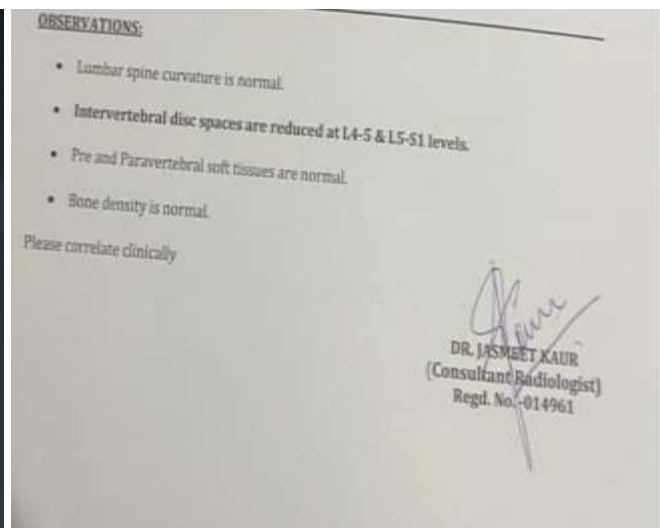
**Palpation:** No local swelling / tenderness was observed

**Tests**

SLR test-positive at 30° angle on right leg  
Lassegue's test positive at 40° angle on right leg  
No tingling, numbness, or weakness of muscles of lower limb found. No bowel bladder incontinence reported.

**Investigations**

Hb%-11gm% TLC-9760 /cmm  
DLC-N-65%, L-32%, M-2%, E-1%  
ESR-13mm/Hr  
RBS-128mg/dl  
RA factor: Negative  
LFT: No Abnormal values reported  
RFT: No Abnormal values reported  
Thyroid profile- within normal limit

**Radiographic investigations****Treatment Plan**

- *Snehana* <sup>[1]</sup> (*Kati Basti* with *Mahanarayan Taila*) for 21 days
- *Swedana* <sup>[2]</sup> (*Nadi Swedana* with *Dashmoola Kwatha*) for 21 days
- *Anuvasana* <sup>[3]</sup> / *Matra basti* (with *Ksheerbala Taila*-60ml) for 7 days
- *Mahavata Vidhwansan rasa* <sup>[4]</sup> (62.5 mg BD) for 21 days
- *Ekangveer rasa* <sup>[5]</sup> (125 BD) for 21 days
- *Maharasnadi Kshaya* <sup>[6]</sup> (20 ml BD) for 21 days
- Cap. *Ksheerbala 101* (1 TDS) for 21 days with Luke warm water
- *Swarna Bhasma* <sup>[7]</sup> (15mg BD) for 21 days

- *Nidana parivarjana* (Avoiding causative factors-diet and lifestyle)

(**Note:** 630 mg of *Swarna Bhasma*, 2625mg of *Mahavata Vidhwansan rasa* and 5250 mg of *Ekangveer rasa* were mixed together and divided into 42 doses and one dose twice a day after meal and was advised to take with 20 ml of *Maharasnadi Kshaya*)

#### Diet advised

##### **Pathya Ahara (healthy food)**

Mudga (green gram), *Puran Shali* (aged rice), *Takra* (butter milk) in diet.

##### **Pathya Vihara (healthy lifestyle)**

*Vishrama, seka, ushna jala snana*

##### **Apathya Ahara (unhealthy food)**

Avoiding *Rooksha, Abhishyandi* diet, curd at night, street food, bakery food items, cold drinks, fridge water, heavy intake at night.

##### **Apathya Vihar (unhealthy lifestyle)**

*Diwaswapna* (day time sleep), *Vega Vidharan* (hold natural urges), *Ratrijagran*, long standing work.

#### Observations and Results

Before treatment 'Oswestry disability index' was 26 and after the complete treatment patient reported relief in symptoms of *Ruk* (pain), *Stambha* (stiffness), *Spandan* (cramping), distribution of pain significantly reduced and score was 4.

Improvement of 84.61% on 'Oswestry low back disability index' was seen.

Oswestry disability index

Symptoms	Before Treatment	After Treatment
Oswestry disability index score	26	4
<i>Ruk</i> (pain)	Severe	Mild
<i>Stambha</i> (stiffness)	Severe	Nil
<i>Spandan</i> (cramping)	Moderate	Mild

#### Discussion

The symptoms seen in the present case are like that of *Gridhrasi* disease described in *Ayurveda*. *Gridhrasi* is a *Vatavyadhi* associated with the symptoms of *Ruk* (Pain) in lumbosacral region as its origin of sciatic nerve, pain radiates up to foot, *Toda* (pricking in nature), *Stambha* (stiffness), *Spandan* (cramping) in *Sphika* (gluteal region), *Kati* (lumbar region), *Uru* (thigh), *Janu* (knee), *Jangha* and *Pada* <sup>[8]</sup> (foot). Taking into consideration *Dhatukshayatmak Vatavyadhi*, combined *Ayurvedic* treatment protocol was followed for it.

##### **Katibasti (medicated oil kept over lumbo- sacral area)**

As the patient had history of habitual over standing work which causes chronic low back pain, in that condition *Katibasti* provides nourishment and lubrication to the structures in lumbar spine i.e., *Snayu* (ligaments), *Sandhi* (joints), *Sira* (blood vessels) and *Marma* points. *Mahanarayana taila* was used for it as it has more analgesic activity. It normalizes the *Vata* and has anti-inflammatory properties too.

**Swedana:** *Sthanik Swedana* by *Nadi Sweda* was done using *Dashmoola kwatha* which relieves *Stambha* (stiffness), increases joint mobility, reduces stress and fatigue and *Swedana* drugs are capable to clean all micro channels in the body.

**Basti** is said to be one of the highly effective treatment modalities for *Vataja* diseases. The drugs administered through *Basti* remains in the rectum and colon (*Pakwashaya*) and later absorbed into the body, thereby pacifying as well as nourishing the nerves.

*Maha Vata Vidhwansan rasa* acts on nervous system. It contains *kajjali* which is *rasayani* and *yogvahi*, *tamra bhasma* reduces radiating pain, *vatsanabh* reduces inflammation of nerves and act as potent *shoolaghna* (analgesic). *Abhrak* and *tankan bhasma* are *balya* and *vata shamak* for nerves.

*Ekangveer rasa* contains *Kant loh- naga loh- vanga loh- tamra loh- abhrak loh- tikshana loh bhasma* which act as *bhrimhaniya*, *jeevaniya* and *rasayana*, in *vataj roga*, *bhrimhana* is only *shaman* so all these ingredients help to do *Vata Shaman* and act well in radiating pain, tingling or numbness (*nadi balya*).

*Maharasnadi Kwath* helps to suppress the inflammation, pain, and stiffness in joint. Its main ingredient is *Rasna* which is excellent *Vataghna*. It is also *deepana*, *pachana* and *shoolaghna* and is very useful in *jeerna* (chronic) *vatavikara*.

*Cap. Ksheerbala 101* provides *snehana* and *balya* effect and has all properties opposite to *vata dosha* thus helps in *vata shamana*. It has prime action on healing and nourishing degenerative bone tissue.

*Swarna Bhasma* is used as anti-inflammatory and analgesic. Also, it is *rasayana* for chronic *vata* diseases, strengthens the musculoskeletal system and helps in tissue regeneration.

#### Conclusion

The multimodal approach following *Ayurveda* principles, yielded good therapeutic results in the case wherein surgical treatment is commonly preferred.

*Ayurvedic* treatment procedures like *Katibasti*, *Nadisweda* & *Matrabasti* along with *Ayurvedic shamana aushadhi* gives good results in chronic conditions like *Gridhrasi*, and helps in improving quality of life of the patients and makes them able to perform day to day activities easily.

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