

“A RAY OF LIGHT ON VATAKANATAKA W.S.R CALCANEAL SPUR”

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Abstract

Vatakantaka is a non fatal common condition which makes life miserable due to pain. It is explained by *Acharya Sushruta* in context of *Vatavyadhi*. *Vatakantaka* is disease of foot and heel with *Kantakvat Vedana* (thorn prick pain). Heel pain is one of the most common complaint with which a person presents to the hospital. The reasons for the heel pain include Plantar fasciitis, Retro calcaneal bursitis, Atrophy of heel pad etc. Most of the heel pain will associate with Calcaneal spur. Almost all the signs and symptoms of *Vatakantak* resembles with the calcaneal spur described in modern texts. Calcaneal spur is pointed bony growth on Calcaneus bone. The incidence of calcaneal spur in normal population is about 15.55%. And in South Indian population it is 59% of which 60% are female, mostly affecting the age group of 40-50 year.

Introduction

Acharya Sushrut explained *Vatakantaka* in context of *vatavyadhi*. When foot is kept on the ground irregularly, *Vata* localized in the *Khuda* (ankle) gets aggravated and produces pain.¹ Pain is an unfavorable sensation that brings an individual to the physician due to a halt from his routine work. Heel pain symptoms commonly found in the society which

experiences sever pain, tenderness and restricted movements at some time during their life, fortunately in some of these pain subsides with in short period. But unfortunately as many as these pains recur and may get converted in disease like *Vatakantaka*. The disease *vatakantaka* is more prone to affect *Gulpha sandhi*, because it most frequently involves joint in daily routine work, which is

weight bearing joint of the body and more prone to develop in over weight patients.

Vata Dosha

Ayurveda is very ancient science of healthcare in world. Often it is called as mother of all healing. It includes the science of *Tridosha*, *Trimala*, and *Dhatu*. *Tridosha* are the three fundamental energizer principles which maintain the functions of the body. The *Tridosha* are *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*. Among *Tridosha* *Vata* is prime driving force behind all the body activities. The activities of *Pitta*, *Kapha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala* depends on *Vata*. *Vata* also controls mind, senses and perception.² *Vata* is responsible for maintenance of *Ayu*, *Bala* and *Shareera Dharana*. Every action or movement of the body or body parts is under the influence of *Vata Dosha*.³

Charecters of Vata:

Vata is *Avyakta*, means not perceived by *Cakshurindriya* (eyes). It is manifested or known through its *Karma* (action), so called *Avyaktovyakta karma*.⁴ It maintains a state of equilibrium between different *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, and *Agni* and helps to maintain uniform state in metabolism of the body. In normal state all the

actions run smoothly. If this balanced *Vata* gets disturbed or gets vitiated it may lead to many diseases. *Vata* gets vitiated by excessive intake of dry foods, cold foods, excessive indulgence in sexual activities, awakening during night times, excessive running, jumping, due to trauma etc. By these causative factors the vitiated *Vata* occupies in *Rikatasrotasa* (hollow susceptible channels) of the body and manifests diseases in one part of the body or whole part of the body.⁵

Types of Vata Dosha:⁶

Though *Vata* is a single entity, it is of 5 subtypes, represented in five places in the body,. Which are inter related with each other. ***Prana Vata*** - which is located in head and moves in the chest, throat. It is the cause for expectoration (*Shttheevana*), sneezing, belching and swallowing of food.

Udana Vata - This is located in chest in nose and throat. It is the causative factor for the speech, effort, memory and strength. ***Samana Vata*** - which is located near the digestive fire. It is the causative factor for digestion. It helps in dividing the food in to useful part and waste part. ***Vyana Vata*** - which is located in heart and

circulates all over the body. It is responsible for the muscle activities like opening and closing of eye lids, flexion and extension of muscles of extremities. **Apana Vata** - which is located below navel region (large intestine) and moves in to waist, bladder and genitals. It is causative factor for urination, ejaculation, menstruation and child birth.

Vatakantaka

Vatakantaka is manifested by the vitiation of *Vata Dosha*. It is *Ekanga Roga* means only one part of the body is affected (foot). The vitiated *Vata Dosha* takes *Sthanasamshraya* (shelter) in *Gulpha* and *Parshni Pradesha* (ankle and heel region) and causes *Kantakavat Vedana* (Thron prick pain). The symptoms of

Vatakantaka are *Shoola* and *Shotha* (pain and inflammation).⁷ *Acharya Sushruta* says that the disease *Vatakantaka* is caused by vitiated *Vata Dosha* due to constant standing and walking on uneven surface resulting into pain in foot.⁸ As the pain is seen more during morning and after a period of inactivity in patients, it indicates the *samsarga* of *kapha* or presence of *ama* with the *vata*.

Nidan⁹

- Irregular placement of foot on ground
- *Shrama* (exertion)
- Walking on uneven surface
- Working in barefoot
- Obesity
- *Adhika chankramana* (excessive walking)

Purva roopa;

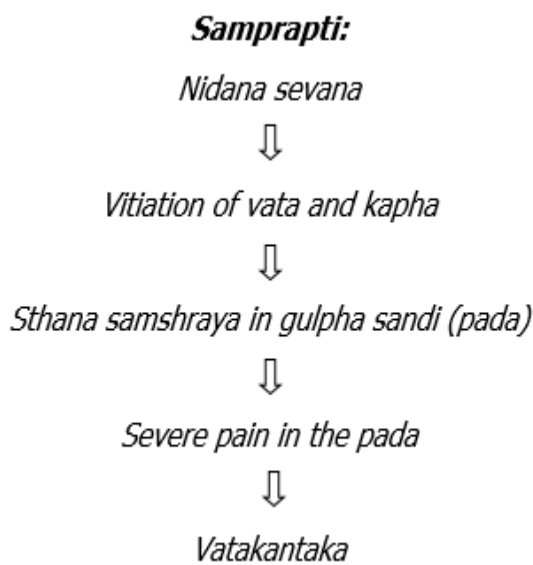
As it is one of the *Vatavyadhi*, the *Purvaroopo Lakshanas* are not observed (*Avyakta*)

Roopa:

- *Shoola*
- *Shotha*

Chikitsa:

- *Rakta Mokshana* (blood- letting) should be done frequently.¹⁰
- *Eranda Tail* should be taken internally.¹¹



- The affected part should be cauterized with needles. (*Agnikarma*)
- *Valuka Sweda, Ishtika sweda, Upanah Sweda.*

Calcaneal spur:

Calcaneum: It is the name of the bone in foot.

Spur: Tiny hook like projection

- Calcaneal spur is small osteophyte (bony) projection located on the Calcaneum.
- Pain caused by this tiny hook like projection in heel and so heel is called as Calcaneal spur or Heel spur.
- It can be seen at the back of the Calcaneus bone (dorsal heel spur) or under the sole (Plantar heel spur)
- The dorsal spurs are often associated with Achilles Tendinopathy, while spurs under the sole are associated with plantar fasciitis.¹²

Causes:

- We see incidence of spur in urban areas where heel is continuously exposed to pressure due to obesity. It is also seen in women who are standing for longer time in kitchen and in people wearing wrong and high heeled footwear etc. In case of people living in rural areas, they work barefoot in fields or on uneven surface leading to pain and unhealthy condition of feet and heels.
- Obesity; Every time a foot is stepped, the heel bears the load equal to 20 times of the body weight. This load is softened by a pillow of fat and large sinew under the sole of foot. Repeated strain on this due to increased body weight causes inflammation and even small cracks in sinew which leads to pain.
- Hypothyroidism: In hypothyroidism musculoskeletal diseases are common like Plantar fasciitis, Tarsal tunnel syndrome, heel pain etc. Normally, Thyroid hormones inhibit the production of fibroblast and secretion of collagen, elastin and GAGs (Glycosaminoglycans). Due to low levels of thyroid hormones, there is an over production of fibroblast, collagen, elastin, GAGs which weakens the plantar fascia and cause inflammation and pain in heel.
- Repeated trauma: Ill-fitting footwear, improper foot wear and use of high heeled footwear, standing in kitchen for longer time, excessive walking, walking on uneven surface, walking bare foot etc.

Signs and symptoms:

- Pain in heel area., Tenderness on plantar aspect of heel
- Swelling

Treatment:

- Life style management
- Analgesics
- Anti-inflammatory drugs
- Shoe recommendation
- Surgery.

Discussion :

Vatavyadhi covers wide range of neurological, neuro-muscular, musculo- skeletal and degenerative disorders. Though *Vata* is the master of body orchestra, if it can be kept healthy and normal through healthy life style and diet practices one would escape the risk of disasters caused by *Vata* like *Vatakantaka*.

Conclusion

Vatakantaka is manifested by the vitiation of *Vata Dosha*. It is *Ekanga Roga*. *Acharya Sushrut* explained *Vatakantaka* in context of *vatavyadhi*. The disease *vatakantaka* is more prone to be affected to *Gulpha sandhi*. *Vatakantaka* is a condition commonly seen in people who wears high heeled shoes, obese, who walks bare foot or who stands for longer period. It can be cured by *shamanoushadhi* like

vatakantakorasa, Brihat chgaladya ghritha, valuka sweda, Ishtika sweda and Agnikarma etc.

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**Source of Support: NIL
Conflict of Interest : None declared**