

A CRITICAL REVIEW ON HISTORICAL ASPECT OF BASTI

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ABSTRACT

Basti is one of the most important measure described in various texts for the internal purification of our body i.e. Panchakarma. The wide applicability and highest disease curing ability bound Acharyas to describe it as 'Chikitsardha'. Because of its said peculiarities, we decided to search and elaborate its descriptions in various texts starting from the oldest one i.e. Vedas. Basti has been described in nearly all texts starting from Veda, Purana up to Yogic and all Ayurvedic Samhitas. Although various Acharyas described its various types and applications but most of the Ayurvedic Samhitas mentioned Basti especially for pacification of Vata Dosh.

KEY WORDS: Basti, Chikitsardha, Samhita, Anuvāsana, Niruha.

INTRODUCTION

Panchakarma is a very unique therapeutic procedure because of its preventive, promotive, prophylactic and rejuvenative properties as well as providing the radical cure. Among these Panchakarma, Basti Karma is such a Chikitsa which is applicable in all the Vataj-vyadhis. Acharyas also mentioned that Basti can be used for several other purposes imaginable.

Acharya Charaka also compares the action of Basti with the watering of plants at their roots. If the roots are watered, the whole plant from the roots to the leaves, flowers & fruits gets water. Likewise, the medications introduced through the anus in the rectum and colon reaches the entire body. Acharya says the diseases pertaining to extremities, bowels and those arisen in the vital parts, proximal parts of body, in short all the parts of human body are affected by Vayu. There is no remedy other than Basti for pacification of Vayu, when it is aggravated severely. Hence Basti is said to be half the treatment of the all diseases i.e. 'Chikitsardha.'

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To search and re-evaluate Basti in various texts including Vedas, Puranas, Yogic and Ayurvedic literatures with references.

To understand the evolutionary comparative descriptions and importance of Basti in various texts.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This article is based on a review of Ayurvedic texts. Materials related to Basti and other relevant topics have been collected. The main Ayurvedic texts used in this study are Charak Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Astang Sangraha, Astang Hridaya, Madav Nidana and available commentaries on these. We have also referred to the modern texts and searched various websites to collect information on the relevant topics.

HISTORICAL ASPECT OF BASTI

Veda

In Kaushika Sutra of Atharva Veda Basti is indicated as a substitute for minor operation. (K.S. Davila-25/127)

Purana

In Agni Purana, Basti is quoted as principal treatment in complaints marked by predominance of Vata. (A.P. 279/53)

It is indicated in fatigue state of Horses, in form of Taila Basti. (A.P. 284/14)

According to season, different Snehas have been indicated for Basti. (A.P. 289/46)

Yogic Literature

In Gheranda Samhita and Hathayoga-Pradipika, Basti is included in Shatkarma and categorized into two as-

1. Jala Basti
2. Sthala Basti (Gh.S.1/49-50 & H.Y. Pra 2/27-29)

Charak Samhita

In Charak Samhita, a wider explanation relating to multi-facets of Basti have been dealt with, though the references are scattered at many stances, a major account of the therapeutic use of Basti, its complications, indications and contraindications are available in the 1st to 10th chapter of Siddhi-sthana. The 11th chapter exclusively deals with the various preparations and examples of Basti.

Sushrut Samhita

In Sushrut Samhita, four chapters of Chikitsa-sthana are related with detailed descriptions regarding the Basti. Other numerous references are also available in the text.

Ashtang Samgrah

In this classic, 19th chapter of Sutra-sthana is related to Basti specifically. Also four chapters of Kalpa sthana have been contributed to Basti. In these chapters every aspect of Basti has been dealt.

Ashtanga Hridaya

In this Samhita 19th chapters of Sutra-sthana, "Bastividhi" and 5th chapter "Bastivyapadasidhi" explains every aspect of Basti.

Kashyap Samhita

In Kashyap Samhita, Basti has been explained in detail in 6th chapter of Siddhi-sthana and in one chapter of Khilsthana.

Bhel Samhita

In Bhel Samhita, Basti has been described in four chapters of Siddi-sthana Viz- Bastimatriya-siddhi, Upakalpa-siddhi, Phalmatra-siddhi and Doshā vyapadika Basti Siddhi.

Harita Samhita

In text only 3rd chapter of Sutra sthana dealt with Basti.

Chakradatta

In this text two chapters named "Anuvāsana-adhikara and Niruhan-adhikara" are dealt with Anuvāsana and Niruh Basti respectively.

Vangasen

In Chikitsa Sar Samgraha, Acharya Vangasena has described Basti in "Bastikarm-adhikara" chapter.

Sarangdhara Samhita

Three chapters of Uttara Khand namely "Bastikalpana-vidhi", Niruha Bastikalpana vidhi, Uttara Bastikalpana vidhi", describes every aspect of Basti.

Bhavaprakash

Fifth chapter of Purvakhanda is related with Basti, Vrana Basti. Vrana Basti is a type of Basti has been explained in this text.

Kalyana Karka

In this text Basti has been described in "Vatarogadhikara only.

Todarananda

In this text Basti is described in the chapter "Basti vidhi".

ETYMOLOGY OF BASTI

According to Vachaspathyam the word 'Basti' is derived from the root 'Vas' by adding 'Tich' Pratyaya and it belongs to masculine gender. Meanings of the root 'Vas' are to reside, to stay, to dwell or means to cover or to coat or Coating of Sneha for the elimination.

In "Vasta gandha ardane" gandha denotes bad smell hence it refers to Mala and the verb Ardane denotes the movement (in the colon) and to beg (drawing of waste material in the colon from all over the body). So, the literal meaning of Basti is to produce the effect of pleasant smell or it denotes an organ which covers the urine or it denotes an organ situated below the umbilicus which holds the urine or it denotes an instrument used for the administration of medicines.

From these foregoing descriptions, the following two conclusions can be drawn—

1. Basti denotes a Karma where in the drugs administered through the anal canal stay for certain time in the body, then produces a coating of Sneha in the body and draws the waste substances through all over body into colon and eliminates them out of the body by producing the movements in the colon, resulting into pleasant effect.

2. Basti denotes an organ which is a receptacle or reservoir of Urine i.e. 'Urinary bladder'. It was used as an instrument for the administration of the drugs with a constant pressure.

DEFINITION

It is defined in two ways i.e. one indicates the Karma, as a whole and the other indicates just the instrument used for it.

Charakacharya, defined Basti on the basis of the Karma similar to that of Vaman and Virechan i.e. "The Karma where in the drugs administered through anal canal reaches up to Nabhipradesha, Kati, Parshva, Kukshi, churns the accumulated Dosha and Purisha (Morbid humours and faecal matter), spreads the oleation all over the body and easily comes out along with the churned Purisha and Dosha is called is Basti.

According to Astang Sangraharakar, the procedure in which either Basti is used for the administration of the drugs or the drugs administered first reaches to the Basti.

CLASSIFICATION OF BASTI

1. On the basis of Adhithana

i. Pakwashayagat Basti—Drugs are administered through the anal canal into the colon. It includes Niruh & Anuvasan Basti.

ii. Uttara Basti —In males it means Mutrashayagat Basti- drugs are administered in urinary bladder. In females it means

Mutrashayagat and Garbhashayagat Basti- drugs administered through urethra into the bladder and through vagina into the uterus.

iii. Vrana Basti —In this type, the drugs are poured into the Vrana for its Shodhana & Ropana. It has been mentioned by Sushrut.

Here we are mainly concerned with Pakwashayagat Basti

2. On the basis of Basti Dravya

i. Snaihik Basti- Drug is administered in the form of Sneha (i.e.Ghrita, Taila, Vasa, Majja) through anal canal into the colon. It is further classified according to dose of Sneha.

a) Sneha Basti- In this type, 6 Pala (240ml) of Sneha is administered.

b) Anuvasana Basti- In this type 3 Pala (120ml.) of Sneha is administered.

ii. Niruh Basti- In this type of Basti, Kashaya is the chief constituent of the Basti Dravya along with Madhu, Saindhav, Kalka and Sneha. In place of Kashaya Kshira, Mamsa-rasa etc. are also used. It is also called as Asthapana Basti.

3. On the basis of Schedule

i. Karma Basti - Total 30 Basti administered in which there are 18 Anuvasan and 12 Niruh Basti.

ii. Kala Basti- According to Charakacharya it is the half of Karma Basti. Chakrapani opines that it includes sixteen Basti out of which 10 Anuvasan and 6 are Niruh. According to Vagbhat it includes 15 Basti, out of which 6 are Niruh and 9 are Anuvasan.

According to Kashayap 12 Anuvasan and 3Niruh, alternate in beginning 1Niruh & 3 Anuvasan and at last 3 Anuvasan.

iii. Yoga Basti- Total 8 Basti- 5 Anuvasan and 3 Niruh.

CONCLUSION

Thus Basti has been widely and elaborately described by all texts of Vedic, Puranic, Yogic and Ayurvedic literatures. Each and every text has described its function in his own ways however, in Ayurvedic texts Basti has been described especially for pacification of Vata Dosha. A detailed etymology, various definitions and classifications have been described by various texts of Ayurveda.

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