

## REVIEW ARTICLE

# A Review on Management of *Vataja Shirorog* W.S.R. to Tension-type Headache through *Dashmooladi Siddha Ksheerdhara* and Oral Administration

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### ABSTRACT

It is sad and known to everybody that in today's era, it is difficult to maintain one's mental health. A happy mind can accomplish anything but with a busy, competitive, and demanding life, earning bread and butter has deteriorated one's mindset. Today's lifestyle change, i.e., irregular food habits, suppression of natural urges, lack of proper sleep, and less time for relaxation, has increased incidences of many diseases. Due to complexity, diversity, and range of root causes of mental health and little awareness about healthy mind among people, it becomes challenging to diagnose the problem. In Ayurveda, mind contemplates to be a bridge between *indriyas* and *indriyarthas*. If the mind is unhealthy, it will surely reflect upon the body. Insomnia, insanity, tension-type headache, office headache, depression, schizophrenia, stress, and anxiety have now become very common. Fortunately, in Ayurveda, there are various lines of treatments such as *Satva avajaya chikitsa*, *Daivya vyapasraya chikitsa*, *Adravyabhoot chikitsa*, *Yukti vyapasraya chikitsa*, *Achar rasayan*, *Yoga*, and *pranayama* followed by proper diet and also *Panchakarma* therapies such as *nasya* and *shirodhara* with medicated oil seems quite effective. *Shirodhara* can be performed using a variety of herbs including *takra*, *ksheer*, *kwath*, etc. It involves continually and rhythmically pouring liquid over the forehead from a specified height for a set amount of time. The liquid depends on what disease is being treated. *Shirodhara* also involves a head massage. It is thought to be a good relaxing procedure for mind.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The main requirements in the current era are speed and accuracy. Individuals are unable to give their bodily and mental health any thought. *Vatik shirahshula* (Tension-type headache in short form TTH) is one among such problems. *Manasa santapa* is the leading factor in creating the disease shirahshula according to Charak.<sup>[1]</sup> It is clearly mentioned by Charak and Harita that *shoka* and *bhaya* are specifically responsible for *Vatik shirahshula* (cha. Su. 17/17; Ha 2<sup>nd</sup> part 1/10).<sup>[2]</sup> It is estimated that 82% of headache occurs due to tension.

### 1.1. Importance of Head

Ayurveda has given prime importance to *Shira*, considering it as one of the three principal vital organs of the body where the Prana, i.e.,

life resides. Charak has considered *Shira* as the supreme, important, and major part of the body which is known as the *Uttamanga*. *Shira* has been compared with the Sun. Charak explains that all the sense organs and the channels carrying the sensory and vital impulses from the *Shira* are like the rays from the Sun.<sup>[3]</sup> Vagabhatta has compared human being with a tree, with roots at the top and branches at the bottom and defined head as a site where all sense organs along with the *Prana* resides. Thus, being the site of conscience, it is the supreme of all organs which requires prime protection.<sup>[4]</sup>

#### 1.1.1. *Vataja Shirorog*

##### 1.1.1.1. *Shira Shoola*

In Ayurveda, *shirahshoola* is the main symptom as well as synonyms of various *shiroroga*. It is separate disease entity which has symptoms and pathology as per *doshik* involvement. Even though all the shirorogas are *tridoshaja*, it has been classified based upon predominant *dosha*.<sup>[5]</sup> Among them, *Vataja shirahshoola* is most frequently seen because of *vata prakopa nidaans*. *Shiroroga* which occurs due to *vata prakopak*

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nidaans with intense pain in the head, neck, and regions surrounding it is termed as *vataja shirahshoola*.

#### 1.1.1.2. Nidan

*Vegavarodha* (Suppression of natural urges), *Divasvapa* (Day sleep), *Ratrijagarana* (Vigil during night), *Madya* (Alcohol), *UcchaBhashana* (Speaking aloud), *Avashyaya* (exposure to eastern wind), *Purvivata* (exposure to eastern wind), *Atimaithuna* (excess sexual indulgence), *Shirobhighata* (head injury), *Rodana* (lamentation), *AshruvegaNigraha* (suppression of tears), *Manastapa* (Mental stress), excessive *vaman*, and excessive *virechan* are etiological factors mentioned.<sup>[6]</sup>

#### 1.1.1.3. Lakshan

*Vatik shirahshula* comprises pain in the temporal region, Acharya has described pain in *ghata* (back region of neck) and specifically quoted (aari se cheerne ke samaan peeda in slok), pain in forehead and dizziness is present, more sphuran is present in *shira*, and *dhamni* of *shira* pradesh. Snigdha and ushna aushad plus aahar vihar suppresses the pain.<sup>[7]</sup>

#### 1.1.1.4. Samprapti

The pathogenesis of disease starts from aggravation of Vata dosha due to indulgence in etiological factors. Aggravated vata then gets lodged in sira and dhamani of head and further undergoes prakopavastha resulting in severe headache. Nidaan is the efficient cause, Dosha is the material cause, and Dosha dushya sammurchana is the essential cause.

Acharya Charak has described samprapti of Vatika shirorog (Cha. Su. 17/18). It is not mentioned in detail in any other Ayurvedic literature.

## 1.2. Definition of Headache

Although the term 'headache' can mean pain anywhere in the head, it is usually confined to pain arising in the region of cranial vault.<sup>[8]</sup> Most often, headache is a symptomatic expression of some minor ailment, mental tension, or fatigue, and in majority of cases, the cause is non-neurological.

## 1.3. Tension-type Headache

This is the most common type of headache and is experienced at some time by the majority of the population in some form. Pathogenesis – the mechanism of TTH is poorly understood, although it has long been regarded as a headache with muscular origins. It may be stress related or associated with musculoskeletal problems in the neck. Emotional strain or anxiety is a common precipitant to tension-type headache.<sup>[9]</sup>

## 1.4. Correlation with Tension-type Headache

TTH is commonly characterized by bilateral tight, band-like discomfort. Pain typically builds slowly, fluctuates in severity, and may persist more or less continuously for many days. The headache may be episodic or chronic (present more than 15 days/month) without accompanying features such as nausea, vomiting, and photophobia separating it from migraine. The International Headache Society's main definition of TTH allows an admixture of nausea, photophobia, and phonophobia in various combinations.<sup>[10,11]</sup>

Pain in TTH:

1. Compressive - constrictive type
2. Non-pulsatile, evening time
3. Varied in intensity, frequency, and duration long lasting

4. Commonly in occipital and bilateral regions associated with muscle contraction
5. Visual symptoms are absent
6. Nausea, vomiting, anorexia, rarely present
7. Photophobia or phonophobia may be present
8. Tenderness on the scalp, neck, and shoulder muscles
9. Insomnia
10. Fatigue
11. Irritability.

## 1.5. Similarities between Vataja Shirorog and Tension-type Headache

Furthermore, Vata can be correlated with tension because tension means bodily tension and mental tension. Bodily tension means muscle tension, i.e., contraction of muscle which is a pathology in the development of TTH. Mental tension means high thinking. Hence, we can correlate the Vata with tension it is also mentioned in table 1.<sup>[13]</sup>

In Ayurveda, the human body is compared to an inverted tree wherein the head is the main part of the body and other organs are its branches, so the head controls every system. Hence, the application of medicine on the head (cranium) can cure many diseases of different parts of the body. *Shirodhara* is one of the effective methods to deal with the different types of neurological disorders. It can also normalize the functions of hormones that regulate sleep and emotions and also effective in anxiety and stress.

### 1.5.1. Chikitsa

According to Acharya Vagbhatta (A.H.U.24/1-3), all the vatavyadhi treatments can be followed. Furthermore, he has indicated shiroabhyanga, upnah, snigdha nasya, snigdha dhoom, shirotarpan, karnatarpan, and Shirodhara with the help of vatahagna devdarvadi or Dasmoola aadi sidh ksheerdhara.

According to Acharya Shushrut (Su.U.26/5), shirodhara with the help of vatanashak aushidhi sidh in ksheer should be used. Furthermore, all vatavyadhi treatments can be followed.

### 1.5.2. Shirodhara

*Shirodhara* (shiro – head; dhara – flow) is a well-known ayurvedic therapy and a traditional *panchakarma* technique that may be performed using a variety of herbs including *taila*, *takra*, *ksheer*, *kwath*, etc. It involves continually and rhythmically pouring liquid over the forehead from a specified height for a set amount of time.<sup>[14]</sup> The liquid depends on what disease is being treated. *Shirodhara* also involves a head massage. It is thought to be a good relaxing procedure for the mind.

*Shirodhara* is a special non-invasive Ayurvedic treatment. The effectiveness of its non-invasive technique in treating headaches, sleeplessness, hypertension, stress, and anxiety has been demonstrated to be good or even better. The four forms of *murdha taila* – *Abhyanga*, *Parishek*, *Pichu*, *Shirobasti* – described by Acharya Vagbhat are gradually more advantageous than the others. One of them is *shirodhara* or *shiroparishechan*. Time limit is commonly described as 45 min to 1 h, respectively.<sup>[15]</sup>

## 1.6. Shirodhara Procedure is Divided into 3 Parts<sup>[14]</sup>

### 1.6.1. Purvakarma

The patient is thoroughly examined whether he is fit for the procedure. Patient should be advised to pass stool and urine. Then pulse, temperature, and blood pressure of the patient should be recorded.

Patient is advised to lie down in supine position on the *dhara* table and *dhara patra* should be fixed 4 *angula* above the forehead. The eyes and ears must be covered with cotton to prevent entry of liquid into them.<sup>[16]</sup>

### 1.6.2. Pradhankarma

The room should be quiet and peaceful. *Shirodhara* is done in the morning time after massage. Any type of liquid (*taila*, *milk*, *kwath*, and *water*) should be kept in *dhara patra*. Dhara should be poured continuously on forehead neither very fast nor very slow. The liquid of shirodhara should not be too hot or too cold. Temperature of liquid should be above the body temperature. When the liquid starts pouring, then, the vessel is moved in the pendulum manner starting from one lateral side to the other lateral side. The liquid is collected in another vessel kept and is used to refill the *dhara patra* before it gets empty.

### 1.6.3. Paschatakarma

After the procedure, the head of the patient should be wiped out and dried followed by short duration of rest and the patient is advised to have *pathya ahara* (light diet).

### 1.7. Indications

Stress and psychosomatic disorders such as IBS (irritable bowel syndrome), headaches, epilepsy, insomnia, hypertension, and loss of memory.

### 1.8. Contraindications

In *kaphaja vikara*, *shirodhara* further increases kapha further making the disease difficult to cure.

### 1.9. Drug Review

The herbs are to be used for *ksheerdhara*<sup>[17]</sup> for the above-mentioned disease *Vataja Shirorog* is mentioned in table 2.<sup>[18-21]</sup>

## 2. DISCUSSION

### 2.1. Probable Mode of Action of the Drug

Treatment in Ayurveda is mostly done according to the *doshas* involved in the disease. The action of every drug is determined by the dominant pharmacodynamic factors. As the name suggests in *Vataja Shirorog*, there is involvement of *Vata dosha*. *Dashmooladi Kwatha* is classically indicated medicine for *Vataja Shirorog* (tension-type headache) mentioned by Vagbatta and Chakradutta. All the drugs included in this *Dashmooladi kwatha* are *Vednashamak*, *Kaphavatahar*, *Balya*, *Tridosahar*, *Hridya*, and *Sothahar*. The combination of the roots is used widely in Ayurveda which acts on *Vata Dosha* and reduces its aggravation. Nerves, muscles, bones, and joints are all linked to a variety of diseases. Its anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and analgesic properties are all potent. In Ayurvedic medicine, the polyherbal combination is one of the most common ingredients used to prepare many forms of medicine used for the treatment of various ailments, especially *Vata Roga*.<sup>[22]</sup>

### 2.2. Probable Mode of Action of Ksheerdhara

*Shirodhara* gives strength to the prana and *indriyas*, *indriyas* are in close contact with mind, so when *indriyas* stays healthy mind, automatically stays healthy. As per the principle of drug absorption, absorption of the substances through the skin depends on a number of factors, the most important of which are concentration duration of contact, solubility of medication, and physical condition of the skin and part of the body

exposed. Furthermore, the skin over the scalp is thin as compared to other parts of body and absorption is faster and more from the scalp (as per the principle of drug absorption, maximum absorption is in the scalp region and comparatively oil is better absorbing than water.<sup>[23]</sup> The continuous flow of warm liquid on the forehead for such a long period will cause mild vasodilatation. *Shirodhara* improves the circulation in these areas and helps in regularization of the blood supply of the brain. When anything pours on the forehead from a certain height due to the change in the form of energy, it generates momentum, and it can cause voltage changes and stimulate the generation of nerve impulses or accentuate the conduction of nerve impulses. Mental stress and irritability are the causative factors of endocrine system imbalance. According to Acharya Bhela, *Bhrumadhya* (between both eyebrows) is the site of *Chitta (Mana)*. It is also place of *Sthapni Marma*<sup>[24]</sup> the stimulation of *Sthapni Marma* and indirect stimulation of pituitary gland brings changes in psycho-somatic level. Hence, *Shirodhara* therapy helps in relieving the mental stress by regulating the normal function of this gland.

## 3. CONCLUSION

*Shirodhara* is an important therapeutic measure in Ayurveda system of medicine. It is a purifying and rejuvenating therapy which eliminates toxins and mental exhaustion as well as relieves stress and any ill effects on the central nervous system. It is a type of relaxation therapy that induces serenity without inducing drowsiness, hypnosis, or other significant states of altered consciousness. It is a form of passive meditation used to calm down the nervous system.

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The study does not require ethical approval as it is a review study.

## 8. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

## 9. DATA AVAILABILITY

This is an original manuscript and all data are available for only review purposes from principal investigators.

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**Table 1:** Similarities between Vataja Shirorog and Tension Type Headache.

Roop of Vataja shirahshoola <sup>121</sup>	Symptoms of TTH
<i>Animittaruja</i>	Obscure origin
<i>Shankhanistoda, Bhru Madhya, Lalata ativednam</i>	Typically involve entire head commonly temporal, occipital, and bilateral regions
<i>Bhavanti tivranishi</i>	Moderately severe in evening time
<i>Sandhimokshanavat peeda</i>	Local tenderness over skull vault

TTH: Tension-type headache

**Table 2:** Herbs are to be used for ksheerdhara in vataj shirorog.

S/No	Drug name	Botanical name	Karma
1	<i>Agnimanth</i>	<i>Premna mucronate</i>	<i>Shothshar, Kapha-vatashamaka, Agnidipaka</i>
2	<i>Shyonak</i>	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i>	<i>Amahar, Deepana, Tridoshanashaka</i>
3	<i>Bilva</i>	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	<i>Grahi Kapha-vatashamaka, Agnivardhaka, Balya, Pittakara</i>
4	<i>Patala</i>	<i>Stereospermum suaveolens</i>	<i>Shothahar, Raktavikara, Pittatisara, Hridya, Tridoshashamaka</i>
5	<i>Gambhari</i>	<i>Gmelina arborea</i>	<i>Shothahar, Tridoshashamaka, Pandunashaka</i>
6	<i>Shalparni</i>	<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	<i>Angmardprashman, Tridoshashamaka, Shothaghna, Balya, Rasayana, Brimhana, Vishaghna</i>
7	<i>Prishnaparni</i>	<i>Uraria picta</i>	<i>Angmardprashman, Tridosha Shamaka, Deepana, Vrishya</i>
8	<i>Brihati</i>	<i>Solanum indicum</i>	<i>Kashar, Kaphavata-shamaka, Hridya, Pachaka, Aruchinashaka</i>
9	<i>Kanthkari</i>	<i>Solanum surattense</i>	<i>Kashar, Kaphavatashamaka, Deepana, Kasa-swasahara, Pinasa, Parswashula</i>
10	<i>Gokshur</i>	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>	<i>Mutravirechan, Vatapittashamaka, Balya</i>
11	<i>Balamoola</i>	<i>Sida Cordifolia</i>	<i>Balya</i>
12	<i>Pushkarmoola</i>	<i>Inula Racemose</i>	<i>Swashhar</i>
13	<i>Rasna</i>	<i>Pluchea lanceolate</i>	<i>Vednasthapan</i>
14	<i>Devdaru</i>	<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	<i>Vednasthapan</i>
15	<i>Sunthi</i>	<i>Zingiber officinale</i>	<i>Kapha-vata shamak</i>