



**GRAHA ROGA IN PEDIATRIC ADVANCEMENT W.S.R. TO
SKANDAPSMARA GRAHA**

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ABSTRACT

Graha is a wide spectrum term and collection of symptoms defined in Ayurveda literature, wherein the aetiology is unknown. References about Graha Rogas are available in the Vedas. Mahabharata first time mentioned morphology of Graha Rogas, whereas Ayurveda literature explain the clinical features along with treatment, though the number of Balagraha differs from text to text. The advancement of technology and diagnostics in the subject of paediatrics in the recent years have made more clear comprehending of these conditions, still many challenging disorders are present whose causes are unidentified, termed as of idiopathic origin. One of the significant management way is Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa for condition of unknown etiological factors especially Graha Rogas. The child seized by the friend of skanda graha, that is skanda apasmar. In modern it can be corelated with childhood epilepsy or febrile convulsions.

Keywords: Graha roga, skandapsmara, Epilepsy, Daiva Vyapashraya chikitsa

INTRODUCTION:

The etymology of word Graha is to seize or grasp (Grahi). It has been used in Ayurvedic literature in cases where

etiology is unknown and can be seen only by sukshma drishti (micro vision). Graha Rogas are separate and specific entities

from other general diseases. Their causative factors, signs and symptoms, severity and treatment are totally different from others disorders which we come across in day to day practice. It constitute group of powerful Paediatric disorders which are rapidly progressive, complicated to diagnose and posses high mortality and morbidity rates. In Ayurveda literature such entities are assigned as Diavika shakti, poorvajanamakrita papkarma etc. The Graha is said to afflict the child when mother in puerperium resorts to mithyaahara . Mahabharata first time mentioned the morphological features of Graha Roga. Kaushik Sutra and Skanda Bhaishajya also explained about Graha Roga. Agnipurana gives his major contribution and explains 38 mythological concept. These Grahas are made by Ishwara, the supreme power which governs and control this whole world. Lord Shiva designated 5 male and 7 female Grahas for care and protection his son Kartikeya. Whatever may be the intention, Grahas are developed with good intension of protection of child from enemies. Acharya Kashyapa has explained causes, habitat and characters of Grahas in Reveti kalpadhyaya of (Kasyapa samhita)

As per modern point of view, all above facts vallidate the microscopic, unicellular nature of Graha which can be visualised by

special supports like microscope. They can transform their shape and size when enters in different phases of their life cycles like egg, larva, spore etc. Micro-organisms although cause disease, but they awake certain immunity inside the body against them by stimulating the body immune system. Classification of Grahas as Stri and Purusha may be showing their pathogenic traits, seriousness and potency as per modern view of gram positive (+) and gram negative (-) organisms.

Vagbhata has mentioned that territories of Grahas are innumerable and attack peoples for three purposes:

- 1) Hinsa (to punish)
- 2) Archana (to get worshipped)
- 3) Rati (to combat the sexual urges)

If we correlate it with modern point of view the purpose is

- 1) Pathogenic nature.
- 2) Parasitic and opportunistic nature that is microbes enter in the body to complete their life cycle.
- 3) Non pathogenic and may contribute for anabolism that is microbes using host body to get nutrition.

Causes for attack of Grahas:

- Due to faulty behavior of Mata / Dhatri.
- Carelessness of hygiene.
- Character lacking in belief in worship.
- Don't practise religion customs.

• Variation in behaviour like excessive happiness & sorrow.

If above all factors are seen in modern prospective view, faulty diet habits of mother, depression and any mood disorder impacts on child psychologically where as unhygienic surrounding, less immunity of child, affects child by appealing attacks of pathogenic micro organism.

Pathogenesis:

Acharya Charaka envisioned that Grahas enters the body by invisible ways common as that of formation of mirror image, heat generation, and refraction of rays in a lens or soul enters in the body at the time of new birth. In this way Grahas gets into the body and vitiates breast milk producing several disease and discomfort to the child. Sushruta illustrate number of different causative factors into two main categories. One related to unsanitary condition in which he told about violation of rule and regulation of lifestyle of child or mothers such as feeding in unhygiene and broken containers with unhealthy condition of surrounding ambience. Other reason consists of excessive indulgence of child's wet nurse or mother in eating, sex, sleep, exercise, harmful activities and other unreligious conduct etc.

Number of Grahas according to different Authors:

- Kasyapa mentioned 20 synonyms of the Revati Graha.
- Aacharya Charak didn't mentioned any numbering and called Them asankhya.
- Bhavprakasha and Susruta described 9 Grahas.
- To which Vagbhata and Yogratnakara added 3 more Grahas and total 12 Grahas out of which 5 are said to be male Grahas and 7 are female Grahas.
- Harita described about only 8 Grahas.
- Twelve balagrahas mentioned in Kumara-Tantra written by Ravana.

Aims and Objectives

To review of Graha Rogas with available literature.

To evaluate the etiopathology of Skandapsmara Graha Roga.

To evaluate the etiopathology of childhood epilepsy and febrile convulsions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Information and data related to graha roga in children are gathered from various ayurveda classics, related texts e-books, various research articles from different journals, websites and references from different types of text books of pediatrics practice

Skandapsmara graha is also known as Vishakha or Skana sakha or skanda mitra. Here skanda is a commander-in-chief of army of Devtas.

According to Sushruta:ⁱ

- Child suddenly goes unconscious and suddenly gets back to consciousness
- Throws away his hands and legs in a bizarre way as if dancing
- Voids feces and urine while throwing his limbs
- Bowing of body
- Severe yawning
- Frothing from the mouth

Symptoms According to Yogaratnakaraⁱⁱ

- When child loses consciousness, he vomits foam
- When child gains consciousness, he cries and screams a lot
- Smell of pus and blood from the body

Symptoms According to Ashtanga Samgrahaⁱⁱⁱ

- Loses consciousness often
- The child pulls his hairs
- The neck gets crooked
- Bending of body
- Yawning
- Repeated voiding of feces and urine
- Vomiting of foam
- Eyes gazed in upward direction

- Rapid movements, as if dancing, of hands, eyebrows and feet (lower limbs)
- Bites the breasts of his mother or his own tongue
- Agitated
- Fever
- Sleeplessness
- Emits smell of pus and blood from the body

In modern health sciences these Grahas are correlated with the infectious agents which may be viruses, bacteria, fungi or other pathogens. Due to negligence of clean environment, less immunity of children's and psychological misconduct of mother they can easily encourage the imposition of microbes.

The main symptoms of Skandapsmaram is similar to 'epileptic attacks in children' explained in modern medical texts.

Epilepsy is very common in childhood. Epilepsy causes seizures. Most often it has been noticed that adults with epilepsy have had their first episode of seizure in childhood or adolescence. According to the Epilepsy Foundation, 2/3 children with epilepsy outgrow seizures by the time they achieve their teenage. Good and thorough care help many children get rid of seizures and in reduction in side effects.

Types of childhood epilepsy and symptoms

1) Focal seizures

2) Generalized seizures

Focal seizures / partial seizures – affect only one side of the brain. The child experiences an aura before seizure. This signals the arrival of seizures. The auras of seizure may include changes in hearing, vision or smell, unusual feelings, such as fear, euphoria or sense of déjà vu. Focal aware seizures affect a specific muscle group such as those in fingers or legs. There is no loss of consciousness. The child having focal aware seizure may appear frozen. The child is unable to respond but can usually hear and understand things which occur in the surroundings. Nausea, pale skin and sweating are also present. Focal impaired awareness seizures cause loss of consciousness or awareness of surroundings. Symptoms like crying, laughing, staring and smacking of lips are present.

Generalized seizures – affect both sides of the brain. It usually causes loss of consciousness. After the attack, the children are sleepy and tired. This is called postictal state. It is of the below mentioned types –

- a) Absence seizures / Petit-mal seizures – presents with brief loss of consciousness. Staring, rapid blinking of eyes and facial twitching are the other symptoms. This is most common in age groups of 4-14 years. The seizures last less than 10 seconds. There is absence of postictal state.
- b) Atonic seizure / drop seizures – there is sudden loss of muscle tone. The child may fall down or limp and stop responding. The attack usually lasts less than 15 seconds.
- c) Generalized tonic-clonic seizure (GTC) / Grand mal seizure – first there is contraction, then straightening and then shaking of child's body and limbs. Later the muscles contract and relax. Finally there is postictal period. Here the child becomes tired and confused. The attack usually last for 1-3 minutes.
- d) Myoclonic seizure – causes sudden jerking of muscles and the seizures last for 1-2 seconds. There may not be loss of consciousness.

Childhood Epilepsy Syndrome

Benign Rolandic Epilepsy of Childhood – occurs between 3-10 years of age and affects about 15% of children with epilepsy. Focal seizures might occur at night and may develop into GTC. Seizures may rarely occur during wakefulness. They usually involve twitching of the face and tongue.

Childhood absence epilepsy – usually affects children under 16 years of age. It

begins between 4 and 10 years of age. The caregivers may not take a note since the absence seizures are very brief.

Infantile spasms / West Syndrome – usually begin before a child is 1 year of age. There are brief spasms or jerking in one or more parts of the body. The spasm occurs in clusters. This can affect infants who have had a brain injury. Many children with this syndrome have learning difficulties or behavioral problems. They may also develop another syndrome called Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome.

Juvenile Myoclonic Epilepsy – begins between 12 and 18 years of age. This causes different types of seizures, including myoclonic seizures, tonic-clonic seizures and absence seizures. Flashing lights can trigger seizures. They may also occur shortly after waking up. It is the most common generalized epilepsy syndrome. It often continues into adulthood. Medication can control seizures in up to 90% cases.

Landau Kleffner Syndrome – is a rare childhood disorder, begins between 3 and 7 years of age. It causes difficulties in understanding language and verbal expression. The child may also have behavior problems. About 70% children with LKS have obvious seizures. The seizures are usually focal.

Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome – usually begins between 3-5 years of age and causes

various kinds of seizures. Many children will have learning and behavior problems.

Temporal Lobe Epilepsy – is the most common form of focal epilepsy. Symptoms usually occur between 10-20 years of age.

Causes of childhood epilepsy

In many cases no cause may be identified. Below mentioned are the potential causes or contributing factors of childhood epilepsy –

- Developmental disorders, autism
- Genetic types of epilepsy
- Infectious diseases like meningitis etc
- Head trauma
- Tumors / cysts in the brain
- High fevers (febrile seizures)
- Oxygen deficiency before or during birth
- Maternal infections and poor nutrition during pregnancy

Common trigger factors for childhood seizures

- Excitement
- Deficit sleep
- Flickering / flashing lights
- Missing medication for seizures
- Music, loud noises etc

Diagnosis

- Complete medical and family history
- Details of episodes of seizure

- Thorough physical examination of the child
- Blood tests
- Brain scans and measurements – CT scan, MRI scan & EEG

Clinical features of Febrile convulsions:

The convulsions in a baby occurring when a child has fever of 38⁰ C or above and without the evidence of documented CNS infections. This is one of the commonest cause of convulsions in children. Febrile seizures are age dependent and are rare before 9 months and after age of 5 years. The peak age of onset is 14-18 months of age. Genetic predisposition is common and the history of the same should be enquired in the family history (siblings and parents).

Treatment

- Medications – antiepileptic drugs to control the symptoms. These do not control seizures in all children.
- Ketogenic diet – to control the seizures should be planned with the help of doctor and dietician.
- Neuro-stimulation – done when the epilepsy do not respond to the drugs. They are of 3 types – vagus nerve stimulation, responsive neuro-stimulation and deep brain stimulation.
- Surgery – in some cases surgery may be needed to remove a portion

of the brain. They may prevent or reduce seizures.

General management of Grahās (Chakradutt):

- Maintenance of Personal hygiene with oleation, bath, fumigation, isolation etc.
- Health of dhatri and attendants should be maintained.
- Personal hygiene of the attending physician is essential.
- Japa, bali, home etc. Karmas should be done.
- Consumption of Ghritas like Astamangala ghrita, Balagrahanasaka ghrita, Balahitkari ghrita.
- Consumption of oil preparation like Mahamasha oil, Jyotishmati oil.
- Symptomatic treatment according to developed sign and symptoms.

Ayurvedic treatment

1. Internal medication

Kshiri vriksha kwatha and Jivaniya Kalka Sadhita Ghrita Pana (Ghee prepared with the decoction of latex yielding trees or paste of Jeevaniya group of herbs should be given for oral consumption.)

Kakolyadi Gana Siddha Ghrita Pana (Ghee prepared with decoction of Kakolyadi group of herbs and milk explained by

master Sushruta should be given for oral consumption.)

2) External measures

a. ointment

Skandagrahokta Lepa – anointment explained in the context of child afflicted with Skanda Graha should be used in this context too - Gugguluvadi Churna Lepa

b. Parishechana / Snana – showering and bath

Durvadi Kwatha Parishechana / Snana

Showering and bath should be given to the child with decoction prepared using the below mentioned ingredients –

Durva – *Cynodon dactylon*

Bilwa – *Aegle marmelos*

Shirisha – *Albizia lebbek*

Musta – *Cyperus rotundus*

Tulasi – *Ocimum sanctum*

c. Abhyanga – massage

Sarpasugandhadi Taila Abhyanga

Oil processed with the below mentioned ingredients should be used to give body massage to the afflicted child –

Paste of *Rauvolfia serpentina*

Paste of *Cedrus deodara*

Kushta – paste of *Saussurea lappa*

Musta – paste of *Cyperus rotundus*

Urine of cow

Urine of goat

d. Fumigation

Fumigation should be given to the child with the below mentioned ingredients –

Feces of vulture

Feces of owl

Body hairs of bull

Human hairs

Nails of elephant

Ghee

3) Ritualistic measures

a. Raksha Sutra – protective measures through wearing / tying medicament

The below mentioned herbs shall be tied to the limbs, neck or head of the afflicted child –

Anantamula – *Hemidesmus indicus*

Kukkuti – *Mallotus tetracoccus* / *Bombax ceiba* / *Physalis minima* / *Luffa echinata*

Kunduri – *Coccinia grandis*

Manjishta – *Rubia cordifolia*

Shweta kamala – white variety of lotus etc

b. Bali and Snana – Sacrifices and bathing

- Raw or cooked meat, blood, curds and spirituous liquor should be offered as sacrifice at the roots of Banyan tree.
- The child should be given with bath at the junction of four roads while reciting the above mentioned hymn

CONCLUSION:

In Ayurveda's classical texts, the various disorders of children is related to divine power ; like balagraha, jataharini (Kashyap Samhita), matrika (Ravanakrit Kumartantra).

Bala graha is defined as a disease which captures and seizes a child.

This means that the hidden grahas in child also causes diseases. This can be pacified and controlled only by daivvyapashraya and yuktivyapashraya chikitsa. Acharya Sushruta has said that this grahas are of different forms and are under control of god. Thus generally can't enter any body. Hence considering the 'apta vakyas ' the features of graha roga are described by him.

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