

## BASTIR VAYA STHAPANANAM – MANAGEMENT OF JARA THROUGH BASTI CHIKITSA – A REVIEW

Snigdha Rani Patra<sup>1\*</sup>, Suresh N Hakkandi<sup>2</sup>, Manjunath Akki<sup>3</sup>

1. PG Scholar, Dept. of Panchakarma, SJGAMC and Hospital, Koppal, Karnataka, India.
2. Professor and HOD, Dept. of Panchakarma, SJGAMC and Hospital, Koppal, Karnataka, India.
3. Professor, Dept. of Panchakarma, SJGAMC and Hospital Koppal, Karnataka, India.

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### Abstract

Every human being wants to stay young and look even younger. No one wants to become old, which in fact is an inevitable biological phenomenon. After the age of 40yrs every human being experiences some shorts of degenerative changes. The problems related to old-age affects physically, mentally and socially. Dealing with old-age related problems and their management has become a challenge for modern medical sciences. According to Acharya Sushruta Jara (old age) is a Swabhabaja (natural/physiological) vyadhi like kshuda (hunger), trishna (thirst) and mrutyu (death). In Astanga Ayurveda Jara-Chikitsa (geriatrics) exist as a separate branch. Ashtanga hridaya starts with ‘Ayushkamiya adhyaya’ and Charak Samhita with ‘Deerghamjeevitiya adhyaya’, this shows the importance necessity of getting a youthful, healthy long life. Panchakarma plays a very important role in Jara (old age). Through its preventive, promotive and curative aspect Panchakarma gives multidimensional therapy. As the age advances Vatadosha increases and Basti (therapeutic enema), one of the chief Panchakarma procedure, is the prime treatment modality to alleviate Vatadosha. So here, an attempt is made to show how Basti will help in sustaining the youthfulness and also help in getting healthy long life.

**Keywords:** Vatadosha; Jara; Panchakarma; Basti.

### \*Address for correspondence:

Dr. Snigdha Rani Patra,  
PG Scholar,  
Dept. of Panchakarma,  
SJGAMC and Hospital,  
Koppal, Karnataka, India – 583 231  
E-mail: [ssk131113@gmail.com](mailto:ssk131113@gmail.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

*Jara* is a part of life cycle for every living being, it is an inevitable phenomenon. In *Ayurveda*, *Jara* (old age) is described as *Swabhavaja* (physiological) *vyadhi* like *kshudha* (hunger), *trishna* (thirst), *nidra* (sleep) and *mrutyu* (death).<sup>[1]</sup>

In last few decades due to development of new medical equipment, eradication of communicable diseases has increased the human life span markedly. But due to the faulty food habits, lack of exercises, occupational stress and improper sleep, a new problem known as Lifestyle diseases took the place of communicable diseases. So, people are getting more early degeneration. So, among the total population majority of them are above their sixties. Hence dealing with geriatric psychology and geriatric disorder has become a challenge.

Geriatrics is a vast branch of medicine dealing exclusively with the problems of ageing and the diseases of elderly<sup>[2]</sup> like degenerative deficits, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, COPD, hypertension, insomnia etc. The challenge is how to keep old people physically fit and psychologically stable.

*Ayurveda* the science of life gives much importance to geriatrics. *Jarachikitsa* (geriatrics) is mentioned in *Ashtanga Ayurveda* as an individual branch.<sup>[3]</sup> This shows that in *Vedic* period also geriatrics was a branch of concern. *Jara* has been divided into two types physiologically-

1. **Kalaja Jara** (chronological ageing) - The symptoms of ageing occur at the appropriate age of the person due to *swabhav* (physiology) and *kala* (time). It is naturally occurring inevitable process.
2. **Akalaja Jara** (premature ageing)- Ageing which occur before the

appropriate age of the individual i.e. before old age is *Akalaja jara*.<sup>[1]</sup>

*Jarachikitsa* implies delaying the process of ageing, prevention and managing the problems of old age by using of *Panchakarma* procedures, *Rasayan* (rejuvenation) and *Vajikarana* (aphrodisiac) drugs. *Panchakarma* is a multidimensional therapy, through its unique five-way procedures it emphasizes in promoting, protecting and extending youthful state and thus helps in curtailing ageing process, it also helps in curing the old age-related disorders.<sup>[4]</sup> As a whole it is a complete therapy for *Jara* and *Jarajanya vyadhis* (old age and related diseases).

Out of the five procedures *Basti* is the chief among *Panchakarma*. According to *Dosha* (bodily humor) involvement, *Basti* helps in alleviating *Vata*. *Vata* is responsible for the movement of vitiated *Pitta*, *Kapha* and *Rakta*.<sup>[5]</sup> So, *Basti* along with *Vata*, pacifies *Pitta*, *Kapha*, *Rakta* and *Sannipataja Vyadhi*.<sup>[6]</sup> So *Acharya Charak* has considered *Basti* as *Ardha Chikitsa* and in some cases according to *roga* and *rogi* (disease and diseased) also considered as *Purna Chikita*.<sup>[7]</sup> Unlike *Vamana* (therapeutic emesis) and *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation), *Basti* can be given in all age groups.<sup>[8]</sup> So, it is beneficial for both kids and elderly.

### Basti

All the *Acharyas* have appreciated *Basti* as a unique form of treatment modality, considering the efficacy, it generates in remodelling the hampered *Doshas* (bodily humor). It is incomparable elimination therapy than the others because it expels the vitiated *Doshas* rapidly as well as it nourishes the body. *Basti* is given through the anal route and reaches up to the colon. Due to its *chalaguna* (mobile property) *Vayu* is chief among *Tridosha*. Among all, *Vata* independently does the action on the whole body. The diseases which occurs in the *Trividhamarga* (three

body channels), *Vata* is known to be the main cause. For this reason, in all types of diseases alleviating *Vata* is considered as the first line of treatment.

### Basti vayasthapananam

All the Acharyas has described about Basti and its *Vayasthapaka* (sustain youthfulness), *Ayusthapaka* (stabilizes ageing process), *Jarahara*, *Balya*, *Vrushya*, and *Rasayan* properties. Some of them are coated below:

- According to *Acharya Sushruta* among the *Snehanadi karma Basti* (fat enema) is the chief procedure. The varied or multifaceted action of *Basti* is achieved through permutation and combination of the drugs used for preparing *Basti*. Hence the functions like *shodhana* (purification), *shaman* (conservation), *samgrahana* are brought. It causes increased libido in *ksheena shukra* (oligospermia), increases the weight of in *krusha* (lean), decreases the weight in *sthula* (obese), causes optimal functions of eyes, delays greying and hair fall, delays degenerative changes, imparts optimal functioning of organs, increases strength and life span.<sup>[9]</sup>
- The *Niruha basti* (decoction enema) is also called as *Asthapanabasti*. It means one which stabilizes the youthful age or sustains life-span by pacifying the vitiated *Doshas*.<sup>[10]</sup>
- According to *Acharya Charak*, *Basti* is quick acting, although it is given through *Gudamarga* (anal route), it acts on the whole body.<sup>[11]</sup> Highlighting the importance of *Gudamarga Parasara* opines that *Guda* (anus) is the *mula* (root) of *Shareera* (body) and it has maximum vascular (siras) supply. Hence the

administration of *Basti* causes nourishment of the entire body.

- For evacuation of vitiated *Dosha*, *Vamana* and *Virechana* is considered as the best *shodhana* measures, but these cannot be administered in *Bala* (kids), *Vruddha* (elderly) and *Garbhini* (pregnant) etc. but *Basti* can be given to all age groups. *Basti* is quick acting, does the *brumhana karma* (nourishment) in *bala* (children) and *vruddha* (aged), and also does *dhatu poshana* (as *bala* has *aparipakwa dhatu* and *vruddha* has *dhatu kshaya*) and in *garbhini* (pregnant lady) stabilizes the *garbha* (foetus), and helps in *sukhaprasaba* (easy delivery). So, it is considered as the prime modality among all.<sup>[12]</sup>
- Following a strict regimen is not needed in *Basti*, unlike the other *shodhana* measures, which is very difficult for an elderly person. The *Yapana* type of *basti* gives instant energy, it can be given at any time and following regimen is not required.<sup>[13]</sup>
- If *Basti* is administered to a *swastha* (healthy) person then it gives 100 years of life.<sup>[14]</sup> And if it is given for once in four months then it cures all the diseases and give enormous strength as the Lion sits over the giant elephant.<sup>[15]</sup>
- According to *Acharya Vagbhata* if 18×18 *Basti* is administered to a person then he becomes intelligent, disease free, gets strong memory power, strength and lives upto 100 years of life.<sup>[16]</sup>
- *Acharya Charak* has described many types of *Yapanabasti*, which act as *Balya*, *Vrushya* and *Vayasthapaka*.<sup>[17]</sup>

This is the era of “fast action”, everyone is running behind growth and development, both socially and economically. But no one has time to think for their physical development, in such a situation doing daily exercises,

taking timely food, proper 8hr sleep is not possible, i.e. following *Dinacharya* (daily regimen) is not possible. So, body accumulates humours and toxins, and these causes various types of diseases in the body. Therefore, these toxins and humours should be removed in order to maintain homeostasis.

For complete evacuation of *Doshas*, *Shodhana* is the only measure, and among all *shodhana* measures *Basti karma* is the chief one. This *Basti* can be given as *Rutu Shodhanika Basti* (seasonal purification) i.e. once in a year. The *Vatadosha* accumulated in the *Grishma Rutu* (summer season) should be evacuated in *Varsha rutu* (rainy season) through *Basti karma*.<sup>[18]</sup>

### Mode of action of basti

#### Ayurvedic view

According to *Acharya Sushruta* the *virya* (potency) of *Basti* drugs reaches all over the body through the *srotas* (channels) in the same way as the water poured at the root of the plant reaches up to leaves. He further explained that even though *Basti* drugs quickly comes out with *mala*, their *virya* acts all over the body by the action of *apanavayu* and other *vayu*. The action takes place just like as sun draws moisture from earth.<sup>[19]</sup>

#### Modern view (By Enteric nervous system)

The ENS (Enteric Nervous System), which can consider as the third division of the ANS, is located within the wall of the digestive tract, all the way from oesophagus to the anus. The ENS contains as many as neurons as the entire spinal cord. It is sometimes referred to as a “mini brain” as it contains all the elements of a nervous system including sensory neurons, interneurons and motor neurons.<sup>[20]</sup> ENS works independently and also with CNS through vagus nerve. This is called Gut-Brain Axis. Through the Gut-Brain Axis, *Basti dravya* (drugs) acts both on GIT system and

Central Nervous system. So, by *Basti* both physical and psychological problems can be managed. The *Basti dravya* given through anus reach upto colon (*pakwashaya*). Due to the increased surface area, neutral pH and reduced digestive enzymatic action, colon enhances the drug absorption. Unlike oral route colon bypasses the first pass effect of liver. So, the drug delivery becomes 100%.

### DISCUSSION

The problems that are experienced in the old age are -

**Physical** - wrinkling of skin, dry skin, greying of hairs, baldness, degenerative joint diseases, constipation, vision problem, deafness, hypertension, and energy loss etc.

**Psychological** - Loss of memory, depression, anxiety, seriousness, loneliness etc.

*Basti* given in elderly helps in subsiding the above problems through its properties like *Varna Teja Balakara*, *Vali Palitahara*, *Stabdha Sankocha nasaka*, *Bhagna sandhanakara*, *Vinmutra sanghatahara*, *Balya* (strengthens), *Vrushya*, *Medhya*, *Shrutikara* (cognitive and memory booster), *Rasayana* etc. And if *Basti* given in *swastha* then it acts as *Vayasthapaka*, *Ayusthapaka* etc. If administered properly than it delays ageing process, sustain youthfulness and gives 100yrs of disease-free life. *Acharya Kasyapa* and *Bhela* has told that *Basti* is like Nectar on Earth.<sup>[21]</sup>

### CONCLUSION

The review given above helps in concluding that *Basti* is helpful in treating all the diseases of the body from Paediatrics to Geriatrics i.e. in all age groups. It is true that *Jara* cannot be cure completely as it is a *Swabhavaja vyadhi*, but the ageing process can be delayed, youthfulness can be sustained and all the *Shareerika* (physical) and *Manasika*

(psychological) *vyadhi* that occurs due to *Jara* can effectively be managed through *Basti karma*. *Basti* should be practiced right from the paediatric age as a health promotive major, again it should be taken as a *Rutushodhana*, which will help in delaying the ageing process i.e. sustaining the youthfulness and after getting old it can be given to treat the old age-related problems.

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