

LUMBAR SPONDYLOSIS IN AYURVEDA AND ITS MANAGEMENT AS A
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ABSTRACT

The common clinical presentation of musculoskeletal disorders is low back pain, commonly seen among aged persons nowadays. Lumbar Spondylosis is one of the reasons for low back pain. The most common cause for this is a strenuous and busy life schedule, stress, and bad food habits. Lumbar Spondylosis is a degenerative condition affecting the lumbar spine's discs, vertebral bodies, and/or associated joints. **Aims And Objective:** To explore lumbar spondylosis and its management in Ayurveda. **Materials And Methods:** Clinical features of lumbar spondylosis and relevant symptoms and diseases in Ayurveda were correlated with its treatment principles. Referred books are Brihatrayi, Laghutrayi, and other authentic ayurvedic books like Gada Nighraha, and Bhavaprakasha, and some are searched in Pubmed and authentic journals like Jaims. **Results And Conclusion:** It is concluded that based on clinical manifestation, pathogenesis, and complication lumbar spondylosis can be correlated with Vatavyadhi in the name of Katigraha, Katigatha Vaata, and Asthimajjagata Vaata.. and the Ayurvedic treatment principle of Vatavyadhi is used as effective management in lumbar spondylosis.

KEYWORDS: Katigraha, Lumbar spondylosis, Ayurvedic management.

INTRODUCTION

The common clinical presentation of musculoskeletal disorders is low back pain which affects approximately 60.85% of adults during some point in their life.^[1] and 10% of low back pain is because of Lumbar Spondylosis (LS). LS is a degenerative condition affecting the lumbar spine's discs, vertebral bodies, and/or associated joints.^[2] Lumbar spondylosis is characterized by back pain, radiating to a unilateral or bilateral lower limb, so that patients are unable to perform normal routine work. Aging is the major risk factor that contributes to the onset of lumbar spondylosis, but nowadays it is also encountered in young and middle-aged populations. The point-prevalence rate of lumbar spondylosis is 17–30%, 1-month prevalence is 19–43%, lifetime prevalence is 60–80% and annual incidence is 5%. The presence of constant pain makes the patients seek treatments. Erroneous dietary habits and irregular lifestyles are responsible for early degenerative changes and play a vital role in the manifestation of such degenerative disorders. In the management of such conditions, modern medicine has limited conservative and surgical procedures. The use of analgesics for subsiding the pain, anticonvulsant drugs, steroids to reduce inflammation,

and muscle relaxants that provide only temporary symptomatic relief and many times have hazardous side effects. However, there is a need to explore the *Ayurvedic* perspective of lumbar spondylosis by which we can cure and prevent this disease. *Ayurvedic* treatment offers a holistic approach to cure and prevent this disease, which needs further scientific validation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is a review focused on understanding the management of lumbar spondylosis in Ayurveda. The methodology involved a comprehensive search and analysis of relevant literature and sources. The following materials and methods were utilized.

Classical Textbooks *Brihatrayi, Laghutrayi, Gadanighraha, Yogaratnakara, Bhavaprakasha.***Modern Allopathic Textbooks** Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine, Essentials of Orthopedics, Davidson's Principles and Practice of Medicine.**Electronic Databases** PubMed, Google Scholar, Authentic journals such as JAIMS and MEDLINE The

review involved a detailed examination of these sources to gather and synthesize information regarding the *Ayurvedic* management of lumbar spondylosis, integrating insights from both traditional *Ayurvedic* texts and contemporary medical literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In lumbar spondylosis, degenerative changes to the intervertebral disk, vertebral body, and associated joints are responsible for disk space narrowing which raises stress on nerve pathways and produces symptoms like low back pain that increases with movement, is associated with stiffness and better with inactivity.^[3] Lumbar spondylosis is correlated with *Katigraha* which is one of the *Vataja Nanatmaja Vatavyadhi*.^[4] and treatment principles of *Vatavyadhi* are to be followed to manage the condition. *Aacharya Charaka* mentioned that continuous *Nidana Sevana* vitiates *Vata Dosha* leading to the accumulation of *Vata* in *Rikta Srotas* (microchannels) and giving rise to several generalized and localized diseases.^[5]

Various *Sandhi* (joints), *Snaayu* (ligaments), and *Peshi* (muscles) are found in the *Katipradesha* (lumbar region). All these structures contribute to joint stability. The *Snaayu* considered a ligament, helps bind the joint together, enabling desirable movement and preventing excessive and undesirable motion in specific directions. Muscle alignment assists in maintaining joint position. When *Vata* is imbalanced, it causes pathologies in these structures within the *Kati adesha*, leading to impaired functioning. The *Ruksha* (dryness) and *Khara Guna* (roughness) of vitiated *Vata* reduce the *Dravansha* (fluid content) of *Rasa* (nutritional fluids) and *Rakta* (blood). *Shleshkakapha* (lubricating *Kapha*) present in the joints also decreases due to the *Ruksha Guna* of *Vata*. This results in the loss of *Sthiratva* (stability) and *Sandhi Bandhana* (joint binding) in the joints, leading to symptoms of *Vata* vitiation, such as *Katishoola* (lower back pain). If *Ama* (toxic buildup) is also involved, it further contributes to *Stabhdhata* (stiffness) in the *Kati Pradesha*.

The vitiated *Vata* also causes *Shleshaka Kapha Kshaya* (depletion of *Kapha* type) due to *Ruksha* and *Khara Guna*. Here, the *Ruksha* and *Khara Guna* of *Vata* are considered antagonizing factors for *Shleshaka Kapha*, which eventually diminishes *Shleshaka Kapha*, which is the binding force between the joints and ultimately leads to the *Kshaya* in *Dhatu*. Because of *Dhatukshaya*, vitiated *Vata* flows out of its *Ashaya* to circulate throughout the body and settle down in the *Asthi*.

Whenever the *Vyana Vayu* (Type of *Vata*) gets vitiated, then simultaneously *Khavaigunya* takes place at *Asthi Dhatu* because of its higher affinity towards *Asthidhatu* due to *Ashraya- Ashryee Bhava* leads to *Asthivaha* and *Majjavaha Srotodushti* which results in *Katigraha*.^[6]

Gadanigrahakara considers *Katigraha* to be one among the *Vatavyadhis*. It projects *Vata Dosha* as the major factor behind the pathogenesis of *Katigraha*. He explains that the vitiated *Shudha* or *Samavayu* takes its *Ashraya* in the *Kati Pradesha* causing pain and stiffness.^[7] *Sushruta* considered *Kati* is one among the *sandhi* that is present in the lumbar region.^[8] Aggravated *Vata* gets *Sthana Samshraya* in the *Kati* region and produces symptoms like *Hanti Sandhi* (stiffness), *Sandhishula* (pain in joints), and *Asthishosha* (degeneration).^[9]

As *Katigraha* is considered under *Vatavyadhi*, the treatment principle of *Vatavyadhi* is to be adopted to treat lumbar spondylosis. *Samanya Vatopakrama* is explained as *Vata Shamaka Ahara*, *Snehana*, *Swedana*, *Mrudu Samshodhana*, *Bahir Parimarjana* and a variety of *Basti Upakramas* are the main line of treatment to pacify the *Vata*.^[10]

Snehana (oleation)

When vitiation of *Vata* occurs without any *Upstambha* or *Avarana*, it should be treated at first with the *Sneha Dravyas* like *Grita*, *Taila*, *Vasa*, and *Majja*. *Anuvasana Basti* with *Amla* and *Lavana Rasa*, *Sneha Nasya*, and *Brihmana Ahara-Vihara* also come under the *Snehana*.

Swedana (hot fomentation)

After proper *Abhyanga*, the patient may be subjected to the *Swedana* therapy like *Nadi Sveda*, *Sankara Sveda*, *Prastara Sveda*, etc. It is also useful in *Toda* (pricking pain), *Harsha* (tingling sensation), *Ruka* (ache), *Shotha* (edema), *Stambha* (stiffness), and *Anga Graha* (spasticity). The *Snehana* and *Swedana* procedures should be administered repeatedly as a result of which the disorders of *Vata* may not get lodged in the *Kostha* softened by the *Snehana* procedure.

Mridu Samshodhana - Virechana (mild therapeutic purgation)

Mrudu Virechana must be given in *Vata Vyadhies* which are not subsided by the *Snehana* and *Swedana*. For this purpose, the patient may take the medicated Ghee prepared with *Tilvaka* or *Saptala* or oral administration of '*Eranda Sneha*' along with *Godugdha* (cow milk) for the *Virechana* purpose. This will help in both *Vata Anulomana* as well as the elimination of morbid *Doshas*.

Basti (therapeutic enema)

Basti is considered to be the best treatment modality, because of its wide applicability and multidimensional therapeutic approach towards the *Vata Dosha*, also effective in conditions where other *Doshas* are involved. The *Basti* is termed as *Ardha Chikitsa*.^[11] The desired effects may be produced by modifying the basic constituents of *Basti* like *Kashaya* and *Kalka* drugs as per the need. *Lekhana*, *Brimhana*, *Grahi*, *Shodhana*, and many other specific *Bastis* are mentioned. *Acharya Charaka*, while explaining the treatment for *Asthipradoshaja Vikaras*, has mentioned *Panchakarma* in which importance is given to *Basti*, containing *Tikta*

Dravyas (bitter drugs), *Khseera* (milk) and *Sarpi* (clarified butter).^[12]

CONCLUSION

Based on clinical manifestation, pathogenesis, and complication, lumbar spondylosis can be correlated with *Katigraha* which is one among the *Vatavyadhi*. The *Katigraha* comes under the eighty types of *Nanatmaja Vata Vyadhies*. *Vata* provoking factors are accepted as *Nidana*. *Vyana Vayu* and *Shleshaka Kapha* are essential components for the pathogenesis of *Katigraha* (Lumbar Spondylosis). The *Ayurvedic* treatment modalities can be used for effective management of lumbar spondylosis in the form of *Bahya Snehana* and *Swedana, Basthi, and Mridu Virechana*.

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