



## LOCAL APPLICATION OF ARKA KSHARA FOR THE TREATMENT OF INTERNAL HEMORRHOIDS: AN ALTERNATIVE TO HEMORRHOIDECTOMY

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Kshara is a plant alkali derived from various herbs that is applied to pile mass using slit proctoscope. This process of application of kshara is known as pratisaarniye kshara. Hemorrhoids are the varicosity of superior, middle and inferior rectal veins within anal canal.

**Methods:** 30 patients attended OPD of Jammu Institute of Ayurveda and Research with complaints of prolapsed mass and bleeding while passing stool. The cases were of 3oclock, 7oclock and 11oclock position with 2nd and 3rd degrees hemorrhoids. Under local anesthesia using 2% lignocaine hydrochloride, kshara karma was performed using Arka kshara. Then yashtimadhu ghrita was applied post operatively and dressing was done. Laxatives and diet regime was advised. No known complications were reported by any patient.

**Result:** After 21 days major complaints ie. Mass protrusion, pain, bleeding were relieved and on proctoscopic examination no evidence of any pile mass.

**Conclusion:** The results are satisfactory and manifests that kshara karma has good role in treating internal hemorrhoids with negligible recurrence rate.

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### INTRODUCTION

Kshara karma ie. pratisaarniye kshara, mentioned by Acharya Sushruta, as one of the best parasurgical procedure for successful treatment of various ailments that are treated with great difficulty<sup>1</sup>. Arsha is one of the grave disease mentioned in the ashtmahagada by Sushruta and is done to sedentary life style. Kshara are known to be superior to shastra (surgery) and anushastra (para surgery) due to its tridoshaghana propertiesthat perform chedhan (excision), bhedhan (incision) and lekhana (scrapping)<sup>2</sup>. It is a chemical cauterization that destroys tissues and promotes healing process. Kshara karma procedure is a potential method as compared to other modern science methods. The study is initiated to catalogue the role of ark kshara in the management of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree internal hemorrhoids as pratisaarniye kshara.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Tikshana Arka Kshara:** Calotropis procera linn. Family Asclepiadaeae (alkali with strong potency). The kshara was prepared according to the textual concept given by acharya susruta. It contains Arka (Calotropis procera), Shukti (Pearl), Chitraka (Plumbago zeylanica linn), limestone and shankha (coanch).

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#### Selection of Patients

30 patients were selected from OPD, Jammu Institute of Ayurveda and Research, Janipur fulfilling the clinical criteria made for hemorrhoids were selected irrespective of their sex, religion, occupation etc.

**Criteria for Diagnosis:** diagnosis was made on the basis of per rectal and proctoscopic examination.

**Investigation:** routine examination of blood, urine and stool and x ray were carried out.

**Inclusive Criteria:** patient with age of 18 – 50 having internal pile mass of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree were included.

**Exclusive Criteria:** patient with carcinoma of rectum, thrombosed and strangulated hernia, pregnancy, patient's with uncontrolled diabetes and hypertension and suffering from HIV and immunodepressent.

### METHODOLOGY

30 patients were selected in this study among them on 25 patients kshara karma was done once and on 5 patients twice due to large size of pile mass. Clinical features of all patients were assured weekly for 1 month. After every 4 months patient was inquired telephonically about the recurrence of symptoms.

**Kshara Karma:** kshara was applied in operation theatre following ayurvedic operative procedures ie. Trividha karma.

**Purva Karma** (pre-operative): written informed consent was taken prior to procedure. Peri anal area was painted and cleaned with antiseptic solution. patient was NPO for atleast 6 hours before procedure and injection tetanus toxoid (0.5ml i/m) was given and sensitivity test for xylocaine was done and intravenous line was secured.

**Pradhan karma (operative procedure):** patient was made to lie in lithotomy position. part was painted again. The slit proctoscope was inserted inside anal canal exposing the site of pile mass. The adjacent area of healthy tissue was covered with gauze piece to prevent the spread of kshara on healthy tissues. The kshara was applied on prolapsed lesion by spatula and was kept on pile mass upto the counting of 100 (shat matra kaal) ie. 1 to 2 minutes. If the color of the swelling matches the color of the pakawa jambu phala (syzigium cumini fruit) or appeared to be suppressed or regress in size, it implies the kshara has done its work efficiently.

**Paschat karma (post operative procedure):** as soon as signs of samayak dagdha (proper cauterization) appears. Without delaying neutralize the area with juice of citrus fruit or acidic fluid ie. lemon water and later on with distilled water. Then apply yashtimadhu ghrith packing is done. After 4-6 hours patients were allowed to take sips of water and then to normal soft diet. Later patients were advised sitz bath with sphatikadiyoga (alum powder) 5gm/sitting upto 15 to 20 minutes in lukewarm water.

**Criteria of Assessment**

The following grading patterns were adopted for scoring (table 1) to check all the signs and symptoms that were assigned a score depending upon their severity to assess the effect of procedure objectively.

**Table 1** grading pattern

Symptoms	Grades	Severity	Description
Pain	3	Severe	Intravenous analgesics required
	2	Moderate	Oral analgesics required
	1	Mild	Feeling discomfort,
	0	Nil	No analgesics required
Bleeding	3	Severe	Changing dressing or cotton pads twice a day
	2	Moderate	Changing dressing or cotton pads once a day
	1	Mild	No need of dressing or cotton pads
	0	Nil	Completely dry area.
Tenderness	3	Severe	Per-rectal examination cannot perform
	2	Moderate	Little finger per rectal examination patient feels pain
	1	Mild	Index finger per rectal examination with tolerable pain
	0	Nil	per rectal examination without any pain

**Observation and Result**

After kshara karam, all patients were followed for 1 month every week. During each visit relief in sign and symptoms were assessed. On 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> visits moderate to mild pain, tenderness, inflammation and brownish black discharge were seen. During 3<sup>rd</sup> visit, no pain, tenderness, or anal stricture and internal hemorrhoids had completely resolved (table 2).

symptoms	7 <sup>th</sup> day	14 <sup>th</sup> day	21 <sup>st</sup> day
Pain	moderate	Moderate	Mild/nil
Pus	moderate	Mild	Nil
Mucous	mild	Mild	Nil
Blood	mild	Mild	Nil
Itching	moderate	Mild	Nil
Burning	mild	Mild	Nil
Discharge	moderate	Moderate	Nil
Tenderness	moderate	Mild	Nil
Inflammation	moderate	Mild	Nil
Discoloration	red	Red	Color of scar

Kshara karma shows significant improvement on clinical features of arsha like rectal bleeding, pain in anal canal and constipation. In overall effect of therapy by kshara karma showed 73.3% of patient got cured or complete remission of symptoms (table 3).

**Table 3** Effect of Therapy

Total effect	No. of patients	Percentage
Cured/complete remission	22	73.3%
Marked improvement	3	10%
Improved	3	10%
Absent in follow up	2	6.66%

Average time taken for complete remission of pile mass was 1 month by kshara karma without bleeding and pain. Total effect of therapy on the basis of symptomatic relief and observation of surgeon are shown in table 4.

**Table 4** Total Effect of Kshara Karma

Days	Patient's complaint	Surgeon's observation
1 <sup>st</sup> day	Mild pain, moderate burning sensation	Coagulation of hemorrhoid plexus, blackish discoloration of pile mass
2 <sup>nd</sup> day	Pain, swelling	Edema, softening of coagulated mass with initiation of sloughing
3 <sup>rd</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> day	Blackish discharge, with tissue sloughing, pain, burning sensation	Sloughing, necrosis of mass
8 <sup>th</sup> - 14 <sup>th</sup> day	Mild to moderate burning sensation while defecation	Mucosal ulcer on the site, mass reduced
15 <sup>th</sup> - 21 <sup>st</sup> day	No major symptoms, mild itching	Healing of ulcers
After 21 days	No symptoms	Scar on the site with complete obliteration and adhering of scar to muscular coat

**DISCUSSION**

Alkali of arka was applied to internal hemorrhoids in all 3 degrees. It was observed that pile mass become black in 60 seconds or on 100 count as per Acharya Sushruta. Citric juice or lemon juice was used to neutralize the effect of kshara after proper dagdha (burning) of pile mass. Kshara causes coagulation of hemorrhoids plexus, followed by necrosis of tissues and fibrosis of plexus, adhesion of mucosal, sub mucosal, sub mucosal coat helps in prevention of further dilation of veins. It prevents recurrence and makes permanent radical obliteration of piles. Due to the sclerosing effect of the kshara it coagulates protein of blood<sup>3</sup>. Thus no bleeding complication during and after kshara application is seen. Kshara also possess anti-microbial activity so no chance of infection. After procedure patient was adviced to for weekly checkup and and necrosing pile mass is checked. After 1 month there is complete remission of the symptoms. In 3

patients ksharakarma was done twice because of larger size of pile mass. After procedure yashtimadhu ghrita was applied which act as analgesic and antibacterial. Today it is one of the safest, efficient and cost effective treatment and can be performed at the OPD level. It doesn't hamper daily activity of the patients and can go to work place very next day. Other supported medications like anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory are not required. It has least recurrence rate and no side effects post operatively like strictures, incontinence, disturbed bowel habits etc.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study came to a conclusion that tikshana ark kshara is very effective in obliterating all 3 degrees hemorrhoids (pile mass). Finally, this study concluded that combination of treatments like kshara karma, conservative treatment, diet management, life style modifications can obliterate hemorrhoids and prevent recurrence of the disease.

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