

## A Clinical Study of 'Agnikarma with Suvarna Shalaka- in Manya and Ansa Sandhi Shoola' (Neck and Shoulder Pain)

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### Abstract

Cervical pain and shoulder pain is commonly due spondylitis and adhesive capsulitis is disabling disease neck and shoulder causing pain and restricted mobility of over joint of neck and shoulders. Prevalence rate is 2-5% in general population. It's a disease of unknown aetiology. However, prolong immobilization of shoulder due to surgery or trauma may cause this condition. Although the disease is self limiting it takes a long time for complete recovery ranging from few months to 3-4 years. Basically, conservative treatment is done which involves use of NSAID and physiotherapy. Many treatment options are available for management of cervical and shoulder pain still there is no consensus in literature regarding which therapeutic option is superior mostly because of lack of high level of evidence. As the recovery period is much longer and initial stage of freezing is very painful some alternative treatment like ayurveda is very beneficial. Agnikarma (therapeutic cauterization) is unique procedure described in ayurveda for instant relief from pain. It has been mentioned in the texts that diseases cured by agnikarma will never recur. Agnikarma is indicated in all painful condition which are due to vata and pitta. Cervical pain and Frozen shoulder can be correlated with manyasthambha and Avabahuk respectively as per ayurveda. Agnikarma is indicated in Vata and kapha both are involved in the pathology of pain in joints, spondylitis and Agnikarma has good results in pacification of vata and kapha. This gives immediate improvement in reduction of the symptoms. hence the present case paper is selected to enhance the importance of Agnikarma with Suvarna Shalaka in the management of joint pain specially over neck and shoulder.

**Keywords:** Agnikarma; Frozen Shoulder; Avabahuk; Adhesive Capsulitis; Manyasthambha; Spodylitis

### Introduction

Sandhigata shoola i.e. painful joints is one of the commonest complaint in routine practice.

In today's most busy life style joint pain is the commonest complaint and everyone is in the search of easy, simple and fast acting treatment which has no side effects. As per modern concept of medicine, the unbearable pain at shoulder or neck region is considered as cervical spondylosis and general line of treatment for this contains painkiller tablets or injectibles or traction therapy. Most of the times these medicaments are expensive, uncomfortable and cause many side effects which may cause harm to other body systems. On the other hand treatment called as Agnikarma

which is offered by Ayurveda for this same ailment is non invasive, non harmful, fast resulting and also cost effective. That is why a research work was taken to study the effect of Agnikarma on shoulder as well as neck pain.

Sandhi shoola is comprised under Vatavyadhi as per Ayurvedic science. Vata dosha is main leading factor to cause Vatavyadhi while other dosha [Kapha & Pitta] involvement is secondary.

Vata dosha gets provoked either by Dhatu kshaya i.e. depletion of Dhatu or Margavrodha i.e. obstruction of in the pathway. Both the samprapti lead to aggravation of Vata dosha thus to cause Vatavyadhi.

In chikitsa Sutra of Sandhigat vata it is primely said as; Sandhi-gata should be treated by 'Dahana Karma' i.e. by applying external heat which directly refers to Agnikarma as the alternative mode of treatment of painful joints.

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In Sandhi shoola i.e. joint pain, Snehana[ application of oil], Upanaha [ application of hot medicated paste], Agnikarma [external heat application], Bandhana [tight bandaging] and Mardana [ Massage] are the methods of choice.

Considering this reference procedure of 'Agnikarma' is selected as the treatment of choice for Manya and Ansa Sandhi shoola i.e. pain in neck and shoulder joint.

### Aim

To assess the efficacy of Agnikarma with 'Suvarna shalaka [Gold bar]' in management of sandhi shoola as the pain relieving procedure.

Manya sandhi i.e. neck joint and Ansa sandhi i.e. shoulder joint are selected as sites for Agnikarma.

### Material and Method:

1. Type of study: Open non comparative single blind clinical study.
2. Sample size: 30 patients 1. OPD- 22 patients. 2. IPD- 08 patients.
3. Duration of treatment: 10 days.
4. Follow up: On third, fifth and seventh day up to tenth day of treatment.
5. Selection criteria: For this study patients of Manya and/ or Ansa shoola were selected. Patients of either sex of 21 to 60 yrs of age. Criteria for selection of patients were purely based on symptoms.
  - a. Patients having shoola [pain] at shoulder and/ or neck joint.
  - b. Patients having stambha [stiffness] at shoulder and/ or neck joint.
  - c. Patients having graha [restricted movements] at shoulder and/ or neck joint.

### Associated symptoms

- Bhrama [vertigo].
- Hasta chimchimayana [ tingling sensation at fingers]
- Shira shoola [ headache]

Place of study: OPD & IPD of Gomantak Ayurved mahavidyalaya & Research centre, Kamaxi Aarogya Dhama- Hospital, Shiroda, Goa.

Material: Blunt probe [ Shalaka] of Gold, length- 7 cm, weight- 4g. Candle, probe holder, match box, sneha dravya [ghrita-ghee].

### About Agnikarma

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The treatment done for immediate relief from pain in various ailments via advocating indirect heat by using shalaka [blunt probe] of different materials like iron, gold, clay etc. is called as Agnikarma.

Agnikarma is considered as the most effective, simple, low cost and fast resulting para surgical procedure advocated by Acharya Sushruta regarding relief of pain especially joint pain. Unfortunately it is not in wide practice and is neglected by Ayurvedic physicians.

### Types of Agnikarma

1. Valaya - Circular, ring like.
2. Bindu - Dots done with shalaka.
3. Vilekha - Straight lines.
4. Pratisarana - Wide spread, flat lines.
5. Ardhcandra - Semicircular.
6. Ashtapada - Having eight branches.
7. Swastika- Cross lined.

### The method of Agnikarma applied in this study is ' Bindu'

### Mode of action of Agnikarma

Agnikarma is considered as the method of choice to treat pain due to aggravated Vata dosha in Vatavyadhi samprapti as it relives pain and provides easy pain less movements of the related body part. The heat advocated via the medium of gold bar brings the aggravated Vata dosha to normalcy and thus normalizes the equilibrium between dosha. The qualities of Agni being ushna- hot, laghu- light, sukshma- penetrating, ashukari- fast spreading, ama

pachaka- digestive to auto toxins and kriya kashtata- restricted movements of the joint which are strictly opposite to Vata & kapha dosha qualities which are particularly vitiated in Vatavyadhi. Vata dosha normalizes due to effect of heat produced by Agnikarma. Also Agni helps in digestion of Ama- auto toxins to remove the margavarodha -pathway obstruction which also is a major event in the etiology of Vatavyadhi. The effect of Agni also reaches the deepest and smallest structures of the body system to improve Dhatvagni.

**Criteria for assessment**

Clinical symptoms of pain, stiffness and restricted movements at shoulder joint and/or neck were categorised.

- Complete relief- 100% disappearance of symptoms.
- Marked relief - 76- 99% disappearance of symptoms.
- Moderate relief - 51- 75% disappearance of symptoms.
- Mild relief 26 - 50% disappearance of symptoms.
- No relief 0 - 25% disappearance of symptoms.

**Withdrawal**

- Patients which discontinued the treatment.
- Patients who developed other complications during treatment.

**Tabular presentation of assessment results**

<b>Number of patients taken for case study</b>	<b>30</b>
Number of patients complaining shoola- severe pain	28
Number of patients complaining graham- stiffness	22
Number of patients complaining stambha- restricted movements.	20

**Table 1**

<b>Symptoms</b>	<b>Number of patients having relief on</b>		
	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> day</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> day</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> day</b>
Shoola - pain	08	07	11
Graha – stiffness	04	07	08
Stambha-restricted movement	04	07	07

**Table 2**

**Number of patients who did not find any relief by Agnikarma**

<b>Laxana - symptoms</b>	<b>No. of pt. Having no relief</b>
Shoola- pain	02
Graha- stiffness	03
Stambha- restricted movements	02

**Table 3**

**Percentage evaluation of relief based on symptoms:**

<b>Laxana- symptoms</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Shoola	92.85%
Graha	86.36%
Stambha	90%

**Table 4**

**Conclusion**

1. Agnikarma provides significant relief in pain in Many and Ansa Sandhi shoola.
2. It is the most simple and fast effective procedure which can easily be administered on OPD level.
3. No wound, bleeding, scar or after marks of the procedure is visible on the body. It is a cost effective, non troublesome procedure which relives pain instantly from the affected sites [1-6].

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