

## Pathya & Apathya in Sandhigata Vata: A Bird's Eye View

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The Human beings are falling prey to various life style disorders, in which the defects in food play a major role. One among such disorder is *Sandhigata vata*. As this disease is chronic in nature, food, lifestyle and medicine have influence on relieving and aggravating the symptoms of *Sandhigata vata*. *Pathya* refers to that which gives relief to the person by the use of diet, regimen and medicine. On the contrary, *Apathya* aggravates the disease. The *Pathya* and *Apathya* are effective tools in *Ayurveda* for diagnosis as well as management of diseases. These same factors when followed in improper way aggravate the condition of *Sandhigata vata*. The disease is characterised by various features like *Sandhi Shoola* (Pain in joint), *Sandhi Shotha* (Swelling in joints), *Akunchana Prasarana Pravritti Vedana* (pain on flexion and extension of the joint) and later *Hanti Sandhi* (diminution of the movements at joints). *Pathya ahara* recommended in *Sandhigata vata* are *Godhuma* (Wheat), *Masha* (Blackgram), *Raktashali* (Redrice), *Draksha* (Grapes), *Badara*, (Dry Jujube) *Madhuka* (Sweet), *Ushnajala* (Hot water), *Shritashita jala* (Hot and cold water). *Pathyavihara* recommended in *Sandhigata vata* are *Atapa Sevana* (Sitting in sunlight). *Apathya* recommending *Sandhigata vata* are *Yava* (Barley), *Chanaka* (Black Chana *Gadarbha Dugdha*, *Shitajala* (Cold Water), *Naveena Madya* (New fermentation), *Shushka Mamsa* (Dry Meat), *Jambu*. *Apathya Vihara* mentioned in *Sandhigata vata* are *Chinta* (Tension), *Jagarana* (Waking late night), *Vega Sandharana* (Holding of natural urges), *Chankramana* (Walking).

**Key words:** *Sandhigata vata*, *Ahara*, *Vihara*, *Pathya*, *Apathya*.

### INTRODUCTION

Among *Gata vata vyadhis*, *Sandhigata vata* is most commonly encountered condition which can be correlated to Osteoarthritis (OA). This is a predominantly degenerative disease that involves peripheral joints in which there is damage to cartilage as well as overgrowth of the bone.<sup>[1]</sup> The prevalence of OA has been found to increase with the advancing age and possibility of women being affected

by the disease is greater than men. It affects the hips and knees more often than other joints. It has been observed that around 10 % to 15% of all aged  $\geq 60$  years have OA with clinical symptoms all over the world, in which prevalence higher among women than men.<sup>[2]</sup>

Osteoarthritis correlate with *Sandhigata vata* described in Ayurvedic classical texts, which is a disease of *Sandhi* (joint) characterized by symptoms of *Sandhi*

*shula* (pain), *Sandhi shotha* (swelling) and *Akunchana Prasarana Pravritti Vedana* (pain on flexion and extension of the joint and in the later stage *Hanti Sandhigatah* (diminution of the movements at joints) [3]

At present there are three groups of treatment measures available for OA: medicinal, surgical and non-medicinal. Surgery is the last measure where there is no scope for management by medicines. Medicinal therapy helps to reduce pain and thus improves the quality of life. Better response can be obtained by simultaneously using small quantity of medicine in combination with other measures like exercise, weight loss and physical therapy which help to avoid toxicity of drugs and by proper dietetic practices and adopting the daily and seasonal regimes illustrated in Ayurvedic texts.

In classical Ayurvedic texts no specific *Nidana* has been explained for Sandhigata vata. Therefore, general hetu of *Vatavyadhi* can be considered as etiological factors responsible for causing Sandhigata vata. Common *Hetus* (etiological factors) of

*Vatavyadhi*, which are mentioned by Acharya Charaka are as below:

**AHARAJA:**

*Atiruksha* (Excessive dry), *Atisheeta* (cold), *Atialpa* (very less quantity), *Atilaghu* (very light), *Abhojana* (no food intake)

**VIHARAJA:**

*Atiprajagarana* (no sleep), *Divasvapna* (sleeping in day), *Ativyavaya* (excess sexual act), *Vegasan dharana* (stopping natural urges), *Plavana* (swimming), *Atiadhva* (excess walk), *Ativyayama* (excess exercise)

**MANASIKA:**

*Atichinta* (excess anxiety), *Atishoka* (excess grief), *Atikrodha* (excess anger), *Atibhaya* (fear)

**OTHERS:**

*Dhatunam Sankshayat*, *Rogatikarshanat* (weakness due to prolonged diseases), *Marmaghata* (trauma to vital parts) [4]

**RISK FACTORS FOR OSTEOARTHRITIS**

Exact aetiology of OA is not clear. The incidence of the disease increases with the age. The risk factors for OA of the knees, hips and hands have been depicted in the table as under:

Table 1: Risk Factors for Osteoarthritis [5]

| Risk factor | Effect   |
|-------------|--|
| Age         | Increases with age<br>Maximum incidence after the age of 80                          |
| Trauma      | Joint fractures and injuries lead to increased risk for OA                           |
| Occupation  | Incidence is more in persons doing heavy physical work like Labourers.               |
| Exercise    | OA is common in sports persons or those doing aggressive exercise                    |
| Gender      | Men under the age of 50<br>Women after the age of menopause                          |
| Genetics    | Incidence have been found to be increased in children of parents with early onset OA |
| Obesity     | Increases the risk of OA   |
| Diet        | Increased risk in people with lower vitamin C and D blood levels                     |

The number of people suffering from OA burden will be greatest in developing countries due to increase in life expectancy but having poor availability of health services. [6,7]

**SAMPRAPTI (PATHOGENESIS) OF SANDHIGATA VATA (OSTEOARTHRITIS)**

Specific *Samprapti* has not been mentioned for *Sandhigata vata*. So, it can be said that *Samprapti* of *Sandhigata vata* is same as that

of general *Samprapti* of *Vatavyadhi*. *Charaka* has described the *Samprapti* – *Nidanasevana* aggravates *Vata* and this *Prakupita Vata* gets accumulated in *Riktasrotas*; means, where free space exists for its lodgment and gives rise to generalized and localized diseases. [8]

In the course of a below pathogenesis the patient may develop clinical features of *Sandhigata vata* (Osteoarthritis) as follows.

When vitiated *VataDosha* gets *Sthana Samshraya in Sandhi* (joint), it causes pain and inflammation in the joints and in later

stages dislocation and loss of function of the joints.

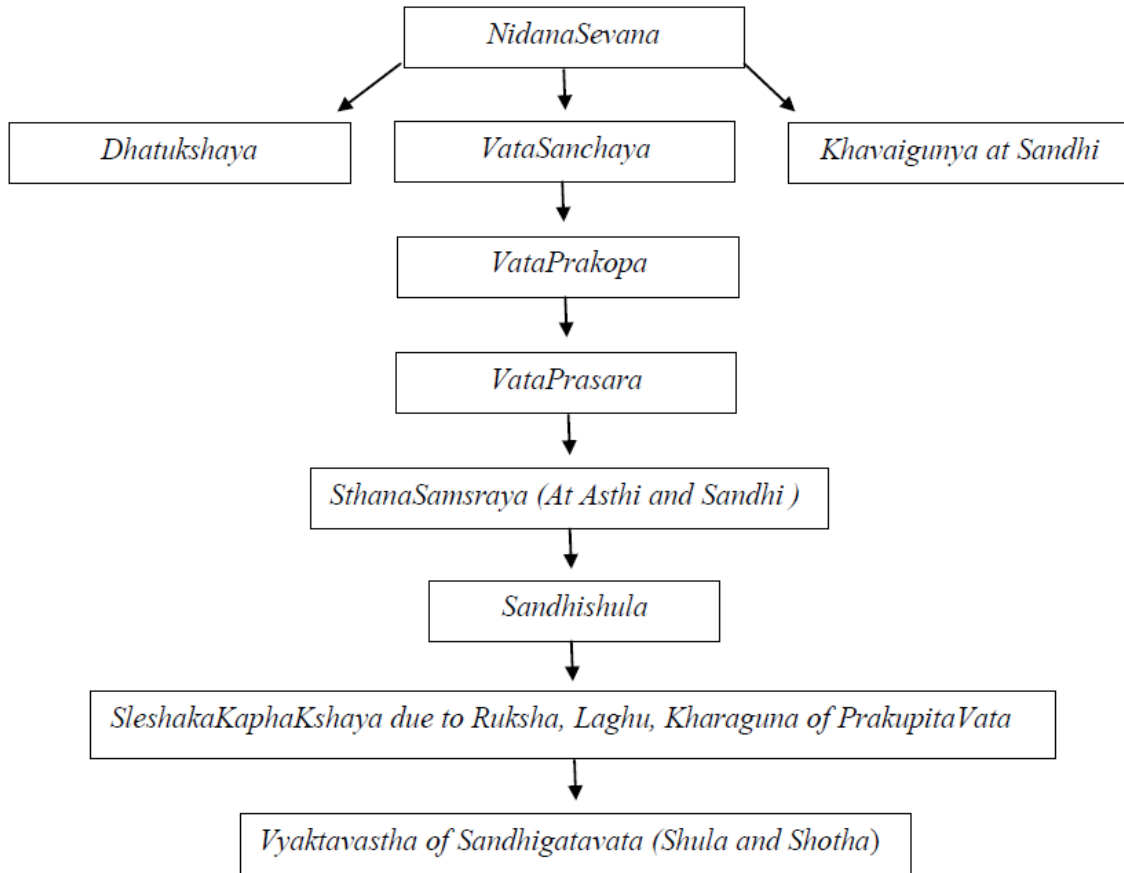


Figure 1: SAMPRAPTI CHAKRA (CYCLE OF PATHOGENESIS OF SANDHIGATA VATA )

Pain during flexion and extension and Sotha which appears like a bag filled with air on palpation are the main *Laksanas* of *Sandhigata vata*, described by *Acharya Charaka*. *Sushruta* has added one more *Laksana* as “*HantiSandhin*”.*Gayadasa* and *Dalhana* commented on this word that there is inability of flexion and extension of *Sandhi*.<sup>[9]</sup>

*Acharya Madhavakara* has given another symptom ‘*Atopa*’<sup>[10]</sup>

The meaning of the word ‘*Atopa*’ appears to be *Sandhi sputana* or *crepitus* of the joints.

### PREVENTION OF SANDHIGATA VATA (OSTEOATHRITIS)

The ultimate aim of Ayurveda is preservation of health and management of the diseased people<sup>[11]</sup> Ayurveda gives special attention to individual peculiarities

such as *Prakriti*, *Satmya*, *Sara*, *Samhanana* and so on while dealing with the patients.<sup>[12]</sup>

According to Ayurveda, there are three important factors for maintenance of health called as *Trayop stambha* (three sub pillars of life )

- i) *Ahara*, i.e. food habits
- ii) *Vihara*, i.e. appropriate lifestyle
- iii) *Brahmacharya*, i.e. Control of sexual desire<sup>[13]</sup>

Ayurveda advocates specific rules for taking diet such as *Ashtahar vidhi Vishesha yatanan*<sup>[14]</sup> and *Dwadasha Ashanapravicharana*<sup>[15]</sup> and also specific regimens for regulating lifestyle such as *Dinacharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Ritucharya* and *Sadvritta*. *Sandhigata vata* is a *Vatika* disease caused mainly due to *Dhatukshaya* or *Avarana*, so general treatment of

Vatavyadhi can be adopted like *Snehana*, *Swedana*, *MriduSamshodhana*, *Basti* and *Vatahara Aushadha*, *Ahara* and *Vihara* may also be applicable in *Sandhigata vata*. As a specific line of treatment, *Acharya Sushruta* and *Acharya Vagbhatta* have described *Snehana*, *Upanaha*, *Agnikarma*, *Bandhana*, *Mardana* and *Swedana* for the treatment of *Sandhigata vata*.

The measures for preventing OA are as follows changes. [16]

1. Primary prevention: The measures for primary prevention include weight reduction and injury prevention. Obesity is a predisposing factor for OA. Therefore, reducing weight decreases the risk of OA.
2. Secondary prevention: It includes early diagnosis and treatment which is difficult for OA due to lack of effective biomarkers to determine the progression of the disease.
3. Tertiary prevention: It involves measures to prevent complications of a disease in order to reduce pain and improve the quality of life. [17]

### ROLE OF AHARA (DIET) AND VIHARA (LIFESTYLE) IN PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT

### OF SANDHIGATA VATA (OSTEOARTHRITIS)

*Ahara* (diet) and *Vihara* (lifestyle) are the key modalities of prevention and management of diseases in *Ayurveda*. The importance of diet can be understood with the fact that it has been called as *Mahabhaishajya* (the super medicine) in the *Kashyapa Samhita*. [18]

In *Ayurveda*, it has been clearly mentioned that food should be taken keeping in mind the rule that one part of the stomach should be filled up with solid food, the second part with liquids and the third part should be left empty for proper action of *Doshas*. [19]

The entire benefit cannot be obtained by taking food simply on the basis of the quantity of intake. There are eight factor - *Prakriti*, *Karana*, *Samyoga*, *Rashi*, *Desh*, *Kala*, *Upayoga Samstha* and *Upayokta* which determine the utility of food and are jointly responsible for bringing about the requisite benefits. [20] Specific *Pathya* and *Apathya* of *Sandhigata vata* are not mentioned in classical texts. But, being a *VataVyadhi*, the *Pathya* - *Apathya* of general *Vatavyadhi* may be adopted. [21]

Table 2: Pathya Ahara (Beneficial dietary factors)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Annavarga</i> (class of grains)      | <i>Godhuma</i> (Triticumaestivum), <i>Masha</i> (Vigna mungo), <i>Raktashali</i> (Orizapuntata)  |
| 2. <i>Dugdhavarga</i> (class of milk)      | <i>Gau</i> (Cow)- <i>Aja</i> (Goat) <i>Dugdha</i> , <i>Ghrita</i>  |
| 3. <i>Phalavarga</i> (class of fruits)     | <i>Draksha</i> (Vitisvinifera), <i>Badara</i> (Zizyphusjujuba), <i>Amra</i> (Mangifera indica), <i>Madhuk</i> (Madhukaindica)  |
| 4. <i>Jalavarga</i> (class of water)       | <i>UshnaJala</i> (warm water), <i>ShritashitaJala</i> (water cooled after boiling)   |
| 5. <i>Madyavarga</i> (class of wines)      | <i>Sura</i> , <i>Madira</i> , <i>Surasava</i> , <i>Amlakanjika</i> (different types of preparations produced by fermentation in <i>Ayurveda</i> )                        |
| 6. <i>Mamsavarga</i> (class of flesh)      | <i>Kukkuta</i> , <i>Mayura</i> , <i>Chataka</i> , <i>Tittir</i> , <i>Nakra</i> , <i>Matsya</i> , <i>Varah</i> , <i>JalacharaMamsa</i> (meats of birds and other animals) |
| 7. <i>Mutravarga</i> (class of urine)      | <i>Gau</i> , (cow) <i>Ashva</i> (horse), <i>Hasti</i> (elephant) <i>Mutra</i>  |
| 8. <i>Rasavarga</i> (class of taste)       | <i>Madhura</i> (sweet), <i>Amla</i> (sour), <i>Lavana</i> (salt)   |
| 9. <i>Shakavarga</i> (class of vegetables) | <i>Jivanti</i> (Leptadeniareticulata), <i>Shigru</i> (Moringaoleifera), <i>Rasona</i> (Allium sativum), <i>Patola</i> (Trichosanthes dioica)                             |
| 10. <i>Snehavarga</i> (class of fat)       | <i>Taila</i> , <i>Ghrita</i> , <i>Vasa</i> (animal fat), <i>Majja</i> (bone marrow)  |

#### Pathya Vihara (Beneficial Lifestyle)

*Atapa Sevana* (exposure to Sun rays), *Mridushayya* (Soft bed), *Ushnodaka Snana* (bath with warm water)

#### Apathya Vihara (avoidable lifestyle)

*Chinta* (anxiety), *Jagarana* (awakened state), *Vega Sandharana* (control of natural urges), *Shrama* (fatigue due to physical work), *Anashana* (taking no food), *Vyavaya* (sexual act), *Vyayama* (exercise), *Pravata* (wind), *Chankramana* (mild exercise), *Yana Gamana* (travelling)

**Table 3: Apathya Ahara Varga Dravya (Avoidable dietary factors)**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 1. Annavarga   | Yava (Hordeum vulgare), Chanaka (Cicer arietinum)  |
| 2. Dugdhavarga | Gadarbha Dugdha (jennet milk)  |
| 3. Ikshuvarga  | Madhu (honey)  |
| 4. Jalavarga   | Nadi (river), samudra (sea), Tadagasya (tank) jala (water), Shita (cold) jala, Dushita (contaminated) jala |
| 5. Madyavarga  | Atimadyapana-Naveen Madya (Excessive use of Alcohol and use of freshly prepared alcohol)                   |
| 6. Mamsavarga  | Shushka Mamsa (dry meat)   |
| 7. Mutravarga  | Ajamutram (Urine of goat)  |
| 8. Phalavarga  | Jambu (Syzygium cumini)  |
| 9. Rasavarga   | Katu (pungent), Tikta (bitter), Kasaya (astringent) Rasa   |
| 10. Shakavarga | Udumbara (Ficus glomerata)   |

## DISCUSSION

Modern medical science is materialistic having high dependence on pharmacological intervention. On the other hand, Ayurveda being a holistic system providing equal importance to physical, mental and spiritual aspects. With the advancement of the modern medicine, the potent antibiotics have helped to manage various types of infections and control of epidemics. There is vast development in the field of diagnostic techniques and surgical interventions along with molecular biology and genetic engineering. But all these depend on use of drugs which have furious side effects along with their benefits. The incidence of chronic and degenerative diseases is increasing very fast and there effective management is still far from reach. Their management depends on continuous intake of drugs having harmful side effects. In such situation the only option remains is the primordial and primary prevention of chronic and non communicable diseases with proper implementation of dietary and lifestyle practices.

Ayurveda has vast scope in this area. Ayurveda advocates fault diet and lifestyle as one of the etiological factors of the diseases. Proper use of diet and elimination of faulty dietary and lifestyle factors provide better management option to the patients of chronic ailments. Ayurveda describes rules for taking meals for healthy as well as diseased persons. An ideal diet is balanced and easily digestible. Besides being pleasing, it should be fresh and taken in

appropriate quantity with full peace of mind.<sup>[22]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

With the rising elderly population due to better availability of medical facilities, there is increase in the cases of OA and its management is a challenge for the medical experts and a cure for the disease is still awaited. Ayurveda advocates proper use of diet and regulation of lifestyle from very early life. Ayurvedic measures can prevent OA in primordial and primary stages and progress of the disease to later stages can be stopped. With this knowledge, one should avoid unhealthy Ahara & Vihara (Anupashaya) and adopt suitable Ahara & Vihara (Upashaya) to prevent and to control Sandhigata vata.

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