



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 6 · Issue 3

May-June 2021

Journal of  
**Ayurveda and Integrated  
Medical Sciences**

*www.jaims.in*

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



**Maharshi Charaka**  
Ayurveda

Indexed

# Case study on *Vrischika Damsha* managed with *Arkapatra Ghrita Dhara* and *Dasanga Agada*

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## ABSTRACT

Many people die every year because of venomous animal bites and stings. Among venomous stings, scorpion stings are a major cause of global public health issues associated with substantial morbidity and mortality. Worldwide, only about 30 of the estimated 1500 species of scorpions produce venom toxic enough to be fatal. Signs and symptoms at the site of a scorpion sting may include pain, which can be intense, numbness, tingling, slight swelling and warmth. The clinical manifestations seen in scorpions seem like *Vrischika Damsha* in *Agadatantra*. This is a case study of a scorpion sting with acute symptoms of pain, burning sensation and erythema. Based upon the result of the study *Arkapatra Ghrita Dhara* has shown assuring results in the management of acute scorpion envenomation.

**Key words:** Scorpion sting, *Arkapatra ghrita dhara*, *Dasanga agada*, *Vrischika damsha*, Case study

## INTRODUCTION

Among venomous stings, scorpion stings are a major cause of global public health issues associated with substantial morbidity and mortality. The incidence of scorpion sting envenomation is about 12 lakh people per year and is responsible for about 3250 deaths yearly.<sup>[1]</sup> Among the numerous species of scorpions,

*Mesobuthus tumulus* and *Palamnaeus swammer-dami* (*Heterometrus swammer-dami*) are the important genera in India.<sup>[2]</sup> Among the scorpion sting cases, the incidence with *M. tumulus* (red scorpion) sting is more common in South Indian coast. Of the myriad of clinical features of scorpion sting envenomation, cardiovascular effects such as tachyarrhythmias, pulmonary oedema and hypertension are mainly responsible for morbidity and mortality.<sup>[3]</sup> *Agada Tantra*, one among eight branches of Ayurveda encompasses topics of both toxicology and toxinology. Excruciating pain, burning sensation, swelling and erythema seen in scorpions resemble the symptoms of *Vrischikadamsha* (*Scorpion sting*) in Ayurveda. Excruciating pain at the sting site is an important factor for the rapid search of medical care. Even though many simple external medicinal preparations have been mentioned in Ayurvedic classics and *Keraleeya Visha Chikitsa Granthas* to address the acute symptoms, Physicians are not trying

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Submission Date: 17/05/2021

Accepted Date: 21/06/2021

### Access this article online

#### Quick Response Code



Website: [www.jaims.in](http://www.jaims.in)

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those formulations much in common clinical practice. Hence, this case study is an attempt to prove the efficacy of *Arkapatra Ghrita Dhara* which finds its reference in *Vrischika Damsha Prakarana* of “*Kriyakoumudhi*” in the management of *Vrischika Damsha*.<sup>[4]</sup>

## CASE STUDY

This is a case study of a 40-year-old male presented with severe pain, redness and burning sensation over the left second toe for the last 10 hours. An interrogation with the patient revealed the history of a scorpion sting before 10 hours while cleaning the courtyard in the house. He noticed a sting mark over the site along with severe pain and tenderness at that time. The patient was presented with pain and burning sensation of grade 4 and redness of grade 2.

### Gradation of symptoms for assessment

#### Pain

- No pain - 0
- Trivial pain - 1
- Mild pain - 2
- Moderate pain - 3
- Severe pain - 4

#### Burning sensation

- No burning sensation - 0
- Not continuous - 1
- Continuous not affecting function of affected part - 2
- Continuous hindering the function of affected part - 3
- Continuous disturbing routine activities - 4

#### Erythema

- No redness - 0
- Diffused, only at point of sting - 1
- Diffused, involving surrounding area up to 5 cm - 2
- Marked, involving surrounding area up to 5 cm - 3
- Marked, involving area more than 5 cm - 4

### Examination

All the systems were examined thoroughly and abnormalities were not detected except in the integumentary system.

Blood pressure - 120/70 mm of hg

Heart rate - 80/min

Respiratory rate - 16/min

Inspection - Sting marks, redness at the sting site

Palpation - Tenderness over the sting site

*Prakrithi* - *Vatapitta*

*Dosha* - *Vatapitta*

*Dhathu* - *Rasa, Rakta*

*Deha Desha* - *Vama Paadaanguli*

### Therapeutic intervention

The patient was administered *Dasanga Agada* or *Dasanga Gulika* (2 grams/tablet) thrice daily for 2 days. *Dhara* with 200 ml of *Arkapatra Ghrita* was done for 30 minutes thrice daily for 2 days. Third day was given for observation. Fourth day was follow-up. Patient was advised to follow all do's and don'ts during treatment and on follow-up.

**Drug internal** - *Dasanga Agada*

**Dose** - 2 gm thrice daily with hot water (2 days)

**No of days of treatment** - 2 days

**Drug external** - *Dhara* with 200 ml of *Arkapatra Ghrita* (3 times for 2 days)

**Distance and site** - 24 cm from sting site

**Duration** - 30 minutes

**Temperature** - 40° Celsius

**Observation** - 3rd day

**Follow-up** - 4th day

### Preparation of medicine

*Arkapatra Ghrita* contains *Arkapatra* (leaves of *Calotropis Gigantea*) as *Swarasa* (herbal juice) and *Kalka* (herbal paste), *Ghrita* (ghee) and *Saindhava*. *Arkapatra Ghrita* was prepared according to *Sneha*

*Kalpana* with *Gritha* one part, *Swarasa* four part and one fourth part of *Kalka*.

## RESULTS

Criteria for assessment were based on the signs and symptoms of *Vrischika Damsha* mentioned in classics. The symptoms were assessed before treatment, after treatment and after follow up. After completion of treatment the patient got complete relief of all symptoms (Table 1).

## DISCUSSION

*Arkapatra* in *Ghritha* form is mentioned in *Vrischika Visha Chikitsa* of *Kriyakoumudhi*. The drug possesses analgesic, anti-inflammatory and anti-toxic properties. *Arka* is included in *Upavisha*, so the concept of *Vishaprabhava* can also be applied in this context. *Vrischika Visha* is *Jangama Visha* (animal poison) and *Arka* the main ingredient of the medicine is *Sthavaravisha* (plant poison). *Sthavara Visha* generally possesses properties similar to *Kapha* and move upwards, whereas *Jangama Visha* possess properties of *Pitta* and spread downwards. Thus, two kinds of poison possessing opposite qualities when put together neutralize the poisonous effect each other. It is well known that *Ghritha* is the best to treat all kinds of poisons and all stages of poisoning especially when *Vata* is powerful. The *Vatahara* property of *Arkapatra* along with *Snigdha Guna* and *Vishahara* (Antitoxic) property of *Ghritha* and *Ushnatwa* which is provided by the *Dhara* (pouring of liquids) contributes to reduction in the symptoms in *Vrischika Damsha*.

## CONCLUSION

Among different types of poisonous bites and stings, scorpions have gained a great clinical importance as they cause both local manifestations and serious systemic reactions. In such cases, *Dharayogas* with references in *Keraleeya Vishachikitsagranthas* along with internal medications are very helpful to nullify the signs and symptoms. More specific studies must be conducted on these literatures to scientifically validate the effectiveness of such formulations.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors are indebted to Dr. TS Krishnakumar, HOD, Dr. Jayasmitha S J, Associate Professor, and Dr. Jayadeep K, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Agadatantra, MVR Ayurveda Medical College, Parassinikadavu, Kannur, for the constant support done to complete the work. Dr. Anju P Ramachandran, Dr. Arathi Rajesh and Dr. Parvathy V. are specially recognized for the wholehearted motivation and assistance in the literary part given to us.

**Table 1: Assessment before, after treatment and follow up**

| Symptoms          | Before | Day 2 | Day 4 |
|-------------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Pain              | 4      | 2     | 0     |
| Burning sensation | 4      | 0     | 0     |
| Erythema          | 2      | 1     | 0     |

**Figure 1: Before treatment**

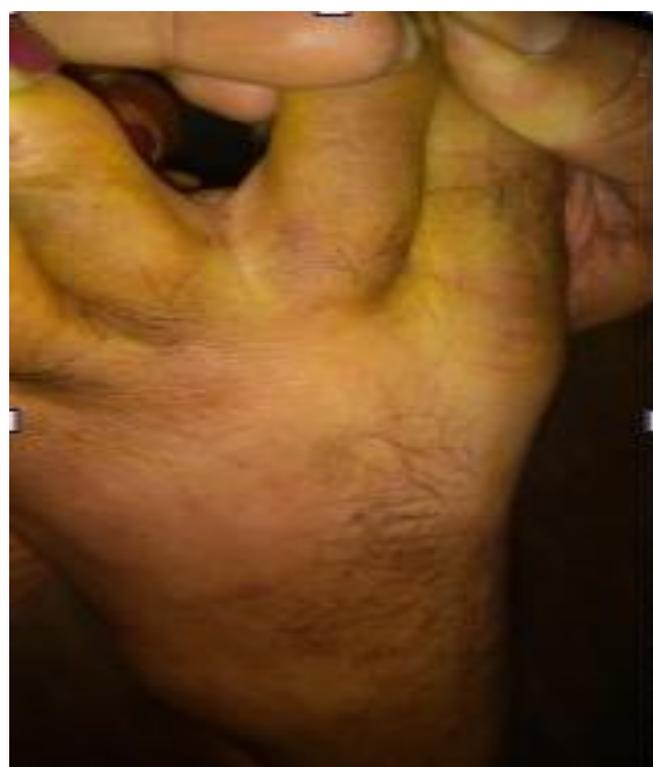


Figure 2: After treatment



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**How to cite this article:** Dr. Ambili TS, Dr. Sharon Jose, Dr. Hema AG, Dr. Shidhin K. Krishnan. Case study on Vrischika Damsha managed with Arkapatra Ghrita Dhara and Dasanga Agada. *J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci* 2021;3:184-187.

**Source of Support:** Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.

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