



## RAKTAMOKSHNA – A PREVENTIVE AND CURATIVE PROCEDURE

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**ABSTRACT**

**Purpose** - *Acharya Susruta* quoted that “*rakta jeeva iti sthiti*”. *Rakta* is a vehicle to carry and transport absorbed nutrients, oxygen metabolites etc. from place to place and maintain normal physiologies of body. If *rakta dusti* starts in body then this physiology of transportation of nutrients disturb. So *raktamokshan* is carried out for purification and cleansing of deep seated blood toxins. Therefore *Raktamokshana* decrease the quantum of increased tyrannid dosha and disease caused by tyrannid are eased.

**Material and methods** - Classical Ayurvedic texts, commentaries, various article, previously conducted research studies were thoroughly reviewed and analysed the frame of physiological importance of *raktamokshan*

**Conclusion** - One who timely performs *raktamokshana* never suffers from skin disease and other *raktaja vyadhis*. *Raktamokshana* impure blood, promotes health, and improve our body immunity. It is a curative as well as preventive medical aid. As per Ayurvedic medicine *Basti karma* is regarded as partial or may be whole treatment methodology. Similarly *Raktamokshana* is considered as partial or complete treatment in itself.

**Keywords**- *Raktamokshana, Dosha, Raktadusti, Rakta jeeva iti sthiti, raktaja vyadhi*

**INTRODUCTION:**

In *Ayurveda* the blood is said to be carrier of ayu, or life, so its condition directly influences the four parts of life: soul (*atma*), mind (*manas*), senses (*indriyas*) and body (*sharira*).<sup>1</sup> Blood, free from toxins and waste products, sustains life and helps maintain the physiology of our body for normal health.

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For maintaining good health, body constituents should be maintained in homeostatic condition and this is gained by dhatus of the body. According to the ancient *Acharya*, 7 *Dhatu* are explained in their reputed documentations i.e. *Rasa- Rakta- Mansa- Meda- Asthi, Majja & Shukra*.<sup>2</sup> Amongst the 7 *Dhatu*'s, *Rakta* is given the supreme position by *Acharya Susruta*<sup>3</sup> as the nutrition of all the other *Dhatu*'s depends on *Rakta Dhatu*, thus maintaining homeostasis.<sup>4</sup> Any fluctuations i.e. reduction or increase in its quantity may lead to various pathology. When the level of *Rakta Dhatu* increase in the body, *Raktanghaksita*<sup>5</sup> (the colour of the whole body and eyes

looks red). *Sirapunatva*<sup>6</sup> (there is fullness in sira) (Blood vessels) which can be correlated to the increased pressure in circulation leading to HTN and Haemorrhagic stroke. Lowering of *Rakta* Dhatu leads to *Twak Parushyai*<sup>7</sup> i.e. the dry skin cracked, lusterless and rough, *Amlasheeta Prarthana*<sup>8</sup>, *Sira Shaithilya*<sup>9</sup> meaning loss of normal tone of Sira leading to varicosity and this symptom also found in dehydration and haemodilution. This can be co-related to Anaemia, dyspnoea, fatigue, Agnimandya and loss of natural complexion and luster. Vitiated Rakta Dhatu leads to number of skin diseases like *Kushtha*, *Visarpa*, *pleehavidhi*, Haemorrhoids, ulcers etc.<sup>10</sup> Hence to relieve the patients from these pathologies *Raktamokshana* is advocated as the supreme mode of treatment.

*Raktamokshan* is the one step of the five detoxifying – cleansing therapies broadly known as Panchakarma or *Shodhana* therapies. It helps to clear the *dosha* residing in the *shakha* (deep tissue) and is the best remedial solution for *Rakta shudhi*. It is derived from the two words, "*Rakta*", which means blood and "*Mokshana*", which means leave. Thus, *Raktamokshana* means to let the blood out. The blood is expelled out from the body to reduce the quantity of toxic substances in the blood borne disorders.

It provides a rapid and sometimes dramatic reduction of symptoms in certain acute

disorders, especially where time is a critical factor. When toxins appear due to excess Pitta, they concentrate in the blood. In situations, when Pitta symptoms must be reduced quickly and there is no time for *Purvakarma* (preparation for Panchakarma) and Panchakarma procedures, acute symptoms can be relieved within hours by simply removing a small amount of toxic blood from the affected area. After that the patient can be put on a *Panchakarma* regimen.

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

To explain about importance of *shudha Rakta* for normal functioning in body.

To explain about the concept of *Raktamokshan* therapy for Preventive and Therapeutic purpose.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF RAKTAMOKSHAN

: Two Types of *Raktamokshan* Therapy:

##### *Shastra Prayoga:*

a) *Pracchana*: scratching with a sterile scalp is indicated to drain the accumulated blood from a particular point.

b) *Sira Vedhana*:<sup>11</sup> Also termed as Venepuncture, *Sira Vedhana* is devised whenever vitiated blood circulates in the body.

##### *Anushastra Prayoga*

a) *Jalouka Prayoga*: leech is applied to extract deep-seated blood. By doing this, the blood vitiated by *pitta* is extracted efficiently.

b) Sringa: Sringa or horn is used to extract the blood vitiated by vata due to its *usna*, *Madhur*, *snigdha* guna, opposite to *vata dosha* guna.

c) Alabu: Blood vitiated by kapha can be extracted by Alabu, as it comprises of *tikshna* and *ushna* gunas.

### INDICATIONS OF *RAKTAMOKSHAN* THERAPY

Unbalance between the *rakta* and *Pitta Dosha* and high level of toxicity are recommended the *Raktmokshana* therapy. The important complication like allergic dermatitis, eczema, sciatica, abscess, edema, swelling and inflammations, uremia, dullness, pericarditis, tonsillitis.

### MODE OF ACTION OF *RAKTAMOKSHANA*<sup>12</sup> :

- Blood letting is used to eliminate toxins that are absorbed into the bloodstream through the gastrointestinal tract.
- If administered properly, it stimulates the antitoxic substances in the blood stream, thus developing the immune mechanism in the blood system.
- Toxins present in the gastrointestinal tract are absorbed into the blood and circulated throughout the body. This condition is called toxemia, which is the basic cause of

repeated infections, hypertension and certain other circulatory conditions.

- Extracting a small amount of blood from a vein relieves the tension created by the *pittagenic* toxins in the blood.
- Bloodletting also stimulates the spleen to produce antitoxic substances, which helps to stimulate the immune system. Toxins are neutralized enabling radical cures in many blood born diseases.
- If we observe the *Siravedhana* sites, most probably they are near to the site of the pathogenesis. By performing *Siravedhana* locally on the vein which drains vitiated blood from that effected part, we can reduce the interstitial pressure and drain the vicious pathological elements of that tissue so the blood supply of that particular part get increase and the healing process of that part can be stimulated.

### PROBABLE MODERN COCEPT OF *RAKTAMOKSHAN*<sup>13</sup>

*Raktamokshan* reduces the workload on liver & spleen, stimulate liver and spleen to perform the normal function and remove the old and damaged blood cells & helps in formation of new cells. It reduces the blood pressure, so useful in hypertension. Reduces the viscosity of blood & thus prevents the

thrombus formation, so useful in DVT & thromboembolism etc.

#### **RAKTAMOKSHANA ACCORDING VITIATED DOSHA<sup>14</sup>**

- If blood vitiated by deranged *Vata* should be sucked through horn, because cow's horn possesses *Madhura* (sweet), *Snigdha* (smooth), *Ushana* (hot) characters which are the opposite character of *Shita* (cold) and *Ruksha* (rough), of *Vata*; as well *Madhura Rasa* is itself *Vata Shamaka*.
- The *Pittaja* vitiated blood is to be removed by application of *Jalauka* (leech), which are born in water possessed of *Madhura* (sweet or soothing) properties and *Ushana* and *Katu* to expel the *Pitta Dosha*.
- The blood vitiated by deranged *Kapha* is to be let by the gourd, as it (*Alabu*) is pungent, parching and irritating in its potency, which have definite action against the *Madhura*, *Shita*, *Snigdha*, properties of *Kapha*.

#### **RAKTAMOKSHANA ACCORDING TO THE STATE OF RAKTA<sup>15</sup>**

The vitiated blood in any part of the body should be abstracted therefore by scarifying (*Prachanna*) it, by cupping it with syringe (pipe), a horn, a gourd, or leeches or by the

opening of the vein respectively, according to the density of the blood. Other assert is that leeches should be applied in the case of the blood being confined deep into the body, scarification with a surgical instrument should be made in the case of clotted blood. Horn or a gourd is used in the case of the deranged blood having seated in the skin.

#### **PRECISE TIME FOR RAKTAMOKSHANA**

1. Generally the *Pitta Dosha* provoked in the Sharad (autumn) season. *Rakta* vitiation is induced by *Pitta* provocation. So that in the autumn *Rakta Mokshana* should be carried out.

2. *Sushruta* has further specified that blood-letting should be performed on a patient not in an extremely hot or cold season, neither on one who is too much heated or improperly heated. (before the act of bloodletting)<sup>16</sup>

#### **RAKTA VISRAVANA PRAMANA:**

Bleeding to the quantity of a *Prastha*<sup>17</sup> (approximate 54 tola) measure should be seemed sufficient for a strong and adult patient stuffed with a large quantity of deranged *Doshas* in the body. In the word of Dalhana one *Prastha* is equal to 13 *Pala* for bloodletting. Again directs for bleeding the *Uttam* (maximum), *Madhyama* (medium) *Adham* (minimum) *Matra* (measures) as one *Prastha*, half of the *Prastha*, and one-fourth of the *Prastha* (*Kudava*) respectively.

**PATHYA AHAR KALPNA AFTER RAKTAMOKSHAN<sup>18</sup>**

*Pariharya Vishaya: Agnirakshaka Vishesha Pathya yojana* is followed such as *Natisheetoshna Bhojana*, (extremely hot and cold food should be avoided) *Rakta Vardhaka Annapana* (food which increase blood formation) should be taken.

**BENEFITS OF RAKTAMOKSHAN<sup>19</sup>**

All types of Skin diseases like leukoderma, Hyperlipidemia, Heart Disease, Acne, Obesity, Herpes Infections, Hypertension etc. could be treated with the help of Raktamokshana. October to December is a period (*Sharad Ritu*) in which *raktamokshan* is advised for general detoxification. A healthy person can undergo process of *raktamokshan* in this period so as to achieve healthy life.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

Classical Ayurvedic texts, commentaries, various article, previously conducted research studies were thoroughly reviewed and analysed the frame of physiological importance of *raktamokshana*

**DISCUSSION**

In *Raktamokshan* avitiated *dushya* to be let out with *Rakta Dhatu* along with vitiated *Doshas*. Since, *Pitta* is depend on *Rakta*, therefore *Raktamokshana* decreases the quantum of *Pitta*, henceforth *Dosha* and *Pittaja Vyadhi* are too relieved or cured by the therapy.

In the different methods of *Raktamokshana* different magnitude of negative pressure is produced. The instrument which creates more negative pressure can remove more deeply seated *Dosha*, so here Acharya has explained the use of different modalities according to extent. In the human body every cell is a basic unit having its own metabolic activity. For this purpose it needs energy, nutrition and excretion which is performed by circulatory and digestive system. In this way homeostasis is maintained. If there is any pathology at tissue level to a great extent there is a need of more fresh blood to metabolise its waste products but the local circulatory system is not able to fulfil this requirement. As a result interstitial pressure gets increased and healing mechanism gets slow due to less blood supply. The Ayurvedic principals of *Sodhana Karma* are also indicate that *Doshas* should be removed of out the body from the nearest possible pathway. As the *Rakta* is a Moola of the body its vitiation should also be evacuated out of body from the nearest part of its vitiation. Acharya Vagbhatta in *Astanga Samgraha* mention probable mode of action of *raktamokshan*. *Purva karma* is indicated for liquefaction of *Dosha* and mobile them into blood circulation. *Siravedhana* remove that *Dosha* from circulation thus its act on removal of disease. *Raktamokshana* is one of the

important para-surgical procedure denoting letting of impure blood outside the body.

### CONCLUSION

*Raktamokshan* is the effective therapeutic tool of Panchakarma in various types of *Rakta Pradoshaj Vyadhi*. The sites of *Raktamokshana* told by Acharya Sushruta are more scientific and can be adopted for the purpose of removal of toxic or impure blood from the body. Different instruments can be used for *Raktamokshan* according to the vitiated *Dosha* and the site. The procedure of *Raktamokshan* explained by *Acharya Sushruta* is extremely scientific. *Raktamokshan* done with appropriate site of individual diseases with internal *Snehpana* and *Abhyanga* for three days may provide better result. *Raktamokshan* is a *Sarvang Shodhana* procedure. Almost all the sites told by *Acharya Sushruta* for *raktamokshan* purpose can be adopted easily in clinical practice. *Raktamokshana* is safe and effective treatment modalities for the management of *Rakta Pradoshaj Vyadhi*.

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