

Review On Effect of Agnikarma in Calcaneal Spur

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Abstract

Calcaneal spurs, commonly known as heel spurs, are bony protrusions that form on the underside of the heel bone (calcaneus). These spurs are often associated with plantar fasciitis, a prevalent cause of heel pain. While many individuals with calcaneal spurs are asymptomatic, those who experience discomfort can find their daily activities significantly impacted. This article delves into the etiology, clinical presentation, diagnostic methods, treatment options, and preventive measures associated with calcaneal spurs. Emphasis will be placed on recent research findings and clinical guidelines, providing a holistic view of this condition. The surgical treatment like plantar fascia release and excision of calcaneal spur are also available, but complications like incomplete relief of pain and nerve damage also comes along. Ayurvedic treatment is one of the best for management of calcaneal spur. In Ayurvedic view point pain in calcaneal spur is due to Snayu, asthi, sandhigatavata. Snehana, Swedana, Raktamokshana, Agnikarma, Eranda tailapana are considered to be effective treatment in Vatakantaka.

Keywords: Agnikarma, Calcaneal spur, Vat-kantaka, KaphavataDushti, Ayurvedic-Para Surgical Procedure.

Introduction

Agnikarma considered as best for pain relief & management in Ayurveda. The most common form of heel pain is mainly due to Calcaneal Spur. Calcaneal spurs are highly prevalent in Middle age people and causes lot of pain of excruciating type and disability. Agnikarma is done on painful heels (calcaneal spur) by Agni shalaka (Thermal cautery instrument) where temperature can be controlled in between 0-200 degrees and shalaka gets heated up from electricity. In ayurveda calcaneal spur co-related with Vata Kantaka.[2] Vata Kantak is one of the Vata Vyadhi[3] which occurs in Gulpha sandhi[4] region. It is characterized by shool (pain) and shoth (Inflammation) in khudak (Heel). In modern science there are injection therapy, Surgical correction etc seen but which have many side effects as well as recurrence. In ayurvedic literature Kapha vatadushti can be treated by Agnikarma. So, in Vata Kantaka I have kept the patient under Agnikarma therapy upto satisfactory level of relief from pain. I have given 5 sittings at the interval of 5 days and the patient got complete relief from pain. Follow up kept for next 2 month

Definition of Agnikarma

Agnikarma is derived from the Sanskrit words "Agni," meaning fire, and "Karma," meaning action. This therapy involves the application of localized heat to affected areas to promote healing, reduce inflammation, and alleviate pain. In Ayurveda, Agnikarma is considered a "Shalya" (surgical) procedure and is employed in various musculoskeletal disorders.

Etiology

The development of calcaneal spurs is associated with several risk factors:

1. **Overuse and Repetitive Strain:** Activities that involve repetitive stress on the heel, such as running or jumping, can lead to micro-tears in the plantar fascia.
2. **Age:** As individuals age, the elasticity of the plantar fascia decreases, increasing the risk of heel spur development.
3. **Obesity:** Excess body weight puts additional stress on the heel and plantar fascia, predisposing individuals to spur formation.
4. **Foot Structure:** Flat feet, high arches, or abnormal walking patterns can contribute to an uneven distribution of stress across the foot.
5. **Occupational Factors:** Jobs that require prolonged standing or walking can also elevate the risk of developing calcaneal spurs.
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Treatment Options

Treatment for calcaneal spurs focuses on relieving pain and addressing the underlying causes. Options include:

Conservative Management

1. **Rest:** Reducing activities that exacerbate symptoms can help alleviate pain.
2. **Ice Therapy:** Applying ice to the affected area can reduce inflammation and swelling.
3. **Orthotic Devices:** Custom-made or over-the-counter insoles can provide arch support and reduce pressure on the heel.
4. **Stretching Exercises:** Specific exercises aimed at stretching the plantar fascia and Achilles tendon can help improve flexibility and reduce tension.
5. **Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs):** Medications like ibuprofen or naproxen can help manage pain and inflammation.

Ayurvedic Treatments

1. **Agnikarma**

Advanced Treatments

1. **Corticosteroid Injections:** In cases where conservative management fails, corticosteroid injections may be administered to reduce inflammation.
2. **Physical Therapy:** A physical therapist can design a tailored program that includes strengthening and stretching exercises.
3. **Shockwave Therapy:** Extracorporeal shockwave therapy may be recommended to stimulate healing in chronic cases.
4. **Surgery:** In persistent cases where conservative treatments are ineffective, surgical intervention may be considered to remove the spur or release the plantar fascia.

Efficacy of Agnikarma in Calcaneal Spur

Clinical Evidence

Research into the efficacy of Agnikarma specifically for calcaneal spurs is limited; however, several

studies have reported positive outcomes in related conditions, such as plantar fasciitis and heel pain.

1. **Pain Relief:** Many patients report significant pain reduction following Agnikarma treatment, allowing for improved mobility and daily functioning.
2. **Functional Improvement:** Patients often experience an enhanced range of motion and reduced stiffness, facilitating a return to regular activities.
3. **Case Studies:** Several anecdotal case studies highlight successful treatment outcomes with Agnikarma in patients suffering from heel pain due to calcaneal spurs, with reports of decreased reliance on pain medications.

Mechanisms of Action

The effectiveness of Agnikarma can be attributed to several mechanisms:

- **Increased Circulation:** The heat applied during Agnikarma improves blood flow to the affected area, promoting healing.
- **Reduction of Inflammation:** Heat can help alleviate inflammation, a key contributor to pain associated with calcaneal spurs.
- **Enhanced Tissue Repair:** The increased metabolic activity in the tissues supports faster healing processes.

Discussion

Agnikarma presents a valuable option for individuals suffering from calcaneal spurs, particularly for those who prefer holistic approaches or have not found relief through conventional methods. Integrating Agnikarma into a comprehensive treatment plan can enhance overall outcomes.

However, practitioners must conduct thorough assessments to ensure appropriate candidate selection for this procedure. Consideration of individual patient circumstances, including severity of symptoms and overall health, is essential.

Conclusion

Agnikarma is simple, easy and economical procedure which can be performed at OPD level. It causes alleviation of vata thus, is helpful in reducing heel pain and stiffness. Calcaneal spur can be effectively managed with Agnikarma.

References

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