

Role of Kriyakalpa in Karna Roga: An Ayurvedic Perspective**Author**

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Guide

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Abstract

Karna (ear) is considered one of the important seats of Vata Dosha and the Adhisthana of Shrotrendriya (organ of hearing). Disorders affecting the ear, collectively known as Karna Roga, are commonly encountered and may range from minor discomfort to severe infections, significantly impairing hearing, balance, and overall quality of life if left untreated. Ayurveda provides a detailed description of various Karna Rogas and emphasizes the importance of local therapeutic procedures in their management. Kriyakalpa, a specialized branch of Ayurvedic local therapies, plays a vital role in Karna Chikitsa through procedures such as Karna Purana, Karna Dhoopana, Karna Prakshalana, and Karna Abhyanga. These therapies facilitate direct delivery of medicinal effects to the affected site, helping to alleviate pain, inflammation, infection, discharge, tinnitus, and hearing impairment while restoring Dosha balance. Additionally, they cleanse, nourish, and promote healing of the ear, thereby improving overall ear health and well-being. This article reviews the role and

significance of various Kriyakalpa procedures in the management of Karna Roga from both classical Ayurvedic and contemporary perspectives. Ayurveda describes numerous diseases affecting the ear under the heading of Karna Roga in Sushruta Samhita⁽¹⁾, Ashtanga Hridaya⁽²⁾, and Charaka Samhita⁽³⁾.

Keywords: Kriyakalpa, Karna Roga, Karna Purana, Ayurveda, Ear Diseases, Karnashoola.

Introduction

Ayurveda, the ancient science of life, emphasizes the preservation of health and management of diseases through a holistic approach. Among the various sensory organs, the ear (Karna) holds special importance as it is the seat of Shrotrendriya and is closely associated with Vata Dosha. The proper functioning of the ear is essential for hearing, communication, and maintenance of balance. Owing to continuous exposure to environmental factors and the influence of vitiated Doshas, the ear is susceptible to various disorders collectively described as Karna Roga in Ayurvedic classics. Acharyas have described numerous therapeutic measures for the management of Karna Roga, including both systemic and local treatments. Among these, local therapeutic procedures play a significant role because they deliver medicines directly to the affected site, providing quicker symptomatic relief and promoting tissue healing. These localized interventions include procedures such as Karnapoorana, Karna Prakshalana, Karna Dhoopana, Karna Pichu, Karna Lepa, and other Sthanika Chikitsa modalities.

The concept of Kriyakalpa, which involves the local application of medicated oils, ghee, decoctions, powders, and fumigatory therapies, occupies an important place in Ayurvedic management of ear diseases. By acting directly on the site of pathology, these procedures help alleviate symptoms, restore doshic balance, and improve the overall health of the ear. Therefore, understanding the role of Kriyakalpa in Karna Roga is essential for exploring its therapeutic potential and clinical relevance in contemporary practice.

Aim and Objectives

A literary review on different Sthanika upkrama in managing Karnagata rogas.

Concept of Kriyakalpa⁽⁴⁾

The term Kriyakalpa is derived from:

Kriya – therapeutic procedure or action

Kalpa – method of preparation or administration

Kriyakalpa includes localized therapeutic procedures designed to deliver medicines directly to affected

organs. In diseases of the ear, these procedures help pacify vitiated Doshas, nourish tissues, relieve pain, and restore normal function.

Karna Roga in Ayurveda

Ayurvedic texts describe various ear diseases, including:

1. Karnashoola (earache)
2. Karnanada (tinnitus)
3. Badhirya (deafness)
4. Karnasrava (ear discharge)
5. Putikarna (foul-smelling ear disease)
6. Kaphaja Karna Roga
7. Vataja Karna Roga
8. Pittaja Karna Roga
9. Krimija Karna Roga
10. Karnakandu (itching in ear)

The treatment principles include:

Dosha Shamana, Shodhana, Snehana, Local therapies, Rasayana measures

Kriyakalpa Procedures Used in Karna Roga

1. Karna Purana:

Karna Purana/ Karna Tarpana is the procedure of instilling warm medicated oil or ghee into the external auditory canal. Acharya Vagbhata included it under Dinacharya⁽⁵⁾ and is one among the 24 pravacharana sneha mentioned by Acharya Charaka⁽⁶⁾.

Commonly Used Oils

Bilva Taila, Apamarga Kshara Taila, Narayana Taila, Dashamoola Taila, Kshara Taila

Method

1. Patient is made to lie on one side.
2. Ear is cleaned gently.
3. Lukewarm medicated oil is instilled into the ear.

4. Oil is retained for a specified duration.
5. Excess oil is removed.
6. Procedure is repeated in the opposite ear if required.

After karna poorana gentle massage over Karna moola and holding the medicine till the pain subsides or for 100 maatrakaala is mentioned by Acharya Vagbhata. According to Sharangadhara Aushadha Dharana kaala for different conditions is as follows⁽⁷⁾ :

Karna roga - 100 maatrakaala

Kanta roga -500 maatrakaala

Shiro roga - 1000 maatraakala

Therapeutic Effects

- Pacifies Vata Dosha
- Relieves pain
- Reduces dryness
- Improves hearing
- Controls tinnitus
- Enhances local circulation
- Nourishes ear structures

Indications

- Karnashoola
- Karnanada
- Badhira
- Vataja Karna Roga

2. Karna Dhoopana:

Karna Dhoopana involves fumigation of the ear using medicinal herbs for a specific time period (Aural fumigation)

Drugs Used

Guggulu, Nimba, Haridra, Vacha, Karanja, Sarjarasa

Benefits

- Antimicrobial action

- Reduction of ear discharge
- Decrease in foul smell
- Drying of excessive secretions
- Prevention of infection

Indications

- Putikarna
- Kaphaj Karnasrava
- Badhirya
- Krimija Karna Roga
- Pashchat karma for Karnaprakshalana, Karnapramarjana to dry ear canal.

(Dhooma being Ruksha Ushna makes it as Vata kaphahara. Its fumes also induce vasodilation and enhances blood circulation)

3. Karna Prakshalana

The process of irrigation of Karna srotas with water or kashaya is Karna Prakshalana⁽⁸⁾

Common Drugs

Triphala Kwatha, Panchavalka Kwatha, Nimba Kwatha

Benefits

- Removes debris
- Cleans discharges
- Remove foreign body
- Reduces inflammation
- Promotes healing

Indications

- Karnasrava
- Putikarna
- Infected ear conditions

4.Karna pichu:

Karna Pichu is a procedure in which a cotton swab, known as Pichu varti soaked in medicated oil (Sneha), is inserted into the ear⁽⁹⁾. Acharya Vagbhata mentioned karna pichu varti in the treatment of pakwa

karna. He said that the pus-filled ears should be first cleaned with pichu varti (dry mopping) and after that, the ear should be filled with pichu varti dipped in medicine⁽¹⁰⁾. It has to be carried out twice daily. But there is no hint of duration of its administration.

Indications

All Karnarogas where Karnapooranais mentioned for treatment. Karna nada, Badhirya, Karna srava, Karnashoola, and Pootikarna

Benefits

Can be used as an alternative treatment to Karna poorana Gives relief from pain and discomfort

5. Lepana Around Ear Region

Application of medicinal paste around the ear and mastoid region.

Drugs Used

Chitraka, Haridra, Nimba, Eranda Moola

Actions

- Anti-inflammatory
- Analgesic
- Reduces swelling
- Improves local circulation

5. Nasya as Supportive Kriyakalpa

Although performed through the nasal route, Nasya has a significant effect on diseases above the clavicle.

Benefits

- Clears channels of head and neck
- Improves auditory function
- Helps in tinnitus and hearing impairment

Indications

- Karnanada
- Badhirya
- Chronic Karna Roga

Mode of Action of Kriyakalpa in Karna Roga

Ayurvedic Perspective

1. Pacification of vitiated Doshas.
2. Nourishment of local tissues.
3. Improvement of Srotas patency.
4. Removal of accumulated Kapha.
5. Reduction of Vata-induced pain and dysfunction.

Modern Perspective

1. Direct drug delivery to affected site.
2. Improved local blood circulation.
3. Anti-inflammatory action.
4. Antimicrobial effect.
5. Lubrication and protection of ear canal.
6. Enhanced healing of local tissues.

Advantages of Kriyakalpa in Karna Roga

- * Localized action
- * Faster symptom relief
- * Minimal systemic adverse effects
- * Easy administration
- * Cost-effective treatment
- * Better patient compliance
- * Can be combined with systemic therapies

Limitations

- * Not suitable in certain acute traumatic conditions.
- * Requires proper sterilization and technique.
- * Contraindicated in some perforated tympanic membrane conditions.
- * Needs supervision by trained Ayurvedic practitioners.

Discussion

The management of Karna Roga in Ayurveda is based on the principles of Vrana Chikitsa, which aim to keep the affected area clean, dry, free from microorganisms, and conducive to healing. These objectives are achieved through various Kriyakalpa procedures that provide localized treatment while correcting the underlying Dosha imbalance. Karnapramarjana is the initial procedure that removes discharge and debris, promoting Vrana Shodhana and Vrana Ropana. Karnaprakshalana helps cleanse the ear canal by removing

impacted wax, fungal debris, and foreign bodies. Karnapoorana, the instillation of medicated oils or decoctions, is beneficial in conditions such as Karnanada, Karnashoola, and Badhirya, while Karnapichu serves as an effective and patient-friendly alternative by ensuring prolonged local action of the medicine. Karnadhoopana, performed after Karnapoorana or Karnaprakshalana, possesses antimicrobial and wound-healing properties and is useful in conditions like Karnasrava, Krimi Karna, and Karnashoola.

Overall, Kriyakalpa therapies provide effective local drug delivery, reduce pain, inflammation, and discharge, promote healing, and help restore normal ear function. Their therapeutic effects are also supported by the antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and wound-healing properties of Ayurvedic medicated formulations, making Kriyakalpa a safe and effective treatment modality for various Karna Rogas.

Conclusion

Kriyakalpa plays a pivotal role in the management of Karna Roga by providing direct local therapy to the affected ear. Procedures like Karna Purana, Karna Dhoopana, and Karna Prakshalana effectively alleviate symptoms such as pain, tinnitus, discharge, and hearing impairment while restoring Doshic balance. Owing to their localized action, safety, and therapeutic efficacy, Kriyakalpa procedures remain valuable tools in Ayurvedic otological practice and offer significant potential in the holistic management of ear diseases.

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