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Ayurvedic management of Constipation predominant IBS: A Threefold Approach with Medicine, Diet, and Yoga.

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ABSTRACT-

Background: Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), a common gastrointestinal disorder, affects millions globally, causing symptoms like abdominal pain, bloating, diarrhea, and constipation. In Ayurveda, these symptoms align with Grahani. Despite no definitive cure, Ayurvedic treatments, including medications, therapies, and lifestyle changes, offer significant relief.

Case History: A 36-year-old male with constipation-predominant IBS, unresponsive to conventional medicine, sought treatment atAlva's Ayurveda Medical College, Moodbidri, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka. After one month of Ayurvedic treatment, including oral medications and lifestyle adjustments, he experienced complete symptom relief and improved mental well-being.

Conclusion: This case highlights the efficacy of Ayurvedic approaches in managing Grahani (IBS) and underscores the potential of integrating traditional practices for effective treatment.

Keywords- Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Grahani, Ayurvedic remedies, Diet, Yoga, Lifestyle modifications.

I. INTRODUCTION-

In today's fast-paced society, dietary habits and meal timings often fluctuate, accompanied by a sedentary lifestyle and heightened mental stress. These factors collectively disrupt the digestive system, leading to various health issues. Among these, Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) emerges as a prevalent disorder significantly impacting patients' quality of life and posing challenges to healthcare systems. IBS is characterized by abdominal pain, diarrhea, constipation, or a combination of both, along with mucus discharge and changes in stool appearance.[1] According to recent epidemiological data based on the Rome IV criteria, the global prevalence of IBS in the general population stands at 4.1%.[2]

The pathophysiology of irritable bowel syndrome is incompletely understood, but it is well established that there is disordered communication between the gut and the brain, leading to motility disturbances, visceral hypersensitivity, and altered CNS processing. There is no definitive treatment for IBS and the traditional management has been symptom based but recent developments in the understanding of complex interaction between the gut, immune system and nerve system have led to an expanded arsenal of therapeutic options for relief of both bowel movement related symptoms and pain.[3, 4]

Grahani is a disease of great clinical relevance in modern era because of its direct link with improper food habits and stressful lifestyle of the present era.Pathologically, the disease starts with improper digestion of food, which disrupts Agni and vitiates the Doshas. This leads to the formation of ama, ultimately resulting in symptoms such as constipation, diarrhea, or a combination of both.[5]Ayurveda classifies Grahani Roga into four main types, with Vataja Grahani being comparable to constipation-predominant IBS in modern science. It describes highly effective medicines and procedures that offer a permanent cure, promote health, and do not cause any adverse effects. This case was diagnosed as Vataja grahani which was correlated to Constipation predominant IBS and line of treatment was followed accordingly.

II. CASE REPORT-

A 36-year-old married Hindu businessman, who is a non-smoker, visited the OPD atAlva's Ayurveda Medical College, Moodbidri, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka on February 15, 2024. He complained of constipation, nausea, and occasional loss of appetite for the past two years, along with abdominal pain, fatigue, digestive impairment, and decreased mental clarity. His abdominal symptoms consist of intermittent cramps, commonly localized in the left lower

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quadrant, and persistent bloating. He reports passing both hard and soft stools, often accompanied by a sensation of incomplete evacuation.He reports no blood in his stool, fever, or unexplained weight loss. He was managed with Softovac powder, 2 teaspoons at night, Tab. Prusent 2mg once daily, Tab. Rifagut 400mg twice daily, and Cap. Vizylac GG once daily under the care of a gastroenterologist. He found temporary relief, but his symptoms resurfaced upon cessation of the medications since 2024. There is no positive family history.The patient's personal history revealed that he is a vegetarian with a reduced appetite, despite regularly consuming homemade food. He experiences disturbed sleep and urinates 5–6 times per day. Additionally, the patient has no addictions.

General examination-

There was no pallor, icterus, or edema, and no palpable lymph nodes. His blood pressure was 122/74 mmHg, pulse rate 66/min, and respiratory rate 20/min.

Systemic evaluation-

On examination, mild abdominal distension was evident, accompanied by mild tympany during abdominal percussion.Additionally, mild tenderness was observed in the left lower quadrant and the umbilical region of the abdomen. There were no signs of abnormal respiratory, cardiovascular, or nervous system function.

Diagnostic criteria-

The Rome criteria is applied if colonoscopy reports are negative.[6]This case was diagnosed as Irritable Bowel Syndrome using the Rome II Criteria[7] and Manning's criteria[8]. Notably, the symptomatologies of both Vataja Grahani and IBS-C exhibited significant similarities. Consequently, the treatment regimen prescribed for Vataja Grahani was implemented in this case.

Treatment schedule-

Table no 1: Treatment given

Date	**Day**	**(PALLIATIVE TREATMENT GIVEN)**	**(PURIFICATORY TREATMENT GIVEN)**
15/2/2024 To 21/2/2024	Day 1 to Day 7	**1.Yavani** **Amlakki** **Musta** **Nishottar** **(Each 4 grams)-40 ml decoction** (2 times per day on empty stomach) **2.Sootshekhar rasa 125mg** (2 times per day before food) **3.Praval Panchamrut Ras 250mg** (2 tablets 2 times per day before food) **4.Avipattikar Churna** (5grams at night with lukewarm water)	1.Matra basti with Bala oil (60 ml) for first 3 days. 2.Shirodhara with Jatamamsi kwath
22/2/2024 To 28/2/2024	Day 8 To Day 14	**1.Yavani** **Amlakki** **Musta** **Guduchi satva** **(Each 4 grams)- 40 ml decoction** **2.Sanjeevani vati 250mg** (2 tablets 2 times per day before food)	2 continued.

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		3 4 continued.	
29/2/2024 To 6/3/2024	Day 15 to Day 21	1 2 3 4 continued. **5.Panchatikta ghrita** (15ml 2 times per day on empty stomach)	2 continued.

Table no 2: Diet plan

Session	Time	Diet	Fruits	Drinks
Morning	8.00 am To 9.00am	Vegetable rava upma/ Mudga yusha/ moong dal chilla/Vegetable soup/vegetable oats	Dadima (Pomegranate)/ Amla(Indian gooseberry)/ Banana./4-5 Almonds	-
Afternoon	11.00am 12.30pm To 2.00pm	 Salad+Moong dal/Masoor dal + Jowar rotti/ Salad+Shashthik shali rice/ Raagi	-	Ajmoda siddha water 150ml / Tender coconut water 200ml/ Aloe Vera juice 150 ml/Panchakola soup
Evening	4.00pm 4.30pm To 5.00pm	 Laja manda		250ml Butter milk with roasted powders of Jeeraka and Saidhav salt.
Night	8.30 pm	Rice with Moong daal /khichadi/Vegetable daliya	-	-

Lifestyle modification-

Following a comprehensive examination, the patient received guidance on various dietary and lifestyle adjustments. These included integrating regular, gentle walks and dedicating 15-20 minutes daily to physical exercise. Recommendations also encompassed breaking up sitting time with short bouts of standing or walking, refraining from daytime naps, steering clear of late-night wakefulness, and avoiding sitting or lying down immediately after meals. Furthermore, specific Yogasanas (outlined in Table 4), Anuloma Viloma Pranayama (a breathing exercise), and

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Omkar Japa (chanting) were suggested for additional support.

Investigations-

Colonoscopy findings-Examined up to 5cm of terminal ileum. The ileal mucosa was normal. The IC valve appeared normal. The entire mucosa of colon from rectum to caecum appearednormal. No inflammation, Ulceration, growth, polyps or diverticuli.

Follow ups and outcomes-

The traditional Ayurvedic text suggests that Grahani dosha can be addressed by adhering to the concept of Langhana and utilizing Deepana and Pachana medicines. These medications aid in strengthening Agni (digestive fire) and eliminating ama (toxins). After adopting dietary and lifestyle changes, as well as following Ayurvedic prescriptions, there was a noticeable improvement in constipation, digestion, appetite, and metabolism.Pain in abdomen was significantly reduced after 3 days of basti and medications.There were no any fresh complaints or any side effects noted during follow up till the reporting of this case. Timeline of events were as follows:

Timeline of events-

Date	**Sign and symptoms**	**Intervention done**
From end of October 2022	Constipation (on and off), loss of appetite, impaired digestion.	Consulted family physician.
20/1/2023 To 20/2/2023	Constipation, nausea, pain in the abdomen, fatigue, digestive impairment.	Softovac powder 2tsf at night, Tab.Prusent 2mg 1OD, Tab.Rifagut 400 1BD, Cap.Vizylac GG 1OD
21/2/2023 To 20/3/2023	No any fresh complaints Patient was feeling better.	No any intervention done.
31/3/2023 till end of 2023	Constipation, Mild pain in abdomen with improvement in previous symptoms.	Colonoscopy done which revealed normal and didn't consult Gastroenterologist at that time.
1/4/2024 To 14/2/2024	Constipation(on and off), loss of appetite,mild pain in the abdomen.	Patient himself tried low FODMAPs (fermentable oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharides, and polyols)diet which he found on internet along with some household remedies for constipation and pain in abdomen.
15/2/2024	Constipation, nausea, pain in the abdomen, fatigue, digestive impairment, reduced mental strength. Stool Character: Struggles with bowel movements, liquid consistency mixed with hard stool, frothy appearance.	The patient was admitted to the inpatient department (IPD) of Dr. D.Y. Patil College of Ayurveda and Research Center, located in Pimpri, Pune.
15/2/2024 To 6/3/2024	Same as above.	Treatment schedule mentioned in Table no 1 was followed with dietary and lifestyle modification.
7/3/2023	Improvement was observed in all the previously mentioned symptoms, with moderate generalized weakness. Character of Stool-Semisolid	Patient was discharged with same medications and was advised to follow the diet and lifestyle which he has been following in the hospital.

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	in consistency. No froth observed while defecation.	
After 1st follow up	Improvement in complaints was seen. No any fresh complaints were noted.	Same as above.

III. DISCUSSION-

The condition of Grahani Roga described in Ayurveda may be partially correlated with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).Grahani and Agni are interdependent; hence, all etiological factors causing Agni Dushti directly lead to Grahani Dosha. To enhance Agni and reduce Ama, medicines and diets with Deepana-Pachana properties were used. These are primarily characterized by Kashaya (astringent), Madhura (sweet), and Katu (pungent) tastes (Rasa); qualities (Guna) such as Laghu (light), Ruksha (dry), Grahi (absorbent), Deepana (appetizer), and Pachana (digestive); Ushna (hot) potency (Virya); and Katu or Madhura post-digestive effects (Vipaka). Vagabhatta notes that the potency (Virya) of Basti treatment is transmitted to Apana Vata and subsequently to Samana Vata, which may help regulate the function of Agni[9].In Ayurveda, "Ahara" (diet) is considered the best medicine, known as Mahabhaishajya.[10]A proper diet is essential for a good life, health, and wellness.[11] Dietary changes that promote good eating habits can improve Agni and reduce the risk of Grahani Roga.[12] Additionally, practicing yoga in conjunction with medications can help control and alleviate symptoms related to digestive diseases.[13]

Combined effect with medicine,diet and lifestyle modifications with yoga and pranayama have shown best results in present case by considering both physical as well as psychological etiological factors responsible for the disease. Rationale of use of medicine, Yoga and Pranayam is mentioned in Table number 3 and Table number 4 respectively.

Table no 3; Role of Medicines

Medicine used	**Rationale of use in this case**
1.Yavani Amlakki Musta Nishottar (Each 4 grams)- 40 ml decoction	Decoction consists of Deepana, Pachana, Rochna, Vata Anulomana properties[14]and Shoolahara (anti-colic) properties.[15]
2.Sootshekhar rasa 125mg[16]	To treat Mandagni (impaired digestive fire)
3.Praval Panchamrut Ras 250mg[17]	Agnideepana (stimulates digestive fire), Rasayana (rejuvenating), Enhance the protective mechanism of gastric mucosa.
4.Avipattikar churna[18]	Avipattikar Churna corrects the action of Apan Vata, which helps in a proper flow of feces.
4.Sanjeevani vati 250mg[19]	helps to strengthen the immune system and rejuvenate the body
5.Panchatikta ghrita[20]	Tridoshaghna (Pacification of alleviated Tridosha) and krimighna (wormicidal) property of ingredients

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Table no 4: Role of Yogasana and Pranayama:

Yogasana and Pranayam	Rationale of use in this case
Bhujangasana	Bhujangasana generates internal heat in the body and enhances digestion.
Mayurasana	Mayurasana facilitates the expulsion of undigested material from the stomach.
Matsyendrasana	Matsyendrasana activates Jatharagni, the digestive fire, promoting efficient digestion.
Paschimottanasana	Paschimottanasana stimulates the gastric fire, aiding in digestion.
Anuloma and viloma pranayam	Pranayama appears to provide similar benefits in reducing stress, anxiety, and enhancing overall health status.[21]
Omkara chanting	Omkara chanting aids in alleviating anxiety and depression, fostering a sense of relaxation that supports enhanced mental and physical wellness[22]

IV. CONCLUSION-

Grahani Roga is a chronic condition affecting the Annavaha (digestive) and Purishavaha (excretory) srotas, arising from disturbances in Agni (digestive fire) and Manas (mind). The primary treatment focuses on correcting Agni, which indirectly alleviates indigestion. Avoiding causative factors is a crucial principle in the management of all diseases. By restoring the balance of Agni, the underlying issues of impaired digestion and metabolism can be effectively addressed, leading to improved overall health.Dietary modification, along with appropriate medication, helps intervene in the pathophysiology of the disease. This combined approach restores balance and promotes health by addressing the root causes and symptoms.With the use of Ayurveda dietary principles, we can assist patients in restoring their normal bowel function, enhance their overall nutritional status, and prevent or lessen the difficulties of malabsorption because eating healthy food in the right amounts after a previous meal promotes longterm health. Ayurveda offers a diverse array of remedies and therapeutic approaches, alongside lifestyle modification recommendations.This holistic approach is highly effective in managing Grahani Roga, promoting overall digestive health, and restoring balance within the body.

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