



Review Article

UNDERSTANDING *DUSHTA VRANA*: AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE ON VARIOUS CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRONIC AND COMPLEX WOUNDS

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ABSTRACT

In the realm of Ayurveda, an ancient Indian system of medicine, the understanding of *Vrana* (wounds) extends far beyond mere physical injuries. Ayurvedic texts delve into the complex nature of chronic wounds and classify them under the umbrella term "*Dushta Vrana*". *Dushta Vrana* refers to non-healing, stagnant wounds resistant to conventional treatments, often requiring a multifaceted approach to facilitate the healing process.

This review article aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of *Dushta Vrana*, shedding light on its diverse manifestations and underlying causative factors explained by *Acharya Sushruta* and *Acharya Dalhana*. By exploring the profound wisdom of Ayurveda, we can unlock potential solutions for the challenges posed by these persistent wounds.

INTRODUCTION

The study of *Shalya Chikitsa* brings out very clearly that *Vrana* (wound) is the most significant surgical entity and the knowledge of its effective management for a surgeon is the basic required skill on which the outcome of surgery revolves. But before starting any treatment, it is very important to know about cause of disease and exact diagnosis. Lack of proper knowledge about causes and symptoms of a disease results to manifest it into its chronic stage. Similarly, when a *Vrana* is misdiagnosed (in respect to its *Dosha* involvement) and not treated adequately, it gets converted into *Dushta Vrana*.

As per Ayurveda, every *Vikriti* (disease) is caused by the disturbance in *Doshas* which further cause the dysfunction of *Dhatus* and *Srotas*^[1]. These disruptions can create an ideal environment for the development of chronic diseases. Similarly, *Vrana* is caused not just by the individual vitiated *Dosha*, but also with the combined vitiation of *Dhatu*, *Srotas* and some external factors.

Even though the *Vrana* is manifested at first on the skin, later it extended to the deeper structure such as *Meda*, *Asthi*, etc and lastly it results in *Dushta Vrana*.^[2] Consequently, recognizing and addressing these factors play a critical role in effective wound healing.

The prevalence of *Dushta Vrana* remains a significant concern in contemporary healthcare scenarios. While modern medicine primarily focuses on wound management through medication, surgery and mechanical interventions, exploring Ayurvedic principles can complement current approaches and provide a wider array of treatment options for patients with lasting and recalcitrant wounds.

Acharya Sushruta in *Sutra Sthana* illustrated the '*Shatvidha pariksha*' to diagnose the disease.^[3] Further, he gave an elaborated description about *Dushta vrana* including its causes, symptoms and treatment. This review article collates evidence from ancient Ayurvedic texts, scientific literature, and clinical experiences to deliver a comprehensive and easy understanding of diagnosis of *Dosha* involvement in *Dushta Vrana* executed with its various varieties of characters. By integrating the wisdom of our ancient medical science with modern advancements, this article aspires to enhance the quality of wound healing and improve patient outcomes.

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तत्रातिसंवृतोऽतिविवृतोऽतिकठिनोऽतिमृदुरुत्सन्नोऽवसन्नोऽति
शीतोऽत्युष्णः नगन्धात्यर्थदाहपाकरागवेदनावानिति पित्तेन,
शेषाः कफेन; उन्मार्गी मुखात् मुखान्तरवान्, उत्सङ्गः
कोटरः इति चक्रः;

कृष्णरक्तपीतशुक्लादीनां वर्णानामन्यतमवर्णो भैरवः पूतिपूयमांस
सिरास्त्रायुप्रभृतिभिः पूर्णः पूतिपूयास्त्राव्युन्मार्ग्युत्सङ्गमनोज्ञदर्शन
गन्धोऽत्यर्थ वेदनावान्

दाहपाकरागकण्डूशोफपिडकोपद्रुतोऽत्यर्थदुष्टशोणितास्त्रावी
दीर्घकालानुबन्धी चेति दुष्टव्रणलिङ्गानि ॥ तस्य दोषोच्छ्रायेण
षट्त्वं विभज्य यथास्वं प्रतीकारे प्रयतेत ॥ (सु.सू.-21/7)

This *Shloka* (verse) from *Sushruta Samhita* enumerates the various characteristics and symptoms of *Dushta Vrana*.

Acharya Dalhana based on the external appearance and *Dosha* involvement has given a self-explaining commentary on each and every character discussed in above *Shloka*.

Tatr-ati-samvrito-ati-vivrito

Acharya Dalhana explains "*Ati-samvrita*" as highly contracted or constricted opening which is due to the involvement of *Vata Dosha*. On the other hand, "*Ativivrito*" means wounds with a wide margin or wide opening and are indicative of the involvement of *Pitta* and *Rakta Dosha*.^[4]



Figure.1- *Ati-Samvrito Vrana*



Figure.2 - *Ati-Vivrito Vrana*

Ati-kathino-ati-mridu

According to *Acharya Dalhana* '*Kathinya*' i.e., firm to hardness in wounds is attributed to *Vata dosha* while '*Mridu*' means softness is attributed to *Kapha dosha*. Some *Acharyas* prefer wounds that have a soft appearance is due to *Pitta* and *Rakta dosha*.^[5]

Utsanno-avasanno

Acharya Dalhana described '*Utsanna*' as elevated *Mansa Dhatu* which can be perceived as indurated elevated margin of a wound. Similarly, '*Avasanna*' is depressed *Mansa Dhatu* wherein means the depressed margins of the wound. This variation is due to the presence of *Rakta* and *Pitta dosha*. Some *Acharya* also mentioned the involvement of *Vata* and *Kapha dosha*.⁶



Figure.3- *Utsanna Vrana*



Figure.4- *Avsanna Vrana*

Ati-shito-ati-ushnah

Acharya Dalhana has quoted on *Sparshan* (palpation) that wound can be felt excessively *Sheet* (cold) or *Ushna* (hot). *Sheet guna* is due *Vata* and *Kapha Dosha* whereas *Ushna guna* is due to *Rakta* and *Pitta Dosha*.^[7]

Krishna-rakta-peat-shuklaadi

Acharya Dalhana explains the different *Varnas* (colours) like *Krishna* (black), *Rakta* (red), *Peeta* (yellow), etc., are according to their respective

involved *Dosha*, e.g., *Krishna* is due to *Vata dosha*, *Rakta-peeta* due to *Pitta dosha*, *Shukla* is due to *Kapha Dosha*.^[8]



Figure.5- Krishna- rakta varna



Figure.6- Krishna- peet- shukla varna

Bhairava

Acharya Dalhana explained 'Bhairava' as "Anavadharita".^[9] This word is a compound of "अन" (*Anna*), which means "not," and "वधारित" (*Vadharita*), which means 'determined' or 'specified'.^[10] Therefore, 'Bhairava' can be understood as *Dushta Vrana* whose origin is 'not determined' or 'not specified'.

Another meaning of 'Bhairava' is interpreted as 'terribly fearsome form', which is understood by some as 'large dreadfully untidy' wound.



Figure.7-Bhairava Vrana

Pooti-puya-maans-seera-snayu-pratibhi

The term 'pooti' means presence of putrefied characteristics related to smell, appearance, or condition of tissue which is decaying in nature likely to be present in muscles, arteries, veins or may be any tendon or ligament. This could also be associated with the discharges from the above-mentioned tissues. Others interpret it, as denoting *Vrana* that are swollen due to the presence of pus. Therefore, with the term *Pooti*, one can understand as a putrefied tissue discharges or the swelling accompanied with pus.⁸



Figure.8- Pooti-puya-maans-seera-snayu-pratibhi Vrana

Unmargi-uttasangi

Acharya Dalhana describes 'Unmargi' as a *Vrana* that exhibits a horizontal *Gati* (orientation), while 'Uttasangi' as a *Vrana* that follows an upward *Gati* (orientation). Here *Gati* (orientation) means the direction of progression of the *Vrana*.

He further describes that if the pus is left untreated it may travel to either deeper tissue or burst outside the skin. This movement towards deeper fascial planes is *Unmargi* and the outward movement is *Uttasangi* movement of the pus. As per the *Dosha* involvement, *Kapha dosha* is responsible for both *Gati* (orientation).^[11]

Amanogya-darshana-gandha

Acharya Dalhana explains *Dushta Vrana* possesses an unpleasant appearance and smell. This is due to the involvement of *Rakta* and *Pitta dosha*, although some *Acharyas* consider all three *Doshas* to be involved.^[12]



Figure.9 Amanogya darshan Vrana

(This Vrana was also having the putrefied smell during the examination)

Atyartha-vedana

Dushta Vrana represent wounds that cause excruciating pain, which is attributed to Vata Dosha.^[13]

Daha-Paka-Raga-Kandu-Shofa

Dushta Vrana represents various symptoms associated with it viz., Daah (burning sensation), Raga (discoloration), Kandu (itching) and Shofa (inflammation). Daah-paka-raga is attributed to Pitta and Rakta doshas, Kandu is attributed to Kapha dosha, Shofa is attributed to Vata dosha, and Pidika (swelling) is attributed to vitiated Rakta dosha.^[14]



Figure.10-Vrana having Shofa-Raga

(During examination patient was having complaints of Daah and Kandu.)

Deergha-Kala-Anubandhitva

Acharya Dalhana explains that Dushta Vrana take a long duration to heal due to the involvement of all three Doshas along with above mentioned cumbersome features.^[15]



Figure. 11 Deergha-kala-anubandhi Vrana

(This case had history of non-healing Vrana since last 12 years)

DISCUSSION

It is well quoted verse that “Pratham aado prishyet tadantar aushadham”^[16] which means first the disease should be diagnosed then its treatment should be advocated. Various Acharyas has mentioned different modes of assessment of the Rogas e.g., Acharya Charak and Acharya Vagbhatta has given Trividha parisha (Darshan, Sparshan, Prashan). Acharya Sushruta, has given Shadvidha Pariksha for the assessment of disease which includes Panchindriya (Ghraanindriya, Rasanindriya, Chakshuridriya, Sparshindriya, Sharavanindriya) and the Prashna. So, on the basis of above mentioned methods one can easily evaluate the Dosha involvement in Dushta Vrana e.g., Tat-ati-samvrito-ativivrito, Pooti-puya-maans-sira snayu-pratibhi, Unmargi-uttasangi, by Chakshuridriya and Sparshindriya (inspection and palpation), Ati-kathino-ati-mridu, Ati-shito-ati-ushnah by Sparshindriya (palpation), Krishna-rakta-peat-shuklaadi and Bhairava by Chakshuridriya (inspection), Amanogya-darshana-gandha by Chakshuridriya and Ghraanindriya (inspection), Atyartha-vedana, Daha-Paka-Raga-Kandu-Shofa, Deergha-Kala-Anubandhitva by Prashna, Chakshuridriya (inspection and sign).

Finally, the Shloka concludes by mentioning that there are six aspects (Doshas) to be considered in the treatment of Dushta vrana, which can be deduced accordingly. This suggests that in order to treat these wounds effectively, it is essential to understand and address the specific Soshha imbalances causing them.

CONCLUSION

From this review study, it can conclude that Acharya Sushruta described all the Dushta Vrana (wound) characteristics, which can be evaluated by Shadvidha pariksha explained by him in detail. This description clearly suggests that they have understood this disease very clearly and therefore, were able to treat such complicated condition effectively in those times. Similarly in today’s era, by carefully addressing the specific Dosha and their combination involved behind the causitive factor of Vrana (either Primary or

secondary to a disease), one can treat and prevent it to change into a *Dushta Vrana*.

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