

# AYURPATRA

Your monthly health e-newsletter

Volume: 1- SERIES URDHWAJATRUGAT II -OCTOBER 2004

Diseases of - Above Shoulder region

As a celebration of the globalization of Ayurveda, we are delighted to present to you our new monthly e-feature about Ayurveda and health. Our web site (<http://www.ayurplanet.com/>) has helped millions of people. This newsletter will be loaded with lots of information, events and happenings related to Ayurveda including featured articles, details of very useful herbs, beauty tips and various herbal products and health supplements. The aim of this Newsletter is to serve humanity from health aspect by natural means.

## FEATURED HEALTH ARTICLE: CERVICAL SPONDYLITIS

**(MANYASTAMBH /GRIVA-SANDHIGATA-VATA).** –Dr.Nishtha Tiwari.

The cervical spine is a marvelous and complex structure. It is capable of supporting a head weighing 15 or more pounds while moving in several directions. No other region of the spine has such freedom of movement. This combination however, complexity and mobility, make the neck susceptible to pain and injury.

\* This region has good amount of lubrication due to Kapha -Shleshaka and Avalambaka, that help in the free movement of neck with the help of Vata. This complex structure includes 7 small vertebrae, intervertebral discs to absorb shock, joints, the spinal cord, 8 nerve roots, vascular elements, 32 muscles, and ligaments.

The nerve roots stem from the spinal cord like tree branches through foramen in the vertebrae. Each nerve root transmits signals (nerve impulses) to and from the brain, shoulders, arms, and chest. A vascular system of 4 arteries and veins run through the neck to circulate blood between the brain and the heart. Joints, muscles, and ligaments facilitate movement and serve to stabilize the structure.

Neck mobility is matchless. It is capable of moving the head in many directions: 90 degrees of flexion (forward motion), 90 degrees of extension (backward motion), 180 degrees of rotation (side to side), and almost 120 degrees of tilt to either shoulder.

## Causes

- Very stiff muscles in the cervical region can, over the years, cause a kinking of the cervical spine to the front.
- Bad posture and lack of exercise to the cervical region are the key factors, which are responsible in a majority of the patients.
- Lying in bed with several pillows propping up the neck into an unnatural position can affect the alignment of the cervical column, causing a forward inclination.
- Reclining on sofas with the spine hunched and the neck pushed forward is bad for cervical alignment.
- Hunching over the computer for many hours, occupational hazards such as those of a writer, an illustrator or a painter, all cause the spine to be bent forward all the time.
- Positioning the body to the same side during sleep, with the shoulder muscles and the neck compressed, also develops faulty alignment in the cervical spine. In due course the spine is bent, the front surface of the bones and disc are excessively pressurised and damage occurs.
- The so-called executive chairs are ill-designed and push the neck out of alignment. No chair should reach over the head. The level should be up to the shoulder blades so that the chest can stretch over the edge keeping the body upright.
- Cold and Vata aggravating food and regimens for eg. Broccoli, Cauliflower, Yum, Curd, Chilled drinks, late night awakening, exertion, too much traveling etc.

In India, railway porters carry heavy loads on their heads but they do not suffer from cervical pain (as one would expect) from the heavy load they carry every day

**Pathology:** Essentially, the pathology consists of:

1. Narrowing of the cervical vertebrae with disc space reduction resulting in friction between two vertebral bodies with an osteophyte (bony spur) formation.
2. Loss of normal concavity in the cervical region, i.e., loss of lordosis.
3. Symptoms of vascular insufficiency resulting in numbness and tingling sensation in the hands or feet due to the compression of the cervical nerve roots.

The problems of vascular insufficiency consist of vertigo, giddiness, occasional tinnitus (a ringing sensation in the inner ear), a sense of unsteadiness, etc.

**Symptoms :** The most common symptom is pain in the neck, worsening with exertion and relieved, in the early stages, by rest. This pain often radiates down to the hand, with the fingers becoming numb due to compression of the nerves that innervate the upper extremity. The brachial plexus is affected. The trapezius area becomes tender and painful. A

nodule can form in the muscle due to chronic pressure.

**Ayurveda** understands the functioning of the body as comprising of three basic functions - Movement, Change and growth & stability, which are referred to as the three doshas - **Vata, Pitta and Kapha**. These doshas in a state of equilibrium lead to health and in-equilibrium to diseases. The disturbance to any one of these ultimately leads to problems related to all the three functions. Treatment in Ayurveda is aimed at restoring the equilibrium through correction of the underlying functional in-equilibrium.

The main causative factor is the aging of bones and joints. Trauma, incorrect posture of body, prolonged typing or writing with flexion of neck aggravates the symptoms. When this disease becomes chronic in nature, giddiness numbness of hands and even paraplegia can occur. The sacrum is situated in the Vata area of the body and this disease is caused by aggravated **Vata** and ama (toxins), which cause stiffness and reduce mobility in this area. Treatment involves detoxification and elimination of ama and also a Vata pacifying diet, lifestyle and herbal preparations.

**In Ayurveda this condition is known as *Griva Sandhigata Vata*.** The deranged **Vata** energy is responsible for the typical symptoms such as neck pain, restricted movement of neck, pain radiating to shoulders and arms, tingling sensation in the fingers etc.

### Management

Physiotherapy can, at best, only offer marginal relief. In situations where the patient suffers acute giddiness, it is useful to restrict the movement of the neck with a soft collar for short span only as its continuous use may make the local muscles stiff. For health, the muscles and bones have to be aligned and stretched rather than made stiff.

**Yogic management:** There are various asanas, which prevent and give relief to this problem — sarvangasana, halasana urdhva dhanurasana and viparita dandasana and back bends are significant.

### AYURVEDA MANGAEMENT----

Comprises of three approaches, Elimination (Shodhanam), of the accumulated toxic products of digestion, metabolism and the disease process, Pacification (Shamanam) and correction of the entities responsible for altered functioning and Rejuvenation (Rasayanam) of the bodily tissue to regain and maintain natural strength and vitality.

**Vata**, the principle of movement is the predominant function with the skeletal-muscular system and the nervous system. Vitiated Vata predominantly causes problems relating to these systems. The vitiation of vata is caused by two mechanisms. One of them is obstruction to vata due to malfunctioning of kapha and pitta. The other one is increase of vata independently (the degenerative problems).

Ayurvedic medicine offers conservative treatment as oral & external medication. This herbal medicine can help you reverse the disease-process giving decongestion of the spinal canal & nerve-root bony outlets, which can relieve cervical spondylosis.

The [Panchakarma](#) or Shodhan treatment for cervical includes Patrapinda

sveda, and oil therapies like Abhyanga, Nasyam, Karnapooran, Shirodhara and Vasti.

**PATRAPINDA SWEDA:**

A highly rejuvenating treatment extremely beneficial in relieving Cervical spondylosis, in which fresh plants like Arka, Eranda, Dhatura, Nirgundi, Shigru, Garlic etc. are fried with several other herbal ingredients and tied into boluses, dipped into warm medicated oil and simultaneously massaged all over the body for 45 minutes.

We at Ayurveda India specifically give **PRISHTHA VASTI/MANYA VASTI** to our patients suffering from this disorder.

Some of the preparations used in this disease are : Extracts of Boswellia, Gugglu, Rasna, Mahavatgajankush, Brihatvatchintamani ras, Mahayograj guuglu, Kaishore gugglu, Rasnadi ghan vati, Maharasnadi kwath etc.

**You may consult our Ayurveda experts through [on line consultation](#) or personally.**

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**HERB OF THE MONTH: TRIPHALA (Will be completed in 3 parts)**

**Part -1-**

**Triphala**,. literally means "three fruits," "*tri*" meaning "three" and "*phala*" meaning "fruit. The three fruits contained in *Triphala* are *Haritaki*, *Amalaki* and *Vibhitaki*.

Traditionally, Triphala comes in many different forms, including Triphala powder, extract, also can take the form of Triphala Ghee and Triphala Rasayana, and these are part of our Veda . Triphala can also be mixed with other herbs. Triphala Guggulu, for instance, is much more powerful than Guggulu alone.

There is a saying in India that if a vaidya knows how to use Triphala properly, he can heal any disease. When these three fruits are combined as Triphala, they form a very powerful Rasayana. A Rasayana is the most highly refined and powerful therapy in Ayurveda, known to promote long life and rejuvenation. A Rasayana promotes ojas, the material equivalent of bliss. Ojas is the finest product of digestion, and prevents disease, creates luster in the skin and rejuvenates the whole body.

Besides nourishing the mind and body and promoting longevity, Triphala has many specific effects. It is particularly rejuvenating for the digestive tract, and is a rasayana for the eyes and the skin.

Triphala balances *Apana Vata*, the subdosha of Vata that governs the colon, lower abdomen, menstrual flow and elimination.

For most people Triphala is a mild laxative, and for that reason it is excellent for clearing toxins from the digestive system. In very rare cases it has a stronger laxative effect, but usually it is an ideal bowel cleanser precisely because of its mildness. In moderate doses it is gentle, and detoxifies the body slowly.

But because it is slow, you can take it for longer periods of time, and then it has a deeply purifying effect. It goes deeper into the physiology and releases the toxins at a much deeper level.

There are seven tissues (dhatus) in the body, and they form in a sequence. Starting with Rasa (the nutrient fluid derived from food), the tissue chain progresses from Rasa to Rakta (blood), Mamsa (muscle), Meda (fat), Asthi (bone), Majja (bone marrow) and Shukra (reproductive fluid) in a chain of reactions that is sequential and orderly.

Triphala cleanses toxins up to and including the fat tissue. You can see that this is a much deeper effect than just cleansing the bowel. It cleanses toxins from the nutrient fluid, the blood, the muscle and the fat tissues if used for a long enough time.

Because it detoxifies the blood, muscle and fat tissues, it is excellent for preventing skin disease. And because it removes Ama from the fat tissue, Triphala also helps balance cholesterol.

Triphala can also repair any damage that has occurred in the intelligence of nature that governs the transformation from one tissue to the next. It is in the gap between the tissues that the intelligence of nature operates, and if there is any damage, Triphala can repair and reset the chain to enable proper transformation of one tissue to the next. That's what makes it a very great rasayana.

Triphala also purifies the urine and prevents urinary tract disease (prameha). It enhances all thirteen agnis (digestive fires), especially the pachakagni, the main digestive fire in the stomach. It pacifies Kapha and Pitta, and if taken regularly, is a powerful anti-aging Rasayana.

\* One study (Food Chemistry Toxicology, 2002) showed that Triphala had an antimutagenic effect in vitro. This is interesting, because as I mentioned earlier, Triphala can repair damage to the sequence of nature's intelligence in the "gaps" in the tissues, in the mechanics of transformation from one tissue to another. In other words, if a type of tissue forgets its connection to nature's intelligence, or is in some way damaged, Triphala can repair that damage before it manifests as a disease. This could have implications for fighting the growth of cancer or other aberrant cells.

\* Another study (Phytomedicine 2002) showed that Triphala had a radio protective effect in mice exposed to gamma-radiation. It delayed the onset of mortality and reduced the symptoms of radiation sickness in one group significantly more than the control group, which did not take Triphala. This demonstrates the ability of Triphala to act as a radiation-protective agent when administered in the proper doses.

\* A third study tested the effect of the three fruits used in Triphala on cholesterol-induced hypercholesterolaemia and atherosclerosis. Although all three fruits used in the Triphala formula were found to reduce serum cholesterol and cholesterol of both the liver and aorta, Haritaki had the greatest effect.

Of course, these studies are limited in their ability to show the true effects of Triphala because they focus on the isolated ingredients

There is a verse in Charaka that explains this principle: "The understanding of the total nature of the subject does not arise from a fragmentary knowledge of it. (Charaka Samhita, Vimanasthana 4.5).

But in any case, these studies do point in the right direction.

**....To be continued .....**

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**BEAUTY TIP – FOR WRINKLES**

Application of pure castor oil prevents wrinkles and softens the skin. This slows down the aging process also. We suggest taking NIKHAR 2 capsules morning and 2 evening for better and quick results. For personalized beauty related queries mail to: [beauty@ayurplanet.com](mailto:beauty@ayurplanet.com)

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#### **FORTHCOMING EVENT:**

**Event Name** :PHARMA WORLD EXPO  
**Date(s)** :8-FEB-05 to 12-FEB-05  
**Venue** :Bombay Exhibition Ground  
Mumbai,Maharashtra ,India  
**Organiser** :Chemtech Foundation  
**Contact** : Tel: +(91)-(22)-22874758  
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#### **News –**

##### **Study finds dogs can smell cancer**

Thursday, September 23, 2004 Posted: 8:51 PM EDT (0051 GMT)

##### **Medical journals press for clinical trial registry...**

Eleven medical journals have announced that next year they will stop considering reports of clinical trials that have not been registered in a public trials registry before or at the time they begin to enroll patients. This policy will apply to any clinical trial starting enrollment after July 1, 2005. For trials that began enrollment before this date, the journals will require registration by September 13, 2005. The registration will include disclosure of the study's purpose, design, starting data, expected length, and sponsor. The participating journals include the Annals of Internal Medicine, Canadian Medical Association Journal, Croatian Medical Journal, Journal of the American Medical Association, Journal of the Danish Medical Association, Lancet, Medical Journal of Australia, Nederlands Tijdschrift voor Geneeskunde, New England Journal of Medicine, New Zealand Medical Journal, and Norwegian Medical Journal.

The new policy is intended to prevent "selective reporting" and "publication bias" in which positive results are reported but negative ones are not. It will also prevent surreptitious changes in study design or data analysis after the data come in. The need for the policy was underscored by a recent study of 122 journal articles which concluded that about half of them were incompletely reported, harm was more likely to be unreported, and 65% had inconsistencies between primary outcomes defined in the most recent protocols and those defined in published articles. [Chan A-W and others. Empirical evidence for selective reporting of outcomes in randomized trials comparison of protocols to published articles. JAMA 291:2457-2465, 2004].

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