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Treatment of *Hridaya Roga* through *Ayurveda*: A Case Study

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Abstract

Hridaya Roga (cardiac disorders) is described in classical *Ayurvedic* texts as a disease affecting the heart due to the vitiation of *Doṣas*, primarily *Vāta*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* along with involvement of *Rasa* and *Rakta Dhātu*. Modern lifestyle factors such as stress, improper diet, and sedentary habits contribute significantly to cardiovascular disorders. *Ayurveda* offers a holistic approach to managing heart diseases through herbal formulations, *Panchakarma*, dietary regulation, and lifestyle modification. This case study evaluates the effectiveness of *Ayurvedic* management in a patient suffering from symptoms correlated with cardiac dysfunction. A 52-year-old male patient presenting with chest discomfort, palpitations, fatigue, and dyspnea was treated with classical *Ayurvedic* medicines including *Arjuna*-based formulations, along with dietary and lifestyle modifications. After 8 weeks of treatment, significant improvement was observed in clinical symptoms and cardiovascular parameters. The findings suggest that *Ayurvedic* therapy can be beneficial in the management of *Hridaya Roga*.

Keywords: *Hridaya Roga*, *Ayurveda*, *Arjuna*, Cardiovascular disorders, Herbal medicine, Case study.

Introduction

The heart is considered one of the most vital organs in the human body as it maintains circulation and sustains life. Cardiovascular diseases have become increasingly prevalent due to sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy diet, psychological stress, and environmental factors. According to global health statistics, heart disease remains a major contributor to morbidity and mortality.

In *Ayurveda*, the heart (*Hridaya*) is regarded as the seat of *Prāṇa* (vital life force), *Ojas* (vital essence), and *Chetanā* (consciousness). The classical texts describe *Hridaya* as the central organ responsible for circulation and maintenance of vitality. Any disturbance in the balance of the three *Doṣas* may impair the normal functioning of the heart and lead to the development of *Hridaya Roga*.

The etiological factors of *Hridaya Roga* include excessive intake of heavy, oily, and incompatible foods, suppression of natural urges, excessive physical exertion, emotional stress, and sedentary habits. These factors lead to vitiation of *Doṣas* and obstruction of *Rasavaha* and *Raktavaha Srotas*, ultimately affecting the cardiac tissues.

Ayurvedic classics classify *Hridaya Roga* into different types based on the predominance of *Doṣas*, such as *Vātaja*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja*, *Tridoṣaja*, and *Krimija Hridaya Roga* ^[1, 2]. The treatment principles include *Doṣa* pacification, strengthening of cardiac muscles, removal of *Srotorodha*, and restoration of normal circulation. Discoloration of the body (*Vaivarṇya*), fainting (*Mūrccchā*), fever (*Jvara*), cough (*Kāsa*), hiccup

(*Hikkā*), dyspnea (*Svāsa*), unpleasant taste in the mouth (*Asya-vairasya*), excessive thirst (*Tṛṣṇā*), confusion or delirium (*Pramoha*), vomiting (*Chardi*), aggravation of *Kapha* (*Kaphotkleśa*), pain (*Ruja*), and loss of appetite (*Aruci*) — these and many other symptoms arise due to diseases of the heart (*Hridaya Roga*) ^[3].

Several medicinal plants described in *Ayurveda* possess cardioprotective properties. Among them, *Terminalia arjuna* (*Arjuna*) is widely recognized for its beneficial effects on cardiac function. It acts as a cardiotonic, antioxidant, and antihypertensive agent. In addition, therapies such as *Panchakarma*, dietary regulation, and lifestyle modifications are recommended for maintaining cardiovascular health.

Aims and Objectives

To evaluate the effectiveness of *Ayurvedic* management in a case of *Hridaya Roga*.

Materials and Methods

Study Design

Single case study conducted in an *Ayurvedic* clinical setup.

Patient Information

A 52-year-old male patient visited the outpatient department with the following complaints:

- Chest discomfort
- Palpitations
- Shortness of breath on exertion

- General weakness and fatigue
- Occasional dizziness

The symptoms had been present for the last 6 months.

Personal History

- **Diet:** Mixed diet with frequent intake of oily and fried food
- **Appetite:** Irregular
- **Sleep:** Disturbed due to stress
- **Lifestyle:** Sedentary occupation with minimal physical activity

Past Medical History

The patient had a history of mild hypertension for two years but was not taking regular medication. The patient had a sedentary lifestyle with irregular dietary habits and psychological stress. No major surgical history was reported.

Clinical Examination

General Examination

- **Pulse:** 88 beats per minute
- **Blood Pressure:** 150/95 mmHg
- **Respiratory Rate:** 18/min
- No edema observed

Systemic Examination

- Cardiovascular system: Mild palpitations and discomfort in precordial region
- Respiratory system: Normal breath sounds

Ayurvedic Assessment

Doṣa Involvement

- *Vāta-Kapha* predominance.

Dhātu Involvement

- *Rasa Dhātu*
- *Rakta Dhātu*

Srotas Involved

- *Rasavaha Srotas*
- *Raktavaha Srotas*
- *Pranavaha Srotas*

Ayurvedic Diagnosis

Based on the symptoms and clinical examination, the condition was diagnosed as *Vāta-Kaphaja Hṛdaya Roga*.

Medical History

Clinical Examination

- **Pulse:** 88/min
- **Blood Pressure:** 150/95 mmHg
- Mild anxiety and fatigue
- ECG showed mild ischemic changes.

Ayurvedic Diagnosis

Based on symptoms and clinical examination, the condition was diagnosed as *Vāta-Kapha* dominant *Hṛdaya Roga* with involvement of *Rasa* and *Rakta Dhātu*.

Treatment Protocol

Internal Medications^[4]

1. *Arjuna Kṣīrapāka*

- **Dose:** 40 ml twice daily

- **Action:** Cardioprotective, strengthens cardiac muscles.

2. *Arjunāriṣṭa*

- **Dose:** 20 ml with equal quantity of water after meals
- **Action:** Improves cardiac function and circulation.

3. *Punarnavādi Kaṣāya*

- **Dose:** 20 ml twice daily before meals
- **Action:** Anti-inflammatory and diuretic.

4. *Sarpagandhā Ghana Vati*

- **Dose:** 250 mg at bedtime
- **Action:** Antihypertensive and calming effect.

Panchakarma Therapy

Abhyanga

- Full body massage with medicated oil performed three times per week to reduce stress and improve circulation.

Hṛdaya Basti

- A specialized *Ayurvedic* therapy where warm medicated oil is retained over the cardiac region using a dough ring.
- Duration: 7 days.
- This therapy nourishes the cardiac tissues and helps relieve discomfort in the chest.

Dietary Advice

- Light and easily digestible food
- Increased consumption of fruits and vegetables
- Avoidance of oily, fried, and spicy foods
- Reduced salt intake

Lifestyle Modifications

- Daily walking for 30 minutes
- Practice of *Prāṇāyāma* such as *Anulom Vilom* and *Bhramari*
- Stress management through meditation
- Adequate sleep

Duration of Treatment

8 weeks.

Results

After eight weeks of treatment, significant improvement was observed.

Symptomatic Improvement

Symptom	Before Treatment	After 8 Weeks
Chest discomfort	Moderate	Mild
Palpitations	Frequent	Occasional
Shortness of breath	Moderate	Minimal
Fatigue	Severe	Mild

Vital Parameters

Parameter	Before	After
Blood Pressure	150/95 mmHg	130/85 mmHg
Pulse Rate	88/min	76/min

The patient reported significant symptomatic relief, improved energy level, better sleep quality, and improvement in quality of life.

Discussion

The pathogenesis of *Hridaya Roga* involves vitiation of *Doṣas* that disturb the normal functioning of the heart and obstruct the channels responsible for circulation. In this case, *Vāta* and *Kapha Doṣa* were predominantly involved, leading to symptoms such as chest discomfort, palpitations, and fatigue.

The treatment protocol was designed according to classical *Ayurvedic* principles to pacify the aggravated *Doṣas*, strengthen cardiac tissues, and improve circulation.

Terminalia arjuna is considered one of the most effective cardiogenic herbs in *Ayurveda*. It contains bioactive compounds such as flavonoids, tannins, and glycosides that help improve myocardial strength and regulate blood pressure. Modern pharmacological studies have demonstrated its antioxidant and cardioprotective effects. *Punarnava* acts as a natural diuretic and helps reduce fluid retention, thereby improving cardiac efficiency. *Sarpagandha* has well-known antihypertensive properties that assist in controlling elevated blood pressure.^{5&6}

Panchakarma therapy such as *Hridaya Basti* plays a supportive role by nourishing the cardiac region and reducing stress, which is an important risk factor for heart disease.

Additionally, lifestyle modifications including regular exercise and breathing practices help improve oxygenation and reduce cardiovascular risk factors.

The combined therapeutic approach resulted in significant improvement in the patient's symptoms and physiological parameters.

Conclusion

This case study demonstrates that *Ayurvedic* treatment can play an effective role in the management of *Hridaya Roga*. Herbal formulations such as *Arjuna*, along with *Panchakarma* therapy and lifestyle modifications, help improve cardiac function and reduce symptoms associated with cardiovascular disorders. The holistic approach of *Ayurveda* addresses both the underlying causes and manifestations of the disease.⁷ However, larger clinical studies are required to further validate the efficacy of *Ayurvedic* therapies in cardiovascular diseases.

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