

## AYURVEDIC TREATMENT FOR THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF WITHDRAWAL SYNDROME IN ADDICTION OF OPIUM PRODUCTS ABUSE- A CASE REPORT

Dr.Pradip S. Mohurle<sup>1</sup>, Dr.Om Prakash Patel<sup>2</sup>,Dr.Manjula<sup>3</sup>, Dr. Suhas A. Chaudhary<sup>4</sup>, Dr. Krutika S. Chaudhary<sup>5</sup>

1. Assistant Professor Senior Scale, Deptt. Of Agadatantra Evum Vidhivaidyaka, NEIAH, Shillong-793018.
2. Assistant Professor Senior Scale, Deptt. Of Homoeopathic Pharmacy, NEIAH, Shillong-793018.
3. Assistant Professor, Department of Dravyaguna, FIMS, SGT University, Gurugram.
4. Research Officer (Ayurveda), M.S. Regional Ayurveda Research Institute, CCRAS, Jaipur, Rajasthan.
5. Senior Assistant Professor, Department of Dravyaguna, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur, Rajasthan.

### Corresponding author

Dr Pradip Sadaram Mohurle, Asst Professor Senior, Dept of Agadatantra Evum Vidhi vaidyaka, North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda and Homoeopathy, NEIAH, Shillong, 793018, Meghalaya.  
[Email-pradipm21@gmail.com](mailto:Email-pradipm21@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

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Opium is known for its addictive properties. Occasional exposure of its products gives the feeling of euphoria, which ultimately leads to physical dependence. Addiction of opium products causes range of behavioural, psychological and physical disturbances in individual. We are presenting the 21 year old male patient of having history of taking opium products in the form of nasal sniffing and oral ingestion since three years. He developed withdrawal symptoms in the form of behavioural and psychological disturbances since he quit the opium products in last month. He was admitted in IPD of NEIAH Hospital to give Holistic therapy for opium products addiction in the form of *Yoga, Panchakarma* and *Ayurveda* for de-addiction and rehabilitation.

**Keywords:** Holistic therapy, Withdrawal symptoms, Addiction of opium products

### INTRODUCTION:

Abuse of tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs is costly to the Nation, exacting more than \$700 billion annually in costs related to crime, lost work productivity and health care: National Institute of Drug Abuse USA (NIDA)<sup>1,2,3</sup>.

A meta-analysis by Reddy and Chandrashekhara (1998) revealed an overall substance use prevalence of

6.9/1000 for India with urban and rural rates of 5.8 and 7.3/1000 population. The rates among men and women were 11.9 and 1.7% respectively<sup>4</sup>.

**Definition of Addiction by American Society of Addiction Medicine:** Addiction is a primary, chronic disease of brain reward, motivation, memory and related circuitry. Dysfunction in these circuits leads to characteristic biological, psychological, social and spiritual manifestations. This is reflected in an individual pathologically pursuing reward and/or relief by substance use and other behaviours.

Social, financial and familial disturbances can enhance the severity of the opium dependence. Addiction's impact on the health can be most harmful affecting the psychological, social, economic and familial life of human and it is in hindering the ability of human being to become a productive member of society.

Drugs addiction & its withdrawal can be managed by taper up of Ayurvedic Therapeutic Agents of same drugs in medicinal doses or antagonistic drugs mentioned in Ayurveda along with *Panchakarma* Therapy with *Yoga* and *Pranayama*.

### AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the aetiology of opium products abuse in ayurvedic view
2. To assess the efficacy of *Brahmi Taila Shirodhara* and *Vishamushtika Vati* in management of withdrawal symptoms in the addiction of opium products.
3. To assess the efficacy of *Naadi Shuddhi Pranayama* in mental disturbance.

### MATERIALS & METHODS:

A 21 year old male patient of addiction of opium products was selected from the OPD and admitted in the IPD of male general ward of Ayurveda Hospital, NEIAH, Shillong. Patient complained of lack of sleep, body ache, tactile hallucinations, tingling sensation, intermittent horripilation and weakness since a month when he quit the opium products. He also complained of irritability and apathy. Especially he used to not get sleep in night hours and had a sleep of two to three hours sleep in morning hours since a month. He had cravings for opium products and irritability since then.

Detailed case sheet was prepared to maintain the records of entire observations regarding the condition of patient. Patient had history of taking nasal sniffing and oral puff smoking of opium products since three years before. He discontinued the opium abuse since a month back and took de-addiction treatment for withdrawal symptoms from Psychiatrist in Shillong. But could not get the relief. Patient then visited the De-Addiction OPD and was admitted in IPD of Ayurveda Hospital, NEIAH, Shillong. No history of injectable abused drugs was given by patient. No history of HIV, HbsAg, and STD was given. No history was given about Hypertension, Diabetes and other systemic disorders.

On examination patient was having vitals stable and no systemic abnormality was found. Hb%, TLC, DLC, routine and microscopic urine examination, LFT, KFT, HbsAg and Retro viral test was done to rule out pathology. All reports are normal in range and HbsAg, Retro viral test was negative.

Two tablet of *Vishamushtika Vati* was administered in morning after food for duration of seven days. Two tablet of *Sarpagandha Ghana vati* was advised at bed time for duration of seven days. Patient was also advised to take *Manasmitra vati* two tablets twice daily for duration of fifteen days to reduce mental irritability. Proper *pathy-apathy* diet was followed. Patient was advised to take *Yogasana* and *Naadi Shuddhi Pranayama* in morning and evening hours from yoga expert in the institute. Whole body *Snehana* with *Til Taila*, Whole body *Swedana* with *Baashpa Sweda* were advised. Then *Shirodhara* with *Brahmi Taila* for thirty minutes followed by *Shadabindu Taila Nasya* was done in Panchakarma department. The above routine of treatment was followed for fourteen days under observation at Ayurveda hospital of NEIAH.

Counselling sessions were done to assess and correct the cognitive and behavioural malfunctions. Meanwhile patient was also advised to hear the spiritual lectures and read spiritual books in which he

was having faith.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION:

The improvement was assessed on the basis of subjective symptoms and objective parameters. Patient got some relief for insomnia and tactile hallucinations within three days of treatment. Intermittent horripilation and weakness were also reduced. But patient was still having body ache and tingling sensations. *Sarpagandha Ghana Vati* was continued for duration of seven days to establish normal pattern of sleeping with quality of sleep, which is also helpful in reducing anxiety.

After duration of seven days treatment patient got complete relief from insomnia, tactile hallucinations, intermittent horripilation, body ache and weakness. So administration of *Vishamushtika Vati* and *Sarpagandha Ghana Vati* were discontinued.

Patient was feeling energetic, empathetic and happy. On the request of patient was discharged from IPD, but advised to complete the course of *Manasmitra vati* medication for duration of fifteen days and *Snehana, Swedana, Shirodhaara* and *Nasya* for duration of further seven days in *panchkarma* department on OPD basis. No adverse effects were found after discontinuation of medication.

Meanwhile patient was followed up regularly in De-addiction OPD in the hospital. During follow up period of one month patient had not reported any complaints of relapse of withdrawal symptoms. Patient had shown improvement in psychological and social behaviour. Family members also had reported marked improvement of patient's behaviour at home.

Addiction, which is chronic obsession of substances ultimately causes vitiation of *vata* and then of *pitta* in human body leading to *rasa dhaatu dushti & rakta dhaatu dushti* and ultimately leads to vicious cycle of psychological and physical imbalance.

Opium or *Ahiphena*<sup>5,6</sup>(*papaver somniferum*) and its products have *ruksha, sukshma, vyavayi, vikasi* and *laghu* properties as mentioned in Ayurveda. It is having *ushna virya* and *katu vipaka* which leads to vitiation of *vata-pitta dosha* in the body, which causes non-metabolised constituents of substances to easily penetrate into *dhatu*. This *madaka* effect of opium produces euphoria and then inhibition of senses leading to sleepiness in individual.

Opium, which is highly addictive in its nature, produces substance dependence for all psychological and behavioural functioning of the body, who abuses it for longer duration. It is causing the *rasadhatu and rakta dhatu dushti*, which vitiates the *vata* and *pitta dosha* in the body. The continuous abuse of substances causes the cravings and hallucinogenic feelings. Thus it causes the disturbance of sleep-awake cycle of body and ultimately leading to dependence for sleep on its products. In general *Vata* predominant *Tridoshaj* pathology will be found in physiological dependence & withdrawal. *Raja dosha* amongst the *Manasa* (Mental) *dosha* will be found for psychological dependence.

Chronic abuse of opium products is also called as Morphine. The symptoms in such cases may include gastrointestinal disturbances with anorexia, constipation, furred tongue, irritability, disturbed sleep and fatigue. Mental depression, moral degradation, loss of self-respect and morality, a desire to procure drug by any means may be the other features.

Withdrawal symptoms, usually the opposite of the acute effects of drug include nausea, diarrhoea, coughing, lacrimation, mydriasis, rhinorrhoea, profuse sweating, muscle twitching, piloerection (goose bump). In addition, diffuse body pain, insomnia and yawning occur along with intense drug craving. The intensity of symptoms usually reaches peak, within 36-72 hours after discontinuation of drug and acute syndrome appears within 5-8 days. However, a protracted abstinence phase of mild symptoms may persist for 6 or more months<sup>7,8</sup>.

Discontinuation of opium products causes the disturbance of sleep-awake cycle of body and produces insomnia, neurosis and peripheral neuropathy. It produces range of psychological and behavioural symptoms, producing the withdrawal syndrome of opium addiction.

Treatment of withdrawal symptoms requires administration of sufficient opioid medication on the first

day to decrease symptoms followed by a gradual withdrawal of drug, maintenance of food, nutrition, vitamins, etc<sup>7</sup>.

*Shirah Seka*<sup>9</sup> or *Shirodhara* is the one of the four type of *Murdha Taila* have been mentioned by *Acharya Vagbhata*. *Shirodhara*<sup>10,11,12</sup> is very useful for nourishment of sensory centres in the brain and for induction of sleep in sleep deprived individuals. *Brahmi*<sup>13</sup> (*Centella asiatica*) has the properties of inhibition of cerebral blood pressure and improving cerebral functioning thus creates mental balance of patient. *Taila* prepared from main ingredient of *Brahmi* is having *sukshma* or penetrating effect, so it reaches the target without fail.

*Vishamushtika vati* contains the *Kuchala* (*strychnous nuxvomica*), *Marich* (*piper nigrum*) as two main ingredients with titration given by *Indravaruni* (*citrullus colocynthis*). *Kuchala*<sup>14</sup> in *Vishamushtika vati* cures the peripheral neuritis, insomnia and myalgia by the effect of *vata-kaphashamak* property, which has action on neuro-muscular junctions of peripheral nerves by its antagonistic action property. *Vishamushtika vati*<sup>15</sup> is also mentioned in *Rasatantrasaara & Siddhaprayoga Sangraha* for de-addiction of opium products.

*Sarpagandha Ghana Vati*<sup>16,17</sup> has indication of hypertension with insomnia, works on improving brain functioning by the inhibition of cerebral blood circulation. It contains *sarpagandha* (*rawelfia serpentina*), *jatamansi* (*nordostachys jatamansi*) *bhanga* (*cannabis sativa*), *khorsani ajwayan* (*hyoscyamus niger*). It acts on peripheral nervous system with the action of *vedanasthapana* and *sangyasthapana*.

*Manasmitra vati* has potent therapeutic effects on brain and mind. It corrects overall system of nervous system. It acts as potent anti-stress, anxiolytic, anti-depressant and relief from generalized anxiety disorder when taken for longer period.

*Naadi Shuddhi Pranayama*<sup>18</sup> also called as *Mala Shodhana Prnayama* works on creating the balance of *Dosha, Dhatu and Mala* in the body. It helps the patient to reduce stress in generalized anxiety disorder and insomnia. It stabilises the nervous system and directs the mind toward spirituality and promote the individual towards ideal daily routine.

The patient had not shown the acute withdrawal syndrome of opium products addiction. Ayurvedic treatment for the effective management of withdrawal syndrome in addiction of opium products abuse has shown the considerable results for mild to moderate grade.

Holistic approach for management of addiction of opium products includes combination of *Yoga, Panchakarma and Ayurveda medicines*. Drugs addiction & its withdrawal can be managed by taper up of Ayurvedic Therapeutic Agents of same drugs in medicinal doses along *Panchakarma* Therapy with some extent *Yoga and Pranayama*<sup>19</sup>. But we have used *Vishamushtika vati* for its antagonistic action on opium products. It is economic and effective management of mind and body of patients affected by ill effects of opium abuse.

#### CONCLUSION:

From the results and observation of present study, *Shirodhara* had shown better results for mild to moderate withdrawal symptoms in the addiction of opium products. Study revealed that although other medicines were effective, but *Brahmi Taila Shirodhara* got better relief in subjective symptoms of *Nidranaasha* and *Vishamushtika Vati* shown better relief for tactile hallucination due to withdrawal of the addiction of opium products. *Shirodhara* is safest method for curing *Nidranaasha*. No side effects and complications were observed in the trial. Drugs addiction and its withdrawal symptoms can be managed by Ayurvedic Therapeutic drugs with antagonistic property along with *Panchakarma, Yoga and Pranayama*.

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Corresponding Author: Dr. Pradip S. Mohurle  
Lecturer, Deptt. Of Agadatantra Evum Vidhivaidyaka, NEIAH, Shillong, Meghalaya-793018.  
Email: [pradipm21@gmail.com](mailto:pradipm21@gmail.com)

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