

## CASE STUDY

# Role of *Agnikarma* in the Management of *Vatakantaka* W.S.R. To Calcaneal Spur

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### ABSTRACT

A calcaneal spur is a bony growth on the heel bone, resulting from continuous strain on the foot, leading to calcium deposits. This condition is painful and can be associated with "Vatakantaka" in Ayurveda. Vatakantaka is a common cause of heel pain which is caused due to vitiation of Vata. Vata is vitiated due to walking on irregular or uneven surface, excessive strain on heels and get accumulated in foot region and causes pain as if pricked by a thorn. Hence it termed as Vatakantaka (Calcaneal spur). Acharya Sushruta has mentioned different types of treatment for its management. One of those treatments is using a technique called "Agnikarma". Here we are presenting a case of a 43-year-old female patient having complaint of pain in left heel region since 2 weeks. She was treated with Agnikarma the same day when she was presented in OPD of Shalya Tantra. After one sitting of Agnikarma, the patient showed significant results in the pain management.

**Keywords:** Agnikarma, Vatakantaka, Calcaneal spur

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## INTRODUCTION

The calcaneus, also known as the heel bone, is the largest of the tarsal bones and forms the prominence of the heel. Its long axis is oriented forward, upward, and laterally. The calcaneus is roughly cuboidal in shape and has six surfaces. It constitutes a significant portion of the foot's skeletal structure, providing posterior support for the bony arches. Additionally, it serves as the attachment site for ligaments, muscles, and tendons essential for daily activities. In Ayurveda Calcaneal spur can be correlated with *vatakantaka*, which is common *vatavyadhi*. In which *vata* is vitiated due to excessive walking or walking in irregular surface, excessive pressure exerted over ankle region and *vata* accumulated in ankle region causing heel pain. (1) The primary symptom is pain around the spur area. Patients often report more intense heel pain after waking up in the morning and following excessive walking. Bearing weight on the affected heel can be uncomfortable. The pain may worsen with activities like walking, running, and lifting heavy objects. In Ayurveda, various treatments are available for such conditions, including *Aushadh*, *Shashtra*, *Ksharkarma*, and *Agnikarma*. Acharya Sushruta have mentioned four types of *Agnikarma*- *Valaya* (Circular shape), *Bindu* (Dot like shape), *Vilekha* (Making of different shapes by heated *shalaka*), *Pratisarana* (Rubbing at indicated site by heated *Shalaka* and there is no specific shape).(2) According to Acharya Sushruta, *Agnikarma* is particularly significant among these treatments, as it is believed that diseases treated with *Agnikarma* do not recur. (3)

## CASE STUDY

A 30 year old female patient came in the OPD of Shalya Tantra having complaints of pain and tenderness since 2 weeks without having any major illness or any associated complaints. She took Analgesics from a private hospital but got only temporary relief. So she came to Shalya Tantra OPD of Parul ayurved Hospital for the pain management.

History of past illness: NAD

Family History: NAD

Chief complaints and its duration:

- Left heel pain, difficulty in walking and tenderness over left heel since 2 weeks
- General Examination of Patient
- Blood Pressure - 120/80 mm of Hg
- Pulse - 78/min
- Sleep - Normal
- Bowel and Bladder Habit - Normal
- Systemic Examination
- CVS - S1 S2 normal
- CNS - conscious and oriented
- RS - AEBE, clear
- P/A - Soft, not tender, no organomegaly
- VAS (Visual Analog Scale): 5

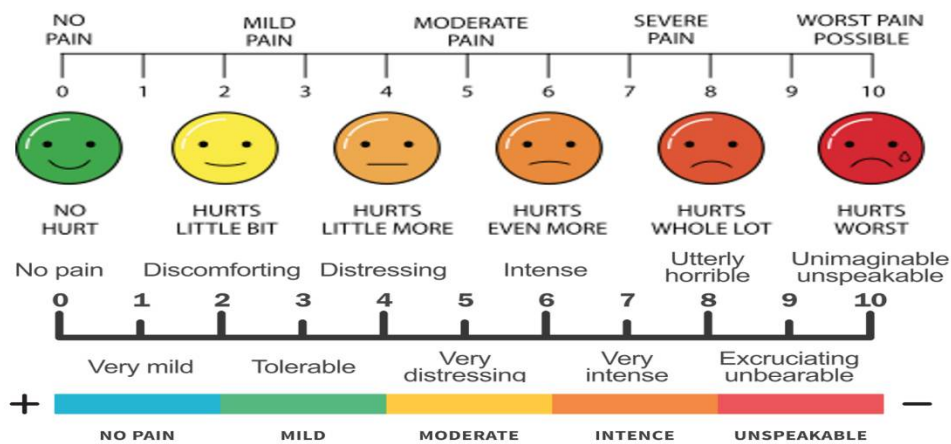


Figure 01 VAS SCALE

### TREATMENT PROTOCOL

The patient was treated with a sitting of *Agnikarma* the same day along with oral medications.

1. *Agnikarma*: on the point of maximum tenderness by *Panchadhatu Shalaka*
2. Oral medications:
  - a. Tab. Shallaki 2 BD After food
  - b. Tab Laghusutshekhar rasa 2 BD after food
  - c. Maharasnadi kashay 30ml BD Before food

### Procedure of *Agnikarma*:

#### *Purvakarma*:

- Patient was informed about the procedure and consent was taken
- Points of maximum tenderness were marked
- *Panchadhatu Shalaka* was heated

#### *Pradhana karma*:

- *Bindu Agnikarma* done with heated *shalaka* on maximum tenderness point at left heel

#### *Paschat karma*:

- After *Agnikarma*, *madhu* and *ghrita*(4) was applied to reduce burning sensation
- Vitals of the patient was checked before and after procedure



**Figure 02**  
Before Procedure

**Figure 03**  
During Procedure

**Figure 03**  
After Procedure

## RESULT

The patient showed significant relief in pain with a VAS (Visual Analog Scale) of 1 after the *Agnikarma* procedure.

Further pain was managed by oral medications for a period of 7 days and patient was asked for a follow up after 7 days.

| VAS (Visual Analog Scale) |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Before Treatment          | 4 |
| After <i>Agnikarma</i>    | 1 |
| After Follow up           | 0 |

**Table No. 1: VAS ASSESSMENT**

## DISCUSSION

In Ayurveda, *Vatakantaka* is caused by the vitiation of *Vata*, along with the involvement of *Kapha dosha*, leading to symptoms such as pain (*shoola*) and stiffness (*stambha*) in the heel region. Acharya Charaka mentioned that *Agni* is the most effective treatment for reducing pain in this condition. (5) In *Agnikarma*, *Agni* is introduced to the affected area by hot *shalaka*. External/ physical heat is transferred to *twak dhatu* and produces *samyak dagdha vrana*. The *Ushna*, *Tikshna*, *Laghu*, *Sukshma*, *Vyavayi*, *Vikasi* and *Aashukari* properties of *Agni* helps to remove *strotoavarodha*, pacifies the vitiated *vatakapha dosha* and break the *samprapti* and reduces pain. In modern terms, the *Agni* increase blood circulation at the heel region, leading to the proper nutrition of the tissue. This increase circulation helps to flush out toxins material from blood and reduce pain and local inflammation. *Maharasnadi kashaya* is prepared from parts of 26 different plants that are used in traditional medicine for a variety of purposes such as reduction of pain, reduction of inflammation, and antipyretic activity. (6) *Shallaki* is best known for its Analgesic properties. Symptoms of *vata vridhhi* was improved due to *Shallaki* as it has *ushna virya*, and according to some classics, due to *tikshna guna* it acts as *vata shamak*. (7)

## CONCLUSION

*Agnikarma* is a simple and affordable procedure that can be performed at the OPD level, providing relief by reducing pain, stiffness, and inflammation. This case study suggests that it can be effectively managed using *Agnikarma*. However, further clinical research with larger sample sizes may be necessary to confirm its effectiveness.

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