

Rajyakshma: Ayurvedic classical literature review.

Vivek Anandrao Shirke

Reader, Department of Panchkarma,

L. K. R. Ayurvedic College, Gadhinglaj, Dist. Kolhapur, Maharashtra-416502

Author Correspondence: vivekshrk@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Rajyakshma is a group of diseases that gets manifested with the vitiation of *tridhatu* and *sapta dhatu*. Due to indulging in *Sahas veg sandarana*, *kshaya*, and *vishamashana*, there is the manifestation of *Ekadasha Rupa*. *Rajyakshma* is considered as king of all diseases. Thus it is termed as Raja (King) and *Yakshma* (decay) which mean of the fraying conditions of huge magnitude. Symptoms of *Rajyakshma* are *Parshwashool*, *Jwar*, *kasa* and *raktashthiwana*. In modern era *Rajyakshma* can be correlated to Tuberculosis. Though there is a difference in the pathogenesis of *Rajyakshma* and Pulmonary Tuberculosis. The clinical picture of both is quite similar. It is a major public health problem in India due to environmental changes, changes in behavior, diet habits, poor quality of life, population explosion, undernutrition, and lack of awareness about the causes of disease and modern lifestyle. Ayurveda can provide the satisfactory health services due to its comprehensive capacity of attending all type of Pathological changes.

KEYWORDS:

Rajyakshma, Nidana, Samprapti, Ayurveda Treatment, Management of Rajyakshma in Ayurveda

Introduction:

Four important causative factors of disease

1. *Sahasaja Rajyakshma (due to over exertion beyond one's capacity)*
2. *Vegasandharanaja Rajyakshma (due to suppression of natural urges)*
3. *Kshayaja Rajyakshma (due to depletion of tissues)*
4. *Vishamashanaja Rajyakshma (due to irregular dietary habits)*

Premonitory signs:

The premonitory symptoms (of *Rajyakshma*) are coryza, debility, nitpicking (or an inclination to find faults where there is no reason to), morbid appearances on the body; feeling of disgust, loss of strength and flesh (inspite of consuming adequate food), craving for women, wine and meat, desire to be always covered by something (feeling of cold), imagined feeling of one's food

being infested with insects, flies, hair,, rapid growth of hairs and fingernails, imagined feeling of being attacked by birds, wasps, and animals, seeing dreams of climbing heaps of hair, bones, and ashes, and dreaming of dried or withered ponds, mountains, and forests- these are to be known as premonitory symptoms of *Rajayakshma* of various types.

Pathogenesis and clinical features

Normally, the *dhatu*s of the body get metabolised (being acted upon) by their own *ushmas* or *dhatvagnis* (transforming enzymes in the tissue elements). From these *dhatu*s, (nutrient tissue elements), the other *dhatu*s (next *dhatu* to it that which receive nourishment) gets nourished through their respective *srotas* (channels of circulation). (For example, a *poshaka rasa dhatu* would nourish the *rakta dhatu*).

Once, however, there is any obstruction to *srotas* or if there is diminution of stable tissue elements like *rakta* or if there is diminution of *dhatu-ushmas* or *dhatvagnis* then *Rajayakshma* is manifested. In such a case, whatever food is digested in the gastrointestinal tract by *jatharagni* is mostly reduced to waste products and very little of it contributes to the formation of *ojas* (nourishment). The patient is depleted of all tissue elements and strength. The patient's stool should be preserved and it is the only source of strength left with him. Because of the obstruction to the *srotas*, *rasa dhatu* becomes *vidagdha* (improperly metabolized) in its own location (heart) and this vitiated *rasa* comes out through the upper passages in different forms by way of coughing. Subsequently, six or eleven symptoms (or forms of diseases) are manifested, and their aggregation is the syndrome called *Rajayakshma*. Cough,

distress in shoulder, change of voice, fever, pain in flanks, headache, vomiting of *rakta* and *kapha*, dyspnea, diarrhea and anorexia are the eleven symptoms of *Rajayakshma* ; or they are also six viz., cough, fever, pain in flanks, hoarseness of voice diarrhea and anorexia. With eleven, six or even three of the symptoms, a patient is incurable if he is losing *mamsa* (flesh tissues) and strength, but he is curable if he is behaving otherwise in spite of showing all the symptoms.

Appearance of sputum

Expectorates resulting from coughing (when afflicted with *Rajayakshma*) contain slimy, thick, putrid, greenish or white-yellowish matter along with *kapha*.

Clinical features of Rajayakshma

The typical characteristics of *Rajayakshma* include a feeling of warmth (or burning sensation) in the shoulders and flanks, burning sensation in hands, and feet, and raised temperature all over the body.

Swarabheda (hoarseness of voice) and characteristics as per dosha affliction

Rakta shthivana (hemoptysis)

Management of Rajayakshma

All types of *Rajayakshma* are caused due to vitiated three *doshas* and hence the physician should treat the patient after examining the degree of intensity of the morbid *dosha* and the vigor of the patient. The physician should carefully observe the status (of patient) – by the symptoms such as coryza, headache, cough, dyspnea, asthenia of the voice and pain in flanks.

Swedana (sudation)

The throat, the flanks, the chest and the head regions should be made to sweat by a commixed type of lump sudation prepared using *krushara* (a type of gruel), *utkarika* (hot poultice), ebony

gram, horse gram, barley and milk pudding; or the head should be effused genially with warm decoction prepared using the leaves of heart leaved *sida*, *guduchi* and liquorice; or the steam kettle sudation prepared with the decoctions of the heads of goat and fish or with *vata* pacifying decoctions should be utilized for sweating the throat, head and sides of the chest. The flesh of aquatic and wet land animals, the decoction of pentaradix or sour *conjee* with unctuous articles may be utilized in steam kettle sudation. The poultices well prepared with cork swallow wort, heart of dil seeds, leaved *sida*, liquorice, saccharine flag cooked meat, white yam, radish, the flesh of aquatic and wet land creatures and commixed with all the four kinds of unctuous articles should be applied to persons suffering from pain applied to persons suffering from pain in the head, side of the chest and shoulder region.

Alepana (local applications)

Dil, liquorice, costus, Indian valerian and sandalwood with ghee make an effective curative for pain in the head, sides of the chest and shoulder regions.

1. Heart leaved *sida*, Indian groundsel, *til*, ghee, liquorice and blue water-lily;
2. gum
, *guggulu*, *deodar*, sandalwood, fragrant poon and ghee;
3. climbing asparagus, heart leaved *sida*, white yam, drumstick and hog's weed;

climbing asparagus, milky yam, ginger grass, liquorice and ghee: these four groups of drugs, described one in each half verse for preparation of application are propitious in conditions of pain in the head, side of the chest

External applications

The application of Himalayan cherry, cuscus grass and sandal wood with ghee is salutary; or the application of scitch grass, liquorice, Indian madder and fragrant poon soaked in ghee; or the application composed of tubers of white lotus chaste tree, red lotus, fragrant poon, blue water lily, rushnut and milky yam with ghee. Inunction with the compound sandal oil or ghee processed for hundred times and affusion with milk or liquorice water are recommended. Effusion with cold rainwater or the sandalwood group should be given. Thus the pacification treatment has been described..

Treatment of burning sensation

Medicinal pacification measures described earlier (in *Jwara Chikitsa*) are employed with ghee for the treatment of fever and burning sensations in the cases of patients suffering from *Rajayakshma*.

Treatment of productive cough/excessive expectoration and vomiting

In cases of excessive expectoration of phlegm in a strong patient and kapha dominant condition, he should be treated with emesis by a draught of milk mixed with emetic nut or with liquorice decoction mixed with emetic nut, or gruel prepared with emetic drugs and mixed with ghee. And after proper emesis, light diet along with digestive stimulants should be given in meals.

The person who is taking the diet consisting of barley and wheat, honey wine, *sidhu* wine, medicated wine and the spit roasted meat of animals of arid habitat will subdue his *kapha dosha*.

When there is excessive formation of phlegm, the *vata* expels this phlegm out of the body. This type of excessive phlegm expectoration should be treated with unctuous and hot medications.



This line of treatment for excess expectoration is also recommended for vomiting. A diet consisting of food and beverages that are *hridya* (liked by mind), alleviate *vata* and light to digest are advised.

Treatment of diarrhea

- Due to the impairment of *agni*, diarrhea accompanied with mucus occurs in patients of *Rajyakshma*. Further distaste in the mouth (*asyavairasya*) and aversion towards food occurs. The following recipes to stimulate digestion, treat diarrhea, cleanse up mouth to enhance taste and counteract anorexia are described. *Indrayava* (*Wrightia tinctoria*) with *nagara* (*zingiber officinale*) admixed with *tandulambu* (rice water), and *yavagu* (thick gruel) cooked along with *changeri* (*Oxalis corniculata*), butter-milk, and pomegranate (*punica granatum*)

Importance of meat in emaciation

The patient who are emaciated and depleted with *mamsa dhatu* (flesh), should be prescribed with dishes of the meats of carnivorous animals intended for special nourishment therapy.

Prescription of wines in Rajyakshma

Only meat shall be consumed in *Rajyakshma* with *madhvika* (wine prepared from honey). The disease does not persist long in one who is well disciplined and with good mental strength (control over mind), who daily drinks *varuni* wine, regularly follows the external cleansing of the body and who does not suppress the natural urges.

The *Rajyakshma* patient shall take *prasanna*, *varuni* or *sidhu* wine or simple medicated wines as per suitability

after taking a meat-diet. Wine owing to its qualities of quickly acting, hot potency, cleansing effect, and subtle action, churns up obstructions in the orifices of the body channels and soon dilates them. As a result of this re-establishment of the liberation of circulation in the vessels, all the seven body- elements get nourished, and the wasting due to *Rajyakshma* soon gets cured.

Lifestyle treatments

The consumptive patient should then adorn himself with perfumes, flower garlands, habiliments and ornaments, touch auspicious articles, worship the gods, the *Brahmins* and the *Vaidya*. He should eat suitable food and drink with favorite color, taste, feel and odor, prepared by agreeable persons and leading to comfort.

Those grains, which are a year old, are to be utilized in the preparation of food for the patients of *Rajyakshma*. Those which are light to digest, which have not lost their nutritive quality and which are dainty, fragrant and virilific, are the most wholesome. The *Rajyakshma* patients, in order to amend their vigor and flesh must utilize those articles that are prescribed as wholesome in the treatment of *kshata-kshina*. It is a recourse to inunction (applying oil), massage, congenial and untorn garments, effusions, baths immersion baths, internal and external cleansing which are congruous to the prevailing season, enemata, milk ghee, meat-foods cooked rice commixed with meat juices, suitable wines, delectable perfumes, optical discernment of friends, comely things and adolescent women, the congenial sound of musical compositions and the musical instruments, cheering and comforting words, constant accommodation to preceptors and elders, practice of *brahmacharya*, charity,

austerity, worship of the gods, truth, rectitudinous, conduct, auspicious rites, nonviolence and deference to the physician and Brahmins, that one gets liberated from *Rajyakshma*, the king of disease. The patient desirous of regaining his health should perform the same spiritual therapies enjoined by the *vedas* as those by the performance of which this king of diseases was subdued in the first instance.

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