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Pragmatic approach of *Ayurveda* in long-Covid-19 management:

A case study

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ABSTRACT:

Although most people with COVID-19 get better within weeks of illness, some people experience post-COVID condition. Long-COVID is a post-COVID condition, is also known as Long-Haul-COVID / post COVID syndrome (PCS). It is estimated that 10 - 30% of patients might experience Long-COVID after recovering. It is incredibly frustrating and impacts the health, employment status and overall quality of life. There is a significant interest in medication to treat Long-COVID. Data about the safety and benefit of medications and supplements is currently insufficient and more research is needed.

According to Ayurveda, LONG COVID can be interpreted as *Aptarpanjanya Vikara* (disease) caused by *Vatapittaprakop*, *Dhatu-kshaya* and *Bala-kshaya*. Such condition can be treated mainly by *Vatapitta Shamak*, *Brimhana* and *Resayan Chikitsa*.

A 14 years old male patient diagnosed as Long-COVID reported to my OPD with complaints of low grade fever,

fatigue, multiple joint pain, muscle pain since 4-months. Also, he experienced worsening of systems after physical or mental activity. He was treated at OPD level with *Suvarnamalini Vasant Ras*, *Drakshadi Kashayam* and *Guduchisiddha Ghrut*. *Abhyanga* with *Chandanadi Taila* was also advised. The treatment over the period of three months resulted in complete relief. Thus the Ayurvedic treatment was found to be effective in managing Long-COVID.

KEYWORDS: Long-COVID, *Dhatu-Kshaya*, *Aptarpan*, *Brimhana*, *Rasayan*.

INTRODUCTION:

Public discourse on Covid-19 has largely centered around those with severe or fatal illness [1]. However recent studies show that a growing number of patients with initially mild Covid-19 will experience prolonged symptoms [2,3], the profile and timeline of which remains uncertain [4,5,6,7,8,9]. Early in the course of the pandemic, patients identified this trend, referring to themselves as “Long-Haulers” and the prolonged illness as “Long-COVID”

[10]. It is defined as a collection of symptoms that develop during or following a confirmed or suspected case of Covid-19, and which continue for more than 28-days. Common signs and symptoms that linger over time include fatigue, shortness of breath, cough, joint pain, muscle pain, chest pain, memory or sleep problems, palpitation, fever, and dizziness on standing and worsened symptoms after physical or mental activities. According to a research study done by CDC (Centre for Disease Control) the patients with Long-COVID / post-COVID syndrome had worse reported physical health, endurance, function and pain compared to patients with cancer. It is a condition not just limited to fatigue and shortness of breath. The numerous symptoms come together to affect what is really most important the ability to live life. In spite of extensive research, Modern Medical Science is still unable to provide a satisfactory solution to this condition.

Ayurveda is the science based on the concept of functional understanding. Though Long-COVID is a new condition but can be interpreted as *Aptarpanjanya Vikara*. The present case study is of a Long-COVID managed through Ayurvedic principles of *Jeerna Jwara*.

AIM & OBJECTIVES:

To evaluate efficacy of Ayurvedic management in Long-COVID.

CASE-HISTORY:

This is a case of 14-years old boy diagnosed as Long-COVID (since 4-months). He reported in my OPD with

chief complaints of low grade fever, fatigue, multiple joint pain, muscle pain since 4-months. Two days back he had developed rash on the lips.

History of Presenting Illness:

Patient suffered with fever and sore throat and his RT-PCR report for Covid-19 came positive on 26th April 2021. He fully recovered from the infection in just 5-days. After 10-days of recovery, patient again started having low grade fever (100.2 °F) and fatigue. Patient also suffered with recurrent mouth ulcers. Gradually he also developed severe calf pain and multiple joint pains. He also noticed worsening of symptoms after physical or mental (like watching TV, attending online classes etc.) activities. Patient was thoroughly examined and investigated by his Paediatrician and was diagnosed as Long-COVID. Tab. Paracetamol, multivitamin and complete rest was advised. But even after 4-months there was no sustained relief. Hence his parents brought him to my OPD for Ayurvedic treatment.

Family History: Father had diabetes. All family members were infected with Covid-19 during the same period.

Systemic Examination:

- Pulse - 102/min
- SPO₂ - 98%
- BP- 100/70
- Temp.- 100 °F
- Weight- 34 Kg
- Height- 166 cm,
- Appetite - Poor
- Bowel - Occasional hard stool
- Bladder - normal

- Skin – dry
- Lip – two pinpoint red spots since 3-days on upper & lower lip (Image-1).
- CVS – S₁S₂ normal, Tachycardia
- RS – normal
- CNS – normal

Local Examination:

- Major joints – inflammatory signs absent, extension and flexion of left knee was painful.

Investigation / Lab Report:

- ✓ Hb – 10.5 gm%
- ✓ WBC – 4900
- ✓ RBC – 3.2
- ✓ ESR – 25
- ✓ Platelet - 195000
- ✓ MP- Negative

- ✓ Dengue – NS1 Antigen test – Negative
- ✓ Widal test – Negative
- ✓ CRP – Negative
- ✓ Vitamin D – 14.8
- ✓ ANTI-SARS COV-2 ANTIBODY, SERUM- Reactive (7.35)
- ✓ Serum LDH – 178
- ✓ D-DIMER - <100
- ✓ Blood Culture – growth not detected
- ✓ X-ray Chest – normal
- ✓ USG – normal
- ✓ Urine – occasional pus cells
- ✓ Stool - normal

METHODOLOGY / TREATMENT GIVEN:

Patient was treated on OPD basis and following medicines were advised.

SN	Name of Medicines	Dosage	Duration in months
1.	<i>Suvarnamalini Vasant Ras</i>	125 mg od	6
2.	<i>Drakshadi Kashayam</i>	15 ml bd	4
3.	<i>Guduchi Siddha Ghrut</i>	10 ml bd	4
4.	<i>Abhyang Chandandi Tail</i>	30 ml bd	2

OBSERVATIONS:

After 3-days of starting treatment the pinpoint red spots on the lips started fainting and disappeared completely in one week (Image-2). Calf muscle pain was the first symptom to show improvement in 2 wks. Initially even night sleep was disturbed 2-3 times because of severe pain in the calf

region and used to feel little better only after massaging. This symptom was completely relieved in 4 wks. The patient had severe fatigue. After walking about 100 meters distance, weakness in legs was felt and he was unable to walk further. Also sitting for half an hour was difficult for him; he used to feel tremendous weakness and had to lie down. Fatigue improved

gradually over 2-months. Fever and intermittent joint pain became better after 3-months of treatment. Fever was the last symptom to subside. Tachycardia gradually improved and at the end of 3-months pulse became 88/min. It was observed that symptoms of long-COVID used to worsen with little exertion.

RESULT:

At the end of 3-months of treatment apart from getting relief from Long-COVID, there was increase in weight by 4 kg and significant improvement in the quality of life. Patient was monitored for another one month after complete relief from Long-COVID and treatment was continued for another one month. No relapse of symptoms was reported. He was advised to continue only *Suvarnamalini Vasant Ras* for next 2-months.

DISCUSSION:

The expert around the world are working to learn more about short and long term health effects associated with Covid-19, who gets them and why. Much about the aftermath of the illness remains unknown and there is even uncertainty about the recovery of the Long-COVID. It is incredibly frustrating and impacts not only health but also the overall quality of life.

Though Long-COVID is a new condition but can be interpreted as "*Aptarpanjanya Vikara*" due to *Vatapittaprakop*, *Dhatu-kshaya* and *Bala-kshaya*. Depending upon the condition of the *Dosha* and *Dhatu*, *Shaman* in the form of *Brimhana Chikitsa* can be adopted in treating

Long-COVID. Also *Rasayan Chikitsa* will play an important role in this condition by rejuvenating body tissue and enhancing immunity. The herbal and herbo-mineral drugs selected in the treatment protocol are classical formulations mentioned in *Jeerna-Jwara Chikitsa* and are useful because they are *Vatapittashamak*, *Brimhana*, *Rasayan* and *Jwarahara*.

Suvarnamalini Vasant Ras is *Rasayan*, *Balya*, *Raktaprasadak* and *Jwarhara*^[11]. *Drakshadi Kashay* is described by *Ashtanghridayakar* in *Jwara Chikitsa* ^[12]. Its main ingredient *Draksha* is the best *Shamahara* drug ^[13]. Also all the ingredients of *Kashay* are *Vatapittahara* and *Jwaraghana*. *Guduchi* is *Dahashamak*, *Tikata Ras*, *Madhurvipaki*, *Tridoshaghna*, *Rasayan* and *Jwaraghana* where as *Ghrut* is the drug of choice in *Jeerna Jwara* because of its *Snigdha* and *Vatapittashamak* properties ^[14]. Hence *Guduchisiddha Ghrut* was selected. *Chandanadi Taila* is mainly *Pittavatashamak*, *Dahshamak*, *Jwaraghna* and beneficial in *Jeerna Jwara* ^[15].

CONCLUSION:

The role of Ayurvedic herbal and herbo-mineral drugs in combating Long-COVID has been established in this study. No side effects were reported. This case study will promote further research and help to make an Ayurvedic treatment protocol for Long-COVID.

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TABLE & IMAGES:



Image-1 (two pinpoint red spots)

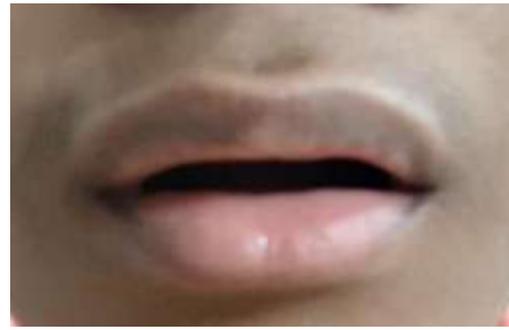


Image-2 (after one week)



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