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ANVESHANA

Cognizance

AYURVEDA MEDICAL JOURNAL

ISSN: 2395-4159

CONTEMPORISATION OF *VEDANA STHAPANA* CONCEPT

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Pain is a distressing sensation in a particular part of the body. It is difficult to investigate and to treat, primarily because of problems in quantification and assessment. Even today the scientists are facing problems in deciding the specific drug, dosage as it depends on sensitivity of the individual.

Ayurvedic physicians always face difficulty in combating pain. Many times the research studies will be limited due to ethical restrictions. In *Charaka Samhita* we can find the formulations named as “*Vedana Sthapana, Shula Prashamana & Angamarda Prashamana*” each having ten different ingredients with different properties and potency for relieving the pain.

To understand the relation between Pain perception and Sensory Adaptation in *Ayurveda*, the term *Vedana Sthapana* needs to be decoded. Phenomenon associated with pain perception can be understood by most accepted, Gate control theory; it is proposed that there is a Gate or Control system in the Dorsal Horn of Spinal Cord, through which all information regarding pain must pass before reaching Brain. The Substantia Gelatinosa (SG) in the dorsal horn controls whether the Gate should be open or closed. An ‘open gate’ means transmission cells (T-Cells) can carry signals to the brain where pain is perceived. A ‘closed gate’ stops the T cells from firing and no pain signal is sent to brain. Three kinds of neurons send signals to the SG; A-delta and C fibers are slow conducting and transmit pain signals; A-beta inhibits transmission of pain signals.

The word Pain, always denotes for a persisting stimuli which is really harmful for the body whereas the term *Vedana* is denoting all the sensory stimuli which are perceived through the sense organs, including the pain stimulus. The important fact is that in *Charka Samhita*, the formulation is named as *Vedana Sthapana*, which can be understood as keeping the healthy status of a Sense Organ in order to perceive its objects unaffected, which is most essential to differentiate the normal Sensory Stimulus under the threshold of Sensory Adaptation and the harmful Pain Stimulus hurting our body.

Substance P is a neuromodulator (a substance that changes neurotransmitter effectiveness) that allows us to perceive a stimulus as painful. Substance P is released from the terminals of specific sensory nerves found in the brain and spinal cord. It is interesting to mention that there are actually some rare medical conditions where Substance P is very low or completely absent and a person feels little or no pain. Having a normal level of substance P is the ideal situation where our body tells us exactly what it should be feeling and pain is perceived at the appropriate level. Probably the herbals mentioned under *Vedana sthapana* category act on regulating the substance P secretion and thus preventing Cascading of symptoms. Further research is needed to understand the exact level of action of *Vedana sthapana* drugs in regulating the Substance P secretion. One can consider the above mentioned conception for developing a working scientific model of *Vedana sthapana* in combating pain.
