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Effect of Panchakarma Therapy in the Management of Avascular Necrosis of Femoral Head: A Case Report

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ABSTRACT

Avascular necrosis (AVN), also known as osteonecrosis, aseptic necrosis, and ischemic bone necrosis, is a degenerative bone condition characterized by the death of cellular components of the bone secondary to an interruption of the subchondral blood supply. It typically affects the epiphysis of long bones at weight-bearing joints. The most common sites for AVN are the femoral head, knee, talus, and humeral head, with the hip being the most common location overall. Advanced disease may result in subchondral collapse, which threatens the viability of the involved joint. Conservative treatment in well-established cases usually leads to poorer outcomes and is therefore not recommended. The choice of surgical treatment depends upon whether the femoral head has collapsed or not. In the pre-collapse stage the principle is to preserve and preferably encourage revascularisation of the femoral head, whereas in the collapse stage the aim is to bring the undamaged parts of the femoral head into the load-bearing zone of the hip joint. In Ayurveda, avascular necrosis (AVN) can be correlated with the concept of Asthi-Majja gatha vata. Additionally, AVN may lead to Raktavaha Srotorodha, resulting in depletion of the Asthi Dhatu. The objective of this study is to introduce an alternative therapeutic approach through Ayurveda that effectively reduces pain, enhances quality of life, and prevents further bone damage, all while being cost-effective. The present case report is a single case study of a 36 year old male patient who was diagnosed with Stage 3 Avascular Necrosis of femoral head done at Government Ayurveda Panchakarma Hospital, Poojappura, Thiruvananthapuram. He was treated with selected Panchakarma treatments. There was significant improvement in the symptoms which was assessed using relevant tools like VAS score for pain, goniometer for range of movement and Oxford Hip score for assessment of function and pain in hip. The present case study documents that specific Panchakarma procedures like Snehapana and Ksheera Vasthi can be effective in AVN and improve the quality of life of patient.

Key words : AVN, Asthi majja gatha vata, Snehapana, Ksheera Vasthi.

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