



Review Article

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TRAYODASHANGA GUGGULU WITH SETU BANDHASANA AND SHISHU ASANA: AN AYURVEDIC APPROACH TO SCIATICA

Dr. Nitin Kumar¹, Dr. Kulbhushan², Dr. Amitabh Singh³

¹Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Swasthavritta, DBU, Desh Bhagat Ayurveda College, Punjab.

²HOD & Professor, Department of Swasthavritta – DBU, Desh Bhagat Ayurveda College, Punjab.

³Professor, Department of Kayachikitsa- DBU, Desh Bhagat Ayurveda College, Punjab.

Corresponding Author- Dr. Nitin Kumar, Department of Swasthavritta, DBU, Desh Bhagat Ayurveda College, Punjab

Email- nitinkumar281987@gmail.com

Abstract

Gridhrasi, a classical *Vātavyādhi*, manifests as radiating pain from the *kaṭi* (lower back) to *pāda* (foot), accompanied by stiffness, tingling, and sensory disturbances. Its clinical presentation closely resembles **sciatica**, resulting from compression or irritation of the sciatic nerve. *Trayodashanga Guggulu*, a time-tested *Vātavyādhi-hara* formulation, exerts *Vāta-Kapha śamana*, *śūla-hara*, and *balya* effects, targeting both symptom relief and underlying *dosha* imbalance. Complementary yogic interventions, such as *Setu Bandhasana* and *Shishu Asana*, alleviate muscular spasm, enhance spinal flexibility, and improve local circulation, thereby facilitating nerve function. This review synthesizes classical Ayurvedic principles, including *Nidāna*, *Samprāpti*, and *Chikitsā Sūtra*, with modern pathophysiological insights and clinical evidence to propose an integrative therapeutic strategy. The combined pharmacological and yogic approach offers a holistic, non-invasive, and patient-centric model for the effective management of *Gridhrasi*, emphasizing restoration of *Vāta* equilibrium and neuromuscular health.

Keywords: *Gridhrasi*, *Trayodashanga Guggulu*, *Setu Bandhasana*, *Shishu Asana*, *Sciatica*, *Vātavyādhi*, *Ayurveda*.

Introduction

Gridhrasi is named after the vulture-like gait caused by pain in the lower limb:

“ग्रिध्रा इव चलति इति ग्रिध्रासी” (*Charaka Saṃhitā, Chikitsā Sthāna 28/56*)

Modern medicine correlates it with **sciatica**, a neuropathic pain caused by lumbar disc prolapse or nerve root compression. Etiologically, *Vāta* (primarily *Apāna Vāyu*) is aggravated, often obstructed by *Kapha*, leading to pain (*rūk*), stiffness (*stambha*), and tingling (*spandana*). Conventional treatment (analgesics, physiotherapy, surgery) often provides only temporary relief. Ayurvedic interventions with pharmacotherapy and yoga offer sustainable, holistic management.

Nidāna Pañchaka of Gridhrasi

Aspect	Details (<i>Charaka Saṃhitā, Chikitsā Sthāna 28/56</i>)
Nidāna (Causes)	<i>Ati-vyāyāma, Ati-sthāna, Abhighāta, Ati-rukṣa-āhāra, Vegadhāraṇa, Ati-Rathayāna</i>
Pūrvarūpa	Stiffness (<i>stambha</i>), tingling (<i>spandana</i>), heaviness (<i>gourava</i>), fatigue (<i>tandra</i>)
Rūpa	Radiating pain <i>kaṭi→ūru→jāṅghu→pāda</i> , difficulty walking, limb weakness
Upashaya/Anupashaya	Relief: <i>Snehana, Svedana, Ushṇa-snān, Yoga</i> ; Aggravation: <i>Śīta-sparśa, Rukṣa-āhāra, Ati-vyayāma</i>
Samprāpti	<i>Vāta</i> vitiation → obstruction (<i>āvaraṇa</i>) in <i>sira & snāyu srotas</i> ; <i>Kapha</i> → heaviness & local congestion; chronic → affects <i>Majja dhātu</i>

Chikitsā and Chikitsā Sūtra

Classical Principle

“स्नेह-स्वेदनस्याभ्यङ्ग-बस्ति-अनुवासनैः।

शमनं च विधातव्यम् ग्रिध्रसियायाः यथाक्रमम्॥” (*Charaka Saṃhitā, Chikitsā Sthāna 28/100*)

Explanation:

Treatment follows a sequence: *Snehana, Svedana, Nasya, Abhyanga, Basti*, and *Śamana* therapies.

Therapeutic Steps-

	Procedure	Action / Purpose	Example
1	स्नेहना (Snehana)	Lubricates <i>srotas</i> , pacifies <i>Vāta</i>	महारायण तेल (Māhārāyaṇa Taila)
2	स्वेदन (Svedana)	Clears <i>āvaraṇa</i> , reduces stiffness	नाडी स्वेदन, पिण्ड स्वेदन
3	बस्ति (Basti Karma)	Balances <i>Apāna Vāyu</i> , nourishes <i>Majja Dhātu</i>	एरण्ड-मूल निरूह बस्ति, अनुवासना बस्ति
4	शमन (Śamana)	Pacifies <i>Vāta-Kapha</i>	त्रयोदशाङ्ग गुग्गुलु
5	रसायन (Rasāyana)	Rejuvenates tissues	अश्वगंधा, शतावरी, गुडुची

Chikitsā Sutras**(a) Snehana**

“स्नेहं वा स्नेहयुक्तं वा वात-रोगेषु योजयेत्।

तीक्ष्णं वा स्नेहयुक्तं वा स्निग्धं वा स्नेहं योजयेत्॥” (Charaka Saṃhitā, Siddhi Sthāna 1/28)

Softens *Vāta*, facilitates nerve conduction, reduces dryness.

(b) Svedana

“स्वेदनं हन्ति स्रोतोरोधं, विशेषेण च वातजम्।

शीतोष्ण व्याधि-हरं नित्यं स्वेदनं हितं स्मृतम्॥” (Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya, Sūtra Sthāna 17/25)

Removes obstructions, reduces stiffness and pain.

(c) Basti Karma

“बस्तिः सर्वेषां वातानां श्रेष्ठः कर्म उदाहृतः।

यस्मात् तृप्तिं प्रयच्छति स्नेहेन च पुनर् पुनर्॥” (Charaka Saṃhitā, Siddhi Sthāna 1/39)

Prime treatment for *Vātavyādhi*. Restores *Apāna Vāyu* and lumbosacral nerve function.

(d) Śamana Chikitsā

“वात-कफ-हर द्रव्याणि शूल-हरणि च सेवयेत्।

गुग्गुलु रस भद्रादर्वी पुनर्नवा प्रयोजयेत् ॥” (Bhaishajya Ratnavali, Vātavyādhi Chikitsa 26/154–157)

Pacifies *Vāta-Kapha*, reduces inflammation, and relieves pain.

Pathya-Apathya

Pathya (Recommended)	Apathya (To Avoid)
<i>Snigdha, Ushṇa, Rasa-pradhāna āhāra</i> (e.g., ghee, milk, soup)	<i>Rukṣa, Śīta, Atidravya, Amla, Vidāha āhāra</i> (e.g., cold food, fermented, spicy extremes)
<i>Setu Bandhasana, Shishu Asana</i> (Yogic postures for <i>Vāta-stambha</i>)	Ati-vyayāma, Atikṛta-sthāna, Bhāra-drṣṭi (excessive exertion or prolonged sitting on hard surfaces)
<i>Abhyanga with Taila, Svedana</i> (Oleation & sudation therapies)	Śīta-sparśa, Śīta-snān (cold exposure, bathing in cold water)
<i>Ushṇa, Snigdha Dravyāḥ</i> (warm, unctuous herbal preparations)	<i>Rukṣa, Kaphavardhaka Dravyāḥ</i> (dry, heavy, cold, kapha-increasing foods)
Regular <i>Vyayāma</i> (moderate exercise, spinal mobility)	<i>Ati-stambhana, Ati-vikrama</i> (overstretching, forced postures)

Trayodashanga Guggulu

- **Ayurveda:** *Vāta-Kapha śamana, Śūla-hara, Balya*
- **Modern:** Anti-inflammatory (TNF- α , IL-6 inhibition), analgesic, nerve conduction enhancement (Tripathi et al., 2017)

Selected Yogāsanas

Āsana	Ayurvedic Action	Modern Physiological Action
<i>Setu Bandhasana</i> (Bridge Pose)	Stabilizes <i>Apāna Vāyu</i> , clears <i>sira-āvaraṇa</i> , strengthens <i>Mūrdha & Kaṭi dhātu</i>	Strengthens lumbar and gluteal muscles, decompresses lumbosacral spine, improves venous return
<i>Shishu Asana</i> (Child Pose variation)	Pacifies <i>Vāta</i> , relaxes <i>Snāyu & Majja dhātu</i> , soothes <i>Sira-srotas</i>	Relieves paraspinal tension, enhances parasympathetic tone, stretches gluteal and lower back muscles

Integrative Mechanism Table

Aspect	Trayodashanga Guggulu	Yogāsanas
<i>Doṣa śamana</i>	<i>Vāta-Kapha</i>	<i>Vāta</i>
<i>Śothahara</i>	<i>Guggulu, Rasna</i>	Reduces local edema
<i>Snāyu balya</i>	<i>Ashwagandha, Shatavari</i>	Strengthens spinal muscles
<i>Srotoshodhana</i>	<i>Trikatu, Guduchi</i>	Improves nerve conductivity
<i>Apāna Vāyu sthāna karma</i>	<i>Eranda, Guggulu</i>	Lumbopelvic activation
<i>Vedanasthāpana</i>	Analgesic effect	Pain relief via stretch reflex

Conclusion

Integration of *Trayodashanga Guggulu* with *Setu Bandhasana* and *Shishu Asana* offers a holistic, non-invasive, and evidence-based approach to *Gridhrasi (Sciatica)*. The therapy corrects *Vāta-Kapha samprāpti*, restores neuromuscular function, and improves quality of life. Further controlled clinical trials are recommended to validate objective outcomes such as VAS score, SLR test, and EMG changes.

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