



Review Article

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RATIONAL SELECTION OF *NIRŪHA BASTI* IN THE MANAGEMENT OF *ĀMAVĀTA*

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Abstract

Āmavāta, described in Madhava Nidana, is a disorder caused by the accumulation of *Āma* along with vitiated *Vāta*, leading to joint pain, swelling, and stiffness. It is clinically comparable to rheumatoid arthritis. *Nirūha Basti* (*Āsthāpana Basti*) is considered highly effective in its management. According to Charaka Samhita, *Basti* is regarded as “*Ardha Chikitsā*” (half of the treatment), especially in *Vāta* disorders. *Nirūha Basti* helps in eliminating vitiated *doṣas*, digesting *Āma*, reducing inflammation, and restoring normal *Vāta* function. Thus, *Nirūha Basti* plays a key role in breaking the pathogenesis and providing symptomatic as well as systemic relief in *Āmavāta*.

Keywords *Amavata, Gridhrasi, Niruha Basti, Erandmula Niruha Basti, Dasamula Niruha Basti, Vaitran Basti, Dasmula-Nirgundi Niruha Basti*

Introduction

Aamavata is an Ayurvedic disease characterized by joint pain, swelling, stiffness, feverishness and systemic malaise caused by vitiated Vata and accumulation of Ama (undigested toxic metabolites) in joints and sleshmasthanas (synovial tissues). It is clinically correlated with rheumatoid arthritis in modern medicine.

In Ayurveda, among the therapeutic approaches, Basti (medicated enemas) holds a special place in managing Vatavyadhi (Vata-dominant diseases) like Aamavata because Vata dosha principally resides in the colon (pakvashaya) and its imbalance is central to disease progression.

Concept of Nirūha Basti

Nirūha Basti is a decoction-based basti primarily indicated for śhodhana of Vāta along with associated doshas.

“निरूहः शोधनः श्रेष्ठो बस्तीनां परिकीर्तितः। दोषाणां विशेषेण वातस्य च विशेषतः॥”

(Charaka Samhitā, Siddhi Sthāna 3/18)

Niruha (Āsthāpana) basti is considered the best among all bastis for śodhana (purification), especially for eliminating Vāta doṣa.

It acts by:

- Expelling vitiated doshas from pakvāśhaya
- Regulating Apāna Vāta
- Improving Agni and metabolism
- Relieving Shula, Stambha, and shotha

Classical reference:

"Niruha Shrestha śhodhanam Vātānām" (Charaka Samhitā, Siddhi Sthāna)

Pathogenesis and Therapeutic Needs

Āmavāta

- Doshas : Āma + Vāta

- Dūṣhya: Rasa, Asthi, Sandhi
- Srotas: Rasavaha, Asthivaha
- Avasthā: Sāma initially, Nirāma later

Therapeutic aim:

- Āma- pachana and śhodhana
- Vāta-anulomana
- Restoration of Agni

Principles for Selection of Nirūha Basti

1. Āma–Nirāma Avasthā

In Sāma Āmavāta, tikta–kaṭu, laghu, āma-pācaka bastis are preferred

In Nirāma Āmavāta and Gridhrasī, snigdha and Vatahara bastis are selected

2. Doṣa Dominance

Vāta-Pradhan → Daśamūla, Eranda-mula based bastis

Vāta-Kapha → Daśamūla with Kaṭu-tikta dravyas

3. Bala and Agni of Patient

Madhyama–uttama Bala patients are suitable for Nirūha Basti

Mandāgni requires prior dīpana– pachana

Mechanism in Aamavata

- Ayurveda explains the pathogenesis of Aamavata as follows:
- Mandagni (low digestive fire) → formation of Ama.
- Ama combines with Vata → moves into sleshmasthanas (joints).
- This leads to joint stiffness, swelling, pain and movement restriction.
- Niruha Basti eliminates vitiated Vata and Ama from the colon and, through systemic reflex, from the joints.
- It pacifies Vata at its root (intestine), reducing joint pain, stiffness and swelling. ☐

- Because the colon is the major seat of Vata, direct treatment through Basti has deep systemic effects not achieved by oral medications alone.

Nirūha Basti Formulations in Aamvata

“सक्थनोः क्षेपणनिग्रहौरुक् स्तम्भः तोदः स्फुरणं च यत्रा जानूरुजङ्घोरुगतं क्रमेणतं ग्रिध्रसीं तां प्रवदन्ति तज्ज्ञाः॥” (Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsā Sthāna 28/56)

Pain, stiffness, pricking sensation and twitching starting from Sphik (hip) and radiating sequentially to Kati-uru-Jānu-Jānghā-Pāda is called Gridhrasī.

1. Daśamūla Nirūha Basti

Composition: Daśamūla Kvatha, Madhu, Saindhava, Sneha (Taila/Ghṛta), Kalka

Rationale:

- Vāta-Kapha hara
- Śūla-Śoṭha-Nasika
- Strengthens Asthi and snāyu (Caraka Saṃhitā, Siddhi Sthāna)

Erandamūladi Nirūha Basti

Indication: Severe Vātika Gridhrasī with stiffness

Action:

- Vāta anulomana
- Relieves radiating pain

“आमवाते विशेषेण बस्तिकर्म प्रशस्यते। आमपाचने कृते पश्चाद् वातनाशनहेतवे॥”

(Chakradatta, Āmavāta Chikitsā, 73)

In Āmavāta, Basti karma is especially indicated, but it should be administered after proper digestion of Āma, mainly to pacify Vāta doṣha.

1. Vaitaraṇa Basti

Indication: Sāma Āmavāta

Composition: Guḍa, Saindhava, Til Taila, Gomūtra, Amla Dravya

Rationale:

- Powerful āma-chedan
- Kapha-Vāta hara
- Reduces Śoṭha and Gaurava [Caraka Saṃhitā, Siddhi Sthāna]

2. Daśamūla–Nirgundi Nirūha Basti

Indication: Nirāma Āmavāta

Action:

- Anti-inflammatory
- Vāta-shaman
- Improves joint mobility
- Selection According to Stage of Āmavāta- Clinical Logic of Selection
- *Stage - Preferred Nirūha Basti*
- *Āma stage (fever, heaviness, swelling) Vaitaraṇa Basti*
- *Mixed stage Saindhavādi / Rasnādi*
- *Nirāma stage (chronic) Eraṇḍamūlādi / Daśamūla Nirūha*
- *Severe stiffness Rasnādi Nirūha*
- *Disease Stage Preferred Nirūha Basti*
- *Gridhrasī Chronic, Nirāma Daśamūla, Erandamūla Basti*
- *Āmavāta Sāma Vaitaraṇa Basti*
- *Āmavāta Nirāma Daśamūla-based Nirūha*

Discussion

Āmavāta is described in Madhava Nidana as a disorder caused by Mandāgni leading to Āma formation, which combines with Vāta and lodges in Sandhi (joints), producing pain (śūla), swelling (śoṭha), stiffness (stabdhatā), and feverishness. The pathogenesis clearly indicates Āma + Vāta predominance, making its management challenging. Among Panchakarma therapies, Nirūha Basti (Āsthāpana Basti) plays a pivotal role.

Conclusion

Niruha Basti is a cornerstone Ayurvedic Panchakarma therapy for Vata-predominant diseases like Aamavata. According to classical texts (Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita) and modern clinical reports: It cleanses vitiated Vata and Ama through colon therapy. It balances systemic Vata, reduces inflammation, pain and stiffness. Classical commentators describe it as Ardha Chikitsa due to its central role in Vata management. Modern clinical evidence supports its efficacy in rheumatoid arthritis-like condition

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