



Review Article

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COMPLICATIONS OF DRUGS USED IN VAMANA AND VIRECHANA ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT ĀCĀRYAS

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Abstract

Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Ashtanga Hridaya have described various complications (Vyapat) of Panchakarma procedures like Vamana and Virechana. These complications mainly occur due to improper patient selection, incorrect dosage, inadequate preparation, or faulty administration of drugs.

In Vamana therapy, the major complications include Ayoga, Atiyoga, Mithyayoga, Hikka, Kasa, Trishna, Daha, Bhrama, and Raktapitta. Similarly, Virechana therapy may lead to Ayoga, Atiyoga, Atisara, Gudabhramsha, Pravahika, Daurbalya, Murcha, and dehydration-like symptoms. Although the terminology differs among Acharyas, all classical texts emphasize careful assessment of Dosha, Bala, Agni, and Rogi condition before administration. Thus, proper Purvakarma, accurate dosage, and timely management are essential to prevent Vamana and Virechana Vyapat and ensure safe and effective Panchakarma therapy.

Key Words - Ayoga, Atiyoga, Mithyayoga, Hridgraha, Jivhadana, Kanthapida, Rakta

Introduction

Panchakarma therapy occupies a central place in Āyurveda, with Vamana (therapeutic emesis) and Virechana (therapeutic purgation) being the prime procedures for the elimination of Kapha and Pitta doṣas respectively. These procedures are drug-dependent therapies, and their success largely relies on the proper selection, dose, processing, and administration of drugs. Improper use of Vamana and Virechana drugs can lead to various Vyāpadas (complications), which have been elaborately described by classical Ācāryas like Caraka, Suśruta, and Vāgbhaṭa.¹

Drugs Used in Vamana and Their Complications

Common Vamana Drugs

Madanaphala

- Ikṣvāku
- Kutaja
- Yaṣṭimadhu
- Pippalī
- Saindhava Lavaṇa

• Complications Due to Improper Use of Vamana Drugs

According to Ācārya Caraka (Caraka Saṁhitā, Siddhi Sthāna)

Caraka describes complications mainly arising from:

- Ati Yoga (excessive use)
- Hīna Yoga (inadequate use)
- Mithyā Yoga (wrong use)

Major complications include:

- Ati Vamana → dehydration, chest pain, fainting, epigastric pain
- Hīna Vamana → persistence of Kapha doṣa, heaviness, nausea
- Ayoga → no expulsion of doṣa

- Hṛdgraha → cardiac discomfort
- Kanṭha Śoṣa → dryness of throat
- Bala Kṣaya → loss of strength due to excessive elimination

Caraka emphasizes that Tikṣṇa Vamana drugs like Madanaphala, when improperly administered, can aggravate Vāta, leading to tremors, pain, and fatigue.

According to Ācārya Suśruta (Suśruta Samhitā, Cikitsā Sthāna)

Suśruta focuses more on drug potency and patient suitability.

Complications described:

- Utkleśa without śodhana → nausea and discomfort without expulsion
- Rakta Pitta → bleeding due to excessive heat of drugs
- Śvāsa and Kāsa → respiratory distress
- Mūrchā → syncope
- Kanṭha and Urah Kṣata → injury to throat and chest due to forceful vomiting

Suśruta warns against using Uṣṇa–Tikṣṇa drugs in patients with Pitta prakṛti or weak constitution.

According to Ācārya Vāgbhaṭa

(Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya & Saṅgraha)

Vāgbhaṭa combines the views of Caraka and Suśruta and stresses balanced drug administration.

Complications mentioned:

- Excessive thirst
- Burning sensation
- Giddiness
- Chest tightness
- Vāta prakopa due to overuse of emetic drugs

He states that improper processing of Vamana drugs can lead to doṣa vilayana without elimination, causing systemic disturbances.

Drugs Used in Virechana and Their Complications

Common Virechana Drugs

- Trivṛt
- Aragvadha
- Dantī
- Drāvaṇṭī
- Snuhi
- Castor oil (Eraṇḍa Taila)

Complications Due to Improper Use of Virechana Drugs

According to Ācārya Caraka (Caraka Saṁhitā, Siddhi Sthāna)

Ati Virechana leads to:

- Atisāra (severe diarrhea)
- Tr̥ṣṇā (excessive thirst)
- Daurbalya (weakness)
- Vāta prakopa
- Mūrchā

Hīna Virechana causes:

- Incomplete elimination of Pitta
- Heaviness
- Burning sensation

Caraka highlights that Tikṣṇa Virechana drugs like Dantī and Drāvaṇṭī must be used cautiously.

According to Ācārya Suśruta

Suśruta describes:

- Rakta srāva due to damage to intestinal mucosa
- Gudapāka (inflammation of rectum)
- Shoola (abdominal pain)
- Jvara due to improper purgation

He strongly contraindicates strong purgatives in children, elderly, and debilitated patients.

According to Ācārya Vāgbhaṭa

Vāgbhaṭa lists:

- Excessive fluid loss
- Aggravation of Vāta
- Burning sensation in anus
- Insomnia and fatigue

He emphasizes that improper anupāna (vehicle) with Virechana drugs is a major cause of complications.

The classical texts of Āyurveda clearly state that Vamana and Virechana drugs are potent therapeutic tools but double-edged swords when used improperly. Complications arise due to incorrect drug selection, dosage, timing, and patient assessment. Ācāryas unanimously emphasize the importance of proper pūrvakarma, madhyama mātrā, and careful post-procedure care to avoid Vyāpadas and achieve successful śodhana.

Madanaphala (*Randia dumetorum*)

Complications of Madanaphala when used for Vamana

Madanaphala is considered the best (Śreṣṭha) Vamana dravya by all Ācāryas. It is Kapha-hara, Uṣṇa, and Tikṣṇa in nature. Improper use of Madanaphala leads to various Vamana Vyāpadas.

Complications According to Different Ācāryas

According to Ācārya Caraka (Caraka Saṁhitā – Siddhi Sthāna)

Improper dose or administration of Madanaphala causes:

- Ati Vamana
- Excessive vomiting
- Tr̥ṣṇā (excessive thirst)
- Daurbalya (weakness)
- Vāta prakopa
- Chest pain and giddiness
- Hīna Vamana
- Incomplete elimination of Kapha
- Heaviness of chest
- Nausea and loss of appetite
- Ayoga
- No vomiting despite drug intake
- Kapha remains aggravated

Caraka states that excessive Tikṣṇatā of Madanaphala may cause Hṛdgraha and Kanṭha śoṣa.

According to Ācārya Suśruta (Suśruta Saṁhitā – Cikitsā Sthāna)

Suśruta emphasizes structural damage due to forceful emesis:

- Kanṭha kṣata (injury to throat)
- Uraḥ kṣata (chest injury)
- Rakta pitta (bleeding due to heat)
- Mūrchā (syncope)

He warns against using Madanaphala in Pitta prakṛti, weak, or elderly patients.

According to Ācārya Vāgbhaṭa (Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya)

Vāgbhaṭa describes combined complications:

- Excessive dryness of mouth and throat
- Burning sensation
- Fatigue
- Vāta aggravation
- Insomnia after Vamana

He highlights that improper saṁskāra (processing) of Madanaphala is a major cause of complications.

Madanaphala is an effective and classical Vamana drug, but its Tikṣṇa and Uṣṇa properties make it capable of producing serious complications if improperly used. Hence, correct dose, patient selection, pūrvakarma, and anupāna are essential to avoid Vyāpadas.

Trivṛt (*Operculina turpethum*) – Complications when Used for Virechana. Trivṛt is one of the most important Virechana dravyas described in Ayurvedic classics. It is considered safe, effective, and gentle when compared to Tikṣṇa purgatives like Dantī or Drāvaṅṭī. Trivṛt primarily eliminates Pitta doṣa and is widely used in diseases like Pittaja vyādhi, Kuṣṭha, Jvara, and Rakta doṣa. Improper use of Trivṛt may result in Virechana

Vyāpadas (complications).

Pharmacological Properties (Brief)

- Rasa: Tikta, Kaṭu
- Guṇa: Laghu, Rūkṣa
- Vīrya: Uṣṇa
- Vipāka: Kaṭu
- Prabhāva: Virechaka (Pittahara)

Complications of Trivṛt According to Different Ācāryas

1. According to Ācārya Caraka (Caraka Saṁhitā – Siddhi Sthāna)

Caraka classifies complications under Ati-yoga, Hina-yoga, and Mithyā-yoga.

Ati Virechana due to Trivṛt

- Atisāra (excessive purgation)
- Tr̥ṣṇā (intense thirst)
- Daurbalya (general weakness)
- Vāta prakopa
- Mūrchā (fainting)

Cause: Excess dose or repeated administration.

Hina Virechana

- Incomplete elimination of Pitta
- Heaviness in abdomen
- Burning sensation persists
- Loss of appetite

Cause: Inadequate dose or poor digestion.

Mithyā Yoga

- Irregular bowel movements
- Abdominal discomfort
- Disturbance of all three doṣas

2. According to Ācārya Suśruta (Suśruta Saṁhitā – Cikitsā Sthāna)

Suśruta emphasizes local and structural complications of Virechana drugs.

Complications described

- Gudapāka (inflammation of anal region)
- Rakta srāva (bleeding per rectum)
- Udara śūla (abdominal pain)
- Dāha (burning sensation)

- Jvara due to improper purgation

He advises caution in children, elderly, pregnant women, and debilitated patients.

3. According to Ācārya Vāgbhaṭa

(Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya / Saṅgraha)

Vāgbhaṭa gives a balanced description and focuses on drug processing.

Complications mentioned

- Excessive fluid loss
- Fatigue and exhaustion
- Vāta prakopa
- Dryness of mouth and anus
- Disturbed sleep

He highlights that wrong anupāna (vehicle) with Trivṛt increases complications.

Special Note on Trivṛt

- Though Trivṛt is mṛdu virechaka, complications occur if used without proper pūrvakarma like snehana and svedana.
- White Trivṛt (Śveta Trivṛt) is considered safer than black (Kṛṣṇa Trivṛt).

Conclusion

Trivṛt is a commonly used and relatively safe Virechana drug. However, improper dose, incorrect patient selection, or lack of procedural discipline may lead to complications such as excessive purgation, Vāta aggravation, and local anorectal symptoms. Classical Ācāryas unanimously stress proper assessment and administration to ensure successful and complication free virechan

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