



Varicose Veins Treatment And Prognosis In Ayurveda Ascompared To Modern

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ABSTRACT

A condition, in which a vein becomes dilated, elongated and tortuous, this is said to be “Varicose”. There are primary as well as secondary causes of varicose veins. The superficial and the deep veins are involved in varicose veins. Modern science provides only symptomatic relief for pain and swelling. The contemporary treatment for varicose veins includes ligation, ligation with stripping, sclera therapy, radial surgical approach and bypass surgery. But these treatments cause reoccurrence of this disease. In Ayurveda, Varicosity is mainly Vatajvyadhi. Pitta and Raktaare also involved in this condition. In Ayurvedic texts Siravyadha (venesection), raktamokshan (bloodletting), jalaukavacharan , veshtana (Wrapping of cloth or crepe bandaging), various panchkarma procedures like Abhyang, Swedanetc and herbs like Guggulu, Ashwagandha, Kanchnar are available which can help in reducing the symptoms and cure varicose veins.

Keywords: *Varicose vein, jalaukavacharan*

INTRODUCTION

Varicose veins is common disease in present era. This is mainly a life style disorder. The common site of varicosity is lower limbs. The basic cause of varicose veins is incompetency of perforating valves of lower limbs. The predisposing factor of varicose veins is prolong standing and increased abdominal pressure like pregnancy, abdominal tumors.

Varicose veins have been described in *ayurvedic* text. It was first described by *AcharyaSushruta* in *Sushruta Samhita*¹. He has mentioned it as *siragranthi*. He has described *siragranthi* with etiology, pathology, clinical features and treatment. He has considered *vata (vyana vayu)* as causative factor.

Pathogenesis according to Ayurveda²:

Varicose veins are primarily a *Vata* disorder, caused by an imbalance in *VyanaVayu*, which creates increased pressure that affects the valves and elasticity of the veins. In fact, *VyanaVayu* is one of the type of *Vata*, which is responsible for transporting oxygenated blood from the heart to the whole body through the arteries. It also governs the flow of deoxygenated blood from the body's cells back to the heart through the veins. Veins have valves and surrounding muscles to push blood back to the heart. They are one way valves. These valves direct blood to upwards direction and then close to prevent backflow of blood. When *VyanaVayuis* imbalanced, then excessive dryness results in hardening and loss of elasticity of veins and valves. Increase in blood pressure causes dilatation of the vein, and then valves are not locked properly for a long time. It makes difficult for the muscles to push the blood in upward direction to the heart. It causes backflow of blood. Now blood collects in the superficial veins of lower limbs, which have weaker muscular support than deep veins. This results in varicosity of veins just beneath the skin surface. Because of this, the blood gets

accumulated in those veins. It causes ulcers in varicose veins due to imbalance in *Ranjaka Pitta*. *Pitta dosha* is *ushna* and *tikshna* in nature and it maintains metabolic and hormonal functioning. *Ranjaka pitta* is one of the *subdoshas* of *Pitta*, it purifies the blood. *Ranjaka Pitta* is present in liver and spleen and it is responsible for composition of blood and for distribution of nutrition to the cells and the tissues through the blood. If *Ranjaka Pitta* is imbalanced, the blood gets impure when associated with *Ama* (metabolic toxins), thereby becoming thick and sluggish, thus contributing to ulcers in varicose veins. Primary cause of varicose veins is poor blood circulation (as governed by *Vyana Vayu*) and ulcers are the secondary complication caused by impure blood (as governed by *Ranjaka Pitta*). According to the ayurvedic samhitas e.g., *Astanga Hrdayam*³ which says that 'if the one who dip their feet in cold water immediately after excessive exercise causes sudden decrease in temperature to the warm legs. As a result, *Vata Dosha* imbalance will occur (prakopawastha of *vata dosha*), after which sudden constriction of warm veins occurs, which leads to formation of varicose veins.

Sign and symptoms^{3,4}:

- Heaviness (*Gowrava*), burning sensation (*Daha*), aching pain (*Toda*), tiredness (*Ayasa*), discoloration of veins or skin (*Krishnaraktasira*), numbness (*Sada*) or pain in legs which gets worse after prolonged standing or sitting.
- Appearance of the spider or tortuous veins (*Grathithasira*)
- Swelling in legs and ankle (*Padasotha*), Itching over the vein (*Kandu*).
- At later stage Varicose ulcers are common at varicose vein and usually aren't a sign of serious problem. But in many cases, varicose veins can be a sign of blockage in the deeper veins called DVT (deep vein thrombosis).

Ayurvedic approach for varicose veins:

In case of any disease first we have to avoid the causes which are responsible for the disease, called as *Nidanaparivarjan*. In varicose vein the food that lead to impairment of *Vata* and *Pitta* in the body are to be avoided like – salty and spicy food, dry and junk food. Prolonged standing must be avoided because it is main cause for this disease.

In *Ayurveda* herbs and herbal formulations, dietary changes and lifestyle modification appear to work by

strengthening the walls of veins, other vessels and promote an healthy venous circulation in the body. They primarily relieve symptoms like pain, heaviness. The main line of treatment is to pacify aggravated *Vata*, *Pitta dosha* and *Raktadhatu*. *Ayurvedic* treatments include internal herbal health supplements and external treatments procedures.

Herbs which can be used are pure *Guggulu* (Commiphoramukul), *Neem* (*Azadirachta indica*), *Kanchanara* (*Bauhinia mvariegata*), *Nagakesar* (*Mesuaferrea* Linn.), *Amalaki* (*Embelica officinalis*), *Bala* (*Sidacordifolia* Linn.), *Shatavari* (*Asparagus racemosus* Willd.), *Vidari* (*Puerariatuberosa* DC), *Arjuna* (*Terminalia arjuna*), *Mandukparni* (*Centella asiatica*), *Daruharidra* (*Berberis aristata*), and *Ashwagandha* (*Withania somnifera*)⁵.

Common herbal preparations which are effective in varicose veins are *Triphalaguggulu*, *Punarnavadi guggulu*, *Chandraprabhavati*, *Manjishtadivati*, *Arogyavardhinivati*. These all preparations are *tridoshshamak* specially *vatashamak*, anti-inflammatory, diuretic, blood purifier, wound healing which ultimately helps in reducing discomfort of varicose veins.

Ayurvedic external treatments⁶:

- **Abhyanga** (Gentle massage or Application of oil) Daily application of medicated oils around the affected part helps to reduce pain, swelling and it improves blood circulation like *Sahachar* oil, *Pinda* oil. *Sahachar* oil is most effective oil.
- **Swedana** (giving steam to body)- *Patrapindasweda* make blood flow smoothly in upward direction.
- **Upnaha and basti karma** with *Vatagnadravya* pacify *vata dosha*. Like *nirgundi*, *dashmool*, *guggulu*, etc.
- **Avagahan karma** (Dipping the legs in) *Erandtaila* and *Dashmoolkwath*.
- **Udvartan karma** with the help of mudga ash and Ghrita mixed cotton seeds.
- Local application of powdered form of black cumin and *kampillak* mixed with *ghee*.
- **Parasurgical procedures**
- **Siravedhana** (Venesection) reduces local engorgement of the pressure and helps in better blood circulation, and preserves valve competency and elasticity of the vein walls.
- **Jaloukavacharana** (Leech therapy) is a blood-letting therapy with the help of leech application

on the affected part. This procedure improves blood circulation. It declines pressure on veins and the surrounding areas, so that elastic recoiling of veins are maintained and over dilatation also prevented. The leech's saliva has anticoagulant, antibacterial and anaesthetic property.⁷

Also certain yoga postures such as Sarvangaasana, Navasana, Shirasasana and Pawanmuktasana⁸ etc are helpful in restoring normal drainage of blood from the legs.

Pathogenesis according to modern⁹

Varicose veins mostly occur due to incompetence of their valves. It occurs commonly in those whose works demand standing for long hours e.g. conductors, drivers, policeman etc. Varicosity may also be secondary, predisposed by any obstruction which hampers venous return e.g. tumors, pregnancy, loaded colon, retroperitoneal fibrosis, ascites. Under normal conditions the blood from the superficial venous system is passed to the deep veins through the competent perforators and from deep veins the blood is pumped up to the heart by muscle pump, competent valves and negative intrathoracic pressure. In varicose vein this mechanism breaks down, either due to destruction of the valves of deep veins or of the perforators or of the superficial venous system the blood becomes stagnated in the superficial veins which become the pray of 'high pressure leaks' and thus becomes distended and tortuous to become varicose veins.

Modern approach for varicose vein⁹:

Three modes of treatments available:

- A. Palliative treatment:** Avoidance of prolonged standing, use of crepe bandage or elastic stockings, limb elevation, exercise.
- B. Operative treatment:** Ligation and ligation with stripping.
- C. Fegan's injection and compression treatment.**
- D. Endothermal Ablation, Endovenous Ablation.**

Drawbacks of modern treatment:

Stripping damages to the sural nerves, cause numbness and tingling sensation in limbs. Short saphenous vein stripping causes bruising and injury to sensory nerve and in post thrombotic condition more chances of reoccurrences.

CONCLUSION:

Once the valves are deranged it is very difficult to bring them in natural form. In contemporary medicine they have tried to treat surgically like stripping, by pass etc. But the reoccurrence will occur and the cure is not permanent.

As per *Ayurveda* treatment it not only reduces discomfort, venous insufficiency but also help in healing of varicosity by controlling *Vyanavata* and *Ranjaka pitta* the main cause. Henceforth *Ayurvedic* treatment regimen can give more promising result for varicose veins.

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