

## Concept of Kshavathu – A Review

### Abstract

Individuals with kshavathu for chronic period develop long standing complications which affect the immune system and respiratory diseases. Poor life style habituates such as physical inactivity, exposure to mist, wind, dust, sleep disruption increase are the factors responsible for nasal disorder symptoms and its severity. Allergic rhinitis is an IgE mediated immune response, it is also important to have an anti-allergic effect so as to make the patient symptom free for longer duration. Attempt is made that allergic rhinitis features are related to kshavathu where paroxysmal sneezing is the crucial feature. Kshavathu not only indicates simple sneezing but a vast pathology exists behind this clinical condition. Kshavathu related uncertainty trouble the patients in day today life so its need to understand and identify the interventions that could help in managing the risk factors, especially with healthy individual who are at risk of immune impairment. The evidence of Ayurveda protocol includes nasya( nasal drops) and internal medication are possible interventions to reduce the risk of complications and improve immune response. Treatment modality which emphasis the resistance of nasal mucosa to the pathogens and there by the patient will be symptom free. Nasya with vata kapha hara medication and internal medicine which addresses both the factors agni and elimination of the doshas should be administered. Therefore, this review paper attempts to explain various consequences of Kshavathu mentioned in classic texts and also enlists the management and its complications.

Keywords: Sneezing, Brimshathu, Brishakshavam

### Introduction

Allergic rhinitis is the most common condition where IgE mediated response of nasal mucosa to air borne allergens, affecting 20% and 47 % respectively, if one or both parents suffer from allergic factors the prevalence will increase. It is a common type of chronic

rhinitis. Past year allergic rhinitis is affecting the nose and nasal pathways, but recent evidence indicates that it affect the entire airway and respiratory tract. Ciliated epithelium which is present in both airways consists of goblet cells which secrete mucous, filter the incoming air and protect the structures. Sub mucosa of both tracts has mucous gland and inflammatory cells. Evidence shows the allergen present in upper airway will affect the lower airways lead to inflammatory condition <sup>[1]</sup>. Severe allergic rhinitis has been associated with significant impairments in quality of life, sleep and work performance. When the person suffers from allergic manifestation, improper medication and irregular dietary habits lead the disease into a chronic phase. This chronicity is difficult to manage completely. Clinically acute and late phase of allergic response are seen. Acute phase within 5 – 30min, consist of sneezing, rhinorrhoea and nasal blockage. Late phase 2-8hours after exposure to allergen lead to swelling, congestion and thick secretion of nasal mucosa. Allergic sign are manifested in structures like eye, ear, pharynx and larynx. Finally it leads to complications like recurrent sinusitis, nasal polyps, serous otitis media and bronchial asthma <sup>[2]</sup>. As practically 20% of population suffer from allergy one or another sometime in life. Avoidance of allergen, Antihistamines, oral and Topical corticosteroids, Immunotherapy is the management which needs longer duration. Whereas the acute phase of allergic rhinitis symptoms are compare with kshavathu in classic and attempt is made to explain the dosha dusti and treatment protocol to get relief from symptoms. Kshavathu is one of the most common clinical presentations in a general consultation. It is enumerated as one among the nasarogas in Brihatrayees. Acharya Charaka and Susrutha termed as Kshavathu while Vagbhatacharya termed it as Brisha kshavam, and to be understood purely on yukthi basis. Because the term *Brishakshavathu* itself denoting repeated sneezing. So, a single vega presentation of sneezing should not be considered as a clinical condition and also the kshavathu mentioned in the navaprathisyaya also not to be taken in to account. For some individuals, prior to sneezing there will be some pricking type of pain inside the nasal cavity and then emerge the output sneezing. Sometimes, the discharge will be there from nose and eyes. More often it may exist for some time or even more. So, the kshavathu explained in thridoshaja pratisyaya should be considered and treatment should be advocated accordingly <sup>[3]</sup>. Various factors like pollution, global warming, seasonal variation, use of junk foods will lead to Kshavathu in human beings. Contemporary approach will not be a complete cure or satisfactory to patients always, so classical medicine are economically cost effective and rectify to break pathogenesis with better relief of clinical features and gradually preventing complication.

## Aim of the study

This review study has been undertaken with the following aim and objectives.

1. To review the literature related to the concept of kshavathu available in different Ayurveda classics
2. To explore the treatment principles regarding the concepts of kshavathu found in different classical text

## Materials and methods

Extensive literary work been conducted with the help of different Ayurveda classical texts such as Charak Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Astanga Hridayam, yogaratnakara and bhaishaja ratnavali. Literary material also included references regarding the concepts of kshavathu along with its management available in the Ayurveda classics. Different electronic databases such as Pub Med, Google Scholar etc., and different online and print journals were also used as the source of data collection during the study.

## Review on Kshavathu

Kshavathu – ksu + athu means sneezing, Ksavathu (sneezing) is a disease where in sneezing is the crucial feature. Inhaling strong smell like chillies, tobacco , exposure to sunrays , inserting threads, grass etc. in to the nose and other causes which aggravates vata, when the cartilage of the nose gets scratched, vata getting obstructed , moves upwards to *sringataka* (Shiromarma) and getting dislodges from that spot , gives rise to too much of sneezing, Bhirsaksava also known as kshavathu. This is the samprapthi explained by Vagbatacharya<sup>[4]</sup>. Charaka, when the vata residing overhead deviated its path and reach nasasritha marma it causes intense sneezing<sup>[5]</sup>. Susrutha explained Kshavathu is of 2 types doshaja and aganthuja Kshavathu.

Table 1. Samanya nidana of Doshaja kshavathu<sup>[6]</sup>

Aharaj & Viharaja Nidana	Vagbhata	Sushruta	Charaka
<i>Ajeerna, Sheeta Ambu</i>	-	-	+
<i>Ati Ambupana</i>	+	-	-
<i>Vega Sandharana, Rajah Sevan, Dhooma Sevana</i>	+	+	+

<i>Ratri jagarana, Ati Divaswapana</i>	+	-	+
<i>Avasyaya</i>	+	+	+
<i>Ati Jala Krida, Neechaatiucchaupadhan, peethana anyana varina</i>	+	-	-

Doshaja kshavathu (due to imbalance in the doshas) is chronic in origin caused due to imbalance in the doshas. The vitiated vata and kapha doshas gets lodged in the nose due to sroto-vaigunya caused by indulgence in the causative factors of nasa roga. The aggravated doshas settled in nasa vitiate the vital points i.e. the marmas and exhibits the symptom of the disease i.e. sneezing<sup>[7]</sup>. Due to paroxysmal sneezing there will be altered in nasal secretion leads to nasal blockage. In this chronic stage, the agni (digestive fire) is impaired and leads to accumulation large amount of Ama (unmetabolized waste which cannot be used by the body). Aganthuja kshavathu is due to usage of strong/pungent smelling substances like chilly, mustard, dry ginger, pippali etc. or due to exposure to sunlight for prolonged time or due to inserting threads in to nasal region causes trauma to the nasal cartilages and Srinkataka marma and causes Sneezing. Sushruta also mentioned one more nasa roga with similar pathology, it is known as Bhramsathu and it is due to the kapha which had accumulated in the head earlier getting liquified by the heat of pitta, flows out of the nose in great quantity often in the form of thick, half ripe and salty liquid<sup>[8]</sup>. Sushruta and Bhavaprakasha only narrated about doshaja and aganthuja kshavathu and treatment also should be considered accordingly. Sushruta explain the mechanism of sternutation sneezing as ‘Pranoadanosamonastapravartateshabda’ that means both prana and udana vayu move in upward direction towards head and thrown via nose with sound and that is known as sternutation (sound of sneezing)<sup>[9]</sup>. Differential diagnosis of this condition includes Pratishyaya and Dushta pratishyaya.

### Pratishyaya

Pratishyaya is nasagata roga described as a cause for kasa roga, as a purvarupa of Rajyakshma and as a symptom of Vega vidharaj, Kshayaja as well as Vishamasanaja Yakshma. This disease is also known for its recurrence and chronicity if not treated

from its root. Sedentary Life style like having exposure to cold weather, Air Conditioner and cooler and food habits like consuming junk foods, ice creams cold drinks, curd, sour items like pickles, sauce are the major causative factors of this disease. Creates headache, fatigue, limits routine activities, interferes with sleep and results in poor work performance. Vatadi dosha along with rakta got vitiated due to exposure to Avashyaya (morning mist), Purovata (type of wind) and Raja (dust), apathya ahara viharas resulting in Pratilomagati of Vata and Doshas get lodged over the head leading to Pratisyaya. Samprapti can be explained as follows in which Sama avastha of Kapha/Pitta/Rakta is there but vitiation of Vayu is present. Here the causative factors are mainly VataVardhaka like Vega Dharana, Tapa-Sevana, Manasika. Secondly Kapha/ Pitta/Rakta Pradhana causative factors lead to its vitiation, whereas Vata is in Sam avastha. Finally Vata and Kapha/Pitta/Rakta are individually vitiated by their etiological factors. In all the three types of Samprapti, Gati of Vata (Udana) is obstructed by Kapha/Pitta/Rakta causing its Avarana. *pratiksana syathi ethi pratishyaya* which means the individual will be having perpetual gamana of doshas and there by continuous sneezing along with running nose. This condition is known as Pratisyaya which has vata, pitta, kapha, rakta and sannipathaja variety. Premonitory symptoms are sneezing, heaviness of the head, general body malaise and horripilation. In vataja pratishyaya, along with sneezing, nasal blockage, thin nasal discharge, dryness in throat, lips and palate region, throbbing pain in temple region and hoarseness of voice are explained. Pittaja pratishyaya clinical features are thirst, Fever Furuncles in nose, Giddiness, Inflammation of tip of nose Hot & yellow nasal discharge. In kaphaja pratishyaya the symptoms are anorexia, Difficulty in breathing, Vomiting, Heaviness in body, Sweetness in mouth, itching and Whitish nasal discharge. Raktaja Pratisyaya features are stiffness in chest, Copper coloured eyes, foul breathing, itching in ear, eye and nose. In Sannipataja Pratisyaya Symptoms are sarvaja lakshana, Akasmat vridhishanti<sup>[10]</sup>. Management for nava pratishyaya is Kanji swedana, Amla pathartha, usna ahara, adarka swarasa with ksheera and Guda. Pakva Pratisyaya with shirovirechana nasya, kavala, Gandusa, dhoomapana. Vataja origin praishyaya should be taken ghrita made by vidaryadi gana, pancha lavana ghrita, nasya and ardita chikista such as navana, moordhini thaila, upanaha, nadi sweda. In Pitta and raktaja sita veerya drugs application, nasya thaila prepared out of triphala, yasti, tilvaka, nisa and ksheera. Sushruta explain nasya with Surasadi Gana and Dhumapana because of its Krimighna property. Kaphaja pratishyaya treated with gaurasarsapa lepam, snehapana follow by vama, nasya thaila with patu, vyosa, jiraka and goats urine. In Sannipataja katu, tikshna drugs are used for nasya and kavala. Oral administration of vyoshadi vatakam , dasamoola

kashyam<sup>[11]</sup>. When it's not treated timely may lead to complications and act as a nidanarthakara roga for Dushta Pratishtyaya.

#### Dushtapratishyaya

All the pratishtyaya when neglected lead on to dushtapratishyaya, leading to torment all the organs of the body. Symptoms include indigestion, fever, dyspnoea, cough, pain in the chest and flanks gets greatly aggravated without any reason, produces foul smelling mouth and swelling of the face, drying of the moisture of the nose, opening and blocking of the passage of the nose often, discharge of fluid resembling pus, black and red in colour and nodular, in this fluid long, unctuous, white and minute worms develop. In all of them, the pakwa lakshanas are the feel of angalaghavam, subsiding sneezing, fluid discharge starts to unctuous and yellow and inability to understand taste and smell<sup>[12]</sup>. Sushruta explain nose becomes very moist or very dry again and again, gets swollen sometimes and widened sometimes, there is bad smell during both inspiration and expiration and he does not recognise smell. Sadhyasadhyata of Dushta Pratishtyaya is yapyā or Asadhya. Treatment principles are rajayakshama and Krimi nashana Chikitsa. Varthi should be made with vyosha, krimijit, pootimatsya, flower of agnimantha, aswavit, aswamootram, gajamootram for dhoopanam. nasya, ghritapana, vamana, virechana, dhoomapana, kavalagraha.

#### Discussion

Considering the above matters, in this stage it is important to plan the treatment which addresses both the factors agni and elimination of the doshas. Importance of the treatment to have an anti-allergic effect so as to make the patient symptom free for longer duration. Treatment start with Nidana-Parivarjan (avoiding the cause), along with external therapies oral medication is also necessary which helps to remove the pathology and improves body immunity. Samanya Chikitsa includes, patient should reside in a room devoid of cold ventilation/breeze and depending on the avastha of dosha he can resort for sneha-sweda-vamana-dhooma-gandoosha along with laghu-amla-snigdha-ushana bhojanam and a tie a warm band of cloth round his head to avoid further exposure from cold/windy atmosphere<sup>[13]</sup>. Whereas in vishesha chikitsa for Kshavathu includes Pradhamana nasya, Swedanam follow by snaihika dhoomapana are mentioned along with symptomatic treatment. Nasya is the procedure where administration of oils, ghee and medicated fresh herbs through nasal route. Nasya in which medicine administered through nasal route reaches Sringataka Marma and

potency of drug spreads through the Siras of nasa, akshi, karna and does shodhana of the Shiras. It helps mainly in Urdhwa Jatrugata vyadhi, helps in Sukha Uchwasas Nishwas, Kshavathu, Sukha Swapna Prabhodana and does Shiras- Vadana- Indriya Vishuddhi<sup>[14]</sup>. Nasya purva karma is Abhyanga and Swedana are done. Abhyanga makes mruduta of doshas and swedana brings vilayana (liquefaction) of accumulated doshas. Contemporary science explains Abhyanga increases the local blood supply and Swedana liquefies the mucous. It increases the permeability of blood vessels due to vasodilatation, which makes the drug absorption faster. In Pradhana *Karma*, the drug in swarasa, churna, thaila form is administered into the nostrils in the head-low position of the patient. Administered drugs reach the Shringataka and travel through different Siras, it spreads to other parts of head like Netra, karna and removes the alleviated doshas. Based on drug property, it causes Srotoshuddhi and makes the Anulomana Gati of Vayu (mitigation of *Vayu*). Urdhvanga abhyanga and swedana helps to remove the doshas and brings srotomukha vishodhana in pashchata karma. Various medicated drugs are used in nasya therapy depending upon chronicity of disease. Nasya therapy gives nourishment, pacify or eliminate the alleviated doshas and clear the sinus cavity, ear, throat, and head region. It balance tri doshas especially vata and lubricate the nasal passages, improve voice and perform function of detoxification. The specific treatment modalities like nasya are great advantages in the management of Kshavathu. Types of nasya such as virechana nasya in which dry medicated powders blown into the nose. Bruhmana nasya such as medicated ghee, milk, oil are administered through the nose which pacify vata dosha. Shamana nasya medicated decoctions, oils, juice of fresh herbal leaves are used in this therapy<sup>[15]</sup>.

Shuntyadi taila nasyam which has sunthi, kusta, kana, vella, draksa drugs are indicated. Even though it is theekshna in nature, taila moorchanam with specific medicines make this oil compatible for the Vata kapha condition<sup>[16]</sup>. Pippalayadi thaila which contain sunthi, kusta, kana, bilwa, draksa is used for nasya proyaga, chitraka Haritaki which is capable to promote the power of digestion which will be given internally in upper respiratory conditions<sup>[17]</sup>. Bhavaprakasha explain kshavathu nasaka thaila which is made up of decoction with dried sunthi, kushta, kana, bark of bilva and raisins(335g each). Prepare kalka out of the same ingredients by taking them in measure of 20g each add 500 ml of sesame oil and same quantity of cow's ghee. Combine all these materials together and the oil thus obtained is used for nasya daily in order to cure kshavathu. Internal medication advised in pratshiyaya chikista is taken such as vyoshadi vatakam, chitraka haritaki lehyam where drugs are vata kapha hara

property. Charaka explain Pathyapathya includes Vartaka, Kulaka, Shunti, Pippali, Maricha, Mudga, Kulatha, Yusha , Ushnajalapana, Langhana, Nirvata Syana and Asana, Chesta, Guru Ushna vastra dharana, Teekshna dravyayukta Virechana and Nasya, Dhumapana, Ruksha padartha sevana, Yavanna and Yusha sevana. Apathya(to be avoid) are Sheetajalapana and Snana, Sheetavayu sevana, Exposure to dust, smoke, Adhika vyayama, Vyavaya and Vegadharana. Ghritapana and Snehana nasya is Varjya in Nava pratishyaya, Anupa mamsa, Dadi, Masha, Kulattha Arvarjya<sup>[18]</sup>.

## Conclusion

Ksavathu is one among major diseases in the present era, which is mainly induced due to the inevitable pollution, climate variation and lifestyle change mainly due to vata kapha predominating . Special attention should be given to ama while treating the disease as improper treatment will leads to complication and more difficult to treat. Severe phase make patient in immuno- compromised state. So Ayurvedic formulations and pathya apathya can be adopted for more effective in treatment. Nasya helps to control acute or sub-acute exacerbation of the symptoms of ksavathu.

## NOTE:

The study highlights the efficacy of " Ayurveda " which is an ancient tradition, used in some parts of India. This ancient concept should be carefully evaluated in the light of modern medical science and can be utilized partially if found suitable.

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