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Prophylactic significance of *Karnapichu* in electronic sound device induced ear diseases: A conceptual Study

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ABSTRACT:

In present era use of electronic sound devices increased dramatically. Mobile, headphones, earphones, neckbands, are the common devices use to enhance the sound experience. Over use of these devices leads to impairment of hearing, tinnitus, otalgia and many other ear diseases. *Ayurveda* has a strong prophylactic protocol to every disease. By following this human being can prevent himself from many diseases. *Karnapichu* is a procedure where cotton wick dipped in lukewarm medicated oil is inserted into the external auditory canal which nourishes the acoustic nerve and improves the signal quality to brain. *Karnapichu* is easy procedure in comparison to others so it can be easily used by the common man suffering such problems on day to day basis. Which helps to prevent electronic sound device induced ear diseases.

Key words: Tinnitus, Otolgia, *karnapichu*, acoustic nerve

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INTRODUCTION:

Ear is one of the most important sensory organ also mentioned as *adhithan*¹ of *srotendriya*² which is *aakash mahabhoot pradhan*³. *Sabda*⁴ is the *Artha* of *Shravanendriya* and it is having *Stotra buddhi (Hearing)*. According to *Sushruta Samhita* the *Srotas* are two types *bahirmukham srotas* and *antahmukha Srotas*. Among them *Karna* has been mentioned under *bahirmukham srotas*⁵. Ear interacts with various electronic sound devices developed in recent decades by modern science now days as our on-the-go lifestyles are increasingly demanding portability. Excessive use of mobile phones headphones, earphones, neckbands, bullets are increasing. Yes, it is certainly convenient to have everything we need for business, entertainment or social networking right at our fingertips; but is all

of that convenience damaging our hearing unfortunately. In *Ayurvedic* classics many procedures are mentioned by *aacharyas* which have both prophylactic and management values. *Acharya charka* has discribed the importance of *karntarpana* as *its regular use prevents from hearing loss* and other ear related diseases.⁶ *Acharya Sushruta* has described 28 *karnarogas* in *Karnaroga Vigyāniya* chapter of *uttaratant*⁷ and various treatment procedures are given in *Karnagataroga pratishedha adhyaya*⁸. *Acharya Vagbhata* said that *bhisaga* should use *shneha dravyas* according to *yukti* for *Bhakshana, Basti, Nasya, Abhyanga, Gandusha, Murdhni Taila, Karna Poorana* and *Akshi tarpana*⁹ With this concept there is practice of administering *sneha dravya* using *pichuvarti* into the ear canal by many

Shalaki vaidya. *Karnapichu* is the procedure, basically evolved from the concept of *shiro pichu* a type of *murdni taila*, where in a wick like cotton swab is dipped in required medicine and kept in ear canal for a stipulated time. *Karnapichu* is easy procedure in comparison to others so it can be easily used by the common man suffering such problems on day to day basis.

***Karna pichu* :**

In ayurvedic classics many references available regarding *pichu* but its description is very less. *Pichu varti* is a cotton swab soaked in medicine, particularly *taila*. When it is placed in *karna*, the procedure is called *karnapichu*

Nirukti of pichu:

Pechatiti Pichu that which spreads is called as *pichu*¹⁰.

"*Pichu sthoola kavalika*"¹¹ A thick swab or a cotton pad is called *pichu*.

Acharya Vagbhata mentioned *karnapichu varti* in the treatment of *pakwa karna*. *Acharya* has told that the puss filled ears should be first cleared with the help of *pichu varti* (dry mopping) and after that the

ear should be filled with *pichu varti* dipped in medicine. It has to be carried out twice daily. But duration of its administration is not mentioned¹² Similarly *Chikitsa Manjari* (an ancient Ayurveda text in Malayalam) mentioned *karnapichu* in *karna roga pratishedha adhyaya*¹³ *Sharangadhara* mentioned *Shiro pichu* as a part of *murdha taila* in the management of all kinds of *shiroroga* including *karna, nasa* and *anya roga*¹⁴.

Indications:

All *karnarogas* where *Karnapoorana* is mentioned for treatment.

Contraindications:

It should not be administered without performing *karna pramarjana* and *puya nirharana*

Procedure:

Purvakarma: The exact procedure is not mentioned. Only *Vagbhata* has given the description that the pus should be cleaned from the ear with *pichu varti* before its administration with the drug. This can be considered as the *poorva karma* of *karnapicchu*.

Pradhana Karma: Ear canal is made straight by pulling the pinna upward and

backward. Then the *pichu varti* dipped in medicine is inserted into ear canal with the help of probe and forceps.

Paschat karma: *Karna pramarjana* (dry moping) and *dhupana karma* should be done. After removing the *pichu*.

Dharana kala: Depending on condition and severity of disease it can be changed once or twice daily.

Benefits of *karna pichu*:

- This is easy to administer and Cost effective.
- The procedure is not messy and is well accepted by patients.
- This uses less medicine and gives more drug tissue contact time.

Example for *karnapichu varti* usage:

- *Nada, Badhirya Karnapichu varti* can be administered overnight, which gives prolonged *snehana* (nourishment) and helps in correction of *vatadushti* in *karnanada* and *badhirya*.
- *Karna srava, kandu, pooti karna*: compared to *karnapoorana, karna pichu* is best in these conditions, as it provides Sustained release of

drug. Longer drug tissue contact time.

- The *karnapichu* absorbs fluid discharge in ear canal.
- As *Karna pichu* provides increased rate of absorption of medicine in the affected area and good healing is facilitated because of increased contact time. Hence *karnapichu* is very effective in the management of *karnasrava*.

DISCUSSION

Probable mode of action of *karnapichu* : *Karnapichu* is a procedure where in cotton wick dipped in luke warm medicated oil is inserted into the external auditory canal which nourishes the vestibular cochlear nerve (8th cranial nerve) and improves the signal quality to brain. In the present study *karna pichu* is used in patients with ASOM, CSOM, and traumatic perforation of tympanic membrane, reduced hearing and tinnitus due to overuse of electronic sound devices.

Purvakarma: Ear canal is cleaned thoroughly to remove the discharge and other debris which facilitates the drug absorption.

The drug: The lukewarm oil used acts as, *sthanika snehana* and *swedana*, thus causes increased local warming, pseudo-inflammation and increased blood circulation there by helping in better absorption. Also causes pseudo-congestion of TM and enhances drug absorption to affected sites.

Pichuvarti: It will facilitate longer residence time of the drug in ear canal, there by increases availability of drug to the tissues. Local action of *pichu* is based on cellular absorption of medicine. It also absorbs the discharge or exudates from the ear which helps in quick healing process.

CONCLUSION

Karna pichu is well defined *ayurvedic* procedure which nourishes the vestibular cochlear nerve (8th cranial nerve) and

improves the signal quality to brain. It is cost effective, easy to use and user friendly. It can be used at OPD level on day to day basis. As electronic device induced ear diseases are increasing drastically which most commonly affects the function of acoustic nerve so *Karna pichu* can be best procedure for prophylactics and the treatment in western system of medicine is highly expensive and many side effects are seen so ayurveda can be the answer for this electronic device induced ear diseases on prophylactic and management level.

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