

Rapid Relief of Shirashula (Headache) through Exclusive Viddha Karma: A Case Report

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Abstract

Shirashula (headache) is one of the most common ailments encountered in daily practice, significantly affecting the quality of life. According to Ayurveda, Shirashula is primarily caused by the vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha doshas* in the *Shiras* (head). Among various treatment modalities, *Viddha Karma*- a minimally invasive para-surgical procedure described by *Acharya Sushruta*- offers instant pain relief through the expulsion of vitiated doshas via puncturing specific sites. The present case report highlights the exclusive application of *Viddha Karma* (Dry Needle Therapy) in the management of Shirashula. The intervention showed remarkable improvement in pain intensity and associated symptoms without any adverse effects, suggesting that *Viddha Karma* can be an effective, safe, and economical therapeutic option for managing chronic headache conditions.

Key words : Shirashula, Viddha Karma, Ayurveda, Dry Needle Therapy, Vata Vyadhi, Para-surgical procedure.

Headache (Shirashula²) is a multifactorial disorder often linked to lifestyle, stress, sleep deprivation and dietary irregularities⁵. In Ayurveda, *Shirashula* is classified under *Shiro Roga*⁷ and is mainly caused by the aggravation of *Vata dosha* leading to obstruction of channels (Srotas) in the head region. Modern medicine explains headaches as vascular,

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tension-type, or migraine-related pain, often managed with analgesics, which provide temporary relief but do not address the root cause.

*Viddha Karma*³, described by *Acharya Sushruta*, is a para-surgical⁶ technique involving controlled puncturing of specific points to release *dushta doshas* and relieve pain. The concept is closely related to modern Dry Needle Therapy¹, which aims at stimulating trigger points (marma sthana⁶) to reduce muscular tension and improve blood circulation. This case report demonstrates how *Viddha Karma* was effectively used as a stand-alone treatment in a patient with chronic *Shirashula*.

Mechanism of action :

- Balances Vata dosha (Ayurvedic)
- Stimulated nerves and muscles⁸ (Modern physiology)
- Relieves pain
- Improves circulation⁴
- Combines Ayurvedic and modern principles
- Effective for headache relief (*Shirashula*)

Case presentation :

A thirty-eight-year old female patient presented with complaints of chronic, throbbing headache predominantly in the frontal region for the past 2 years. The pain as associated with heaviness, photophobia and mild nausea. She had previously used analgesic medications intermittently, which provided only temporary relief.

History: No history of head injury, visual problems, hypertension, or sinusitis.

Lifestyle: Sedentary, irregular sleep pattern,

frequent fasting.

Ayurvedic Assessment :

- **Prakriti:** Vata-Kapha
- **Nidana:** Irregular meals, excessive mental stress
- **Lakshana:** Toda (pricking pain), Gaurava (heaviness) and Sira-vedana (pain in head).

Diagnosis: Vata-Kaphaja Shirashula

Main Procedure: Viddha Karma (Dry Needle Therapy) :

Preparation :

- The patient was seated comfortably with the head slightly bent forward.
- Local site (temporal and occipital region) was cleaned with sterile gauze soaked in spirit.

Procedure:

- Using a sterilized dry needle⁶ 26G × ½ inch, puncture was performed at selected *Marmasthanas* and *trigger points* (especially *Avarta marma* and *Adhipati marma* region).
- The needle was inserted swiftly and retained for about 20-30 seconds.
- A total of 6 points were treated in one sitting.

Schedule :

- The procedure was performed once daily for 7 consecutive days.

Post-procedural monitoring :

After each session, the site was cleaned and

mild massage with *Dasamoola Taila* was done to enhance relaxation. The patient was advised:

- To avoid exposure to cold wind and stress.
- To maintain proper sleep and hydration.
- To consume light, warm and easily digestible diet (*laghu aahara*).

The patient was observed for any local redness, swelling or pain at puncture sites-none were reported.

After 7 sessions of **Viddha Karma** :

- **Pain intensity** (VAS scale) reduced from 8/10 to 2/10.
- **Associated symptoms** such as heaviness, photophobia and nausea were completely relieved.
- The patient reported improved sleep quality and mental relaxation.
- No adverse reactions or complications occurred.

Follow-up after 1 month revealed sustained relief without recurrence.

The *Viddha Karma* procedure works by balancing *Vata dosha*, improving local blood circulation, and relieving muscular tension around the head region. In Ayurveda, Shirashula is a result of obstructed *Vata vega* in the head; puncturing the specific Marmas releases stagnation and restores normal *Pravritti* (Flow). From a modern perspective, dry needling causes micro-trauma that triggers endorphin release and neuromuscular modulation, resulting in pain relief.

Compared to conventional drug therapy, *Viddha Karma* is minimally invasive,

cost-effective and provides quicker results without pharmacological side effects. The success of this case suggests that ancient Ayurvedic principles can be effectively integrated with modern therapeutic understanding for holistic management.

Exclusive Viddha Karma (Dry Needle Therapy) proved to be a highly effective and safe procedure in managing Shirashula without medication. The therapy offers sustained relief, addresses the root cause, and enhances patient well-being. Further controlled studies with larger sample sizes are recommended to validate its efficacy scientifically and promote its inclusion in integrative pain management protocols.

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