

Ayurvedic Management of Karnanada with Special Reference to Tinnitus - A Clinical Case Study

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Abstract

Ayurveda, the ancient science of life, emphasizes the maintenance of health through preventive and therapeutic measures. The ear (*Karna Indriya*), one of the vital sense organs (*Indriya*), is described in Ayurveda along with various preventive and treatment modalities for maintaining its health and managing ear disorders.^[2] *Karnanada* is an ear disorder described in Ayurveda, characterized by the perception of sounds such as *Bheri* and *Mridanga* ^[5] without any external stimulus, and can be correlated with tinnitus in modern medicine. Tinnitus significantly affects quality of life by causing disturbed sleep, irritability, and difficulty in concentration.^[1] This case study presents a 46-year-old male who attended the Shalakya Tantra OPD with complaints of ringing in the right ear for one year, which had worsened over the previous 15 days. The patient was treated with *Nirgundi Taila Karnapoorana*, *Ksheerabala Taila Nasya*, and *Sarivadi Vati* for one week. Marked improvement was observed in tinnitus symptoms, along with relief from disturbed sleep and irritability. No recurrence was noted during a four-week follow-up, suggesting that Ayurvedic interventions can be effective in the management of tinnitus.

Key words : Karnanada, Tinnititus, Nirgundi Taila, Ksheerabala Taila.

Karnanada is a *Karna Roga* described under *Urdhvajatrugata Vikara* in Ayurveda. The term *Karna* refers to the organ responsible for hearing, while *Nada* denotes the perception of rhythmic sounds. According to the Ayurvedic classics, *Karnanada* occurs when vitiated *Vata Dosha*, either independently or obstructed by *Kapha Dosha*, lodges in

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the ***Shabdavaha Srotas***, leading to the perception of abnormal sounds such as *Bheri*, *Mridanga*, *Shankha*, and *Bhrungara* without any external auditory stimulus.^{2,5} Among the three ***Doshas***, ***Vata*** plays the principal role in its pathogenesis.

The etiological factors include ***Pratishyaya*** (rhinitis), ***Avashyaya*** (exposure to cold winds), ***Jalakreeda*** (swimming), frequent irritation or instrumentation of the ear (***Karna Kanduyana***), improper use of diagnostic or therapeutic instruments, excessive or inadequate exposure to sound, and other factors that aggravate ***Vata Dosha***. Clinically, ***Karnanada*** is characterized by the perception of various abnormal sounds in the ear and is also described as a symptom of several diseases such as ***Vataja Jwara***, ***Vataja Shiroroga***, ***Pandu***, and ***Apasmara***.^{2,5}

Karnanada closely resembles **tinnitus**, which is defined in modern medicine as the perception of sound without any external acoustic stimulus. Tinnitus may be unilateral or bilateral and is commonly described as ringing, buzzing, humming, hissing, or clicking. It may be subjective or objective, with subjective tinnitus being the most common type. The condition adversely affects sleep, concentration, mood, and overall quality of life. Common causes include age-related hearing loss, prolonged noise exposure, acoustic trauma, ototoxic medications, and middle or inner ear disorders.¹

In Ayurveda, the management of ***Karnanada*** includes ***Ghritapana***, ***Rasayana***, ***Karnapoorana***, and lifestyle modifications such as avoiding excessive physical exertion, head bath, loud sounds, and activities that

aggravate ***Vata***, aiming to restore the normal function of the ***Shabdavaha Srotas*** and alleviate symptoms.

Patient Information :

Chief complaints :

A 46 year old male patient complaints of ringing sound in the right ear for the past 1 year and disturbed sleep and irritation for past 1 month.

History of present illness :

The subject was apparently normal 1 year ago. Then he gradually developed ringing sound in the right ear since a year. Later he noticed symptom has aggravated from past 1 month associated with disturbed sleep and irritation. He approached allopathic doctors, there ear drops and medicines were given still he didn't find any relief and with all complaints he came to our college hospital and approached the Shalaky Tantra OPD to get Ayurvedic Treatment.

History past illness :

No history of Nasal allergy. Not a known case of DM and Hypertension

The patient was on a mixed diet with a moderate appetite and had ***Madhyama Koshta***. Micturition and bowel habits were regular and normal. The patient complained of disturbed sleep.

Clinical Findings :

On **General Examination**, the vital signs were within normal limits, with a

respiratory rate of **19 breaths/min**, body temperature of **98.6°F**, blood pressure of **110/70 mmHg**, and pulse rate of **71 beats/min**.

On **Physical Examination**, the patient weighed 64 kg and had a height of 158 cm. There was no pallor or lymphadenopathy observed.

Systemic examination revealed normal findings in all systems. Cardiovascular system (CVS), central nervous system (CNS), respiratory system (RS), and gastrointestinal tract (GIT) examinations were within normal

limits.

On **Ashta Sthana Pareeksha**, the patient's Nadi, Mutra and Mala were prakruta. The Jihwa was Alipa, while Shabda, Sparsha, and Drik were Prakruta. The patient's Akriti was Madhyama.

Diagnosis :

According to the signs and symptoms, this case was diagnosed as Tinnitus and according to ayurveda, the clinical features shows a features of Karnanada.

Table-1. Ear Examination findings

Structure	Before Treatment		After treatment	
	Right Ear	Left Ear	Right Ear	Left Ear
Pinna	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal
Pre and post auricular area	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal
EAC	Clear	Clear	Clear	Clear
Tympanic membrane	Intact	Intact	Intact	Intact

Table-2. Qualitative test for hearing by tuning fork

Test name	Before Treatment	After Treatment
Rinnes's Test	AC>BC (B/L)	AC>BC (B/L)
Weber's Test	lateralized to both ears	lateralized to both ears
ABC Test	Normal (B/L)	Normal (B/L)

Table-3. Tinnitus Assessment Index^{1,6}

Before Treatment		After treatment	
Tinnitus Handicap Index (THI)	Tinnitus Functional Index (TFI)	Tinnitus Handicap Index (THI)	Tinnitus Functional Index (TFI)
47	48	5	4

Therapeutic Intervention :

Table-4. Timeline of intervention

S.no	Date	Kriyakalpa Procedure and Internal Medicines	
1.	21/04/26 to 27/04/26	Nasya	With Ksheerabala Taila with proper Mukha Abhyanga and Swedana, 8 drops into each nostril for 7 days.
2.	21/04/26 to 27/04/26	Karnapoorana	With Nirgundi Taila after proper Karna Abhyanga for 7 days.
3.	21/04/26 to 04/05/26	Sarivadi Vati	2 BD A/F for 14 days.

Observations and outcome :

After every follow-up patient reported comfort and improvement. After 1 month patient came for follow-up and patient compliance was good. He has 75% relief. His condition is improved with a sound sleep. Previously he has complaints of disturbed sleep due to irritation, but now he is relaxed. He is asked to maintain healthy lifestyle and stay away from stressful situations.

Non-surgical, non-invasive, and cost-effective management of tinnitus can be achieved through Ayurvedic interventions along with appropriate dietary habits, lifestyle modifications, and adherence to a proper regimen. Acharya Charaka has described *Karnanada* as a *Vataja Nanatmaja Vyadhi*, and *Karna* is considered one of the principal *Adhithana* of *Vata Dosha*. Therefore, aggravation of *Vata Dosha* plays a major role in the pathogenesis of *Karnanada*. As *Sneha* is the primary therapeutic measure for pacifying aggravated *Vata*, *Karnapoorana*, a form of *Bahya Snehana*, is indicated in its management. *Nirgundi Taila*, owing to its *Vata-shamaka* properties, helps alleviate the localized vitiated

Vata in the ear. *Ksheerabala Taila Nasya* is also an effective *Vata-shamaka* therapy and is widely used in neurological disorders, including *Karnanada*. *Sarivadi Vati* is a well-established *Shamana Aushadhi* indicated in various *Karna Rogas*. The combined administration of these Ayurvedic therapies in the present case resulted in significant improvement in tinnitus symptoms, highlighting their effectiveness in the management of *Karnanada*.

The therapeutic potential of Ayurvedic procedures and medicines in the management of tinnitus is yet to be fully explored. Ayurveda can play a significant role in improving tinnitus symptoms and enhancing the patient's quality of life without producing significant adverse effects. In the present case, the patient presented with symptoms of *Karnanada* and was successfully managed with *Vata-shamaka Chikitsa*, including *Karnapoorana* with *Nirgundi Taila*, *Nasya* with *Ksheerabala Taila*, and oral administration of *Sarivadi Vati*. The patient showed marked improvement in tinnitus symptoms following the treatment. In the modern era, unhealthy lifestyle practices and excessive exposure to noise have become important contributing factors to tinnitus.

Therefore, a healthy environment and avoidance of excessive noise exposure are essential. Ayurvedic literature also emphasizes avoiding *Atiyoga*, *Ayoga*, and *Mithyayoga* of the *Indriyas* to maintain their normal function. Thus, preventive measures should be given prime importance, along with appropriate Ayurvedic management, in the prevention and treatment of *Karnanada*.

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