

Effect of Agnikarma therapy (by Kharper) on heel pain associated with calcaneal spur: A Case Study

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Abstract

An essential Ayurvedic parasurgical treatment is agnikarma. Agnikarma, an Ayurvedic treatment, involves applying heat to a specific area of the body to lessen inflammation and, by extension, pain. Since diseases treated with agnikarma never recur, Agnikarma are superior to kshara. By harmonising the local vata and kapha dosha, agnikarma delivers immediate, long-lasting, and sustainable relief from chronic or acute pain.

The patient, a 35-year-old female, had localised, severe, intermittent heel discomfort that got worse when she exercised like walking or jogging. A big, distinct bony protrusion at the base of the calcaneus in both heels was visible on a lateral X-ray. Agnikarma is a traditional Ayurvedic surgical procedure from ancient India used to relieve ligament discomfort, joint pain.

Methodology: *Agnikarma* was done with *kharper* followed by application of oil with 5 settings. Proper follow up was taken for about six months in order to observe for any recurrence.

Observation: As agnikarma was started patient got relief from symptoms. After 5th setting heel pain and tenderness totally redused.

Conclusion: It can be concluded that after *Agnikarma* there is total relief in heel pain and tenderness.

Keywords: Heel Pain; Calcaneal Spur; Agnikarma; Kharper; Dahan

1. Introduction

An abnormal bone growth called a calcaneal spur causes mild to moderately severe persistent discomfort where the plantar fascia joins to the heel bone. The calcaneum, a significant component of the foot's skeleton, serves as the posterior support for bony arches. Additionally, it offers insertion for the tendons, ligaments, and muscles required for daily walking activity. Calcaneal spur resembles with vatakantaka, in context to ayurveda, a typical vatavyadhi. Calcaneal spurs are diagnosed through physical examination and the use of the right imaging techniques, including X-ray, MRI, and ultrasound. Calcaneal spur pain might get so bad that it's challenging to carry on with your usual tasks. The most effective treatment for calcaneal spur control has been regarded as agnikarm, According Acharya to Sushruta, Agnikarma having its own im- portance in treating diseases among others. Diseases which are treated by agnikarma never return [1]. Agnikarma is done by different methods like Bindu, Vilekha, Pratisaran and Valay [2-3]. Different materials like Pipali, Aja Shakrut, Madhu, Tail, Panchadhatu shalaka, Suvrna shalaka, Loha shalaka and Mrutika shalaka

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(kharper) [4]. So, in the patient of Calcaneal spur we decided to do agnikarma. Calcaneal spur is a condition in which Osteophytes (bone spur) are formed on calcareous bone and is characterized by pain during walking, swelling and tenderness over heel [6]. Agni karma treatment is carried out with a kharper. While doing Agnikarma procedure one should not exert excessive pressure unless it will produce Atidagdha vrana. Number of sitting depends on chronicity and severity of pain.

Aim

The present study was carried out to find out the efficacy of agnikarma for the treatment of Calcaneal Spur.

2. Case report

A 35-year female patient Come to the OPD of shalya department having OPD no 2507 on 4.02.2024 having complaints of pain in left heel region, difficulty in walking and tenderness over left heel region for six months without having any major illness. The patient developed pain in left heel a standing long time and after excessive walking. She had taken analgesics drug for 3months but pain was not completely relieved so, she came to our hospital for further treatment.

- History of Past illness: NAD
- Family History: Not Significant
- Chief complaints

Left heel pain, difficulty in walking and tenderness over left heel from 6 months.

2.1. General examination

- Bp -110/90 P-74/min
- Bowel and Bladder Habits-Normal
- Sleep-Normal

2.2. Systemic examination

- P/A- soft
- CVS-S1S2 normal
- CNS-conscious, oriented
- RS-AEBE clear
- X ray finding - Calcaneal spur extended forward

2.3. Procedure of Agnikarma

2.3.1. Purvakarma Patient's

Consent for Agnikarma procedure was taken. The point of maximum tenderness at left heel was selected. Selected site was cleaned with normal saline. Kharper was heated.

2.3.2. Pradhankarma Agnikarma

Done with heated kharper on maximum tenderness point at left heel. Once the kharper gets red hot Dagdha was done at the site marked till Samyak Dagdha Lakshana occurred i.e. Durgandhata, Twakasankoch etc [6]. After that alovera was applied to reduce burning sensation at that site.

2.3.3. Pashctat Karma

After Agnikarma Goghrit is applied at that site for Ropana Karma [7]. Vitals of patient checked before and after treatment.

2.4. Treatment

- **External** 5 setting of Agnikarma given to patient with alternate day followed by Local application of Shatadhauta malahara
- **Internal medication** Mahayograj guggul 2 Bd, Dashmularishta 20 ml Bd for 2 months

2.5. Observation

The symptoms are taken into consideration according to their gradations

Table 1 Grade for pain

Grade	Grade no
No pain	0
Mild pain	1-3
Moderate pain	4-7
Severe pain	8-10

Table 2 Observation during each sitting

Sr no	Sign and symptoms	Before treatment	1 st setting	2 nd setting	3 rd setting	4 th setting	5 th setting
1	Heel pain	8	7	5	4	2	0
2	Tenderness over heel	5	4	3	1	0	0
3	Difficulty in walking	5	4	2	0	0	0

2.6. Observation

- As Agnikarma was started patient got relief from symptoms.
- After 1st setting pain and tenderness reduced.
- After 2nd setting walking tendency increased
- As no of setting increases symptoms reduced.
- After 5th setting heel pain and tenderness totally reduced.

3. Discussion

In this case report, a 35-year-old woman who had three Agnikarma setting experienced total pain relief from her calcaneal spur and acute heel discomfort. Over the course of one year, a half-yearly follow-up was kept, and the effects of the Agnikarma treatment were kept. The subsequent X-ray also showed that the calcaneal spur's growth was stopped in its early phases. Despite the presence of a calcaneal spur, the patient did not report any pain. The Sushruta Samhita (800 BC) mentions agnikarma therapy. This treatment is in practicesince then for various acute and chronic disorders of joints, ligaments and bones [7]. The possible explanations for the effectiveness of Agnikarma treatment may be due to raised local temperature resulting in dilation of local blood vessels which caused efficient tissue perfusion, thereby reducing inflammation and pain [8]. Another explanation for reduced pain is that the raised local temperature of the heel forced the accumulated/trapped vata to move out to the respective channels, thus reducing the pain due to trapped vata. Further, increased Basal Metabolic Rate due to raised local temperature led to better perfusion and thus improved oxygenation of tissues at the site of pain. Improved blood circulation helps in flushing of pain-producing substances from the site of pain and reduces local inflammation.

As per Acharya Charaka, Agni is the best treatment for pain. Ushna (hot) guna of Agni pacifies the Shita (cold) guna of Vayu and thus results in reduction of pain. Heat leads to vasodilatation, increase in WBC, antibodies and exudation of excessive fluids.

4. Conclusion

Agnikarma is one of the very effective treatments in reducing symptoms such as heel pain, swelling and tenderness of heel. Vata and Kapha Dosha are the causative factors for Shoola and Shotha in the heel [9]. Agnikarma is a parasurgical procedure which is useful in Vataj and Kaphaj Dushti. Agnikarma is a cost effective, easy to practice, less complicated,

quick relief treatment that does not require surgeries or hospitalization. This study concludes that no of sitting depends on the severity of the disease.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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