Role of Ayurveda in Management of Myocardial Infarction

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Access this article online: www.japs.co.in

Published by International-Academy of Ayurveda-Physicians (IAAP), 7HB, Gandhinagar, Jamangar-361 002, Gujarat, India

One of the main aims of Ayurveda is to preserve the health of healthy persons; hence it describes means and measure for preservation and promotion of physical, mental and sexual health as well as to prevent the diseases. Ayurveda emphasizes the need of preservation of health of the heart and includes it in the three major vital organs (Trimarma) viz. heart, head and kidney (Basti). Good conduct of life (Sad- Vritta), good eating habits of balanced food, Rasayana (rejuvenation), periodical Shodhana (detoxification) are the general measures for keeping the body and heart healthy. The specific measures for maintaining the health of the heart include avoidance of such factors which cause unhappiness of mind, use of such diet and drugs which are beneficial to heart (Hridya) and Ojas and keep the channels clean (Srotas Prasadanan).

The cases of myocardial infarction (MI) primarily are of two types viz. acute attack and chronic. At present Ayurveda, even its premier Institutes are not well equipped to handle the acute cases of myocardial infarction. Hence in present scenario Ayurveda seems to have no role in the management of acute MI cases, but it has a definite role in managing the chronic cases of MI.

Before considering the role of Ayurveda in the management of chronic cases of myocardial infarction it may be appropriate to discuss its stages and states in the present scenario of its management available in our country.

Advance technology of pin pointing the site of the thrombus and then its cleansing is now available in many parts of our country, but it is beyond the financial capacity of all the poor population as well most of the people of middle classes of our society. However, this technology only corrects the damage done or to be done but risk of developing the same pathology again is very much there. Hence it requires secondary prevention.

There are a large number of cases which survives from the acute cases but unable to afford the very costly managements of modern medicine. Such patients always look toward Ayurveda for alleviating the risk of developing second attack of the disease. Hence Ayurveda should come forward and equipped well with appropriate solutions to help them in their secondary prevention.

There are many patients of chronic MI who are on the drugs of secondary prevention of modern medicine but due to developing side effects they have to take help of other medical sciences particularly Ayurveda.

Secondary prevention also includes taking care of underlying disease such as obesity, diabetes mellitus, hypertension etc., which are being well managed by Ayurveda as evidenced from getting relief by large number of patients of these diseases

Factors responsible for the blockage of the artery such has high bad or low good cholesterol, coagulants (calcium), sedentary habits etc can also be taken care by Ayurveda.

Reversal includes dissolving of thrombus. The drugs such as garlic with Tikshna action have potentiality to dissolve the thrombus as their thrombolytic effects are shown in experimental study.

Magnesium is beneficial for the health of the heart; as magnesium containing drugs such as Abharaka Bhasma (Sahastra Puti), Svarna-Makshika Bhasma etc have potentiality for this purpose, so they may be added in the preparations for its management.

Jaharamohara Pishti is widely used by Ayurveda and Unani physicians for heart diseases. Yashada Bhasma contains zinc which helps in regeneration, hence may be combined with herbal preparations.

Anti cholesterol drugs such as Guggulu, garlic, onion etc may also be used.

Many Ayurveda Hridya drugs have been proved to have anti-oxidant properties; similarly many vegetables and fruits commonly used in Indian kitchens have antioxidant properties, hence may be easily acceptable for using them in daily life. Hridya drugs such as Arjuna, Amalaki, Pushkaramula, Ankola, Bijapura (lemon) have also been proved to have role for managing Hrid Roga.

Medhya Rasayana drugs such as Brahmi, Shankhapushpi having Anxiolytic actions may be used to alleviate the adverse mental factors.

Periodic Shodhana particularly Virechana is a good choice for detoxification and providing relief to heart.

Drugs such as Sarpagandha, Shankhpushpi etc are being widely used by Ayurveda physicians for treating the hypertension.

Thus Ayurveda can play an important role in secondary prevention of MI, hence in Ayurveda Institution specific heart diseases clinic should be started so that research and relief both can function side by side.

Cite this article as: Gurdipsingh (2018): Editorial: Role of Ayurveda in management of Myocardial Infarction. JAPS, January 2018, Vol. 5 (1) page-1