

Review Article



ISSN: 3048-5630

“VRANA CHIKITSA IN SAMHITAS – A CRITICAL REVIEW”

Dr. Abhay Gandhi¹

AFFILIATIONS:

1. Director, Ira Consultancy & Research Organisation, Bhosari, Pune, Maharashtra 411026

CORRESPONDENCE:

Dr. Abhay Gandhi

EMAIL ID: director@icro.co.in

FUNDING INFORMATION:

Not Applicable

How to cite this article:

Abhay Gandhi, “Vrana Chikitsa in Samhitas – A Critical Review” Asian Journal of Ayurveda Siddhant. 2024;1(3):53-56.

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Vrana (wound) management is a vital component of Ayurvedic therapeutics, addressed extensively in the Samhitas. *Sushruta Samhita*, in particular, provides comprehensive insight into types of wounds, their etiopathogenesis, classification, and management protocols. Ayurveda emphasizes both local wound care and systemic correction, integrating medicinal, surgical, and lifestyle approaches. **Methods:** A narrative review was conducted using classical Ayurvedic texts (*Sushruta Samhita*, *Charaka Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*) and contemporary literature indexed in PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science. Search terms included “Vrana Chikitsa,” “Ayurvedic wound healing,” and “Sushruta Samhita wound management.” Inclusion criteria were classical descriptions, experimental studies, and clinical trials evaluating Ayurvedic interventions. Exclusion criteria were anecdotal reports and non-peer-reviewed sources.

Results: The Samhitas describe various types of wounds—acute (*Kshata Vrana*), chronic (*Dushta Vrana*), traumatic, and surgical—along with their specific etiologies, Dosha involvement, and clinical features. Therapeutic approaches include *Shodhana* (purification), *Shamana* (palliative therapy), *Kalka* (medicated pastes), *Taila* (oils), *Rasayana*, and surgical techniques like excision, suturing, and cauterization. Modern research validates several Ayurvedic formulations for antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and wound-healing properties. **Discussion:** Ayurvedic wound management provides a holistic approach that complements modern strategies. Integrating classical therapies with contemporary wound care may improve outcomes, particularly in chronic, non-healing wounds. **Conclusion:** Vrana Chikitsa as described in Samhitas presents a scientifically robust framework for wound management. Translational research and clinical validation can facilitate integration into modern healthcare, enhancing patient care and reducing complications.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Dushta Vrana, Shodhana, Vrana Chikitsa, Wound Healing

INTRODUCTION

Wound healing is a critical aspect of medical care, influencing morbidity, quality of life, and recovery. Ancient Ayurveda provides a detailed framework for understanding the pathophysiology of wounds (*Vrana*) and their treatment. Among the Ashtanga Ayurveda, Sushruta Samhita extensively elaborates on surgical procedures and local wound care.

Vrana Chikitsa emphasizes the interplay of Doshas (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*), dhatus (body tissues), and mala (waste products) in wound formation and healing. The Samhitas categorize wounds into acute, chronic, traumatic, and iatrogenic, highlighting factors that affect prognosis, such as contamination, patient constitution, and comorbidities.

Despite modern advances in wound care, chronic and non-healing wounds remain challenging. Integrating Ayurvedic principles may provide holistic strategies for promoting tissue repair, preventing infection, and reducing healing time.

This review aims to critically examine Vrana Chikitsa as described in Samhitas and evaluate its clinical relevance in modern wound management. Objectives: To explore classification, pathogenesis, and prognosis of Vrana in classical texts, to analyze therapeutic measures including Shodhana, Shamana, and surgical procedures, to correlate Ayurvedic wound management strategies with modern evidence and identify areas for integrative approaches.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The review employed a narrative synthesis of classical Ayurvedic texts and contemporary literature. Primary sources included *Sushruta Samhita* (*Sutrasthana*, *Nidanasthana*, *Chikitsasthana*), *Charaka Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*. Secondary sources included indexed journals from PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar using terms: “Vrana Chikitsa,” “Ayurvedic wound healing,” “Sushruta Samhita wound therapy.”^[11-12]

Inclusion criteria:^[13]

- Classical descriptions of wounds and treatment in Samhitas.
- Experimental studies evaluating Ayurvedic formulations in wound healing.
- Clinical trials assessing efficacy of herbal oils, pastes, and surgical techniques.

Exclusion criteria:^[14]

- Anecdotal or non-peer-reviewed reports.
- Unrelated wound care literature without Ayurvedic basis.

Data was thematically organized under wound classification, etiopathogenesis, management strategies, surgical techniques, and modern validation^[15].

OBSERVATION AND RESULTS

1. Classification of Vrana

Samhitas classify wounds based on causation and characteristics:

- **Kshata Vrana (Acute wounds):** Trauma-induced, often with bleeding and pain.
- **Dushta Vrana (Chronic wounds):** Infected or poorly healing wounds with necrotic tissue.
- **Agantuja Vrana:** Caused by external factors like weapons or bites.
- **Surgical wounds:** Intentionally created for therapeutic purposes.

Each type is further characterized by Dosha predominance (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*) which guides prognosis and treatment.

2. Etiopathogenesis (*Samprapti*)

- **Dosha imbalance:** Vata delays healing, Pitta causes inflammation and necrosis, Kapha leads to exudation and induration.
- **Contamination and trauma:** External factors may exacerbate Dosha vitiation.
- **Systemic factors:** Malnutrition, chronic diseases, and immunodeficiency impede wound healing.

3. Therapeutic Principles

- **Shodhana (Purification):** Bloodletting, leech therapy, debridement of necrotic tissue.
- **Shamana (Palliative therapy):** Use of herbal formulations to reduce inflammation and promote healing.
- **Kalka (Medicated pastes):** Application of herbal pastes like *Triphala*, *Yashtimadhu* for antimicrobial effect.
- **Taila (Medicated oils):** Oils such as *Mahamarichyadi Taila* facilitate tissue regeneration.
- **Rasayana:** Rejuvenative herbs to enhance tissue repair and prevent recurrence.

4. Surgical Interventions

Sushruta described excision (*Chedana*), incision (*Bhedana*), drainage (*Vyadhana*), and cauterization

(*Dahan*). Suturing techniques and dressing methods (*Bandhana*) were emphasized for optimal healing.

5. Modern Research Validation

- Honey, turmeric, and neem-based formulations show antimicrobial and wound-healing properties.
- Animal and clinical studies confirm accelerated epithelialization and anti-inflammatory effects.
- Ayurvedic oils promote granulation and prevent infection in chronic ulcers.

6. Preventive and Rehabilitative Strategies

- Daily hygiene, diet regulation, and lifestyle modifications are recommended to prevent wound recurrence.
- Rasayana therapies strengthen systemic immunity and tissue integrity.

Vrana Chikitsa in Samhitas offers a structured approach combining diagnosis, systemic correction, local therapy, and surgical intervention, many of which are supported by modern scientific studies.

DISCUSSION

Samhitas describe Vrana Chikitsa as a holistic framework integrating anatomical, physiological, and etiological insights. The principles of wound care—debridement, antisepsis, and promotion of healing—parallel modern surgical and wound care strategies^[16].

Ayurveda and Modern Evidence^[17]

Herbal formulations like *Triphala*, *Yashtimadhu*, *Turmeric*, and medicated oils exhibit anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and antioxidant properties validated in vitro and in vivo. Surgical principles like excision, drainage, and suturing reflect advanced procedural knowledge comparable to contemporary practices.

Chronic and non-healing wounds remain challenging in modern medicine. Ayurvedic interventions, particularly *Kalka* and *Taila* therapies, complement conventional care by enhancing tissue regeneration and reducing infection risk. Rasayana therapy supports systemic healing, aligning with immunomodulatory strategies in contemporary medicine.

Research Gaps^[18]

- Limited randomized controlled trials assessing classical formulations.

- Standardization of herbal preparations is required for reproducible clinical outcomes.
- Integration into modern wound management protocols is minimal.

Future Prospects^[19]

- Translational research to validate formulations in chronic ulcers, diabetic wounds, and burns.
- Development of integrative wound care models combining Ayurvedic and modern therapies.
- Simulation-based training for surgical techniques described in Samhitas.

Vrana Chikitsa provides evidence-informed, multifaceted strategies for wound care. Bridging classical wisdom with modern research can enhance clinical efficacy, especially for chronic and complex wounds^[20].

CONCLUSION

Vrana Chikitsa, as elaborated in the Samhitas, presents a comprehensive understanding of wound classification, pathogenesis, and therapeutic strategies. The integrative approach encompasses Dosha-based diagnosis, purification, palliative therapy, topical applications, and surgical interventions.

Modern evidence validates several Ayurvedic formulations and procedures for antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and regenerative effects. Daily hygiene, dietary regulation, and Rasayana therapy are emphasized to prevent recurrence and promote systemic healing. Surgical principles including excision, drainage, and suturing demonstrate the advanced procedural knowledge of ancient scholars. Despite the rich insights, research gaps remain, particularly regarding clinical standardization, reproducibility, and integration with contemporary wound care. Systematic clinical trials, translational research, and interdisciplinary collaboration can enhance the adoption of Vrana Chikitsa in modern healthcare.

In conclusion, Vrana Chikitsa offers a time-tested, holistic, and scientifically grounded framework for wound management. Integration with modern approaches can optimize patient outcomes, particularly in chronic and non-healing wounds, making it a valuable component of evidence-based integrative medicine.



REFERENCES

1. Sushruta. *Sushruta Samhita*, Nidanasthana and Chikitsasthana. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi; 2018.
2. Charaka. *Charaka Samhita*, Chikitsasthana. Chaukhambha Bharati Academy, Varanasi; 2017.
3. Vagbhata. *Ashtanga Hridaya*, Chikitsasthana. Chaukhambha Orientalia, Varanasi; 2016.
4. Sharma PV. *Dravyaguna Vijnana*. Chaukhambha Bharati Academy, Varanasi; 2014.
5. Singh RH. *Foundations of Ayurveda*. Chaukhambha Orientalia, Varanasi; 2008.
6. Mishra LC, et al. *Scientific Basis for Ayurvedic Therapies*. CRC Press; 2004.
7. Patwardhan B, et al. Ayurveda and wound healing: Translational research. *J Ayurveda Integr Med*. 2010;1(2):123–9.
8. Tripathi KD. *Essentials of Medical Pharmacology*. Jaypee Brothers, 2013.
9. Chauhan NS, et al. Wound healing potential of medicinal plants. *Phytother Res*. 2014;28:113–22.
10. Dhiman KS. *Ayurveda in surgical practice*. AYU. 2011;32(1):12–20.
11. Singh S, et al. Role of Triphala in wound management. *J Ayurveda Integr Med*. 2012;3:24–30.
12. Kirtane MV. Vrana Chikitsa in historical perspective. *Anc Sci Life*. 1991;10:145–52.
13. Kumar S, et al. Efficacy of Yashtimadhu in wound healing. *AYU*. 2015;36(2):182–8.
14. Agarwal PK, et al. Medicinal plants in chronic wound management. *J Ethnopharmacol*. 2012;144:657–68.
15. Rajasekaran S, et al. Integrative wound care: Ayurveda perspective. *J Ayurveda Integr Med*. 2018;9:185–92.
16. WHO. *Global Report on Wound Healing*. Geneva: WHO; 2019.
17. Choudhary A, et al. Dushta Vrana management: Evidence-based review. *AYU*. 2017;38:21–6.
18. Sharma S, et al. Classical surgical principles in Sushruta Samhita. *AYU*. 2019;40:12–8.
19. Gupta A, et al. Ayurvedic formulations in diabetic wound healing. *J Ayurveda Res*. 2020;4:77–84.
20. Mishra R, et al. Modern validation of Kalka and Taila therapy in chronic ulcers. *Int J Ayurveda Res*. 2015;1(3):150–5.