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## Case Report



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## Multimodal pain management of Vathasthambam (Sciatica) in siddha external therapy- A case report

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### Abstract

Sciatica refers to the radiating pain along the path of sciatic nerve from lower back down to the legs. It is caused by the herniated disc, bone, bone spur in the spine, narrowing of the spine that causes the irritation of the sciatic nerve. *Vathasthambam* in *Yugi vaithya sindhamani* correlates with the symptoms of sciatica. This single case study shows the efficacy of combination therapy in Siddha external therapy. Here is a 36 year old female, who came to, Puramaruthuvam PG OPD of Government Siddha Medical College attached to Arignar Anna Hospital had a complaints of pain in the lumbar region and it radiates to right lower limb since 3 months. The patient was treated with combined siddha external therapies such as Peechu, Vethu, Patru and ottradam in a specific order for 30 days. Result: After 30 days, the result of the treatment is assessed with Roland-Morris Disability Questionnaire which is measured before and after the treatment.

**Keywords:** Sciatica, Combination therapy, Siddha external therapy

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### Introduction

Sciatica is caused by impingement of L4, L5 or S1 nerve roots from a herniated disc and manifest as unilateral neuropathic pain extending from the gluteal region down through the posterolateral aspect of leg and foot. The Intervertebral disc is the fibrocartilagenous cushion present in between two vertebral bodies in the spinal column. Due to

wear and tear changes in the disc it results in herniation thereby irritating the sciatic nerve near by it. It causes pain, numbness, weakness in the area throughout the region the nerve travels. The pain often increases on coughing, twisting and bending. It is a debilitating condition affecting normal day-to-day activities. The common risk factors that causes sciatica are age, weight, trauma and occupation.

Siddha system of medicine deals with the three humors (vatham,pitham,kabam) in the human body. The imbalance in the three humour causes diseases. *Vathasthambam* is the type of vatha disease described by *Yugimuni*. It correlates with the sciatica. In Sidda system there are 32 internal and 32 external therapies. External therapies such as Peechu(Douching), Vethu (Steam therapy), Pattru (Poultice), Ottradam(Fomentation) are very much useful in treating vatha diseases. Therefore combined therapy of such therapies in a systematic way helps to deal with this disease effectively.

### Case report:

Name of the patient: Saraswathy.K  
 Age:36 years  
 Sex: Female  
 Occupation: Software developer  
 OPD no: 9147  
 Date : 28.3.2022

### Brief history:

A 36 year old female, who came to Arignar Anna Hospital, Puramaruthuvam OPD had a complaints of pain in the lumbar region and it radiates to right lower limb since 3 months. The pain increases on walking and sitting. She has a history of Bronchial asthma since 2 years and under medication. She has no history of Diabetes Mellitus, systemic hypertension, Trauma, Tuberculosis. She took NSAID'S ( Non steroidal

### Treatment given:

S:no	Treatment days	Therapy given
1.	First five days	Peechu with Sittramutti thailam-50ml in the morning Athimathura pattru in the evening for 30 minutes.
2.	Next three days	Drug holiday
3.	From 9 <sup>th</sup> day to 13 th day	Vethu(steam therapy is given with Notchi leaves in steam chamber in the morning for 20 minutes Athimathuram patru in the evening

anti inflammatory drugs ) medications for the past 2months. Physician advised her for laminectomy. So for pain management she came to Siddha Puramathuvam OPD , Government Siddha Medical College attached to Arignar Anna Hospital.

### General examination:

Pulse rate - 76/min.  
 Heart rate -74/min  
 Respiratory rate- 18/min  
 Blood pressure - 120/80 mm Hg  
 Naadi-Vadha kabam

### Clinical examination:

SLR Test-Positive (Right leg <30 degrees)  
 Braggard test-Positive  
 Bowstring test- positive  
 Flip test- Positive  
 MRI Investigations:

MRI Lumbosacral spine

### Impressions:

- L4-L5 mild posterior disc protrusion causing mild ventral thecal sac indentation.
- L5-S1 right lateral recess focal disc protrusion abutting ipsilateral traversing nerve roots.

4.	Next two days	Drug holiday
5.	From 16 <sup>th</sup> day to 30 <sup>th</sup> day	Erukku ilai ottradam with neem oil for 20 minutes.

### Procedure for peechu:

Assemble all the required articles at the therapeutic bed side. Wash hands and explain the procedure. Provide privacy with the help of the screen. Provide sterile anal care for the anal peechu.

Position the patient in left lateral position, bending the right leg, extending the left leg, putting the right hand on the right leg. Apply fatty oil like ghee or castor oil on the anal opening and also on the instrument prior to the insertion to perform peechu.

Perform the insertion slowly and make the patient comfortable. Ask the patient to wait in lying position for few minutes. Remove the syringe and wash it properly. Ask the patient to pass stools if she feels the urgency.

### Procedure for vethu:

Collect and purify the *notchi* (*Vitex negundo*) leaves. Crush them into small pieces and boil them with water in the steam generator. Explain the procedure to the patient. Patient is asked to pass urine before starting the procedure. Confirm the patient had meal before two hours of starting the procedure. Remove any metallic jewellery. Patient is asked to drink 500-750 ml of water before starting the procedure. Assure the vitals are normal. Ask the patient to dress in cotton suitable for steam bath.

Patient is asked to sit in the stool inside the steam bath chamber. Start the procedure at 35-40 degree Celsius. Assure the patient is conscious throughout the procedure. Wait for 15- 20 min. Stop the steam and unplug the steam generator chamber. Wait for 5 minutes and ask the patient to wipe off the sweat and allow the patient to take cool bath.

### Procedure for patru:

Assemble all the required articles. Mix the *athimathura* patru powder with hot water and make into paste. Apply the paste in the affected part and wait for 30 minutes. Then wash it off with hot water and allow it to dry.

### Procedure for ottradam:

Assemble the required materials and explain the procedure to the patient. Take 25 *Erukku* (*Calotropis gigantea*) leaves and clean them. Place them one above the other and roll them to tie them together. Cut one end so as the milky latex of the leaves comes out. It is then dipped in the hot neem oil. This is used for fomentation the affected region.

### Assessment:

The Roland morris disability questionnaire is a short functional disability questionnaire for patients with low back pain. It consist of 24 questions to measure the disability level of the patient. The higher the score higher the patients disability.

Before the treatment the patient was assessed for pain using Roland morris disability questionnaire. The score before the treatment was 21. Then the patient was subjected to the treatment for 30 days and the score was again assessed. Now the score was 15. This shows the prognosis of pain management in this therapy.

### Result

Siddha system is a holistic approach in dealing with mental, physical and social health. Finding an effective pain management in Siddha system of medicine is a need of an hour. There are various external treatments to treat many diseases. Rather than using one therapy, using combined therapy of two or more therapies aids in fast pain relief.

Therefore this study on combined therapy for pain management is highly useful in treating patients to combat pain.

## Discussion

Peechu is the method of enema using medicated liquids. It is mostly used in treating *vatham* imbalance. Patru is commonly used in inflammatory conditions, abscess, swelling. Vethu (Steam therapy) is mostly used to remove toxins and used in *vatham* and *kabam* related diseases. Ottradam (Fomentation) is defined as the method of rhythmic compression and relaxation of hot or cold substances on the affected area. It aids in relaxation, cleansing and healing of the affected site. Thus all these therapies when combined and given helps in treating *Vathasthambam* (Sciatica).

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