

HISTORICAL SURVEY OF WOUND HEALING

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ABSTRACT

“ A constant re-examination of theory of facts is the essence of science.”

The response of living tissues to injury forms the foundation of all surgical practices. Indeed, from the historical point of view, tissue injury or *Vrana* or wound and its sequelae have participated in cure of most of the general medical problems from the days of Susruta till date. The earlier medical literatures extensively considered wound care as based on instinctive remedies but on the other hand, the present concepts cogitate healing of wound based on visual observations. Basic perception of wound healing lies only in its interpretation, which has varied from civilizations to civilization. There are various methods for treating of wounds and have since been passed over by ancient humans to today's modern surgeons. Therefore, it is very essential to know the historical aspects of *Vrana* and its *Ropana* since the beginning of the era of medicine as compare to wound and it's healing from the modern point of view. On the basis of above said facts an attempt has been made to explore the historical background of and healing in present paper.

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Introduction

Man has always looked well after his own body for achievement of his prime goal i.e. The *Purusartha*. We can assume that, care taken today by the modern surgeons to heal the flesh or to keep it young. Virile differs little from the attention that primitive man paid to his health and virility. There is no doubt that prehistoric man paid greater attention to his injuries or wounds.

Art of surgery revolves around *Vrana* and its essence was uneventful healing. The term *Vrana* is derived from *Vrana Gatra Vicurnane* in literal sense a gap or discontinuity of tissues and seems to be most common and earliest among the ailments, man has ever experienced.

The term *Vrana Ropana* depicted here as wound healing, forms the basic theme of the Ayurvedic surgical treatise under the subheadings *Nirukti*, *Sadhyasadyata* and whole details of *Vrana Ropana* in *Mula*, *Pada*, *Upakrama Adhithana*, *Laksana* and *Upadrava* are detailed in ancient era. Thus the history of *Vrana* is as old as civilization.

History of medicine can never be complete without quoting the names of three high profile physicians Caraka, Susruta and Vagbhatta. A cursory glance of the obtained ancient medical treatise reveals, that our ancestors had enough thoughts for curing the injured. They had studied the battle wounds and accidental injuries based on the facilities available at their disposal. They evolved suitable remedial measures both in terms of principles of treatments as well medicaments. Treatment of wound, therefore, is an important aspect of health care during that era, as it is even today.

All major entities and commentators of Ayurvedic classics at various places have emphasised to take care of wounds which occurs either as a result of vitiated *Dosas* or due to traumatic origin. The plan for the management of *Vrana* under three subheading *Purva*, *Pradhana* and *Pascata Karma* of different measures by local and general medicaments as well as proper diet. Because of appropriate management in proper time to avoid the conversion of *Sadhya* into *Asadhya* category, the study of *Salya* science brings out very clearly that *Vrana*- wound is the most significant entity on which the whole science of surgery revolves. The very fact that, this subject is being studied from the days of *Susruta* to till date denotes its magnitude and complicity. Aims and duties of

a surgeon, when called upon to treat an open wound, is to bring about the repair of the tissues in the manner, most conducive to the welfare, present and future of the patients. Such an important responsibility cannot be carried out without a thorough and adequate knowledge of the retrospect of the drugs used in the process of wound healing, and of the factors which influence it. And to achieve this object, a screening of historical survey of the problem is essential. With this aim an attempt has been made to achieve the status of knowledge of *Vrana* and its *Ropana* since the beginning of the era of medicine.

Aims and Objects

- * To explore the complete status of *Vrana* and *Vrana-Ropana* with the gradual knowledge of wound and its healing from the modern aspect.
- * To highlight the scope of research of fundamental and repeated advocacy in regards to *Vrana*.
- * To compare the various changes happened in the modern medicine in respect to healing of wound.
- * To know the basic established status of treatment and management of *Vrana* from the ancient point of view.

Historical Background

Basic perception of wound healing lies only in its interpretation. Which has varied from civilization to civilization. But all these lead us to a universal truth of cure i.e. *Ropana*. To bring out the status of knowledge of *Vrana* and its *Ropana* since the beginning of the era of medicine. This study is being carried out in the course of medicine order as adopted by Ralph H. Major:

Mesopotamia (3600 B.C.)

This land is known as the cradle of civilization and the earliest source of medicine. The direct information on wound healing also exists. *Chot* represents *Vrana* and its *Upaya* means healing by various applications.

Egypt (3500 B.C.)

Biblical accounts of Jews and Papyri are main source of information like:-

- * The techniques of prevention of infection and its influences on wound are available in Misra civilisation (3000 B.C.)
- * There are evidences of a well-equipped kit perhaps today's first aid kit being used along with *Malham* (ointment), *Patti* (Bandage) and other required things in *Asva* civilization.
- * The surgical procedure of *Vrana* is also noticed in Babylon civilization in 2000 B.C. China (2800 B.C.)

Chinese literature shows the reference of application of *Parada* on *Vrana*.

Greek and Greeko Roman (1600 B.C. – 476 A.D.)

Greek civilisation was heavily drawn by the Babylonians, the Cretons, the Egyptians and probably by the Indians after 400B.C. The following references are found in this era:

- * The anatomy and treatment of *Ksata* has been noticed.
- * Techniques to stop the bleeding and four characteristics of *Vrana* *Sopha* (inflammation) have been described in literatures of Rome civilization in 753 BC.
- * Hippocrates who lived in the 500 BC. had faith in the healing power of nature so he favoured the use of simple dressing. He further advised the use of cold water with or without vinegar, wine, oil and honey for cleaning purpose followed by the dry bandaging. He also mentioned to avoid wet or greasy bandages. The edges of clean wounds were watched closely during healing.

India (3000 B.C. to till date)

Indian civilization is considered to be one of the greatest civilization in each aspect. Since the origin of Ayurveda is from this place therefore the Sanskret term *Vrana* is termed from the natural Indian medicine. In India a large number of references pertaining to the subject are scattered all around. The same is compiled here according to different periods

- * To cover up this era in a systematic way a chronological order is adopted as acquired by Prof. P V Sharma.

Ancient Period (3000B.C.-700 A.D.)

Rgveda

- * In *Madhuvidya* and *Kaksyaya Vidya Vrana Rohana* in reference to transplant the head of *Yagya* is found.

Samveda

- * *Jaiminiya Brahamana* mentions *Vrana Rohana* of a injured prince during war in 3/94-95.

Atharvaveda

- * *Laksa* uses for *Vrana Rohana* as well as for haemostasis are mentioned in the *Kausikasutra* in 28/5/14.
- * Example of regeneration is found in *Atharv.* 6/139/5
- * Use of *Mansa Rohini* in *Ropana* of a *Vrana* and use of salt on unripened *Vrana* are existed in the *Atharv.* 7/10/1-2
- * *Raksoghna dravya* usage of *Gomutra* in *Vrana* and exploration of *Pakva* ripened *Vrana* narrates in the *Brahmana*.
- * *Sastra Ksata* is found in the *Kausika Sutra*.

Ramayana

- * Various *Lepas* for various *Agantuja Vranas* are mentioned during the war between Lord Rama and devil Ravana.
- * Injured Laxmana was treated with drugs named *Sanjivani*.
“*Sanjivani Visalya Karni Sandhana Karani* and *Savarnnya Karani*”.

Mahabharata

- * There are statements that soldiers used to carry first aid kit along with them during war which contained honey, ghee and bandage.
- * There are also references found pertaining to the collection and storage of drugs during the war period.

Buddha Kala

- * *Dhupana, Taila, Varti, Lepa* and *Kvath* were used for management of *Vrana*.

- * Application of *Tila Kvatha* and bandaging were also mentioned. References of cutting of extra grown *Mamsa* by salt *Kankari* are also exists.

Smrti and Purana

- * Administration of *Durva* and *Lepa* for the haemostasis are described in *Agni Purana*.

Maurya Kala (363-211B.C.)

- * Management of *Vrana* by the means of *Malhara Ksara Prayoga* in the Menaner
- * Management of *Vrana* are mentioned in *Bhadant Nagsen*

Kusana Kala (210 B.C.)

- * A complete chapter on *Dvi Vraniya* exists in *Cikitsasthana* regarding *Vrana* and its thirty six measures are well explained in the *Caraka Samhita*.
- * Management of *Vrana* exists in *Cikitsa Sthana* of *Bhela Samhita*.

Naga Vansa

- * During this period *Susruta Samhita* was written and carried a detailed review of *Vrana*.
- * It includes *Sandhana* of *Karna-Nasa Khandostha* and *Sainya Cikitsa* in *Yuktasainya Adhyaya* in detail.
- * During this time the knowledge of wound was at its peak level as nearly fifty percent of the *Salya Tantra* deals only with the management of *Vrana*.
- * Acarya Susruta being a surgeon himself could know its value better and so dealt almost all possible measures of wound in detail.
- * The text *Susruta Samhita* abounds in various herbs for local and systemic use. Susruta has also dealt the clinical assessment of wound, union or healing and the dietetic restriction which favours early healing.
- * He has also referred to congenital abnormalities while describing the bad prognosis of wound healing.
- * Thus it would not be an exaggeration to say that Susruta had good grasp of the subject and was almost complete, when compared to that of today's knowledge on wound healing.

Kasyapa Samhita

Nija and *Agantuja* of *Vrana* and their management is available, especially to cure the mother and child when they suffered.

Navnitka (2nd century)

Different *Lepas* and various types of *Tailas* are explained in detail with regard to the management of *Vrana* in 1st and 2nd Khand respectively .

Astanga Sangraha (5th century)

- * The knowledge of wound and its healing were edited and classified on stage basis by Vagbhata.
- * He advocated preparation and applications of *Ghrta* and *Taila* based ointments for local use.
- * The drugs in compound form were used at large.

Madhava Cikitsa (7th century)

Bhanga Vrana as well as *Sadyo Vrana* have been described in the chapter 45th and 46th of *Madhava Cikitsa*.

Vrnda Madhava (9th century)

Siddha Yoga has mentioned the management of *Agantuja Vrana* by *Jatyadi Ghrta*.

Medieval Period (701 A.D. to 1500 A.D.)

Madhya Kala

It is clearly mentioned that during this period *Jakhmas* of *Suryamala* were treated by *Vaidyas*.

Yoga Ratna Sammuccaya

Chandrahata has described *Tailadhikara* and *Kasayadhikara* amongst ten *Adhikaras*.

Madhava Nidana (12th century)

Srikanta Dutta speaks about *Vrana*, its characters and classification in 41st

chapter and *Sadyovrana* in 42nd chapter.

Sarangadhara Samhita (13th century)

Application of *Nimba Dala Kalka* in *Vranas Taila Kalpana* has mentioned for *Vrana* in the *Purvakhanda*.

Satasloki (Bopadevasataka 13th century)

Chapter *Taila Prakarana* has been emphasised on *Vrana*.

Modern Period (1501 A.D. onward)

Bhava Prakasa (16th century)

Vrana, Vrana-Sotha, Vrana Sodhana and *Vrana-Ropana* are described in the *Cikitsa Sthana* chapter 47 in details.

Uses of different drugs with special reference to healing are also dealt .

Yoga Cintamani (17th century)

Harshakirti has mentioned *Lepa, Malhama* etc. in *Misraka Prakarana*.

Vaidya Vallabha (1726)

At the time of mentioning the treatment of *Pada Vrana, Hastiruchi Kavi* speaks about the use of *Lepa* prepared from wax + resin + soap.

Mugal Kala (1175 to 1836)

Sainya Cikitsa and plastic surgery especially *Nasa Sandhana* are described during this period.

Bhaisajya Manimala (1953)

Krisharam Bhatt has given the description of Unani *Malham*.

Ayurveda has basically originated from India . A vast scope of research exists in the field of Ayurvedic fields for the benefit of the science and humanity at large. It is true that a number of scientists and medicine experts are working on various preparations which may help in achieving wound healing. A close study of Ayurveda reveals that a number of plants both locally as well as systemically were used to achieve the goal of *Vrana- Ropana*.

This paper shall not be completed without mentioning this work. The work done upto 1998 in this direction by various institutes are as follows:

Institute of Post Graduate Teaching and Research for Ayurveda, Jamnagar

M.D.WORK

<i>Vrana Ek Adhyana</i>	Pandya K.K.	1974
<i>Vrana Sodhana</i> and role of <i>Karanja</i>	Trivedi Hari Suman	1979
Certain indigenous drugs on <i>Vrana Sopha</i>	Sharma MD	1979
<i>Madhu Sarpi</i> in <i>Vrana Ropana</i>	Chand & Amrut K	1981
Indigenous drugs in <i>Vrana Ropana</i>	Thomas T	1986
<i>Karanjadi Ghrta</i> in <i>Dusta Vrana</i>	Chowatia NM	1988
<i>Sodhana</i> and <i>Ropana</i> drugs in <i>Dusta Vrana</i>	Chowdhary AR	1990
<i>Yastimadhvadi</i> compound in <i>Vrana Ropana</i>	Gupta Rakhee	1995

Ph.D. WORK

Role of <i>Nyagrodhadi Ghrta</i> and <i>Udumbaradi Ghan Vati</i>	Gupta Rakhee	1998
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Institute of Medical Science, Varanasi

M.D. WORK

Wound healing & tissue regeneration by <i>Mansa Rohini</i>	Rao I	1966
Healing of wounds in Diabetes with <i>Udumbara</i>	Agrawal JS	1967
Corneal wound healing with indigenous drugs	Sharma C.P.	1967
Studies on <i>Vrana Ropana</i>	Mishra S.N.	1969
Studies on <i>Vrana Sodhana</i>	Sharma S.K.	1971

Ph.D. WORK

Studies on wound healing w.e.r. burns & scalds	Paathak S.N.	1972
Effect of indigenous drugs on wound healing	Chansuria JPN	1975

Ayurvedic College, Bangalore**M.D. WORK**

Effect of <i>Ksara Taila</i> in <i>Dusita Vrana</i>	Shetty Narayana	1987
<i>Bandhana Karana</i> through <i>Patradana in Vrana</i>	Huvin S.V.	1988
Effect of <i>Kasisadi Taila</i> in <i>Dustavrana</i>	Mashetti N.B.	1989
Effect of <i>Triphala Guggulu</i> in <i>Vrana</i>	ScinchaR. Keshava	1989
Exp. study of <i>Ksudra Sevantika</i> in <i>Sadyo Vrana</i>	Narsimha	1990

Government Ayurvedic College, Thiruvanthapuram**M.D. WORK**

Effect of <i>Murivenma</i> in healing of <i>Dusta Vranas</i>	Anitha O.	1989
<i>Rasa Sinduram</i> & <i>Rasa Karpuradi</i>	Sanjeev LB	1990
<i>Dhupanam</i> in <i>Dusta Vrana</i>		
Management of <i>Dusta Vrana</i> with <i>Karkaradi Ghrtam</i>	Bindu B.	1993

Ayurvedic College, Hyderabad**M.D. WORK**

Study of <i>Vajraka Tailam</i> in <i>Dusta Vrana</i>	Pani Saranga S	1985
<i>Swatha Malhar</i> in <i>Dagdha Vrana</i>	Prasad KMVD	1987
<i>Svarna Ksiri</i> in <i>Dusta Vrana</i>	Nagraj A	1990
<i>Karanjadi Tailam</i> in <i>Dusta Vrana</i>	Rao Panduranga	1991

Ayurvedic College, Nagpur**M.D. WORK**

<i>Dusta Vranome Tulasi Malham</i>	Lakhpat AM	1992
<i>Ek Prayogika Adhyana</i>		

Role of *udumbara Ksira* in *Dusta Vrana*

Faheem Qureshi

1993

Middle Age (11th-14th century)

- * In the 11th century pus formation was considered to be a healthy sign in the process of wound healing.
- * But William Saebiceto in 1210 A.D. of Bologna surgical school, held quite definitely that pus formation was a hazard for both the wound and the patients.
- * This theory was also supported by Gay in 1368 who further added four points for treatment of wound i.e. removal of foreign body, reapproximation of parts, maintenance of general body resistance, conservation and reservation of the subject and checking of complications.
- * These principles continued till the end of 14th century.

Renaissance (1401-1600A.D.)

- * The term renaissance or rebirth connotes a transition period between middle ages and modern era.
- * The ancient physicians of Egypt, Greece, China, India and Europe developed gentle methods of treating wound.
- * They main stress was on the requirement of removing foreign bodies, suturing, covering wounds with clean material and protecting the injured tissues from corrosive agents.
- * With the emergence of gun powder and increase in the frequency of bullet injury during 14th century the new era of wound treatment emerged.
- * Instead of maintaining the attitude of caretaker in the wound management and relying on the natural process of wound healing, surgeons assumed an aggressive attitude by changing the age old customs of application of boiling oil, hot cautery, scalding water, gentle washing with warm water and application of mild *salve*, but the cleaning part was left unattended.
- * Needless to say 'Lets do something about it' attitude towards wound healing, the results of new innovations proved disastrous.

Modern Medicine (From 1600A.D. onwards)

Period of 16th to 17th century-

- * Ambrose Pare a great French Army surgeon rediscovered gentle methods during the battle of Valance in 16th century.
- * The surgeon was forced to apply milder treatments to the amputation wounds, and noticed that these wounds healed much faster and with lesser complications. And from this, the beginning of modern era of gentle wound healing evolved.
- * John Hunter, William Stewart, Alexin Carrel and many other great clinical biologists emphasised and demonstrated that by minimising the tissue injury we can produce rapid and effective healing.
- * The ethics of wound healing is based on “Minimal Interference” concept.
- * If a surgeon can remove all impediments, normal wound healing processes produce the best results.

Period of 17th to 18th century-

- * John Hunter brought out that a wound heals faster if suppuration after suturing due to ancients hands of surgeons was stopped.
- * But they could not bring out the actual organism responsible for suppuration. This was later discovered by Louis Pasteur (1822-95).

Period of 20th century-

- * This period is considered to be one of the most important era in the history of medicine.
- * During world war I (1914-1918) the greatest difficulty faced was of curing of wound and their protection from infection from outside factors like skin, clothing, missiles, and dirty soil, which would have had serious repercussions like streptococcus, tetanus, gangrene which would have spread and rapidly converted with muscles into a mass of putrefying flesh distended with stink.
- * It was the mobile casualty cleaning stations equipped with every operative necessity, which came to their rescue.
- * The wounded were first given the first aid and were brought in ambulance to nearest hospital for treatment.

- * However it was not certain that the wound would heal even if it was surgically treated well, chances of infection were still not ruled out.
- * This was continued till the Spanish war in 1937–39 when another new surgical enterprise came into existence.
 - Paul Ehrlich discovered chemotherapeutic agents which were useful in treatment of contaminated wounds.
 - Once Penicillin was isolated this drug was widely used in curing the wound. It was used both for prophylaxis and cure of contamination.
 - Now a days number of antibiotics specially of broad spectrum and ampicillin are used to prevent and cure suppuration.

Period from 1939 onwards

- * This period was influenced by world war II and the advent of sulphonamides and antibiotics.
- * Debridement of wound and prophylactic inoculation against tetanus took place. Scientific study towards wound healing was first done by Alexis Carrel et.
- * He evaluated the observations on the surface of wounds and watched the process of healing in laboratory on animals and patients to demonstrated the effect of age, temperature, infections and other conditions of wound healing.
- * The present knowledge of wound healing was based on visual observation.
- * The light microscopic development and recently the electron and polarising microscope, including the X ray refraction and auto radiographic studies have assisted a lot in the development of science of wound healing.

Conclusion

The historical survey of wound and its healing suggest that the gradual development in modern medicine is the mirror of ancient findings.

It is clear that without any experiment which already took place in ancient era, the minimal interference with removal of all impediments by means of *Sodhana* with consideration of *Ropana* with *Vranitopasana* are the only solution of *Vrana* for healing with minimal scarring.

To establish the accuracy and usefulness of the fundamental principles, that *Vrana Ropana* is a subject that has its reign from the beginning of mankind.

It can be proved by the very fact, that *Vrana* has been dealt since beginning of *Veda* to current era and has been a major problem since the early stages of medical study.

This fact has been dealt by *Susruta*. It shows its antiquity or importance. Similarly, in the west the description of disease dates back to the date of *Hippocrates*.

Thus the dressings for both acute and chronic wounds have changed dramatically.

The new principles of wound care have evolved many new types of dressings for wound treatment.

Old concepts have been corrected the facts, and have been substituted for appearances and demonstration for impression.

Techniques have been simplified and standardized so that many procedures previously of value to only a small group of specialist are now being carried out effectively by every surgeon willing to acquaint him with the precepts laid down.

The efforts are being made every day by medical sciences in order to overcome the above said problems in healing.

The same is also being tried by *Ayurvedic* experts to provide a good herbal remedy free from the side effects.

All the remedial agents used for the management of wounds have broadly been classified under the headings of *Vrana Sandhaniya* which includes both the *Sodhana* and *Vrana Ropaniya* measures. Therefore it is necessary to know the historical successful applications in the past era and its limitations, than only a research of new technique or say cure of wounds can be explored.

Acknowledgements

At the outset, I express my sincere thanks to Prof. Kulwant Singh Ex Dean, I.P.G.T & R.A, Gujarat Ayurveda University Jamnagar for his inspiring spirit. My special salutations to Dr. G.S. Lavekar, Director, CCRAS, New Delhi for his provocative thoughts

and progressive attitude of mind towards Ayurveda. At this juncture, I also lucky to have been bestowed with Dr. V.V. Prasad, Director, Rashtriya Ayurveda Vidyapeeth, New Delhi for his motivation towards literary research and creative thinking. I am also grateful to Dr. Avadhesh Kumar Srivastava, Office Secretary All India Ayurvedic Congress for his unfailing and generous substantial helps.

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सारांश

व्रण चिकित्सा - एक ऐतिहासिक सर्वेक्षण

राखी मेहरा

व्रण - इतिहास मानव सस्यता की पुरातनता से सम्बंधित है। क्योंकि प्रथम दर्द की अभिव्यक्त मानव को चोट से अवश्य हुई होगी इसलिये प्रारम्भ से ही मनुष्य इसके उपाय की और अग्रसर रहा है। हर युग में व्रण चिकित्सा का स्वरूप भिन्न रहा है। प्रस्तुत लेख में इन्हीं संदर्भों को एक जगह एकत्रित करने का प्रयास किया गया है। प्राचीन से नवीनतम विधियों का कालबद्ध रूप में विवरण सिद्ध करता है कि सूक्ष्म से स्थूल और पुनः स्थूल से सूक्ष्म व्रण चिकित्सा के संदर्भ में किस तरह परिवर्तित हुई है और किस तरह प्राचीन विधियों की सार्थकता सिद्ध होती है। आज अवश्यकता है तो इन पद्धतियों का चिकित्सकीय दृष्टि से अनुसंधान करने की।