



Management of Uncomplicated Chronic Sinusitis with Siddha therapy- A case report

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Abstract

Sinusitis or inflammation of mucosa is very common complaint in clinical practice seen recently. The common symptoms of sinusitis are nasal blockage or obstruction, feeling of heaviness in cheeks, severe headache, mucosal discharge and sleep disturbances. *Mookadaipu* which is also known as *Peenisam* or Sinusitis in Siddha literature bears a resemblance to clinical symptoms of Chronic sinusitis of Modern medicine like Nasal congestion, mucous production, altered secretion and nasal blockages causing breathing issues. Elimination of mucous, relieving of obstruction, cleansing the channel is the line of treatment.

Siddha vaidyam, an ancient and old therapy has proved to be treating many patients with such conditions by traditional techniques of using hand pressures and massage. Siddha believes by aligning body energies (mind, body and spirit), and aims to treat all disorders from the root cause.

In this article, we present a case report of 29 years old woman with Chronic Sinusitis who underwent 4 siddha sessions for relieving the obstruction in nasal passage along with Cervical sessions and has a good result without complications. Different hand pressures like Thadaval and Amarthal to stimulate "*varmam*" points at neck and nasal area were administered, which helps in reducing the severity of symptoms. The symptoms presented by patient at time of admission like nasal obstruction, breathlessness, sleeplessness, stiffness in neck, headache, mouth breathing, snoring which were at scale 9 was lowered to 2 on completing the treatment on VAS scale. The changes can be felt by patients by changes in severity in symptoms and routine work activities. Clinically can be justified by pre and post x-rays of Paranasal sinus (PNS).

Keywords: *Mookadaipu*, *Peenisam*, Chronic Sinusitis, Siddha, *Varmam*, Thadaval (massaging), Amarthal (pressing technique)

Introduction

Chronic sinusitis affects approximately 18.7% of the Indian population and is currently the 5th most common condition treated with antibiotics, accounting for 34 million GP's visits and costing over 7 billion annually [1]. Sinusitis or the inflammation of the paranasal sinus mucosa may be acute or chronic. Acute and Chronic sinusitis have similar signs and symptoms. Acute sinusitis is a temporary infection (< than 1 week) of the sinuses often associated with cold and sometimes fever. Also, treatment is OTC available anti-inflammatory or antibiotics, steroids which completely relieves the patient from the infection. Another way of classifying sinusitis is by determining it is 'open' or 'closed' depending upon whether the sinus drainage can drain freely into the nasal cavity through the natural ostia or not. A 'closed' sinusitis causes more severe symptoms and is also likely to cause complications [2].

Chronic sinusitis occurs when the spaces inside the nose and head (sinuses) are swollen and inflamed for >3 months, despite treatment. Fever isn't a common sign of chronic sinusitis, but if it is associated with an infection, there might be weakness and fever as a symptom [3]. Though, most commonly involved sinus is the maxillary sinus followed by ethmoid, frontal and sphenoid. If all the sinuses are involved, this condition interferes with the normal breathing, thick mucosal drainage and severe nasal congestion. The area around eyes might feel swollen or tender. There might be reduced sense of smell and taste and few may have heaviness and headaches. The retention of nasal discharge compromises the immune system of patient. Symptoms like continuous headache, heaviness in frontal region, watery eyes disturbs patients working capacity makes him physically and mentally distressed [4] Other signs and symptoms can include ear pain, cough, throat pain, aching upper jaw, sore throat, halitosis and fatigue [4,5].

Studies reveal cause of chronic sinusitis can be an infection, allergies such as pollen or chemicals, by growths in the sinuses (nasal polyps) or by swelling of the lining of sinuses. Also called chronic rhinosinusitis, the condition can affect both adults and children [5]. Another most common cause of chronic sinusitis is an uneven wall of tissue between the nostrils. This is known as a deviated septum, and it can limit air flow in one or both of the nostrils [6,7].

In modern Science, the treatment of Sinusitis is allergy tabs or corticosteroids with nasal sinus irrigation but recently the alternate therapies like Ayurveda, Homeopathic and others have started gaining more preference than allopathic medicines. Reason is simple, they use natural products and does not have any side effect. Siddha therapy is also one unique, ancient alternative treatment process that relies mainly on natural remedies, dietary and lifestyle changes to cure a particular condition, it has been effective in curing sinusitis as well. In Siddha system of medicine, it is known as Mookadaippu or Peenisam or Sinusitis [8]. The physiological functioning of the body is mediated by three humours, namely Kabam, Pittam and Vatham. The popular belief in the Siddha system is that sinusitis occurs when two out of these three humours, Vatham and Piitam are deranged. The line of treatment focuses on normalizing the balance of the humour, so the disease is cured and body normalcy is regained [8,9].

In this article, we present a case report of 29 years old woman with Chronic Sinusitis who underwent 4 siddha sessions for relieving the nasal obstruction and has a good result without complications. The treatment protocol included a multidisciplinary plan: Siddha, Yoga and physio with diet modifications for overall improvement [10].

Case Report

1.1 Participant Information:

A 29-year old female homemaker visited Chakrasiddh in Jan, 2023 with complaints of difficulty in breathing which was severe from last 10 days, Nasal blockage, cough from last 6 months, mild headache in frontal region, heaviness since last 6 months. Her associated complaints included fever especially on weather change, and body aches on off. Due to Nasal blockage, she was forced to do mouth breathing, and had heaviness feeling in chest area. She felt her symptoms got aggravated on exposure to dust, weather change esp in cold climate, cold and fridge foods, tonsils and family stress (loss of father a year before). She always tried to avoid the aggravating factors and preferred to stay in warm environment.

1.2 History of Present Complaints:

Patient was apparently healthy 2 years back. In 2020, after she was admitted in hospital due to tonsils, her complaints of cough and heaviness in chest area increased. She noticed her weight increased by 15 kgs as she was unable to walk and do exercise due to her asthma and heaviness in breathing. When she lost her father in 2021, her condition aggravated due to stress. The intensity of dust allergy and coughing increased many folds that she stopped going out for family functions too. She noticed stuffy nose which lasted about 6

hours and then followed with heaviness around eyes, cheeks and head. At the end of the day symptoms used to subside by taking medication like Citrizine or Montac. She started getting repeated attacks of stuffy nose with on off obstruction in airflow in her nose. The condition of nasal obstruction worsened followed with increased habit of oral breathing and halitosis with dry mouth feeling in morning. After 4 months of suffering she developed additional symptom of on off headache in frontal region with temporal region. She had disturbed sleep, was irritated on noise and wanted to just keep quite. On aggravation of the symptoms, she visited her physician who advised her rest and kept on steroids. Patient had been on steroids for 2 years which did not work so from last 1 year she is on Homeopathic medicine that gives her relief but she wants complete relief from the issue of Sinus. She has failed multiple courses of medical treatment including antibiotics, nasal steroid, oral steroid, and antihistamine. Her symptoms are interfering with her lifestyle and work. She wanted a complete relief so visited Chakrasiddh for her chronic condition.

Treatment Protocol

In Siddha following Diagnostic and Line of Treatment is followed for chronic sinusitis:

Primary Kutram (defect) Affected: Vatham

Secondary Kutram Affected: Pitham

Siddha Pathogenesis: It is explained by aggravation of Vatham which influences Pitham. In seven udalthathukal Saaram and senneer gets affected [11].

Investigations:

Envagai Thervu (Eight Fold System of Clinical Assessment):

Naadi - Vathapitham

Sparisam - Warmth

Naa - Pallor

Niram - Normal

Mozhi - Low pitched

Vizhi - Normal

Malam - constipation

Neerkuri - Yellowish in colour, tamarind odour

Neikuri - Normal

Modern Medical Investigations:

- Monitor blood pressure - 128/82
- Complete Blood Count(CBC)- NAD
- X-ray- PNS (Showed opaque sinus, mucosal thickening)
- Ophthalmic Examination- NAD
- MRI –Brain (plain)- CT showed mild DNS

The treatment was started on 30th Jan, 2023; it was planned for 10 days for Cervical Stiffness along with 3-4 sessions of Sinusitis twice a week. The main focus initially was on releasing the stuffiness in nose so that patient gets relief from wheezing and shortness of breath. A multidisciplinary plan including nasal sessions with special diet and daily Pranayam for 1/2 hr were initiated for the patient. External

therapies are really helpful in this condition and gives a remarkable relief. Nasal powders and Steam inhalation were been advised to be done twice daily to the patient (Table-1).

Patient could see difference in her sleep from 3 hrs to 8 hrs after 1 sinus session and the stiffness in neck became moderate. The chief healer did the sinus session by hand pressure therapy (*Varmam*). She initiated by pressurizing her fingers into nasal cavity and manipulating with hands. She used different hand pressures like *Thadaval* and *Amarthal* to stimulate "*varmam*" points at neck and nasal area, to clear the nasal blockage and open the nasal passage. Various special therapies like Varma maruthuvam (varmam points) and Yoga Maruthuvam were incorporated for 10 sessions to give relief in cervical region with flexibility (Table-1).

Table-1 (Different methods for Treating Sinusitis in Siddha practice)

S.No	Method of Treatment	Treatments names	Procedure
1	External Medications	Poochu (Liquid/Oil Poultice)	Murungai ilai (<i>Moringa oleifera</i>) juice and pepper (<i>Piper nigrum</i>) are ground and apply over the forehead
		Patru (Semi Solid Poultice)	Dry ginger (<i>Zingiber officinalis</i>) can be ground with warm water and apply over forehead.
		Pugai (Medicated fumigation)	Inhalation of smoke obtained by burning dried turmeric (<i>Curcuma longa</i>)
		Nasiyam (Liquid Nasal Application)	Application of Eucalyptus oil inside the nasal chamber
		Vedhu (Steaming)	Steam inhalation using thippilli (<i>Piper longum</i>), manjal (<i>Curcuma longum</i>)x 2 times
2	Yoga Maruthuvam	Pranayamam	Anulom and Vilom are recommended for 3 - 4 weeks, once in a day. Savasanam for 5 minutes
3	Varma maruthuvam (Different varmam points)	Kondaikolli varmam Chunnambu kaalam Chenni kaalam Anna kaalam Adappa kaalam	(Using Thadaval and Amarthal for not more than 2-3 mins at different locations)
4	Dietary Regimen	To be avoided: All triggers including these in diet. To add green veggies and pulses	1. Tamarind (<i>Tamarindus indica</i>) 2. Tobacco (<i>Nicotiana tabacum</i>) 3. Alcohol 4. Sweet potato (<i>Ipomoea batatas</i>) 5. Yam (<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>) 6. Cowpeas (<i>Vigna unguiculata</i>) 7. Broad beans (<i>Vicia faba</i>)

Result

Significant changes in signs and symptoms were noticed before treatment and after treatment with short course duration of 10 days. Patient felt good response after 1st sinus session. After each sinus session, she was monitored for feedbacks related to her nasal blockage, sleep and headaches. The patient could feel a lot of difference in nasal blockage and there was decreased head heaviness. She was able to sleep for 8-9 hrs without disturbance while earlier she could not sleep even for 2-3 hrs without disturbance.. In subsequent week, she noticed there was no mouth breathing and snoring was reduced. Headaches was on/off but with very less severity and only when she has stressed herself. She was able to sleep straight with decrease in snoring. Early morning dry throat was reduced too much. Pain in neck reduced from severe to mild in intensity in just 10 days.

At the end of treatment, the symptoms presented by patient at time of admission like nasal obstruction, breathlessness, sleeplessness, stiffness in neck, headache, mouth breathing, snoring which were at scale 9 was lowered to 2 on VAS scale (Table 2). Depending upon the feedback, X-rays were taken out for pre and post appearance of PNS and cervical region (Fig 1). On the day of discharge 10th day, she was happy and feeling better. On regular follow up the sign and symptoms reduced progressively and on 5th follow up after 6 months, patient was having mild symptoms.

Fig 1: (Pre and Post treatment x-rays)

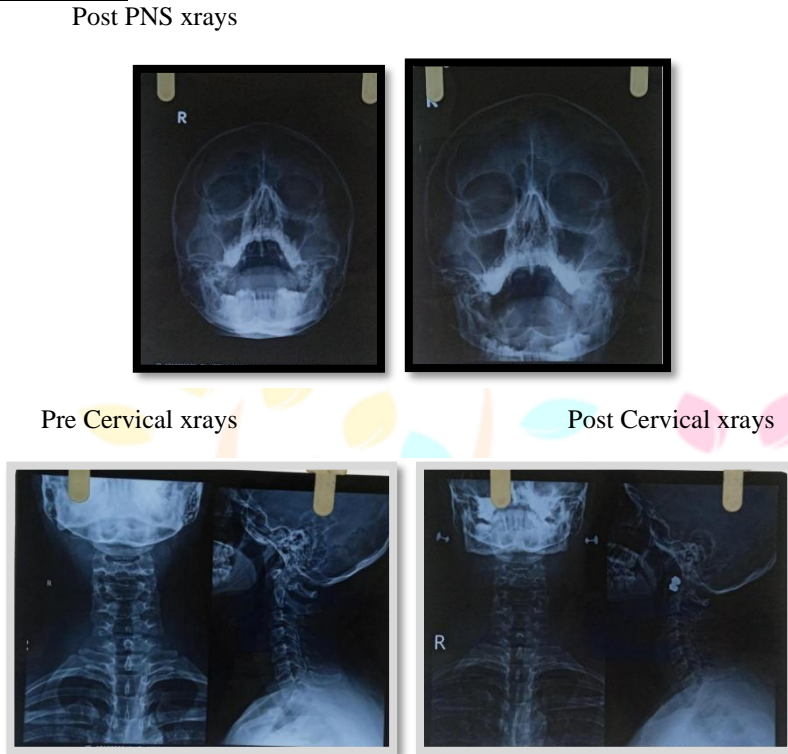


Table-2 (Nasal obstruction symptoms evaluation chart on VAS)

Symptoms	Before the treatment	After the treatment
Nasal obstruction	9	2
Nasal breathing	9	2
Headache	8	1
Sneezing	8	2
Snoring	9	3
Wheezing	9	1
Trouble sleeping	10	2
Neck stiffness	8	0

Average VAS value

9 (Severe)

2(mild)

0 = no problem

1-3 = very mild problem

4-6 = moderate

7-8 = fairly severe

9-10 = severe

Discussion

Chronic sinusitis occurs when the spaces inside the nose and head (sinuses) are swollen and inflamed for >3 months, despite treatment [2]. In modern Science, the treatment of Sinusitis is allergy tabs or corticosteroids with nasal sinus irrigation but recently the alternate therapies like Ayurveda, Homeopathic and others have started gaining more preference than allopathic medicines [6]. In Siddha system of medicine, it is known as Mookadaippu or Peenisam [8]. The popular belief in the Siddha system is that sinusitis occurs when two out

of these three humours, Vatham and Piitam are deranged and line of treatment is to balance these humors [10]. The retention of nasal discharge compromises the immune system of patient. Symptoms like continuous headache, heaviness in frontal region, watery eyes disturbs patients working capacity makes him physically and mentally distressed [4]. There is long term dependency on medications and diet restrictions which make him weak [13].

In above case, a multidisciplinary approach of External therapies like (Vedhu) steam inhalation, Nasiyam (liquid nasal application) proved beneficial in opening up passage giving relief in nasal blockage. Subsequently, the headache was down with help of natural products like Piper Nigrierum [12]. Varmam Maruthuvam (Different varmam points), and Yoga maruthuvam worked well on the stiffness and flexibility of the neck regions and overall improvement in ability to do different activities by the patient [11]. Diets specific to patient's triggers designed gives better results.

Conclusion

In modern medicine, PNS can be managed by continuous use of steroids and Sinus surgery is finally solution but this case study proved that *Siddha Vaidya*, an ancient science reduced symptoms by just simple methodology of using hand pressures in the nasal cavity and opening up blockages. By channelizing body energies, *Siddha* therapy empowers and activates the body's internal healing mechanisms thus, resulting in cure and an improved lifestyle. No unwanted effect of therapy was observed during treatment and during followup period. Along with modified diet and Yoga asanas, there was a marked improvement in pain and stiffness in neck; reducing symptoms related to nasal blockages, functional independence, and quality of life in patients.

It can be concluded that these Siddha procedure along with external medicines are very effective in management of Chronic Sinusitis. but to establish this effect further study of longer duration and larger sample is required.

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