ABSTRACT:

In present era use of electronic sound devices increased dramatically. Mobile, headphones, earphones, neckbands, are the common devices use to enhance the sound experience. Over use of these devices leads to impairment of hearing, tinnitus, otalgia and many other ear diseases. Ayurveda has a strong prophylactic protocol to every disease. By following this human being can prevent himself from many diseases. Karnapichu is a procedure where cotton wick dipped in lukewarm medicated oil is inserted into the external auditory canal which nourishes the acoustic nerve and improves the signal quality to brain. Karnapichu is easy procedure in comparison to others so it can be easily used by the common man suffering such problems on day to day basis. Which helps to prevent electronic sound device induced ear diseases.

Key words: Tinnitus, Otalgia, Karnapichu, acoustic nerve
INTRODUCTION:

Ear is one of the most important sensory organ also mentioned as adhistan\(^1\) of srotendriya\(^2\) which is aakash mahabhoot pradhan\(^3\). Sabda\(^4\) is the Artha of Shravanendriya and it is having Stotra buddhi (Hearing). According to Sushruta Samhita the Srotas are two types bahirmukham srotas and antahmukha Srotas. Among them Karna has been mentioned under bahirmukham srotas\(^5\). Ear interacts with various electronic sound devices developed in recent decades by modern science now days as our on-the-go lifestyles are increasingly demanding portability. Excessive use of mobile phones headphones, earphones, neckbands, bullets are increasing. Yes, it is certainly convenient to have everything we need for business, entertainment or social networking right at our fingertips; but is all of that convenience damaging our hearing unfortunately. In Ayurvedic classics many procedures are mentioned by aacharyas which have both prophylactic and management values. Acharya charka has described the importance of karntarpana as its regular use prevents from hearing loss and other ear related diseases.\(^6\) Acharya Sushruta has described 28 karnarogas in Karnaroga Vigyāniya chapter of uttaratantr\(^7\) and various treatment procedures are given in Karnagaroga pratishedha adhyaya\(^8\). Acharya Vagbhata said that bhisaga should use shneha dravyas according to yukti for Bhakshana, Basti, Nasya, Abhyanga, Gandusha, Murdhni Taila, Karna Poorana and Akshi tarpana\(^9\) With this concept there is practice of administering sneha dravya using pichuvarti into the ear canal by many
Shalaki vaidya. Karnapichu is the procedure, basically evolved from the concept of shiro pichu a type of murdha taila, where in a wick like cotton swab is dipped in required medicine and kept in ear canal for a stipulated time. Karnapichu is easy procedure in comparison to others so it can be easily used by the common man suffering such problems on day to day basis.

**Karna pichu :**

In ayurvedic classics many references available regarding pichu but its description is very less. Pichu varti is a cotton swab soaked in medicine, particularly taila. When it is placed in karna, the procedure is called karnapichu

**Nirukti of pichu:**

*Pechatiti Pichu* that which spreads is called as pichu.10

"*Pichu sthoola kavalika"*11 A thick swab or a cotton pad is called pichu.

Acharya Vagbhata mentioned karnapichu varti in the treatment of pakwa karna. Acharya has told that the puss filled ears should be first cleared with the help of pichu varti (dry mopping) and after that the ear should be filled with pichu varti dipped in medicine. It has to be carried out twice daily. But duration of its administration is not mentioned12 Similarly Chikitsa Manjari (an ancient Ayurveda text in Malayalam) mentioned karnapichu in karna roga pratisedha adhyaya13 Sharangadhara mentioned Shiro pichu as a part of murdha taila in the management of all kinds of shiro roga including karna, nasa and anya roga14.

**Indications:**

All karnarogas where Karnapoorana is mentioned for treatment.

**Contraindications:**

It should not be administered without performing karna pramarjana and puya nirharana

**Procedure:**

*Purvakarma:* The exact procedure is not mentioned. Only Vagbhata has given the description that the pus should be cleaned from the ear with pichu varti before its administration with the drug. This can be considered as the poorva karma of karnapichu.

*Pradhana Karma:* Ear canal is made straight by pulling the pinna upward and
backward. Then the *pichu varti* dipped in medicine is inserted into ear canal with the help of probe and forceps.

*Paschat karma:* *Karna pramarjana* (dry mopping) and *dhupana karma* should be done. After removing the *pichu.*

*Dharana kala:* Depending on condition and severity of disease it can be changed once or twice daily.

**Benefits of *karna pichu***:

- This is easy to administer and Cost effective.
- The procedure is not messy and is well accepted by patients.
- This uses less medicine and gives more drug tissue contact time.

**Example for *karnapichu varti* usage:*

- *Nada, Badhirya Karnapichu varti* can be administered overnight, which gives prolonged *snehana* (nourishment) and helps in correction of *vatadushti* in *karnanada* and *badhirya.*
- *Karna srava, kandu, pooti karna:* compared to *karnapoorana,* *karna pichu* is best in these conditions, as it provides Sustained release of drug. Longer drug tissue contact time.
- The *karnapichu* absorbs fluid discharge in ear canal.
- As *Karna pichu* provides increased rate of absorption of medicine in the affected area and good healing is facilitated because of increased contact time. Hence *karanapichu* is very effective in the management of *karnasrava.*

**DISCUSSION**

Probable mode of action of *karnapichu:* *Karnapichu* is a procedure where in cotton wick dipped in luke warm medicated oil is inserted into the external auditory canal which nourishes the vestibular cochlear nerve (8th cranial nerve) and improves the signal quality to brain. In the present study *karna pichu* is used in patients with ASOM, CSOM, and traumatic perforation of tympanic membrane, reduced hearing and tinnitus due to overuse of electronic sound devices.

*Purvakarma:* Ear canal is cleaned thoroughly to remove the discharge and other debris which facilitates the drug absorption.
The drug: The lukewarm oil used acts as, *sthanika snehana* and *swedana*, thus causes increased local warming, pseudo-inflammation and increased blood circulation there by helping in better absorption. Also causes pseudo-congestion of TM and enhances drug absorption to affected sites.

*Pichuvarti*: It will facilitate longer residence time of the drug in ear canal, there by increases availability of drug to the tissues. Local action of *pichu* is based on cellular absorption of medicine. It also absorbs the discharge or exudates from the ear which helps in quick healing process.

**CONCLUSION**

*Karna pichu* is well defined *ayurvedic* procedure which nourishes the vestibular cochlear nerve (8th cranial nerve) and improves the signal quality to brain. It is cost effective, easy to use and user friendly. It can be used at OPD level on day to day basis. As electronic device induced ear diseases are increasing drastically which most commonly affects the function of acoustic nerve so *Karna pichu* can be best procedure for prophylactics and the treatment in western system of medicine is highly expensive and many side effects are seen so ayurveda can be the answer for this electronic device induced ear diseases on prophylactic and management level.

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