

## CASE REPORT

# Effect of Siddha Medicine and *Yogam* in *Swasakasam* (Bronchial Asthma) Patient – A Case Report

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### ABSTRACT

The prevalence of bronchial asthma and allergic rhinitis is on the rise in India. In the Siddha text, *Pothu maruthuvam*, bronchial asthma is referred to *Swasakasam*. Among the different modalities of treatment, poly-herbal combinations, *yoga* practice and *pranayamam* are said to be well-accepted, safe and effective in treating *Swasakasam*. 39-year-old male, IT professional was referred to Siddha wing at Integrated AYUSH OPD, All India Institute of Ayurveda, for the management of bronchial asthma and allergic rhinitis. He was treated with Siddha medicines, *Yogam* and pranayamam practice for 3 months. He showed significant improvement in control of asthma, reduction in taking salbutamol puff, anti - histamine drugs and his quality of life improved.

### KEYWORDS

Bronchial Asthma, Siddha, Pranayamam, *Swasakasam*, *Yogam*.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Bronchial asthma is a chronic inflammatory disorder of the airway and the most common distressing disease affecting 3-5% of the total population.<sup>[1]</sup> The prevalence of bronchial asthma and allergic rhinitis is on the rise in India. In Siddha text, *Pothu maruthuvam*, bronchial asthma is referred to as *Swasakasam*. It contributes several modalities of the treatment for *Swasakasam*.<sup>[2]</sup> Among all modalities of treatment, poly-herbal combinations, *Yogam* and pranayamam practice are said to be well-accepted, safe and effective in asthma. The word "*Yogam*" means union, joining or to link together as a whole. *Yogam* is a physical method which uses the breath to link the various parts of the body and the mind and to allow them to behave as one functional unit

which helps in the control of Asthma. *Pranayamam* breathing is used to increase respiratory stamina, relax the chest muscles, expand the lungs, raise energy levels, and calm the body.<sup>[3]</sup>

## 2. Case description:

A 39-year-old old male IT professional was referred to Siddha department at Integrated OPD, All India Institute of Ayurveda, for management of bronchial asthma and allergic rhinitis. He had h/o of episodic breathlessness accompanied with a wheeze and aggravated during early morning and nighttime for 18 years. These episodes were associated with sneezing and nasal itching.

Physical examination revealed no pallor, clubbing or cyanosis. He was tachypneic with a respiratory rate of 26/min. On auscultation, vesicular breath sounds of equal

intensity were audible bilaterally along with brhronchi. On investigation, hemoglobin and white blood count recorded was 12.07g/dl and 8900mu/l, eosinophil was 9%. The radiology findings were normal.

The patient was on inhaled Salbutamol puff for the last 8 years and he also takes a frequent dose of anti-histamines to control his allergy. The history of the patient was suggestive of uncontrolled bronchial asthma with allergic rhinitis. It can be correlated to *Swasakasam* in *Siddha* text. The name, dosage, vehicle and therapeutic properties of the prescribed drugs are mentioned in Table 1. Suggested *Yogam* and *pranayamam* practice are given in Table

2.<sup>[3]</sup> The patient attended *Yogam* training on yogic posture and *pranayamam*. Then, he was supervised and advised to practice daily for 50 minutes at home. Patient visited twice a week to receive medicine and to practice yoga. After 3 months the overall assessment of results was made with the help of the subjective parameters<sup>[10]</sup> (Table 3).

Symptoms were categorized into three types – cough, wheezing, and dyspnoea and scored as mild, moderate, and severe. Any reduction in these symptoms from moderate to mild or mild to absence was considered as improvement in the disease severity.

**Table1. Name, Dosage, Vehicle and Therapeutic Properties of the Prescribed Drugs**

SN	Name of the given <i>Siddha</i> Formulation	Dosage and vehicle
1	<i>Thalisathi chooranam</i> (2 g) + <i>Sivanar amirtham</i> (200mg)	BD with honey
2	<i>Swasakudori</i> pills	2 pills (100mg each) BD with betel leaf
3	<i>Thippili rasayanam</i>	6g BD

**Table 2. *Yogam* and *Pranayamam* Practices**

SN	<i>Yogam</i> and <i>Pranayamam</i>
1	<p><b>Integrated yogic practice:</b> Initial warm up activity with relaxed breathing technique with stretching exercise breathing exercise (5minutes). Loosening exercise (5 minutes) yoga practice to loosen various joints.</p>
2	<p><b>Yogic Postures:</b> General physical postures (10 minutes) like <i>Bhujangasanam</i>: <i>Dhanurasanam</i>, <i>Gomukhasanam</i>, <i>Ardhamatsyendrasanam</i> which are simple easy physical postures in standing and sitting along with specific slow breathing were done.<sup>[3]</sup> <i>Savasanam</i> (10 minutes). Deep relaxation practice (10 minutes) to consciously relax muscles followed by conscious slowing of breathing and calming of the mind.</p>
3	<p><b>Pranayamam:</b> It is performed with easy comfortable and slow deep breathing without voluntary breath holding (10 minutes). Deep breathing (deep inspiration and deep expiration): subjects sit in <i>sukhasanam</i> and perform deep inspiration and expiration through both nostrils.</p>

**Table 3. Clinical Assessment**

<b>Completeremission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total disappearance of signs and symptoms.</li> <li>• No Wheeze.</li> </ul>
<b>Major improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No night awakening due to breathlessness.</li> <li>• Nature of symptoms from severe to mild.</li> <li>• Frequency of wheeze one to two times for 15 days.</li> </ul>
<b>Minor improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No night awakening due to breathlessness.</li> <li>• Nature of attack severe to moderate.</li> <li>• Frequency of wheeze more than two times for 15 days.</li> <li>• Night awakening present due to breathlessness</li> </ul>

### 3. RESULT

After completion of treatment for 3 months, the patient's showed a reduction in his symptom like breathlessness, tightness of the chest, sneezing, cough and Sleep disturbance due to asthmatic attacks. Overall, he showed major improvement from his symptoms.

The decrease in the number of wheeze (day and night) resulted in the reduction of the use of asthma drugs especially Salbutamol puff and he showed 80% decrement in the use of anti-histamines for the allergic rhinitis in the patient during and after the treatment.

### 4. DISCUSSION

Bronchial asthma is a chronic inflammatory disorder and mast cell, eosinophils and T-lymphocytes play an important role.<sup>[8]</sup> The ingredients like *thalisapathiri (Taxus buccata)*, *pepper (Piper nigrum)*, *vellai erukku (Calotropis gigantea)* may be collectively effective on airflow obstruction and airway hyper responsiveness by bronchodilator, anti-inflammatory and antihistaminic properties.<sup>[9]</sup> The effect of yoga like *Bhujangasanam*, *Dhanurasanam*, *Gomukhasanam*, *Ardhamatsyendrasanam* in helping the coordination of breath and movement associated with good posturing for best relaxation of breath, muscles help to decrease the number of wheeze (day and night) resulted in the reduction of the use of asthma drugs especially Salbutamol puff.

It also helps in controlling the panic attacks which aggravate individual's further deterioration and shortness of breath by letting a way to control the physical body, the mind (Psychosomatic) and the autonomic nature of breath control <sup>[9]</sup>. This explains the effect of *Yogam* and *Siddha* medicine in the relief of asthma attack and improving quality of life.

There is limited number of well-designed studies exploring beneficial effects of *yoga* on asthma. Hence it is not possible to conclude the long-term efficacy of using yoga to control asthma attack with this single case report. Further studies are required in controlled conditions with large sample size and standardized yoga protocol for confirmation.

### 5. CONCLUSION

The patient showed good response to treatment with marked reduction in his symptoms and quality of life with significant reduction of his regular drugs.

This documentation is an attempt to highlight the importance of *Yogam* and *pranayamam* in treatment of bronchial asthma along with *Siddha* medicine, further large-scale studies – RCTS are recommended.

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