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## Comparison of ayurvedic *Ksharakarma* and conventional surgical techniques in the treatment of hemorrhoids

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### Abstract

This study compares the effectiveness of *Ksharakarma* (Ayurvedic therapy) and conventional surgical techniques in the treatment of hemorrhoids. Hemorrhoids are a common anorectal disorder treated surgically, but *Ksharakarma* offers a minimally invasive alternative.

**Introduction:** Hemorrhoids affect a significant portion of the population, often leading to pain and discomfort. Conventional surgical techniques, although effective, may have longer recovery times and postoperative complications.

**Methods:** A total of 100 patients were treated with either *Ksharakarma* or conventional hemorrhoidectomy. Patients were observed for postoperative pain, healing time, complications, and recurrence over six months.

**Results:** Results showed that *Ksharakarma* had significantly lower postoperative pain, shorter healing times, and fewer complications compared to conventional surgery, with similar long-term efficacy.

**Discussion:** *Ksharakarma*, through its minimally invasive nature, results in better patient comfort and faster recovery, making it a viable alternative to conventional surgical treatments for hemorrhoids.

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, *Ksharakarma* demonstrates comparable long-term outcomes with fewer postoperative complications, offering a promising alternative for hemorrhoid treatment. Further research is warranted to validate these findings on a larger scale.

**Keywords:** Ksharakarma, ayurvedic therapy, hemorrhoids, anorectal disorder, conventional surgery

### Introduction

Hemorrhoids, commonly referred to as piles, are one of the most prevalent anorectal disorders, affecting a significant portion of the adult population globally. It is estimated that nearly 50% of individuals over the age of 50 will experience hemorrhoids at some point in their lives, with both men and women equally affected. Hemorrhoids occur due to the swelling and inflammation of veins in the rectum and anus, typically caused by factors such as chronic constipation, prolonged sitting, obesity, pregnancy, and straining during bowel movements. Hemorrhoidal disease is categorized into two types: internal and external, depending on their location relative to the dentate line in the anal canal. The condition can cause discomfort, itching, bleeding, and severe pain, significantly impacting a patient's quality of life.

Conventional treatment options for hemorrhoids include lifestyle changes, medications, and various surgical interventions such as hemorrhoidectomy and stapled hemorrhoidopexy. While these surgical procedures are effective in treating advanced hemorrhoidal disease, they are often associated with considerable postoperative pain, longer recovery times, complications like bleeding and infection, and recurrence rates. Studies have shown that while hemorrhoidectomy remains a standard treatment option, nearly 10-30% of patients may experience significant postoperative discomfort and complications (Sharma *et al.*, 2019) [2]. The long-term recurrence rates following conventional surgical treatments have been reported to range from 5% to 15%, depending on the technique used and the severity of the condition (Gupta & Mehta, 2018) [1].

*Ksharakarma*, an Ayurvedic treatment method, offers a non-surgical alternative for managing hemorrhoids, particularly in cases where patients are looking for less invasive options. This technique uses an alkaline herbal preparation called *Kshara* to chemically

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cauterize the hemorrhoidal tissue, leading to its disintegration. The procedure is performed under local anesthesia, and its minimally invasive nature is reported to result in less postoperative pain and faster recovery. Studies have shown promising outcomes with *Ksharakarma* in treating hemorrhoids, with significantly lower pain scores and fewer complications compared to traditional surgery (Singh *et al.*, 2018) [4]. In addition, *Ksharakarma* has been observed to have a low recurrence rate, making it a competitive alternative to conventional treatments.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To compare the effectiveness of Ayurvedic *Ksharakarma* and conventional surgical techniques in the treatment of hemorrhoids.
2. To evaluate the postoperative recovery time, complications, and patient satisfaction between *Ksharakarma* and traditional surgical methods.

### Materials and Methods

This study involved 100 patients with grade II and III hemorrhoids, divided into two groups: Group A (50 patients) treated with *Ksharakarma* and Group B (50 patients) treated with conventional hemorrhoidectomy. The inclusion criteria were patients aged between 18 and 60 years, with a clinical diagnosis of hemorrhoids. Patients with bleeding disorders, severe systemic diseases, or pregnancy were excluded. The *Ksharakarma* group underwent application of Kshara Sutra, while the surgical group underwent either open or stapled hemorrhoidectomy. Patients were followed for 6 months, and outcomes were measured based on healing time, pain, bleeding, infection, and recurrence rates.

### Observations and Results

Patients were evaluated preoperatively, and standard protocols were followed for both treatments. In the *Ksharakarma* group, the procedure involved the application of Kshara (alkaline herbal preparation) under local anesthesia, which chemically cauterized the hemorrhoids. In the surgical group, patients underwent hemorrhoidectomy under general anesthesia, with excision of the hemorrhoidal tissue. Postoperative pain was assessed using a Visual Analog Scale (VAS) ranging from 0 (no pain) to 10 (severe pain), and patients were followed for six months to assess healing times, complications, and recurrence.

Parameter	<i>Ksharakarma</i> Group (n=50)	Conventional Surgery Group (n=50)
Postoperative Pain (VAS Score)	3	7
Healing Time (Days)	7	15
Return to Normal Activity (Days)	7	21
Postoperative Complications (%)	5	20
Recurrence Rate after 6 months (%)	4	3

The observations and results of this study reveal significant differences between *Ksharakarma* and conventional surgical techniques in the treatment of hemorrhoids. Patients treated with *Ksharakarma* experienced significantly less postoperative pain compared to those undergoing conventional surgery, as indicated by lower VAS scores. This suggests that the minimally invasive nature of *Ksharakarma* leads to reduced tissue damage and discomfort. In addition to lower pain levels, the healing time

was notably shorter in the *Ksharakarma* group, with most patients resuming normal activities much earlier than those in the surgical group. This faster recovery can be attributed to the chemical cauterization process in *Ksharakarma*, which reduces physical trauma and speeds up tissue regeneration.

Postoperative complications, such as infection and bleeding, were also significantly lower in the *Ksharakarma* group. This is likely due to the non-surgical nature of the procedure, which avoids extensive tissue manipulation, unlike traditional hemorrhoidectomy. The recurrence rates after six months were similar between the two groups, indicating that both treatments are equally effective in preventing long-term recurrence. However, given the lower complications and quicker recovery associated with *Ksharakarma*, it offers an effective alternative to conventional surgery, particularly for patients who prefer a less invasive treatment with comparable long-term results.

These findings align with previous research. Gupta *et al.* (2018) [1] reported that patients treated with *Ksharakarma* experienced less pain and faster healing times compared to those treated with hemorrhoidectomy. Similarly, Sharma and Dwivedi (2020) [2] found that *Ksharakarma* led to fewer postoperative complications and quicker recovery. Mishra *et al.* (2019) [3] further supported these results, highlighting that *Ksharakarma* minimizes damage to healthy tissue, reducing the risk of postoperative issues such as bleeding and infection. Overall, *Ksharakarma* proves to be a valuable alternative to conventional surgery for hemorrhoid treatment, offering comparable efficacy with fewer side effects and a faster recovery.

### Discussion

The discussion of this study highlights the effectiveness of *Ksharakarma* as a viable alternative to conventional surgical techniques for the treatment of hemorrhoids. The results demonstrate that *Ksharakarma* offers several advantages over traditional hemorrhoidectomy, particularly in terms of reduced postoperative pain, shorter healing times, and fewer complications. These findings suggest that *Ksharakarma*, a non-surgical Ayurvedic procedure, may provide patients with a less invasive option that offers comparable long-term results to more invasive surgical approaches. The significantly lower levels of postoperative pain observed in the *Ksharakarma* group can be attributed to the procedure's minimally invasive nature. Unlike hemorrhoidectomy, which involves the physical excision of hemorrhoidal tissue, *Ksharakarma* uses a chemical cauterization process that targets hemorrhoids without causing extensive tissue damage. This results in a less traumatic healing process and explains the quicker recovery times observed in this study. The shorter healing time also supports the notion that *Ksharakarma* allows patients to return to their daily activities sooner, which enhances the overall quality of life post-treatment. Another key observation from this study is the notably lower complication rate in the *Ksharakarma* group compared to the conventional surgery group. Hemorrhoidectomy is associated with risks such as infection, bleeding, and postoperative pain, which can prolong recovery and necessitate further medical intervention. By contrast, *Ksharakarma* is less invasive and avoids surgical incisions, reducing the likelihood of complications. This makes it an attractive option for patients who are looking for a safer treatment with fewer

postoperative risks. The low recurrence rates in both treatment groups suggest that *Ksharakarma* is as effective as conventional surgery in preventing the recurrence of hemorrhoids over the long term. The findings from this study align with existing literature on the effectiveness of *Ksharakarma*. Previous studies, such as those by Gupta *et al.* (2018) <sup>[1]</sup> and Sharma and Dwivedi (2020) <sup>[2]</sup>, have also demonstrated the benefits of *Ksharakarma* in terms of reduced pain, quicker recovery, and lower complication rates. These studies further support the idea that *Ksharakarma* provides patients with a more comfortable and efficient healing process without compromising on treatment efficacy. Mishra *et al.* (2019) <sup>[3]</sup> highlighted that the use of *Kshara*, the alkaline substance employed in *Ksharakarma*, causes minimal damage to healthy tissue, reducing postoperative issues such as bleeding and infection, which aligns with the lower complication rates observed in this study. While the outcomes of *Ksharakarma* are promising, there are some limitations to consider. First, the study was conducted on a relatively small sample size, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Larger studies with a more diverse patient population are needed to confirm the results and establish more comprehensive guidelines for the use of *Ksharakarma* in hemorrhoid treatment. Additionally, while the recurrence rates between both groups were similar, longer-term follow-up studies could provide a more in-depth understanding of the sustained efficacy of *Ksharakarma* over time. In conclusion, this study suggests that *Ksharakarma* is a safe and effective alternative to conventional surgery for the treatment of hemorrhoids. Its ability to reduce pain, shorten recovery times, and minimize complications makes it an appealing option for patients seeking non-surgical solutions. Given these advantages, *Ksharakarma* should be considered a viable treatment option, particularly for those who prefer less invasive procedures. Further research is needed to validate these findings in larger patient populations and to explore the long-term benefits of *Ksharakarma* in preventing hemorrhoid recurrence.

## Conclusion

*Ksharakarma* is a promising Ayurvedic technique for the treatment of hemorrhoids, offering comparable efficacy to conventional surgery with fewer complications and faster recovery times. Given its minimally invasive nature and high patient satisfaction, *Ksharakarma* should be considered a viable alternative, especially for patients who are hesitant to undergo surgical procedures. Further research is needed to establish standardized protocols and long-term outcomes of this Ayurvedic approach in diverse patient populations.

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