

11.16. Urustambha

Urustambha

(massive heaviness, stiffness, and aching of both thighs – the classic “leg-block” of the Santarpanottha group)

Textual home-base: **Āṣṭāṅga-hṛdaya, Cikitsā-sthāna, Chapter “Urustambha-chikitsā”** (entire chapter is devoted to the disease) and the earlier **Nidāna-sthāna “Santarpanottha-vikāra”** section.

1 ▶ Etiopathogenesis in a nutshell

Link	Classical reading	Modern parallel
Nidāna	Long over-nutrition (<i>santarpana</i>): heavy sweet/sour food, curd at night, day-sleep, no exercise	Hyper-caloric life-style, metabolic syndrome
Doṣa mix	Kapha + Āma flood → lodge in Uru (thigh) channels; Kapha “blankets” Vāta	Inter-muscular oedema, venous & lymph stasis, myofascial tightness
Srotas	Medo-māmsa-vaha blocked; Vāta can’t propel dhātu-rasa → “stumbling heaviness”	Impaired micro-circulation, lactate build-up
Vyakti	Sudden or gradual heaviness, stiffness, pain; thighs feel “stone-packed”; knee/ankle spared early	Bilateral thigh ache, difficulty flexing hip/knee, waddling walk

Key dictum from AH Urustambha chapter:

“Until Kapha-āvaraṇa is removed, **Sneha is absolutely contraindicated**; it will aggravate the plug.”

2 ▶ Samprāpti-Vighaṭana (breaking the chain)

- Kapha-āma liquefaction** – very dry / hot fomentations (**Valuka-sweda, Dhānyāmla-dhārā**), plus strong **Deepana-pācana** powders (Trikatu, Hiṅgavāṣṭaka).
- Evacuation / Anulomana** – single or repeated **Mṛdu Virecana** with castor-oil, or classical **Vamana** if chest-Kapha dominates.
- Rūkṣa-Udvardhana** – powder massage (Kolakulathādi cūrṇa) to “churn” Kapha-medas in the thighs.
- Lekhana / Kṣāra-basti** – scraping basti (Daśamūla-kṣāra, gomūtra) every other day until limb lightness is felt.
- Only then Sneha** – moderate taila-abhyanga & *Patra-piṇḍa-sweda* to restore Vāta rhythm.
- Rasāyana** – light, Kapha-shaving tonics (Gudūcī, Āmalakī, Guggulu-tikta-ghṛita) + monitored exercise for lasting recovery.

3 ▶ Chikitsā-sūtra - distilled ladder

Lañghana → Rūkṣa-Sweda → Deepana-Pācana
↓
Virecana / Vamana
↓
Kṣāra / Lekhana Basti
↓
Moderate Sneha-Sweda

↓
Rasāyana + Vyāyāma

“Rūkṣa first, Sneha later” is the non-negotiable rule.

4 ▶ 30-Day Chikitsā-yojanā

Day-block	Core Therapy	Expected milestone
1-3	Dry hot Valuka-sweda thighs 15 min + 2 g Trikatu t.i.d.	Sweat, heaviness ↓ a little
4 (night)	30 ml castor-oil purge with warm ginger-water	5-6 oily stools, tongue coat clears
5-10	Daily Kolakulathādi-udvartana 20 min → same Valuka-sweda	Thighs feel lighter, stiffness ↓
11-18	Kṣāra-basti (dashamūla kṣāra-kvātha + gomūtra + taila) on odd days; warm water diet on basti days	Limb girth ↓ 1-2 cm, walk easier
19-24	Begin Abhyanga with 50 ml warm Triphalā-taila + Patra-piṇḍa-sweda	No rebound heaviness; Vāta pacified
25-30	Rasāyana start: 10 g Guggulu-tikta-ghṛita a.m.; 500 mg Gudūci-satva b.i.d.; daily 30-min brisk walk	Stable lightness, ROM restored

(Doses modulate with age, strength & gut-fire.)

5 ▶ Rasāyana

Drug	Why in Urustambha	Typical dose
Guggulu-tikta-ghṛita	“Scrapes” residual medo-kapha yet nourishes joints	5-10 ml empty stomach
Gudūci-satva	Anti-āma, anti-oxidant, light	500 mg b.i.d.
Āmalakī-rasāyana	Cools post-procedure pitta, vitamin-rich	1 tsp a.m.
Śuddha Śilājatu (optional)	Mineralises bones after weight-loss	250 mg b.i.d.

6 ▶ Pathyā-Apathyā checklist

☑ Do

Barley, millet, green-gram soup, buttermilk spiced with Trikatu
Warm water, dry-ginger-coriander tea
Daily **Udvartana** & hot bath
Regular brisk walk, Surya-namaskāra
Thin cotton/linen clothes

☒ Avoid

New rice, curd at night, cheese, sweets
Cold drinks, beer
Day-sleep, couch-sitting > 45 min
Heavy gym before Kapha clears
Thick fleece trapping moisture

☑ Take-home bullets

1. **Urustambha is Kapha-āma barricading Vāta in the thighs** — never oil first.
2. Sequence = **Laṅghana** → **Śodhana** → **Lekhana** → **Sneha**.
3. **Basti** (especially Kṣāra / Lekhana) is the game-changer; think “colon scrapes thigh heaviness”.
4. Rasāyana must be **Kapha-śamaka & lekhanīya**, not bulk-building.
5. Continued **pathyā diet + exercise** prevents rebound heaviness once procedures stop.

With this clear ladder students can safely convert theory into a day-wise protocol for any Santarpana-based heavy-thigh



syndrome labelled **Urustambha**.

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