

SCALP PSORIASIS MANAGEMENT THROUGH AYURVEDA- A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Psoriasis is a common, chronic, non-communicable skin disease, with no clear cause or cure. The scalp is also characteristically affected in many people, like psoriasis anywhere on the body, scalp plaques produce excess scale and can itch. Scalp psoriasis somewhat difficult to treat when the scalp is covered with hair sufficient to act a barrier to the application of topical medications. According to *Ayurveda Eka Kushta* is a type of *Kshudra Kushta* described in different *Ayurvedic* classics. Modern medical science treats Psoriasis with corticosteroids etc. but these therapies give serious side effects. Hence, it is the need of time to find out safe and effective treatment for Psoriasis and here *Ayurveda* plays an important role. The unique treatment modality of *Ayurveda* provides long lasting results and a better life to patients through its three basic principles i.e. *Shodhana*, *Shamana* and *Nidanparivarjana*. The improvement was significantly increased during course of oral medications with *Nidana Parivarjana*.

KEYWORDS: Scalp Psoriasis, *Eka Kushta*, *Sadyo Virechana*, *Thakradhara*, *Shiropakshalanaan*, *Shamanaoushadis*.

INTRODUCTION

Psoriasis is an autoimmune disease in which the life cycle of skin cells is sped up. This causes cells to build up on the surface of the skin. These cells form silvery colored scales and red or purple patches that may be itchy or painful. The scales may cover large areas of your body or be just small spots.¹ In *Ayurveda*, all skin diseases are grouped under a broad heading of *Kushta Roga*. *Eka Kushta* is one of such diseases explained under the heading of *Kshudra Kushta*. The classical symptoms of *Ekakushta* described in *Ayurveda* resembles with Psoriasis. The clinical feature of *EkaKushta* described by *Acharya Kashyapa* represents remission,

relapse and seasonal variation which are present in Psoriasis.

Prodromal features of Psoriasis (*Purvarupa of Eka Kushta*)²

- Reduced perspiration (*Aswedana*)
- Increased perspiration (*Atiswedana*)
- Discolouration of the skin (*Twak Vaivarnya*)
- Itching (*Kandu*)
- Pricking sensation (*Nistoda*)
- Numbness (*Suptata*)
- Horripilation (*Lomaharsha*)
- Fatigue (*Klama*)

Clinical features of Psoriasis (*Rupa of Ekakushta*)

- Reduced sweating (*Asweda*)

- Extended skin lesions (*Mahavastu*)
- Scaling of skin similar to the scales of the fish (*Matsya Shakalopama*)
- Pink discoloration (*Arunavarna*)

In *Panchakarma*, among *Shodhana* therapy, *Virechana* is principle treatment for *Pitta Dosh*³. *Acharya Charaka* defined *Virechana* as a process in which waste products or toxins (*Doshas*) are eliminated through anal route. According to *Sabdakalpadruma*, *Sadya* means on the same day, in the very moment, or immediately. Therefore the word *SadyoVirechana* means instant purgation. It given before giving *Samana Aushadha* for purification of *Koshta*.⁴

Shirodhara is the process in which medicated *Takra* is poured in a continuous stream of drip on the head and It indicated in Psychosomatic disorders, Neurological disorders and also in Psoriasis.⁵ *Shiropakshalana* (Headwash) with appropriate medicine like *Arogyavardhini Vati*, *Haridra churna*, *Amalaki Rasayana* help to reduce the Psoriasis symptoms.

CASE REPORT

A 39 years old male was presented in OPD of *Shalakyatantra* Department presenting with chief complaints as itching and discoloration of skin, erythematous patches of rounded to irregular shape, appearance of silvery scales guarding the patches over his scalp, face and back of the ear. Around about 10 years back, he was in healthy state, later he started with itching sensation on head. The area affected with itching slowly got discoloured and dry. Also, there was

appearance of scaly, silvery, or powdery patches. He didn't take any medicine for that because it consider as dandruff and used some shampoos. After 5 year condition become worst. Simultaneously he was suffering from constipation, loss of appetite, physical and mental stress and disturbed sleep. So he approached allopathic physician and it diagnosed as scalp psoriasis. He had taken treatment of allopathic medicine for years but didn't get complete relief. When he visited OPD, first of all we carried out his all routine blood investigations as Complete Blood Count, Blood Sugar Level, Liver Function Tests, Renal Function Tests and Routine and Microscopic Urine Examination to rule out any possible associated disorder. But finding of these investigations were found within

Normal limits. There was no significant past history of any type of addiction was found.

Treatment Plan:

The treatment is carried out in three phases

I. First Phase:

SadyoVirechanana (Process of purgation) with *Trivrut lehya*

II. Second phase:

1. *Shirodhara* with *Takra*

2. *Shiropakshalana* with *Panchavalkala Kwata*

III. Third Phase:

After *Shodhana*, third phase of treatment initiated in the form of oral medication and *Nidana Parivarjana*. The composition of oral administration of drugs was *Arogyavardhini Vati*, *Haridrachurna*, *Amlaki Rasayana* and for Local application *Nalpamaradi Taila* for 2 week.

Table No. 1. 15 Days of treatment Procedure.

Date	Procedure	Medicine	Dose	Duration
15/2/2020	<i>Sadyovirechana</i>	<i>Trivrutlehya</i>	50grm	-
16/2/2020-22/2/2020	<i>Shirodhara</i>	<i>Takra</i>	Q.S	30mnt
23/2/2020-29/2/2020	<i>Shiropakshalana</i>	<i>Panchavatkalakwatha</i>	Q.S	15 mnt
1/3/2020-14/3/2020	Local Application (Before bath)	<i>NalpamarathiTaila</i>	Q.S	Headwash after 20 mnt

Table No.2. Internal medicines and Dose for next 14 Days.

Medicine	Dose
<i>Aogyavardhini Vati</i>	1 -0-0 After food
<i>Amlaki Rasayana</i>	1tsp-0-1tsp Before food
<i>Haridra choorna</i>	0-0-1tsp + 1glass water

OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

During the 15 days course of *Sadyovirechana*, *Shirodhara* and *Shiropakshalana* patient had reported 80-90% improvement in his symptoms. He had got relief from itching, discoloured skin and red scaly patches. The silver scales were reduced. Also the patient had developed normal bowel habit. The treatment regime was planned in three phases. In the initial phase of the management patient was undergone through *Sadyovirechana Karma*. The principle of the therapy is until one expel out the morbid *Doshas* from the body. It acts mainly on vitiated *Doshas* of psoriasis that is *Vata* and *Kapha*. End phase completed with 2 week of internal medicines and local application of *Nalpamaradi taila*⁶ with *Nidanaparivarjana*⁷ through proper *Pathya* and *Apathya* of *Ahara* and *Vihara*

like intake of vegetarian food. After the one month of treatment period, Patient discharged with complete relief from scalp Psoriasis symptoms and Patient reported after the 14 days of follow up period without any Psoriasis symptoms.

Discussion on Scalp psoriasis: Psoriasis is an autoimmune disease that causes patches of red, scaly and itchy skin and can affect any part of the body. When the patches appear on a person's Scalp, the condition is called Scalp psoriasis. The causes of Scalp psoriasis are similar to those of psoriasis on other parts of the body, but it can more challenging to treat. Scalp psoriasis causes red, itchy, sore skin and silvery scales of dry skin on the scalp. It can extend to a person's forehead, neck and ears.

The severity of scalp psoriasis usually varies over time. People often experience flare-ups, when their symptoms become worse, and periods of remission.

Some people may confuse this dry, scaly skin with dandruff, which is a different psoriasis causes a general "silvery sheen" in the hair, and people can usually detect silvery scales on the scalp.⁸ Other symptoms of scalp psoriasis include: reddish patches on the scalp, a dry scalp, itching, bleeding, soreness, hair loss.

According to the National Psoriasis Foundation⁹, the initial treatment of Scalp psoriasis will typically involve shampoos and other topical treatments. According to research, the most effective treatment options for Scalp psoriasis include topical corticosteroids, clobetasol propionate shampoo, and vitamin-D derivatives.

Ayurveda believes that impurities in the blood associated with emotional factors are the cause of the disease. Psoriasis is believed to occur due to vitiation of all the *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitha*, *Kapha*) in varying degree, but predominantly *Vata* and *Kapha* according to the *Ayurvedic* concept¹⁰. Ayurveda closely resembles the classical symptoms of symptoms of Psoriasis.

The predominance of *Vatha* causes, dryness and scaling of skin, *Pitha* vitiation leads to burning sensation, redness, inflammation etc and that of *Kapha* causes rashes, itching, discharge, thickening of skin etc. From these signs and symptoms, the *Doshik* involvement is analyzed carefully in each patient, which is of utmost importance in the management of this disease. *Nidana* like irregular food habits etc. produced toxins and it accumulated in deep tissues like *Rasa* (nutrient plasma), *Rakta* (blood), *Mamsa* (muscles) and *Laseeka* (lymphatic). These toxins cause contamination of deeper tissue, leading to Psoriasis.

The vitiated *Dosha* affect the skin and blood tissues. They also influence water element of the affected region on skin. Thus the skin which is influenced by affected *Doshas* becomes discoloured (white or copper colored), scaly and thin.

At *Charaka*¹¹, treatment primarily focuses on blood purification and balancing the vitiated *Doshas*.

Management of Psoriasis comprises of: *Shodhanachikitsa* (Detoxification) done through *Panchakarma* therapies like *Virechana* etc an exclusive therapies like *Shirodhara* and *Shiropakshalana*. *Shamanachikitsa* through administration of internal medication and external application. Same administered in Scalp psoriasis case and experienced completely relief from its symptoms

Discussion on *Sadyovirechana*: After 1 day rest the patient was advised to take *Trivrutlehya* at next day morning with 50 gram. The properties of *Virechana Dravyas* are *Ushna*, *Tikkshna*, *Sukshma*, *Vyavayi*, *Vikasi* are mentioned in Ayurveda classics which play a vital role in the mode of action of *Virechana karma*.

Ushna: *Ushnaguna* has *Agneya* property and hence “*Vishyandana*” occurs and it facilitates movement of morbid *Doshas* towards *Koshta*. It also assists *Tikshna Guna* to perform its action.

Tikshna: *Tikshnaguna* performs the function of “*Sanghatabhedana*”. It breaks the complex morbid matter into smaller molecules. According to *Dalhana*¹², it is responsible for quick excretion. Thus, *Tikshna Guna* breaks mala and morbid *Dosha* in microform.

Sukshma: *Sukshma Guna* due to its *Anupravanabhava* it helps to dilate the channel and to pass the drug into micro-channel. This property helps to remove the morbid matter from micro-channels and bring them to *Koshta* for expulsion.

Vyavayi: Due this property, drugs spreads quickly throughout the body and starts their action before its digestion. *Virechana* drugs spreads all over the body.

Vikasi: Due this property dugs loosens the *Dhatubandhana*. It creates the *Dhatu Shaithilya*. Hence drugs initiate their action without being digested.

From above description of properties of *Virechana Dravya*, it can be concluded that due to their *Vyavayi*, *Vikasi*, *Sukshma Guna*, *Virechana Dravyas* reaches minute *Srotas* and by virtue of its *Ushna*, *TikshnaGuna* it scrapes out and liquefies morbid mala and compact *Doshas*. *Virechana Dravyas* are predominant of *Prithvi* and *Jalamahabhuts*, due to the *Gati* of *Dravya* is towards *Adhobhaga*. In this way, *Virechana Dravyas* bring *Shakhagata Mala* to *Koshta* and consequently expels out from the body.

Discussion on *Shirodhara*: *Shirodhara* is form of Ayurveda therapy that involves gently pouring liquids over the forehead and used to treat a variety of conditions. Also used in certain types of skin diseases like psoriasis. *Shirodhara* with *Takra* help to reduce the symptom of Psoriasis.

Medicinal effect: *Takra* contains large amount of lactic acid. It is scientifically proved that lactic acid is used to moisten and lessen the appearance of thickened scales. Lactic acid is a good for vehicle transdermal absorption of drugs it is also have systemic anti-inflammatory, antioxidant effects. The efficacy of lactic acid containing products is linked to their ability to deliver it to specific skin strata. The penetration of L+ lactic acid to different skin layer of porous skin from varies emulsions was measured in vitro using flow through diffusion cells.

Acharya *Sushruta* explained¹³, the *Pitha*, which is located in skin, is *Brajakagni*, enables the digestion and utilization of substance used for *Abhyanga*, *Pariseka*,

Avagaha, *Lepana*. *Dalhana* commenting on above and says *Bhrajakagni* is located in *Avabhasini Twacha* (i.e 1st layer) and *Dravya* getting digested (*Deepana*) and metabolized (*Pachana*) by power of *Bhrajakagni*. After digestion and metabolism, *Veerya* of the medicines which are used spread all over the body through *Dhamani* and exhibit their action all over body.

Discussion on *Shiropakhalana* (Head wash)
Medicinal effect: Studies indicate that the Pharmacological action of *Panchavalkala* (Bark) is found to have Anti-inflammatory, Analgesic and Antimicrobial properties¹⁴. Early researches explain that tannis present in *Nyagrodha* and *Udumbara* are anti-oxidants and blood purifiers with anti-inflammatory actions. They hence might have helped to decrease the Scalp psoriasis symptoms. *Acharya Sushruta* has specifically indicated *Nyagrodhadi Gana Kwatha Prakshalana* for *Shodhana* effect¹⁵. As *Panchavalkala* drugs are included in *Nyagrodhadi Gana.Panchavalkala Kwatha* provided better therapeutic efficacy and very beneficial in the *Doshakarma* of *Pithakaphahara*. In classical terms, it can be explains that *Katu*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya Rasa*, *Laghu*, *Ruksha*, *Teekshna Guna Ushna Veerya*, *KatuVipaka* and *Kaphapithaghna* properties of drugs are responsible to break the *Samprapti* of diseases. As compared with modern view, *Panchavalkala Kwatha* phytochemically dominant in phenolic group components like tannis, flavonoids which are mainly responsible for its excellent activates antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, immune modulatory, antioxidant, antibacterial, antimicrobial and wound purifying well as healing, astringent properties.¹⁶

Discussion on *Shamanaoushadha*

Medicinal effect: *Arogyavardhini Vati*¹⁷ improves overall good health by balancing all the three Dosha. This remedy maintains a healthy digestive system. It also does the *Raktavardhana* (Purifies blood).

Amlaki Rasayana promoting general energy, act as disease-preventing tonic may

Be its effect on the immune system and this can be attribute to *Tridhoshahara*, Again because of having properties such as *Hridya* and *Maduravipaka* does nourishment of *Rasa Dhatu* which further nourish all the *Dhatu*.¹⁸

Haridra is used as an antioxidant and possesses various beneficial properties such as anti-inflammatory, anti-allergic, blood cleansing.¹⁹ It due to its *Tikta-Katu Rasa*, *UshnaVeerya*, *KatuVipaka* and *Laghu*, *Ruksha Guna* removes blocks in the blood vessels making the circulation of blood and nutrients easy. It helps in immune-modulation by metabolism.²⁰

CONCLUSION

Eka Kushtha (Psoriasis) though difficult to manage, but if proper diagnosis is made at proper time, it can give significant relief. In present case; the treatment was found very effective in treating Scalp Psoriasis. There was 80-90% relief in signs and symptoms after *Shodhana* Therapy and 100% relief after Oral medications and other therapeutic procedure with *Nidana parivarjana*.

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