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Applied Aspect Of Shodhan Chikitsa In Psoriasis (*Ekakustha*)

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ABSTRACT: -

Psoriasis is a chronic inflammatory disease of skin which is non-infectious in origin. It is characterized by erythematous plaques (of well defined margins) with silvery scale on extensor surface and scalp. This disease not only affects patient's physical appearance but also disturbs the mental and social health, as the lesions appears externally which are embarrassing. In *Ayurveda* the disease *Ekakustha* resembles more with the characteristics of psoriasis. *Ekakustha* is described as *Vata-Kaphaj* disease. The exact aetiology of this disease is unknown but it is believe that there are many factors (like genetic, dietary, immunological and psychological) which helps in precipitation of this disorder. There is no treatment available for complete cure of Psoriasis. The use of various drugs such as corticosteroids, anthralin, psoralen and ultraviolet rays is recommended by modern science. which suppress the immune system (if used for long time) and have negative impact on body. In *Ayurveda* repeated *Shodhan Chikitsa* (Purificatory processes) and *Shaman Yogas* (Pacifying) are mentioned in treatment of *Kushtha* (Skin diseases). *Shodhan Chikitsa* (Purificatory processes) is able to give satisfactory results in *Ekakustha* and also used for prevention of many disorders and promotion of healthy life. A lot of work has already been done for psoriasis keeping *Vaman Karma* (emesis) and *Virechan Karma* (purgation) as the main procedures, In the present work there is a new approach towards use of *Bastikarma* will also discussed along with these two, as the *Vatadosha* is suggested to be a main *Dosha* (among all three *Doshas*) in creating the pathogenesis of psoriasis. The combined effect of all the three procedures was found very effective and clinically safe as no adverse drug reactions were reported during treatment period.

Keywords: *Ekakustha*, *Shodhan Karma*, Psoriasis, *Panchkarma*



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INTRODUCTION

Psora, means itch, rash, or skurf so Psoriasis can be called as itching disease^[1]. It has global prevalence rate 2-3% with 0.44-2.88% prevalence rate in India^[2] It is a chronic, recurrent inflammatory disease of the skin of unknown origin, which is characterized by well circumscribed erythematous dry plaques of various size which are covered with mica like scale^[3]. The most characteristic lesions are of red colour, and are scaly, sharply demarcated, and present mainly over extensor surfaces and scalp. In development of psoriasis both genetic and environmental factors plays a critical role. In *Ayurvedic* texts, all skin disease are described under the heading of *Kushtha* (Skin diseases). Psoriasis is correlated with *Ekakushtha* (a type of *Kushtha*) due to resemblance of signs and symptoms. There are different opinions regarding *Ekakustha* according to different *Acharya*. According to *Acharya Kashyap*, the condition of skin developed over erysipelas, spreading constantly and associated with discharges, pain and parasites is *Ekakustha*.^[4] According to *Acharya Charaka* the condition of skin in which there is absence of sweating (*Aswedanam*), present all over the body (*Mahavasthuvam*) and resembles with scales of fish (*Mastyasakalopamam*) is known as *Ekakushtha*.^[5] According to *Sushruta* the condition in which the skin becomes black and pink colour is known as *Ekakushtha*.^[6] *Acharyas* has described *Ekakustha* as *Raktapradosaj*, *Vatakaphapradhan* *Tridoshaj* *Kshudrakustha*.^[7] In modern medical science the treatment of psoriasis is includes PUVA and corticosteroid^[8] but the therapy gives serious side effects (as used for long time) like liver & kidney failure, bone marrow depletion etc. while *Ayurvedic* treatment is safe and effective medicine for Psoriasis. *Kustha* is described

as one of the most chronic disorders (*Dirgha-Roga*) by *Acharya Charak*.^[9] All these symptoms can be co-related with psoriasis, in which silver fish scales is most predominant feature along with well circumscribed, sharply demarcated erythematous papules or plaques covered by dry, brittle, silvery or greyish white.

This article deals with the ayurvedic treatment modality for the management of psoriasis and hence describes a detailed knowledge regarding how different treatment can be implemented to give a sure shot relief to the patient.

Causes (Etiology) of Psoriasis –In *Ayurvedic* classics there is no specific description for etiology of *Ekakustha* so it can be understood on the basis of general etiology of *Kustha*. In *Charak Samhita* *chikitsa sthana* (*kustha chikitsa adhyaya*) There is description of *Samanya Nidana* (General etiology) for *Kustha*. These *Nidanas* (etiology) can be mainly categorised in three groups-^[10]

1. *Aharaja Nidana*
2. *Viharaja Nidana*
3. *Achara Hetu*

***Aharaja Nidana* (Food related etiology)**

1. Intake of *Mulaka* (redish), *Lashuna* (garlic) etc. with milk.
2. Meat of *Gramya* (domestic animals), *Anupa* (marshy animals), *Audaka* (aquatic animals) with milk.
3. Intake of fish (specially *Chilchim*) with milk.
4. Intake of *Pippali* (*Piper longum*), *Kakamachi* (*Solanum nigrum*), *Lakucha* (Monkey Jack) fruit with *Dadhi* (curd) and Ghee.
5. *Mulaka* (reddish) with *Gud* (*Jaggery*).

6. Excessive intake of Alcohol and green vegetables with milk.
7. Honey and meat after taking hot diet and vice versa.
8. Use of fish, *Nimba(margosa)* and milk together.
9. *Adhyashana*(intake of food just after meal).
10. *Vishamashana*(intake of wholesome and unwholesome diet together).
11. *Atyashana*(intake of excessive food).

Viharaja Nidana (Life style related aetiology)

1. *Vyatyasa* (alternate intake) of sheet and *Ushana Dravyas*(hot potency drugs).
2. Use of *Santarpana* (nutritious) and *Apatarpana* (non-nutritious) diet without sequence.
3. Sudden diving into cold water or drinking cold water after coming from sunlight, fear, exhaustion.
4. Physical exercise & sun bath after heavy meals.
5. Suppression of *Vegas* like *Chhardi* (vomiting), *Mutra*(urine), *Purisha* (faeces).
6. *Kupathya* (Unwholesome) in *Panchakarma*.
7. *Divaswapna*(day sleep)just after lunch.

Achara Hetu (Conduct related aetiology)

1. *Papa Karma* (sin act).
2. Contemned of respected one like *Vipra Guru* etc.
3. Criticize of holy persons(*Sadhu Ninda*).
4. Killing the virtuous persons.

Management in Ayurveda –

In *Ayurveda* textbook there are three types of management is explained to cure any disease -

1. ***Nidana Parivarjana (avoidance of aetiology) :*** *Nidana* are causative factors which initiate or promotes disease. Therefore it is the first step for management to avoid all the expected causes. By restricting *Doshas* vitiation, it prevents the further progression of the disease.

2. ***Sanshodhan (Purification) :*** This is the therapy which aims at the removal of the morbid *Dosha* from the body is known as *Sanshodhan* (Purification) [11] *Acharyas* have point up on *Shodhan* therapy (Purification) in the management of *Kushtha* as this disease occurs due to *Doshabahulyata* these *Doshas* are *Tiryaggami* & very difficult to treat by *Shaman Chikitsa (Pacification)*. According to *Acharya Charak* and *Vagbhata* there are different line of treatment according to *Dosha* predominance (when there is dominance of *Vata* one should advise *Ghratapana* (intake of ghee), in dominance of *Kapha - Vamana* and in *Pitta* dominance - *Virechana* and *Raktamokshana* should be carried out [12]

Ashtanga Hridaya explained *Snehapana* (internal oleation) for the purpose of *Shareera Pushthi* (strengthen of body) in all varieties of *Kushtha* (skin diseases), he also mentioned that *Doshanusara Shodhan* (Purification acc. to dosha) to be done after *Snehapan* [13] According to *Acharya Sushruta 'Ubhayato Sanshodhanm (Vaman and Virechan)'* should carried out even at the *Purvarupa* (Prodromal signs) condition of *Kushtha (skin diseases)* , he also advised *Sansodhana* (Purification) in the treatment of *Rasagata (plasma)* , *Mamsagata (muscles)* , *Medogata Kushtha* [14]. *Acharya Sushrut* also emphasize on repeated *Shodhan* (Purification) at regular intervals

Table 2- Showing Periodic *Shodhan* (Purification) in *Kushtha*

Procedure	Periodicity
<i>Vamana</i> (Emesis)	Once in 15 days
<i>Virechana</i> (Purgation)	Once in month
<i>Nasya</i> (Nasal medication)	Once in 3 days
<i>Raktamokshana</i> (Bloodletting)	Once in 6 months

3. *Samshaman Chikitsa* (Pacification treatment)

: *Shaman chikitsa* should initiate after completing the *Shodhan Karma* (Purification) to subside the remaining *Doshas*. *Shaman Chikitsa* alone is less effective in treat this disease due to *Doshabahulyata* and *Tiryaggamita*. *Shaman* therapy should be advised in those cases whom do not have enough time for *Shodhan* therapy (Purification) due to their busy schedule. *Acharya Charaka* has described in *Kushtha Chikitsa* (skin diseases) that *Shaman* therapy with *Tikta* and *Kashaya Dravyas* (bitter and astringent) . External therapy should be done when the patient of *Kushth* (skin diseases) has undergone the purificatory procedure. *Acharya Sushruta* has suggested *Shodhan lepa* (Purification) for the management of *Twakagata Samprapti* (Pathogenesis)^[15].

The treatment schedule comprising of various aspects of internal (*Abhyantar*) and external (*Bahya*) Medication along with *Shodhan* (Purification). the whole process is divided into three steps named as *Poorvakarma* (Pre-operative procedure), *Pradhan karma* (Main procedure), *Paschat karma* (Post-operative procedure).

Poorvakarma (Pre-operative procedure)

It includes two main procedures named as *Deepan-Pachan* (appetizer and digestives) and *Snehan* (Oleation). Benefit of *Poorvakarma* (Pre-operative procedure) is to prepare patient for *Shodhan* (Purification).

1. *Deepan pachana* (appetizer and digestives) - it is important to achieve normal status of *Agni* (digestive fire) to digest the metabolic waste before starting *Snehpana* (internal oleation). Digestion of the metabolic waste is achieved by increase the secretion from the digestive glands, *Deepan-Pachan* (appetizer and digestives) will also help in easy digestion of fat that will be consumed later on during *Snehpan* (internal oleation).

2. *Snehan*-Functions of *Snehan* (internal oleation) according to *Charak* are-

Anilamhanti (*Vatahara* property) – *Sneh* (oil) have exactly opposite *Guna* (Quality) to *Vata*, but *Sneh* (mainly *ghritam*) processed with *Kaphaghna* drugs is able to pacify *Vata* and *Kapha* simultaneously and it is mentioned above that *Ekakushtha* is *Vata-Kapha Pradhan Vyadhi*^[16].

Mridukarotidham- use of *sneh* (oil) leading to softness of body.

Malanaamvinihantisangam- it detach the adhered *Doshas* or mala and prevent them from further cling.

From above description it can be said that *Sneha*, by its *Sukshma Guna* reaches at the cellular level and it can be correlate with the “*Anutva of Sneha*”.

Consumption of medicated Ghee (eg. *Panchtikta Ghrita*) according to *Dosha* involve in disease and *Prakruti* for 5-7 days.

3. *Swedana* (Steaming and other heating procedure)-

On increasing temperature of skin, there is increase blood flow in the area (comes in contact with heat) due to vasodilation, as a result of Vasodilation there is an increased blood flow so that the necessary oxygen and nutritive materials are supplied (which accelerates tissue healing) and waste products are removed. It can be correlated with *Srotomukha-Vishodhanat*.

Metabolic rate and the tissue extensibility also increase on increasing temp of skin, increases the activity of destructive enzymes (such as collagenase, and increases the catabolic rate) also occurs^[17] Due to excess accumulation of *Dosha* there is a blockage of various *Strotas* (channels) in

Mode of action of *Vamana* (emesis):

Vamana (emesis) eliminates the vitiated *Kapha* and *Pitta* from *Amashaya* (stomach)



Digestion of drug as well as food takes place in proper way.

5. *Virechana* (Medicated Purgation) –

It is an also cleansing method for lower gastro intestinal tract, it removes blockage (*Srotoavrodh*) in lower alimentary canal. It is a best line of treatment for *Pitta Dosha* in our body. After *Snehan* (oleation) and *Swedana* (Sudation) there is liquification of *Doshas*, and *Virechan* drugs carry the melted *Doshas* to the gut and expel them from *Kostha* (elimentary canal) by the process of purgation. Certain drugs are used for *Virechana* (purgation) e.g, *Trivrittaleha*, *Abhayadimodak*, *Aaragwadhkapila Vati* etc. Dose of drug is decided by *Bala* (strength) of the patient. Properties of *Virechana* (purgation) drugs^[19]. *Saratva* (Laxation), *Tikshna* (Strong potency),

psoriasis. And *Swedana* (Sudation) is useful in removal of blockage of subtle channels (*Strotas*).

According to *Acharya Charak* if the lesion is *Sthira* (stable), *Kathina* (hard) and *Mandal* (patches) then *Swedana* (Sudation) can be done with *Prasthar* and *Pranadi*, and *Swedan* (Sudation) procedure liquifies the *Doshas*^[18].

4. ***Vamana* (induced vomiting)**- In psoriasis there is excess accumulation of *Dosha*, in body, which leads to blockage of *Strotas* (channels). *Vamana* (emesis) is a best cleansing method /therapy for removing *Kapaha Dosha*. *Madanaphala* (*Randia dumetorum*) is a drug of choice for *Vamana* due to its best effectiveness and less side-effect. In psoriasis this procedure can be done after each 15 days.

Sukshma (Fineness), *Ushna* (Hotness) and *Vikasi* (Dispersibility). *Virechana* (purgation) drugs due to *Vikasi*, *Sukshma* (Fineness), *Guna Virechana* (purgation) reaches to the micro channels and due to its *Ushna* (Hotness), *Tikshna Guna* (Strong potency) it scrapes out and liquefies the morbid *Dosha* and *Mala* and brings them from *Shakha* (Branches) to *Koshtha* (alimentary canal) then expels out form the body.

Virechaka (purgation) drugs having dominancy of *Jala* (water) and *Prithvi Mahabhutas* due to which it has natural tendency to go downwards and thus they can assist in induction of *Virechana* (purgation).

6. **Basti (Medicated Enema)**-it is most effective treatment in *Ayurveda* which cleans *Strotas* (channels) of all over the body. This is a very effective therapy for treatment of *Vatadosha*. There is inseparable relationship between skin and *Vata/ Vaayan Vaayu* resides in skin so in skin disorders *Vata* is a main factor and *Basti* is main treatment for *Vaat*. *Acharya Charak* mentioned *Basti* (Medicated Enema) as *Ardha Chikitsa* due to its broad effects on body.
7. **Lepa** (Pack) -External application of medicated paste gives relief in psoriasis as *lepa* act a local blood purifier.
8. **Raktamokshan (Bloodletting)**-In psoriasis there is a *Dushti* of *Raktadhatu* (impurity of blood). To remove *Dushti* present in *Rakta Mokshana* (Bloodletting) is best line of treatment.

Regimen for Patient-*Pathya* (wholesome food)

• **Ahara:** *Laghu Anna* (light food), *Purana Dhanya* (old cereals), *Jangala Mamsa* (domestic animals), *Moong daal* (green gram), *Patol* (*Trichosanthes dioica*), Food and *Ghee* processed with *Bhallataka* (*Semicarpus anacardium*), *Triphala* and *Nimba* (*Margosa*), *Guduchi* (*Tinospora cordifolia*), oil of *Danti* (*Baliospermum solanifolium*), *Ingudi* (*Balanites aegyptiaca*), *Sarshap* (*Mustard*).

Vihara: *Abhyanga* (Massage) with *Sarshap Taila*, *Utsadanam* (rubbing) with *Aaragvadhadi Kashaya*.^[20] *Snaan*(Bath) with *Khadira Kashaya*.

•*Apathya* (Unwholesome)

Ahara: *Guru Anna* (heavy food), *Amla Rasa* (citrus fruits), milk, curd, *Anupa Mamsa* (Marshy meat), *Guda* (jaggery), *Kulattha* (horse gram), *Masha* (black gram).

• **Vihara:** *Divaswapna* (Day sleep), *Maithuna* (Coitus), *Vegadharana* (Suppression of natural Urges), *Paapakarma* (Sin act)^[21]

DISCUSSION

After studying *Kustha* (skin disease) in ayurvedic literature and Psoriasis In modern text, it is clear that the disease Psoriasis is mostly comparable with *Ekakustha* which is categorized under *Mahakustha* (major skin disease). In this article *Nidana* (etiology) of *Kustha* (skin disease) along with effect of panchakarma therapies are discussed. Psychological stress factors help in origin of dermatological disorders as stress causing aggravation of *Vata*. With this new approach towards the treatment of psoriasis *Basti* (medicated enema) added after *Vaman* (emesis) and *Virechan* (purgation) is more effective than *Sodhana* (Purification) alone.

CONCLUSION

None of the disease in *Ayurveda* can be exactly correlated with Psoriasis but because of close resemblance with *Ekakushtha* it can be considered. *Ekakushtha* comes under the heading of *Kshudra Kustha* (minor skin diseases). Here, mainly three procedures namely; *Vaman Karma* (emesis), *Virechan* (purgation) and *Basti Karma* (medicated enema) discussed, creates the necessity due to involvement of *Tridosha* in *Kushtha* with *Vata Kapha* predominance. The combined effect of all the three procedures was found very effective and clinically safe as no adverse drug reactions were reported during treatment period. The final takes away message from the above discussion states that *Shodhan Chikitsa* followed by *Shaman Chikitsa* (pacification) afterwards proves to be approach for the deep rooted chronic disease like psoriasis. Further studies on the combined action of *Vaman Karma*, (emesis), *Virechan* (purgation) and *Basti Karma* (medicated enema) on large scale must be performed in future for definitive conclusive results.

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