

KUSHTHA ROGA - DERMATOLOGICAL DISORDERS IN AYURVEDA**Dr. Anurag Narware^{*#}**^{*}Trainee CHO, NHM, Govt. of M.P.[#]Ex. Assistant Professor, Department of Agada Tantra, Rajiv Gandhi Ayurvedic Medical College, Bhopal (M.P.).Article Received on
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Tantra, Rajiv Gandhi
Ayurvedic Medical College,
Bhopal (M.P.)**ABSTRACT**

Aim & objective: The main objective of this paper is to increase the awareness of the dermatological disorders in *Ayurveda* under the reasons (*nidana*), that why we got of *Kushtha roga* and how to increase the quality of life. **Basis of evidence:** The authentic subject material has been reviewed from *Ayurveda* and modern medical literature. Selected articles from dermatologic literature were reviewed and used as the basis for the discussion of how skin diseases interact with each other and affect patient's quality of life and selection of appropriate management. **Central Message:** This review is mainly focused on awareness of the dermatological disorders. Patients with the skin disorder always experience physical, mental and socioeconomic embarrassment in the society. This embarrassment leads to mental stress which further causes aggravation of preexisting disease.

KEYWORDS: *Nidana*, Stress, *Kushtha roga*, Skin disease, Quality of life.**INTRODUCTION**

Word *Kushtha*^[1] means a pathological condition which despises the skin. Skin is an important organ of communication with the external world. It is one of the five *Gyanendriyas* which responsible for *Sparsha Gyan* or touch sensation. All dermatological disorders are coming under the term *Kushtha* as per *Ayurvedic* texts. *Kushtha* produces psychological and physical discomforts due to the blemished skin which itself is proved by the name.

The skin is one of the largest organ of the body in surface area and weight. In adults the skin covers an area of about 2 square meters (22 sq. ft.) and wt. 4.5 – 5 kg. It's thickness is about 0.5 to 4.0 mm. depending upon the location

ETIOLOGY (NIDANA) OF KUSHTHA

For better understanding the etiology of *Kushtha* can be categorized in the following groups.

- (a) *Ahara Hetu*
- (b) *Vihara Hetu*
- (c) *Achara Hetu*
- (d) *Anyah Hetu*

Ahara hetu can be divided as –

- Types of food.
- Quantity of food.
- Quality of food.
- Food incompatibility.
- Faulty dietetic habits.

Aharaja Nidana: *ATI SEVANA* of following factors:

| ITEMS | AYURVEDIC NAME | C.SU. | SU SU | AA | AS. | MA NI. | BP | MODERN IMPLICATION |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|----|-----|--------|----|--|
| <i>Rasa</i> | <i>Amla, Lavana Katu & Ksara</i> | + | + | – | – | + | + | Pickle, Punjabi food, Jam & Sauce, Chinese |
| <i>Guna</i> | <i>Guru & Snigdha Ahara</i> | + | – | – | – | + | + | Sweets, <i>Laddu</i> , Ghee, Cake, Bread Chocolate |
| Dairy products | <i>Ksira, Dadhi and Takra</i> | + | – | – | – | + | + | Milk & its derivatives, like Curd, Buttermilk |
| Grains | <i>Navadhanya</i> | + | – | – | – | + | + | Recent mellowing grains like Wheat, Polished Rice, Bajara. |
| Pulses | <i>Kullatha, Masa</i> | + | – | – | – | + | + | Black Gram, Pigeon, Peas, Tila |
| <i>Anupa Mamsa</i> | <i>Matsya</i> | – | + | – | – | – | – | Fish, Pig, Deer, Bullock |
| Sweet Substance | <i>Guda</i> | + | – | – | – | + | + | Jaggery |
| Oil | <i>Tila, Sarsapa</i> | + | – | – | – | + | + | Sesame, Castor oil |
| Vegetables | <i>Mulaka Lakucha, Kakamachi</i> | + | – | – | – | + | + | Raddish |
| Others | <i>Pista, Tila, Kola</i> | + | – | – | – | – | – | Foods like <i>puri</i> , <i>kachories</i> etc. |

➤ **Ahara hetu**

The main causative factors of *Kushtha* are *Viruddhha Ahara* and *Mithya Ahara*.

1) *Viruddha Ahara*

Viruddha means antagonistic or incompatible. The substances which act as antagonist to normal *Dhatu* of the body should be regarded as '*Viruddha*'. These substances change the normal configuration of the *Dhatus* and leave them susceptible to the disease. According to *Acharya Chakrapani* and *Yogindranath Sen* '*Dehadhatus*' means '*Dhatus*' and '*Doshas*' but *Gangadhara* includes '*Malas*' also. Furthermore *Chakrapani* interprets '*Virodha*' as '*Dushana*' but *Gangadhara* takes it in the sense of '*Nashaka*' (Destroyer).

Viruddha dravyas dislodge the various *Doshas* but do not expel them out.^[2] So they cause various disorders, even death also. But for the causation of disease "*Silana*" means continuous use must be there. *Acharya Charak* also mentioned that they can not affect persons who are young, to whom *Viruddha Ahara* is *Satmya*, who takes its small quantity, who have strong digestive power, who have undergone *Snehana* therapy, or who is of strong physique due to "physical exercise".

Acharya Charaka has mentioned 18 types of *Viruddha Ahara* which are *Viruddha to Desha* (place), *Kala* (period), *Agni* (digestive power), *Matra* (doses), *Satmya* (habit), *Aniladibhi* (*Doshas*), *Sanskara* (mode of preparation), *Virya* (potency), *Kostha* (state of bowel), *Avastha* (state of health), *Krama* (order of intake), *Parihara* (pro-scription), *Upachara* (prescription), *Paka* (cooking), *Samyoga* (combination), *Hrid* (palatability), *Sampada* (richness of quality) and *Vidhi* (against to rules of eating) etc.

Acharya Vagbhatta has compared *viruddhha ahara* with *visha* and has also given the symptoms occurring due to *viruddha Ahara* in the body. According to *Acharya Vagbhatta* *virudhha Ahara* can sometimes becomes fatal, just like the poison and in some case it becomes *Gara visha* in long run.^[3] The different factors related to *Viruddha Ahara* may be summarized in two major groups -

- (1) *Guna Virudhha*
- (2) *Samyog Virudhha*

Classification of *Viruddha Ahara*

(A) *Guna Viruddha*

- 1) Intake of *Mulaka*, *Lasuna* etc. with Milk.
- 2) *Gramya*, *Anupa*, *Audaka*, *Mamsa* with Milk.
- 3) Intake of *Chilchim* Fish with Milk.

- 4) Milk with *Nimba*.

(B) *Samyoga Viruddha*

- 1) *Mulaka* with *Guda*.
- 2) Excessive Alcohol and Green vegetables with Milk.
- 3) Honey and meat after taking hot diet.
- 4) Use of fish, *Nimba* and Milk together.
- 5) *Pippali*, *Kakmachi*, *Lakucha* with *Dadhi* and *Ghrita*.
- 6) Articles having sour taste or meat of deer with milk.

(C) *Mithya Ahara*

Mithya Ahara means improper diet. According to *Acharya Vijayarakshita*, the diet Opposite to “*Asta Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatana*” is designated as “*Mithya Ahara*”. *Acharya Charaka* has described eight factors determining the utility of food they are called as “*Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan*”, they are –

- 1) *Prakrati*
- 2) *Karan*
- 3) *Samyoga*
- 4) *Rasi*
- 5) *Desh*
- 6) *Kala*
- 7) *Upyoga samstha*
- 8) *Upyokta*.^[4]

These eight factors give rise to beneficial or harmful effects. Habitual intake of things in proper way may more useful but in improper way they are always harmful. So they should be avoided.

Mithya Ahara hetu for Kushtha

- 1) *Adhyasana*.
- 2) *Visamasana*.
- 3) *Atyasana*.
- 4) *Asatmya Ahara*.
- 5) Intake of food during indigestion.
- 6) Excessive *Snehana*.

- 7) Continuous and excessive use of *Madhu, Phanita, Matsya, Lakucha, Mulaka, Kakmachi*, and intake of above substances while having *Ajirna*.
- 8) *Vidhi Ahara* without *Vaman* of undigested food.

Dravyata

- 1) Excessive intake of *Gramya, Anupa, Audaka, Mamsa*.
- 2) *Navanna, Dadhi, Matsya, Mulaka, Tila, Pistanna, Ksira, Guda*.
- 3) *Dusi visha*.
- 4) Polluted water.

Gunata

- 1) Excessive *Drava, Snigdha Ahara*.
- 2) *Guru Ahara*.

Rasata

- 1) Excessive *Amla & Lavana Rasa*.

2) *Vihara Hetu*

All kinds of activities done physically, vocally or mentally are considered as *Vihara*. *Mithya Vihara* means improper activities. The activities opposite to “*Swasthavritta*” is the “*Mithya Vihara*”. The *Mithya Vihara* is the chief causative factor of many diseases but it has been considered as main cause for the *Kushtha*.

Mithya Vihara Hetu for Kushtha

- 1) *Shitosana Vyatyasa Sevana* and *Anupurvya Sevana*.
- 2) Use of *Samtarpana* and *Apatarpana* diet without sequence.
- 3) Sudden diving in cold water or drinking cold water after fear, exhaustion & coming from sunlight.
- 4) Practice of physical exercise & sunbath after heavy meals.
- 5) *Mithya Samsarga*-Sex indulgence in *Ajirna*.
- 6) Suppression of *Chardi, Mutra, Purisa* like *Vegas*.
- 7) *Kupathya* in *Panchkarma*.
- 8) *Divasavpana* after lunch.

(c) Achara Hetu

This is a very important factor and has been mentioned by all the *Acharyas*. Behavioural misconduct, antisocial activities, and other punishable activities are considered under this heading. It has been mentioned that good morals are also necessary for a man to be healthy, a detailed description of which is given in *Sadvritta* chapter.

Brahatrasyi has mentioned *Chinta*, *Bhaya*, *Krodha* as *Vata Prakopa nidana* and *Bhaya*, *Krodha* and *Shoka* also causes *Dushti* of *Svedavaha Srotas*.^[5] *Chinta* causes *Dushti* of *Rasavaha Srotas*, those diseases, in which no clinical improvement is obtained even after the best treatment, are considered as *Papa Karma* *Vyadhi*. Both *Acharya Charaka*^[6] and *acharya Sushruta*^[7] have described *Kushtha* as a most chronic diseases and other *Acharyas* like *Bhavamisra* and *Madhavakara* have included it to be due to *Papa Karma*.

Achara Hetu for Kushtha

1. *Papa Karma*
2. *Guru Tiraskara*
3. *Sadhu Ninda*
4. Use of money and material acquired by unfair means
5. Killing of virtuous persons

(d) Anya Hetu

Some scattered references regarding *Nidana* of *Kushtha* are also found in the Classics which are as follows.

(a) Samsargaja Hetu

Kushtha is *Aupasargika Roga* according to *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata*. *Sushruta* describes in *Nidanasthana* 5/32-33 that –

प्रसंगाद् गात्रसंस्पर्शान्निश्वासात्सहभोजनात् |
सहशय्याळसनाच्चापि वस्त्रमाल्यानुपलेपनात् ||
कुष्ठं ज्वरश्च शोषश्च नेत्राभिष्यन्द एव च |
औपसगिकरोगाश्च संक्रामन्ति नरान्नरम् ||

(*Su.Sam.Ni.5/32 - 33*)

Viz. *Kushtha* spreads from one man to another due to -

- (1) Sexual intercourse.

- (2) Physical contact.
- (3) Droplet infection.
- (4) Partaking of foods and drinking together.
- (5) Sleeping or sitting on patient's bed or seat.
- (6) Wearing clothes or garlands used by others.

The same has been corroborated by *Bhavamishra* and *Urabhra*. They have many other diseases in this list.

(b) Kulaja Nidana

Kulaja Nidana is otherwise known as *Aanuvanshika Nidana* i.e. due to *Beejadushti*. *Sushruta* has mentioned *Kushtha* as *Adibalpravritta Vyadhi*^[8] which means that the original cause of the disease is attributed to the defects of *Shukra* or *Shonita*.

(c) Krimija Hetu

सर्वाणि कुष्ठानि सवातानि सपित्तानि सश्लेष्माणि सकिर्मिण च भवन्ति ।

(*Su.Sam. Ni.5/6*)

According to *Acharya Sushruta* all types of *Kushtha* have their origin from *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* and *Krimi*.^[9] Also *Acharya Charaka* has expressed that the causative factor and treatment of *Raktaja Krimi* is as same as *Kushtha*.^[10] Hence from this *Krimi* can also be taken as one of the causes for *Kushtha*.

(d) Chikitsa Vibranshajanya Hetu

Stambhana in the initial stage of disease like *Raktapitta*^[11], *Raktarsha*^[12] and *Amatisara*^[13] cause *Kushtha*. *Stambhana* may lead to the *Tiryag gati* of *Doshas* and hence causes *Kushtha*. *Kushtha* is mentioned as *Raktapradoshaja* and *Santarpanjanya Vyadhi*. So the *Raktaprapakopa* and *Santarpaka Nidana* can be attributed for the production of *Kushtha*.

पारियात्रभवा याश्च विन्ध्यसहयभवाश्च याः ।

शिरोहृद्गोकुष्ठानां ता हेतुः श्लीपदस्य च ॥

(*Cha.Su.27/212*)

Charaka also indicated that the water of the rivers originating from *Vindhya*, *Sahya* and *Pariyatra* hills may cause *Kushtha*.^[14]

Samprapti according to Acharya Charaka

While describing the *Samprapti* of *Kushtha*, *Acharya Charaka* exemplifies the dual part played by the aetiological factors in the following words as -

वातादयस्त्रयो दुष्टास्त्वग्रकल्म मांसमम्बु च ।

दृश्यन्ति स कुष्ठानां सप्तको द्रव्यसंग्रहः ॥

(*Cha.Sam.Chi.7/9*)

Here, since the aggravation of *Doshas* and vitiation of *Dhatus* seems to occur simultaneously, it is not the same. It is just the superficial profile of the process and the interior of the *Samprapti* process is rather different than what meets to the eyes. The whole operation takes place step by step systematically. But as the causative factors are very potent and the rate of process is very fast the aggravation of *Doshas* and vitiation of *Dushyas* seem to occur in synchronization.

Because of the various causative factors all the 3 *Doshas* are simultaneously provoked which in turn involve the four body elements viz. *Twak*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa* & *Lasika*. The four *Dushyas* become morbid and lose their character. These provoked *Doshas* settling themselves in these vitiated body elements & getting localized there, further vitiated themselves to produce *Kushtha*.

Samprapti according to Acharya Sushruta

After taking *Viruddhahaara* & unwholesome diets, *Pitta* & *Kapha* are vitiated & cause *Avarana* of *Vata*, leading to an aggravation of *Vata*. These provoked *Doshas* through *Tiryaga Siras* reach *Bahyamarga* and vitiated *Twak*, *Rakta* etc. As a result of involvement of the *Twak* by an aggravated *Doshas*, *Mandalas* are formed and afflicted. If no proper management is done at this stage the deeper *dhatu*s like *Meda*, *Asthi*, & *Majja* are also involved.^[15]

Samprapti according to Acharya Vagbhata

The provoked *Doshas* reach to the *Tiryaga Siras* & then vitiated *Twak*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, and *Lasika* and by making them weak, they pass to the external surface of the body, causing discolouration of the skin & produce *Kushtha*.

The *Kushtha* is generally described as *Tridoshaja Vyadhi* but type of the *Kushtha* depends upon predominance of particular *Dosha*. *Acharya Charak* mentioned that *Kushtha* may be

seven, eighteen or innumerable (*Aparisankhyeya*) types.^[16] But almost all authors including *Charaka* divided *Kushtha* into two categories, *Mahakushtha* and *Kshudra Kushtha*, which further classified into seven types and eleven types respectively. As per the view point of *Charaka*, *Mahakushtha* includes *Kapal Kushtha*, *Udumber*, *Mandala*, *Rishyajivha*, *Pundarika* and *Kakanaka* and *Kshudrakushtha* includes *Ekakushtha*, *Charma Kushtha*, *Kitibha*, *Vipadika*, *Alasaka*, *Dadrumandala*, *Charmadala*, *Pama*, *Vishphota*, *Shataru* and *Vicharchika*.^[17]

CLINICAL FEATURES

The following are the clinical features of different types of *Kushtha*^[18-21] -

Kapala Kushtha: It is reddish black in colour, irregular and associated with dryness and pain.

Udumber Kushtha: It is like fruit of ficus in colour and associated with burning, itching, pain and redness. The hairs are greyish white in colour at the site.

Mandala: It is white or red in colour and characterizes by stable, rounded and indurated plaques attached with each others.

Rishyajivha: Characterizes by pain and hard skin lesions which are similar to tongue of *Rishya* (a special type of beer) in shape. The colour is reddish black in centre and red in periphery. It is also associated with *Krimi*.

Pundarika: The lesions of *Pundarika* is associated with burning sensation. It is similar to the colour of the red lotus. *Pundarika* is also associated *Krimi*.

Sidhma: The lesions are usually localizes to chest and similar to the flower of *Alabu* (gourd) in colour. The lesions release powder on rubbing and associated with mild pain and burning.

Kakanaka: It is similar to the *Kakanantika* in colour (red and black).

Ek-kushtha: Characterizes by large scaly plaques and Scales are similar to the fish scales.

Charma Kushtha: The skin becomes very thick like elephant skin and lesion covers a vast area.

Kitibha Kushtha: lesions are Characterizes by reddish black and rough skin associated with severe itching. The lesions are round in shape and occasionally associated with secretions.

Vipadika: In this cracking of palms and soles occurs and associated with severe pain.

Alasaka: Skin lesions are red in colour and associated with itching.

Dadrumandala: It is charactreizes by nodular lesion associated with erythema and itching.

Charmadala: The lesions of *Charmadala* are red in colour and blasts or skin cracked with pain and associated with itching.

Pama: Characterizes by nodular skin lesions which are white or reddish black in colour with severe itching.

Visphota: White or red colour nodular lesions with thin skin.

Shataru: Characterizes by red or reddish black skin lesions and associated with burning and multiple ulcers.

Vicharchika: It is characterizes by blackish nodular lesions associated with itching and secretions.

Sadhyata and Asadhyata of Kushtha

According to *Aacharya Charaka* the *Kushtha* having all the symptoms along with complications of *Trisha*, *Daha*, *Agnimandhya* and infested with *Krimi* is to be avoided by a wise physician. It indicates that it is incurable. If the Patient suffers from *Vata-Kaphaja Kushtha* or only one *Doshika Kushtha* it is easily curable. But *Kushtha* with deranged *Kapha-Pitta* or *Vata-Pitta* are difficult to cure.^[22]

According to *Aacharya Susruta*. The patient who has full control over his organ, disease is seated in *Rakta* or *Mamsa* is curable. But if the diseases reach to *Medo Dhatu* it becomes *Yapya*. But *Asthigata*, *Majjagata* & *Sukragata* are incurable. According to *Madhav Nidana*, the curable *Kushtha* are those which are located in the *Twak*, *Rakta* or *Mamsa* & in which *Vata* & *Shlesma* are deranged together. *Yapyas* are those located in *Medo Dhatu* or are *Davandaja* (*Vata-Pittaja* or *Pitta-Kaphaja*). Those located in the *Asthi* or *Majja Dhatu* are *Asadhya*. The prognosis of *Kushtha* depends upon many other factor like strength of *Nidana* factor, intensity of *Purvarupa* and *Rupa*, extent of vitiation of *Dosha*, involvement of *Dhatu*, *Prakrati*, *Vaya*, *Avastha* of the patient, nature of the disease, *Upadrava*.

MANAGEMENT

According to *Ayurveda kushtha roga* can be managed by three fold therapeutic management they are –

1. *Samshodhana* (biopurification),
2. *Samshamana* (pacification) and
3. *Nidana Parivarjana* (avoiding causative factors).^[23]

The *Samshodhan* helps to maintain the *Dosha* and *Dhatu Samya* i.e *Samshodhan* is very important preventive as well as therapeutic measure for a wide range of disorders including dermatological disorders.^[24]

The type of *Samshodhan* (as per the view point of *Acharya Charaka*) used is *Vaman* (therapeutic emesis) in *Kapha* predominant and *Virechan* (therapeutic purgation) & *Raktamokshana* (therapeutic blood-letting) in *Pitta* predominant *Kushtha*.^[25] *Acharya Sushruta* advises the use of *Nasya Karma* (nasal medication) every third day, *Vaman* on every fifteenth day, *Virechan* on every month and *Raktamokshana* on every six month for the management of *Kushtha Roga*.^[26]

According to *Charaka* the principle for the management of *Vata* predominant *Kushtha* is *Ghrita Pan*. *Acharya Charaka* described the use of the drugs with predominance of *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa* for palliation of *Kushtha*.^[27]

According to the current concept, the pathogenesis involved in the most of the dermatological disorders is complex interplay between immunologic, genetic and environmental factors. Psychological stress and related factors are major culprits involved in the etio-pathogenesis of dermatological disorders. Most of the drugs described for the management of dermatological disorders in *Ayurveda* are enriched with *Rasayana* property. Various studies on *Rasayana* drugs suggest their following action^[28] –

- Immunomodulator
- Adaptogenic
- Antioxidant
- Nootropic and
- Antistress

Therefore, *Rasayana* drugs are very important for the management of dermatological disorders.

The recommended diet for the patients of *Kushtha Roga* includes old wheat, old barley, pulses like *Moonga*, *Masoor*, *Arhar*, honey, *Patola*, *Neem*, garlic, *Triphala*, old *Ghrita* and diet rich in *Tikta Rasa*.^[29]

Non-pharmacological therapies Non-pharmacological therapies for the management of *Kushtha Roga* includes^[30-32] –

- *Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa*
- *Satvavajaya Chikitsa*
- Life style modification

Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa is a divine therapy or psychological therapy. It include chanting *Mantras*, *Aushadhi* and *Mani Dhaaran* (spiritual use of herbs and gems), *Mangal Karma* (propitiatory), *Bali* (offering oblations), *Homa*, *Prayashchita* (ceremonial penances), *Upavasa* (fasting), *Swastyayana* (rituals for social well being) etc. All these ritual activities directly or indirectly exert a positive impact on the mind (*Manas*) and therefore, lead to reduction in stress.

Sattvavajaya in principles is full-fledged Psychotherapy. It is a method of restraining or withdrawal of the mind from unwholesome objects (*Arthas*). Therefore, it is a therapeutic for mental or emotional stresses and disturbances. It is well acknowledged that positive and negative impact of lifestyle related factors like discipline of food intake, activity level, sleep, surrounding environment etc. play a major role in health and disease respectively. There are some lifestyle related factors which influence the psychosomatic health of an individual, which are economic and social status, social support networks, education and literacy, surrounding social environment, family environment, sanitation, culture etc. Therefore, modification of these lifestyles related factors are very important for the management of dermatological disorders.

CONCLUSION

The skin is a vital organ of communication and the role of skin as an organ of communication remains important throughout the life. *Kushtha* is one of the oldest and chronic disease which related to mankind. *Ayurveda* described a wide range of dermatological disorders including its classification, etio-pathogenesis, clinical presentation, prevention and management. The pharmacological and non-pharmacological measures for the management in dermatological disorders as described in *Ayurveda* are good immuno-modulators and anti-stress agent. Therefore, these measures, when used properly are cost effective and provide management in natural way with no or adverse effects. The present study also opens up new windows of research to identify the deleterious effect of dietary factors affecting the body and thus prevent it which is the basic principle of *Ayurveda- nidan parivarjanam*.

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