

ROLE OF ARKA TAILA IN MANAGEMENT OF PAMA W. S. R SCABIES - A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Appearance plays an important role in present era. Skin diseases are very common and has a high prevalence throughout the world. skin diseases have serious impact on life. They can cause physical damage, embarrassment, social and occupational restrictions. In *Ayurveda* all the skin diseases are described under *Kushtha roga*. In *Charak samhita* *kushta* is of two types – 1. *Mahakushtha*, 2. *kshudra kushtha*. In 11 type of *kshudra kushtha*, *Pama* is one of the types. *Pama* is a *pitta-kapha* dominant disorder having features like *pitika*, *shotha*, *kandu* and *strava*. Due to these analogous symptoms, *Pama* is often correlated with scabies. Scabies is a contagious skin infestation and can spread

quickly through close physical contact so it is an acute communicable disease. No satisfactory treatment is available in modern science on Scabies except antihistamines and topical agents. *Arka Taila* is an important formulation described by *Acharya Sharangdhara* in the management of *Pama*. An attempt has been made in present paper to assess the probable mode of action of *Arka Taila* on *Pama*.

KEYWORDS: *Kushtha*, *Pama*, Scabies, *Arka Taila*, Skin Disease.

INTRODUCTION

Skin is a mirror that reflects external and internal health of the body. Skin diseases are a major health problem affecting a high proportion of the population in India. skin diseases can place a heavy emotional and psychological burden on patients that may be far worse than physical impact.^[1] skin diseases continue to be the 4th leading cause of nonfatal disease burden world-wide.^[2] Due to consumption of unhealthy food, lifestyle modifications, environmental pollution and stress, skin problems are increasing day by day and it also

affects the quality of life of an individual. In daily routine, each and every general Practitioners face 10-15% of skin disorders.^[3]

In *Ayurveda*, all skin disorders describe under the heading of *kushtha*. In other words, it can be listed as *Ayurvedic dermatology*. *Pama* is one of 18 types of *kushthas*, having *doshik* predominance of *pitta* and *kapha*. *Pama* is stated as a *kshudra kushtha*, characterized by many small *Pitikas*, *Srava*, *Kandu* and *Daha*, that can be considered as scabies in contemporary science.^[4]

Pama (scabies) is an acute communicable disease, caused by *Sarcoptes scabiei* an Arthropode, of the order *Acarina*. Although a long-recognized disorder of skin but is a common problem in India. Its incidence is about 30% of all the dermatoses and 2-3% of all medical problems seen in practice. The Treatment of *Pama* is still a challenge to dermatologists. Except symptomatic relief for time being, permanent cure cannot be assured in all cases with any modern drug known today for its treatment.^[5]

Different medicated oils were used in the treatment of skin diseases depending upon the condition and severity of the disease. *Arka Taila* is one such formulation mentioned in *Sharangdhara Samhita* in the management of *Pama*. It contains *Arka patra swarasa*, *Haridra kalka* and *Sarshapa taila*.^[6] All these drugs are having the property of *kushtghna*, *kandughna*, and *krimighna* hence used in *Pama* as external medication. The present study is an attempt to assess the probable mode of action of *Arka Taila* on *Pama*.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Conceptual study of *Pama*.
2. To correlate the *Pama* w.s.r. scabies.
3. To assess the probable mode of action of *Arka Taila* on *Pama*

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In *Ayurveda* skin disease described as “*tvachah kurvanti vaivarynam dushtaah kushthamushanti tam*”.^[7] All such disease that produces discoloration in skin are included under *kushtha roga dhikar*. *Pama* is one of the forms of *kshudra kushtha* having *doshik* predominance of *pitta* and *kapha*, where morbid *Dosha* after vitiating the *Rakta*, spreads through *Tiryakavahisira* and by affecting the *Tvak* produces this disease.^[8]

The primary symptoms of *Pama* is appeared as *Atikandu*, *Rukshata*, *Pidika*, *Srava*, and *Daha* which is also seen under the sign and symptoms of scabies. Scabies is major public health problem with an estimated prevalence of 300 million cases worldwide.^[9] The point of prevalence in the general population of rural India is about 5% this may go up to 60% in certain areas, 72% of cases are seen in the age group below 16 year. It is essentially a disease of children and young adult age because of overcrowding and poor personal hygiene.^[10] Scabies is a severe itchy and contagious skin disease. Both males and females are equally affected.

Its predominant feature is severe and continuous itching. It is a parasitic infestation of the skin, caused by female itch mite- *sarcoptes scabiei* var *hominis*.^[11] It is caused by close personal contact or contaminated clothing. Scabies commonly affects finger webs, buttock folds, axillary area and genitalia. "*Pamah swetaarunashyavah pidika kandula bhrishm*". *Acharya Charak* defines *Pama* as a dermatological condition which exhibit extensive pruritis along with *sweta*, *aruna*, *shyava pidika*.^[12] According to *Acharya Sushruta*, the condition which shows *srava*, *kandu*, *paridah* along with tiny *pidika* is known as *Pama*.^[13] *Pama* is type of *kushtha vyadhi* and also described under *raktapradoshaj vikara*. The usage of *lepa* is indicated as external application in *tvak vikara*. So *Arka Taila* can be used externally for *lepa* purpose in *Pama*.^[14] For the attributes like *kushthagha*, *kandughna* and *krimighana* it can be efficacious in the management of *Pama*.

Composition of Arka Taila

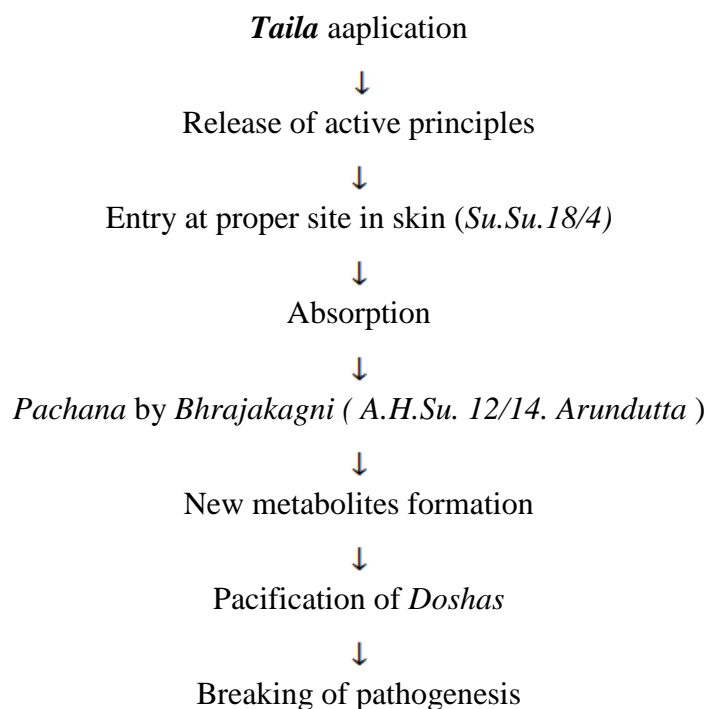
Table No. 1. The contents of Arka Taila are as follows.^[15,16,17]

Sr.no.	Dravya	Latin name	Family	Doshaghna
1.	Arka	Calotropis procera	Asclepiadaceae	K
2.	Haridra	Curcuma longa	Zingiberaceae	PK
3.	Sarshapa	Brassica campestris	Crucifererae	K

Table 2. characteristics of ingredients of Arka taila.^[18,19,20]

Sr.No.	Dravya	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Karma
1	Arka	Katu-tikta	Laghu-ruksha-tikshna	Ushna	Bhedan, dipana, krimighna, vranahara, vishaghna, kushthagna, kandughna.
2	Haridra	Katu-tikta	Laghu-ruksh	Ushna	kushthagna, kandughna, Raktaprasadana, raktavardhaka, vishaghna, varnya.
3	Sarshapa	Katu-tikta	Tikshna-snighdh	Ushna	Lekhana, varnya, krimighna, jantughna, kushthaghna.

- Hypothesis based on textual references^[21]



Probable mode of action of Arka Taila^[21]

1. **Pilosebaceous uptake:** when *Arka Taila* is applied over the surface of skin opposite to the direction of hairs on it, through a proper base, the active principles of the ingredients of *Taila* are released into that base. After that, this combination enters the *Romkoop* and further gets absorbed through the *Svedavahi Srotas* and *Siramukha*.
- However, it should be kept in mind that the pilosebaceous uptake i.e. absorption of *Taila* differs as per site variation, skin condition and more important is the base through which it is applied.
2. **Cutaneous bio transformation:** Thereafter it is subjected for *Pachana* by *Bhrajakagni* viz. the viable epidermis starts off the catabolic degradation of the absorbed material with the help of essential enzymes.
- In due course of the above transformation, some new metabolites might be forming which pacifies the provoked *Doshas* locally and thus breaks the pathogenesis cycle leading to the alleviation in the symptoms.

DISCUSSION

In *sharangdhara Samhita Madhyam Khand* a unique formulation called *Ark Taila* is mentioned for the treatment of *Pama*.

Pama being a *kshudra kushtha* has *kaphapitta* dominance having symptoms like *pitika*, *shotha*, *kandu* and *srava*.

The symptomatology of *Pama* is similar with scabies- a parasitic infestation of skin caused by itch mite “*sarcoptes scabiei*”.

Arka Taila contains *Arka*, *Haridra* and *Sarshapa Taila*.

Upon topical application, the active principle of the *Taila* reaches to the deeper tissues through *Siramukha* and *Svedavahi Srotas* by virtue of its *Sukshma* and *Tikshna* property. Due to its *Ushna*, *Laghu*, *Ruksha*, properties it removes the obstruction in *Svedavahi Srotas* and allows the local toxins to flow out through the *Sveda*, thus clearing out the micro channels. *Kandu* can be relieved significantly due to *Kusthaghna* and *Kandughna* properties of drugs of *Arka Taila*.

Pharmacological action of *Arka Taila*

Arka due to *Laghu*, *Ruksha*, *Tikshna Guna*; *Katu*, *Tikta Rasa* and *Ushna Virya* demolishes hardness and compactness of skin. It purifies the dead cells, tissues and dissolves collagen fibres by its *Tikshna* property.

Haridra due to *Ruksha*, *Laghu Guna*; *Tikta-Katu Rasa* and *Ushna Virya* absorbs the *Kleda*.

Sarshapa Taila due to *Tikshna*, *Snigdha* and *Ushna* properties it permeates the movement of medicine through epidermis of skin and destroy its roughness and increases its softness.

Kandu can be relieved significantly due to *Kusthaghna* and *Kandughna* properties of drugs of *Arka Taila*.

In modern term, the individual ingredients of *Arka Taila* have anti-inflammatory, antihistaminic, antibacterial, antifungal and blood purifier properties.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that, *Arka*, *Haridra* and *Sarshapa Taila* present in *Arka Taila* possess *Kapha-hara*, *Pitta-hara*, *Kandughna*, *Kusthaghna* and *Twak Dosh-hara* property. Due to presence of these properties, external application of *Arka Taila* in *Pama* (scabies) helps in reducing the symptoms by alleviating the aggravated *Kapha* and *Pitta Doshas*. Thus, *Arka Taila* can be considered as an efficacious formulation in the management of *Pama* (scabies).

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