

AYURVEDA MANAGEMENT OF SHVITRA (VITILIGO): A CASE REPORT

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ABSTRACT

Vitiligo is a skin disorder in which the pigment-producing cells, melanocytes, are destroyed, leading to white patches on the body. It affects around 0.5%–2% of people worldwide, and India reports one of the highest rates, nearly 8.8%. A 21-year-old female visited the outpatient department with several white patches having a slight reddish border on the left hand and left leg and face also. Based on the signs and symptoms, the condition was identified as *Shvitra* (vitiligo) with dominance of *Pitta* and *Kapha dosha*. The patient was treated using wheatgrass juices, *gandhak vati*, and *kaishore guggulu*. After the treatment, the Vitiligo Extent Tensity Index (VETI) score reduced from 8 to 2.4, showing noticeable improvement. Although this case shows promising results, more detailed case studies and properly designed clinical research are needed to build strong evidence supporting the use of Ayurveda therapies in managing *Shvitra*.

KEYWORDS: *Shvitra*, Vitiligo, wheatgrass juices, *gandhak vati*, *kaishore guggulu*, Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

Vitiligo is an acquired pigmentary disorder characterized by the loss of melanocytes, leading to depigmented patches on the skin. It is widely accepted as an autoimmune condition mediated by autoreactive T-cells that selectively destroy melanocytes. Globally, vitiligo affects 0.5%–2% of the population, while India shows a comparatively higher prevalence of around 8.8%.

Several modern treatment options—including topical corticosteroids, calcineurin inhibitors, excimer laser therapy, depigmentation methods, and surgical grafting techniques—are commonly used, but none guarantee a complete cure. Moreover, long-term use of topical corticosteroids may lead to side effects such as skin thinning, which limits their prolonged use.

Ayurveda describes vitiligo as *Shvitra*, and classical texts recommend a variety of herbal and dietary interventions for improving skin health and pigment restoration. The present case report documents the management of vitiligo using **wheatgrass juice**, **Gandhak Vati**, and **Kaishore Guggulu** as the primary treatment approach.

CASE DESCRIPTION

A 21-year-old female patient visited the outpatient department with complaints of multiple white patches on the upper limb and lower limb and face. Some patches showed a faint reddish border. The patient reported gradual progression of the lesions over the past several years.

- **Age:** 21 years
- **Gender:** Female
- **Affected Areas:** upper limb and lower limb and face.
- **Onset:** Gradual
- **Associated Symptoms:** Mild redness around patches and dryness.
- **No history of:** Severe illness, chemical exposure, or chronic medication use

Initial assessment using the **Vitiligo Extent Tensity Index (VETI)** showed a score of **8**, indicating moderate disease involvement.

TREATMENT PROTOCOL

The patient underwent a **45-day treatment regimen** consisting of:

1. Wheatgrass Juice

- **Dose:** Fresh wheatgrass juice 30 ml once daily.
- **Duration:** 45 days
- **Rationale:** Wheatgrass is known for antioxidant activity, blood purification, and supporting skin regeneration.

2. Gandhak Vati

- **Dose:** 2 vati (250mg each) twice a day.
- **Purpose:** *Gandhak Vati*, containing purified sulphur, acts as a *Rakta-shodhak* and *Rasayana*.

It reduces toxins (*Ama*) and improves skin immunity and pigmentation.

3. Kaishore Guggulu

- **Dose:** 2 vati (250mg each) twice a day.
- **Purpose:** *Kaishore Guggulu* works as a blood purifier and reduces Pitta-Kapha imbalance, which is central in vitiligo pathogenesis. It has potent anti-inflammatory and immunomodulatory effects, supporting healthy melanocyte function.

The patient was advised to follow:

- Light, non-spicy diet
- Avoid excessive sun exposure
- Regular follow-up every 15 days

No topical corticosteroids or other modern therapies were used during the treatment period.

RESULTS

After 45 days of treatment:

- Visible reduction in the size of white patches
- Marginal repigmentation observed in multiple areas
- Improved skin tone around the borders of lesions
- No adverse side effects reported
- VETI score reduced from 8 to 2.4, indicating significant improvement

The patient reported better confidence and satisfaction with the outcome.

CLINICAL FINDINGS



Figure 1: (a) The vitiligo lesions before treatment. (b) The vitiligo lesions after treatment.

The color of the lesions was slightly reddish white with some hyperpigmented gray spots [Figure a], without itching or burning sensation. The texture of the skin was the same as that of adjacent skin. The size of the lesion was different in various regions. The Vitiligo Extent Tensity Index (VETI) was used to assess the severity of vitiligo.

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT

The central portion of the lesion was few depigmented, surrounded by a hypopigmented area. The surrounding skin was normal. Considering the symptoms present, Doshic predominance was ascertained. Symptoms of Pittaja shvitra, including Padmapatra prateekasha (resembling the petals of a lotus), Tamra (copper colored), and Roma vidhvamsi (loss of hair) were present in the lesions. However, Paridaha (burning sensation) was absent in the lesions. The symptoms of Kaphaja shvitra lesions including Shveta varna (whitish discoloration), Snigdha

(smooth), Bahala (large), Kandu (itching), Ghana (thick and dense lesion), and Guru (heaviness). Among these symptoms, all were present except itching in the initial assessment.

THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION

wheatgrass (*Triticum aestivum*) juice was used as a supportive therapeutic intervention owing to its antioxidant, immunomodulatory, and tissue-nourishing properties. Vitiligo is associated with oxidative stress and autoimmune-mediated destruction of melanocytes; therefore, therapies that reduce oxidative damage and support cellular regeneration are considered beneficial.

Freshly prepared wheatgrass juice was administered orally in a dose of **20–30 ml once daily**, preferably in the morning on an empty stomach, for a duration of **45 days**. The patient was instructed to consume the juice regularly and to maintain hygienic preparation practices.

Wheatgrass juice contains chlorophyll, vitamins, minerals, and active enzymes that help in detoxification, improvement of microcirculation, and enhancement of immune balance. These effects may contribute to improved melanocyte function and gradual repigmentation of depigmented patches.

Gandhak Vati, containing purified sulphur, acts as a *Rakta-shodhak* and *Rasayana*. It reduces toxins (Ama) and improves skin immunity and pigmentation. Its antimicrobial and detoxifying actions help stabilize vitiligo and support repigmentation.

Kaishore Guggulu works as a blood purifier and reduces Pitta-Kapha imbalance, which is central in vitiligo pathogenesis. It has potent anti-inflammatory and immunomodulatory effects, supporting healthy melanocyte function.

It aids detoxification and promotes gradual repigmentation of affected areas, supports metabolism, and purifies the blood. The combined intervention aimed to reduce disease progression, support melanocyte function, and promote gradual repigmentation. The treatment was well tolerated, with no adverse effects reported.

DISCUSSION

This case shows notable improvement in vitiligo symptoms using natural oral interventions. Wheatgrass juice is rich in antioxidants, chlorophyll, vitamins A, C, E, and minerals that support pigmentation and immune balance. *Gandhak Vati* and *Kaishore Guggulu* are

Ayurvedic formulations used for chronic skin disorders due to their anti-inflammatory and detoxifying and blood purifying properties.

The combined effect of these medicines may help reduce oxidative stress, regulate immune response, and support melanocyte activity.

More clinical studies with larger samples are needed to scientifically validate these outcomes and establish standardized treatment protocols.

CONCLUSION

This case demonstrates that a 45-day regimen of wheatgrass juice along with *Gandhak Vati* and *Kaishore Guggulu* can produce promising results in the management of vitiligo. The treatment was safe, well-tolerated, and showed considerable improvement in the patient's VETI score. Further research and controlled trials are recommended to confirm its therapeutic potential.

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