

VIRECHAN IN KUSHTA ROGA: A REVIEW ARTICLE**Sheetal Makta Gavit^{*1}, Dr. Sachin Gandhi²**¹PG Scholar Panchakarma Department, PMT's Ayurveda College, Shevgoan.²Guide, HOD of Panchakarma Department, PMT's Ayurveda College, Shevgoan.

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ABSTRACT

Virechana Karma is one of the important Shodhana therapies described in Ayurveda. It is mainly indicated in diseases caused by the predominance of Pitta and Rakta Dosha. In Ayurveda, various skin disorders are broadly described under the concept of Kushta. Skin is considered an important indicator of overall health, and healthy skin reflects a balanced state of the body. Improper dietary habits, unhealthy lifestyle, and faulty daily activities can disturb the balance of Doshas and may contribute to the development of diseases. Virechana is the second procedure among the five Panchakarma therapies and is especially useful for disorders involving Pitta and Rakta. It can also be beneficial when Pitta is associated with Vata or Kapha. According to Ayurveda, impairment of Agni and improper

functioning of the liver along with Dosha imbalance may play a role in the development of skin disorders. Many chronic skin conditions may not respond adequately to conventional treatment, particularly when they are recurrent or difficult to manage. Virechana Karma helps eliminate aggravated Doshas from the body and may support the restoration of normal physiological balance. It has been described as useful in the management of various skin disorders such as psoriasis, eczema, acne vulgaris, vitiligo, and leukoderma. Ayurveda focuses on correcting the underlying imbalance rather than treating only the symptoms. This article reviews the role of Virechana Karma in the management of different skin disorders and discusses its possible benefits as an Ayurvedic purification therapy.

KEYWORDS: Virechan, Shodhanchikitsa, Skin Diseases, Psoriasis, Panchakarma.

INTRODUCTION

Virechana Karma is one of the important Shodhana therapies described in Ayurveda. The term Virechana refers to the elimination of aggravated Doshas through the lower gastrointestinal route, mainly through the anal passage (Adhobhaga). Acharya Chakrapani explained that Adhobhaga means Guda or the anal passage. Although Niruha Basti also eliminates Doshas through this route, it is not considered Virechana because its main action is not specifically described as Adhobhaga Harana.

Among the Panchakarma therapies, Virechana is considered especially important for the elimination of aggravated Pitta Dosha. It is therefore widely used in diseases in which Pitta is predominantly involved, including various skin disorders. According to Ayurveda, Bhrajaka Pitta is situated in the skin and is responsible for maintaining normal skin colour, temperature, and complexion. Acharya Sushruta was the first to describe Bhrajaka Pitta as a specific type of Pitta. According to the commentary of Chakrapani, regulation of body temperature and variation in complexion are important functions of Bhrajaka Pitta. Therefore, maintaining the balance of Bhrajaka Pitta is important for healthy skin.

Shodhana therapy is particularly useful in diseases where a large amount of Dosha is accumulated in the body. Shamana therapy mainly controls the aggravated Doshas, but they may become aggravated again when the causative factors continue. In contrast, Shodhana aims to eliminate the aggravated Doshas from the body. Since most skin disorders are described under Kushta, and Kushta is considered a Tridoshaja disorder, Shodhana therapy has an important role in its management.

Virechana Karma helps in eliminating aggravated Doshas, improving digestion and metabolism, and supporting the normal functioning of the body. It is also described as beneficial for maintaining the proper functioning of the sense organs and body tissues. When Dosha-Dushya Samurchaya persists in the Malabhuta Ashaya, Shamana therapy alone may not be sufficient to remove the root cause. In such conditions, Shodhana, particularly Virechana, is considered useful for eliminating the accumulated Doshas.

Virechana is therefore considered an important therapeutic procedure in various skin diseases, especially those associated with Pitta and Rakta Dosha. It helps in correcting the underlying Dosha imbalance and supports the restoration of normal body functions.

SKIN

In modern anatomy, the skin is divided mainly into two layers: the **epidermis** and the **dermis**. The epidermis is the superficial and thinner layer, which is mainly composed of epithelial tissue. The dermis is the deeper and thicker layer and is mainly composed of connective tissue.

The epidermis does not contain blood vessels and is therefore avascular. The dermis contains blood vessels and is vascular. Hence, an injury limited to the epidermis usually does not cause bleeding, whereas an injury involving the dermis may result in bleeding. Below the dermis lies the subcutaneous tissue, also called the hypodermis. Although it is not considered a part of the skin itself, it supports and connects the skin with the underlying structures. It mainly consists of areolar and adipose tissue.

The epidermis is divided into five layers.

1. **Stratum Corneum** – Horny layer
2. **Stratum Lucidum**
3. **Stratum Granulosum**
4. **Stratum Spinosum** – Malpighian layer
5. **Stratum Basale** – Germinative layer

The dermis is divided into two main regions:

1. **Papillary region**
2. **Reticular region**

Ayurvedic Concept of Skin

According to Acharya Sushruta, Twacha or skin is described as having seven layers. Each layer has a specific structure and is associated with particular diseases.

1. **Avabhasini** – This is the outermost layer of the skin. It is responsible for the appearance and colour of the skin. Sidhma and Padmakantaka are described as diseases occurring in this layer.
2. **Lohita** – The second layer is Lohita. Tilakalaka, Nyachchha and Vyanga are described in relation to this layer.
3. **Shveta** – The third layer is Shveta. Diseases such as Charmadala, Ajagalli and Mashaka are described in association with this layer.

4. **Tamra** – The fourth layer is Tamra. Different types of Kilasa and Kushta are described as affecting this layer.
5. **Vedini** – The fifth layer is Vedini. Kushta and Visarpa are associated with this layer.
6. **Rohini** – The sixth layer is Rohini. Conditions such as Granthi, Apachi, Arbuda, Shlipada and Galaganda are described in relation to this layer.
7. **Mamsadhara** – This is the deepest layer of Twacha. Bhagandara, Vidradhi and Arsha are described as occurring in this layer.

CLASSIFICATION OF VIRECHANA

Virechana itself is not divided into different types; however, Acharya Sharangadhara has described four types of actions of drugs related to bowel evacuation: **Anulomana, Sramsana, Bhedana and Rechana.**

1. Anulomana

Anulomana refers to drugs that help in the normal downward movement and elimination of Mala after it has undergone proper digestion. Haritaki is a commonly mentioned example. The term mainly indicates the removal of obstruction to the normal movement of Vata. Acharya Sushruta has used the term Sara as a synonym for Anulomana. These drugs help in maintaining the normal movement of Vata and facilitate the elimination of Mala.

2. Sramsana

Sramsana refers to drugs that help eliminate partially digested, sticky, or unformed Mala without requiring prior complete digestion. Aragvadha is an example. Compared with Anulomana, Sramsana has a relatively stronger action because the Mala is expelled without being completely digested first.

3. Bhedana

Bhedana refers to drugs that break down and eliminate hard, compact, or accumulated stool through the lower gastrointestinal tract. These drugs can act on both formed and unformed Mala. Katuki is an example of a Bhedana drug. Its action is stronger than that of Anulomana and Sramsana.

4. Rechana

Rechana refers to drugs that eliminate both digested and undigested Mala or Dosha by converting them into a liquid form and expelling them through the anal route. Trivrit is a

commonly mentioned example. Rechana drugs have a stronger and faster evacuating action and are closely related to the therapeutic action of Virechana.

INDICATIONS OF VIRECHANA

Virechana is indicated in various diseases, particularly those involving Pitta and Rakta Dosh. Important indications include.

- Kushta (skin disorders)
- Visphotaka (skin eruptions)
- Pandu
- Agnimandya or indigestion
- Visarpa
- Vatarakta
- Hyperpigmentation
- Leukoderma
- Psoriasis
- Dermatitis
- Herpes zoster

ROLE OF VIRECHANA KARMA IN SKIN DISEASES

Virechana Karma has an important role in the Ayurvedic management of chronic and recurrent skin disorders. Since Pitta and Rakta are frequently involved in skin diseases, Virechana is considered useful for eliminating aggravated Doshas and restoring their normal balance.

Virechana in Psoriasis

Psoriasis can be correlated with Ekakushtha based on its clinical features. A comparative single-blind clinical study conducted on 20 patients with Ekakushtha reported improvement following Virechana Karma.

Initially, patients were given Pachana Chikitsa with Jeerakadi Churna at a dose of 5 g three times daily. This was followed by Abhyantara Snehapana using Guggulu Tiktaka Ghrita until the features of proper Snehana were achieved. After Abhyanga and Swedana, Virechana was administered using Trivrit Lehya in a dose of 30–40 g. After completion of Virechana and Samsarjana Karma, Shamana Chikitsa was given using Arogyavardhini Rasa along with Aragvadhadi Kashaya.

The study reported significant improvement in the clinical features of psoriasis, as assessed using the Psoriasis Severity Index. These findings suggest that Virechana may be beneficial in psoriasis by addressing the involvement of Pitta, Rakta, Agni and Twak.

Virechana in Eczema

Eczema is a common inflammatory skin condition characterized by itching, dryness, redness, swelling, rashes and flaking of the skin. In Ayurveda, it can be correlated with **Vicharchika** based on its clinical presentation.

Eczema may be aggravated by various factors such as soaps, shampoos, detergents, disinfectants, allergens, microorganisms, hot and humid weather, excessive sweating, spicy or fried foods, fermented foods and stress.

Virechana is considered useful in Vicharchika because it helps eliminate aggravated Doshas and correct the underlying imbalance. In one study, Virechana followed by Shamana treatment with Guduchi-Bhringaraja Rasayana and Shrishadi Kwatha, along with local application of Shujyadi Lepa, showed significant improvement in patients with Vicharchika. The study reported a high rate of clinical improvement and a low rate of recurrence during the treatment period.

Virechana in Vitiligo and Leukoderma

Vitiligo is characterized by well-defined depigmented or white patches on the skin. In Ayurveda, it can be correlated with certain types of **Shwitra/Kilasa**.

Shodhana therapy, including Virechana, is considered useful in the management of such disorders. Ayurveda emphasizes the elimination of aggravated Doshas and the correction of the underlying pathological factors. Proper Shodhana is therefore considered helpful in reducing the possibility of recurrence in chronic skin disorders.

Virechana in Acne Vulgaris

Acne vulgaris is a chronic inflammatory disorder of the pilosebaceous units. It commonly presents with comedones, papules and pustules and may sometimes progress to nodules or cysts. In Ayurveda, acne vulgaris is commonly correlated with **Yuvanapidika or Mukhadushika**.

Virechana is considered useful in this condition because it helps eliminate aggravated Doshas from the Koshtha and supports the maintenance of Dosha-Dhatu equilibrium. It may also help improve Agni and support the normal functioning of the body.

PROBABLE MODE OF ACTION OF VIRECHANA

Virechana drugs generally possess properties such as **Ushna, Tikshna, Sukshma, Vyavayi and Vikasi**. Due to these properties, the drugs are believed to circulate throughout the body and act on the vitiated Doshas.

The Ushna property helps in liquefying the accumulated Doshas, while the Sukshma property allows the drug to reach deeper tissues and channels. The aggravated Doshas are then brought towards the Koshtha. Due to the predominance of Prithvi and Jala Mahabhuta in Virechana Dravyas, their action is directed downward, resulting in the elimination of Doshas through the lower gastrointestinal route.

Thus, Virechana helps in removing aggravated Doshas, cleansing the Koshtha and supporting the normal balance of Dosha and Dhatu. It may also help improve Agni and the functioning of body channels (Srotas). Because of these actions, Virechana is considered an important Shodhana therapy in the management of various skin disorders.

CONCLUSION

Virechana Karma is an important Shodhana therapy in Ayurveda and has a significant role in both the management and prevention of various skin disorders. Since Pitta and Rakta Dosha are commonly involved in skin diseases, Virechana is particularly useful for eliminating aggravated Pitta and maintaining Dosha balance.

Among the Panchakarma procedures, Virechana is considered especially important for Pitta-related disorders. It helps in eliminating accumulated Doshas, improving digestion and metabolism, and supporting the normal functioning of body tissues. It may also contribute to better skin health by maintaining the balance of Dosha and Dhatu.

Thus, Virechana Karma can be considered a useful Ayurvedic approach in the management of chronic and recurrent skin disorders. When appropriately administered along with proper diet, lifestyle and Shamana Chikitsa, it may support overall health and help maintain healthy skin.

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