

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF *VRISHADI LEPA*- A HERBAL FORMULATION

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ABSTRACT

Skin is a shield which protects us from various external invasions. Skin is the organ of the body which is readily available for inspection by the eyes. Of all the organs, skin is larger one and is exposed to disease and injury. In *Ayurveda*, the word '*Twacha*' or '*Charma*' is used for skin. *Twacha* is derived from the *Dhatu- Twach Samvarne* meaning covering of the body. All the skin diseases in *Ayurveda* have been discussed under the broad headings of *Kushta*. *Dadru* is a skin disease, spreading in nature, challenging to cure completely and it needs more promising intervention giving rapid effect. Acharyas have said different treatment principles for management of *Kustha*. *Vishaprayoga* is the concept mentioned in *Ayurveda* wherein the *Visha Dravyas* are used for therapeutic purpose and it acts as wide by judicious use. In *Vrishadi Lepa* has seven ingredients, among these

ingredients one of the drugs is *Karaveera*. *Vrishadi Lepa* is apparently effective in *Kustha Vyadhi* and has anti-fungal, anti-microbial, analgesic activity. Acharyas such as *Charaka* & *Harita* have explained it in their classical texts. Along with *Dadru Kustha*, it can be used for the treatment of all type of *Kustha* and *Krimi*.

KEYWORDS: *Dadru Kustha*, Dermatophytosis/Tinea, *Vrishadi lepa*.

INTRODUCTION

There are two types of Kushta^[1] described in Ayurvedic classics, Mahakushta and *Kshudra Kushta*. *Mahakushta* is subdivided into seven and *Kshudra Kushta* into eleven types.

Mahakushta^[2] - *Kapala, Udumbara, Mandala, Rushyajihwa, Pundarika, Sidhma* and *Kakanaka*.

Kshudra Kushta^[3] – *Eka Kustha, Charmakhya, Kitibha, Vipadika, Alasaka, Dadru, Charmadala, Paama, Sphota, Shataru* and *Vicharchika*.

Dadru Kushta is prioritized in the Ayurvedic literatures as both *Mahakushta* and *Kshudra Kushta*. Acharya Charaka includes it under *Kshudra Kushta*^[4], whereas it has been elaborated under *Mahakushta*^[5] by Acharya Sushruta and Vagbhata. *Dadru* is *Kapha-Pitta Pradhana Vyadhi*^[6], surfacing skin with the *lakshanas* like *Kandu, Raaga, Deerghapratana, Utsanna*, and *Mandalavat udgata Pidaka*.^[7] Acharya Sushruta mentions *Kushta* as *Sankranmika Vyadhi* which hold good for *Dadru*. According to *Dalhana* *Dadru Kustha* is of two types Viz. *Sita* and *Asita*.^[8] *Asita Dadru* is included under *Mahakushta* by Sushruta because it is cured by *Mahā Upakrama* (broad and multi spectrum treatment) and *Anubandhi prakarsat* (having the tendency of persistence), whereas the *Sita Dadru Kustha* due to its *Sukha Sādhya* nature, absence of entry into successive *Dhātus* and not having lot of severe symptoms.^[9]

Modern View

Manifestation of *Dadru Kustha* appears similar to that of Dermatomycosis.^[10] More than 10 million dermatomycosis affected patients are reported in India per year. In modern science there are three genera of superficial dermatophytosis as *Trichophyton*, *Microsporum* and *Epidermophyton*. They are grouped according to their natural habitat as geophilic (soil), zoophilic (animals), and anthrophilic (humans).^[11] Transmission may be indirect or direct bodily contact. Clinically, these fungal infections are labelled according to the region involved. These are as follows:^[12]

1. ***Tinea capitis*** occurring on the scalp, especially in children.
2. ***Tinea barbae*** affecting the region of beard in adult males.
3. ***Tinea corporis*** involving the body surface at all ages.
4. ***Tinea cruris*** occurs most frequently in the region of groin in obese men, especially in hot weather.

5. **Tinea pedis** or 'athlete foot' is located in the web places between the toes.
6. **Onychomycosis** shows disintegration of the nail substance.
7. **Tinea vesicolor** caused by *Malassezia furfur* generally affects the upper trunk.

Predisposing factors

Warm, humid climate, poor nutrition and hygiene, obesity, diabetes mellitus and debilitating illness.^[13]

Symptoms of Dermatophytosis

Common symptom is pruritus in all types of dermatophytosis. Other clinical features are intense itching, annular erythematous scaly lesions, the active border consists of papulovesicular lesions, and in advancing stage the lesions spread peripherally with central clearing and pigmentation.^[14]

Clinical features of *Dadru Kushta* and Dermatophytosis (Mycoses / Tinea / Ringworm) are similar with each other so the co-relation between *Dadru Kushta* and Dermatophytosis is done on the basis of similarities of clinical features in both Ayurveda and Modern medicine.

Prevalence rate of Dermatophytosis (Tinea)

The prevalence rate of this infection is 2% among young adults and increases to 20% among individuals of 40-60 years age.^[14] 39% of the world population is suffering from Tinea infections. In India also, 5 out of 1000 people are suffering from Tinea infections.^[15]

Twak Shareera

Acharya Sushruta described the formation of *Twak* in the developing foetus. He says that after fertilization of ovum *Twak* develops just like cream on the surface of the boiled milk.^[16] Acharya Vagbhata also followed the same.^[17] *Twak* is one among the *Matrija Bhava*. According to Vagbhata, *Twak* formation in the foetus will be completed in the sixth month. Vagbhata described the formation of *Twak* due to *Paka* of *Rakta Dhatu* by its *Dhatwagni* in the foetus. After *Paka*, it dries up to form *Twak*.

Table No 1: Layers of Twak According to Acharya Sushruta Sarira Sthana.

SL.No	Layers of Twak	Pramana	Disease
1.	Avabhasini	1/18 th Vrihi	Varna-Chaya Prasadaka, Adhishtana of Sidhma and Padmakantaka
2	Lohita	1/16 th Vrihi	Adhishtana of Tilakalaka,

			<i>Vyanga and Nyaccha</i>
3	<i>Shweta</i>	1/12 th <i>Vrihi</i>	<i>Adhishtana of Charmadala, Ajagallika and Mashaka</i>
4	<i>Tamra</i>	1/8 th <i>Vrihi</i>	<i>Adhishtana of Kilasa Kushtadi</i>
5	<i>Vedini</i>	1/5 th <i>Vrihi</i>	<i>Adhishtana of Kushta, Visarpa</i>
6	<i>Rohini</i>	<i>Vrihi (Rice Grain)</i>	<i>Adhishtana of Granthi, Apachi, Arbuda, Sleepada and Galaganda</i>
7	<i>Mamsadhara</i>	<i>Vrihi Dwaya</i>	<i>Adhishtana of Bhagandara, Vidradhi and Arsha</i>

Nidana for Dadru Kushta

There is no separate Nidana for *Dadru Kushta*. *Dadru Kushta* spreads from person to person by *Malaja Krimi* through *Sweda* (contact with the infected person and contact with the wearables of the infected person etc.)^[18] Due to the sharing of towels, bed sheets, soap, hand kerchief etc. of infected person causes the spreading of micro - organism from one person to another person.^[19]

Dadru Kushta is likely similar to fungal infection of the skin in which the fungal spores has been transferred from a diseased person to a healthy person by above explained modes.

Samprapti of Dadru Kushta

Sharing the wearables of infected person (contagious/*Sankramika*)



Sankramika of *Krimi* from *Purusha* to *Purusha* (*Malaja - Bahya Krimi*)



Krimi enters into *Twak* through *Sweda* and vitiates *Tridosha*, *Twak*, *Rakta* and *Lasika*



Dadru Kushta (*Kandu*, *Pidika*, *Raaga*, *Mandala*, *Visarpini*)

Table 2: Sign & symptoms of *Dadru Kushta* according to various *Acharyas* and Modern Science.

Sl No	Signs & Symptoms	Charaka	Sushruta	Ashtanga Hridaya	Ashtanga Samgraha	Madhava Nidana	Yogaratanakar	Modern
1	<i>Kandu</i> (itching/ pruritus)	✓	--	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	<i>Raga</i> (redness/ erythema)	✓	--	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	<i>Atasi Pushpavat Pidika</i> (macular rashes similar to flax flower)	--	✓	✓	--	--	--	--

4	<i>Tamra Varna Pidika</i> (copper coloured macular rashes)	--	✓	--	--	--	--	--
5	<i>Visarpani Pidika</i> (diffused macular rashes)	--	✓	✓	✓	--	--	--
6	<i>Dirgha Pratana</i> (tendrill like macular rashes)	--	--	✓	✓	--	--	--
7	<i>Unnata Mandala</i> (raised border ring)	--	--	✓	✓	✓	--	--
8	Scaling	--	--	--	--	--	--	✓
9	Vesiculation s	--	--	--	--	--	--	✓

Table 3: Ingredients of *Vrishadi Lepa* with Properties and Indication as per *Haritha Samhita*.^[20]

Sl No.	Dravya (Drug)	Rasa (Taste)	Guna (Property)	Virya (Potency)	Vipaka (Metabolic property)	Doshaghna
1.	<i>Vasa</i> (<i>Adhatoda vasica</i> Nees)	<i>Tikta, Kashaya</i>	<i>Ruksha, Laghu</i>	<i>Shita</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha pitta samaka</i>
2.	<i>Kutaja</i> (<i>Holarrhena antidysenterica</i> Wall.)	<i>Tikta, Kashaya</i>	<i>Ruksha, Laghu</i>	<i>Shita</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha pitta samaka</i>
3.	<i>Saptaparna</i> (<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>)	<i>Tikta, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu, Snigdha, Sara</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha pitta samaka</i>
4.	<i>Karaveera</i> (<i>Cerebra thevetia</i>)	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha pitta samaka, Vata samaka</i>
5.	<i>Karanja</i> (<i>Pongomia pinnata</i>)	<i>Katu, Tikta, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu, Tikshna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Vata Kapha samaka</i>
6.	<i>Nimba</i> (<i>Azadirachta indica</i>)	<i>Tikta, Kashaya</i>	<i>Ruksha, Laghu</i>	<i>Shita</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha pitta samaka</i>
7.	<i>Khadira</i> (<i>Acacia catechu</i>)	<i>Tikta, Kashaya</i>	<i>Ruksha, Laghu</i>	<i>Shita</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha pitta samaka</i>

Table 4: Ingredients of *Vrishadi Lepa* with Action & Therapeutic Indications as per *Haritha Samhita*.^[21]

Sl No.	Dravya (Drugs)	Karma (Action)	Therapeutic Indication
1	Vasa	Swasahara, Kasahara, Hridya, Rakta Pittahara, Mehahara, Kusthaghna, Varnya	Kustha Raktapitta Aruchi
2	Kutaja	Kusthaghna, Krimighna, Amapachaka, Dipana	Kustha Krimi Twak Vikara
3	Saptaparna	Kusthaghna, Krimighna, Dipana, Hridya, Raktadosajit	Kustha Krimi Agnimandya Raktavikara Hrid roga
4	Karaveera	Kusthaghna, Kandughna, Krimighna, Vishakara, Vranahara, Twakrogahara.	Kustha Kandu Krimi Jwara Vrana Vishphota Twak roga.
5	Nimba	Krimighna, Vishaghna, Kusthaghna, Ruchikara, Vranaghna,	Kustha Twak roga Surameha
6	Karanja	Kandughna, Kusthaghna, Jantughna, Shothahara, Vedanasthapana, Dipana, Pachana,	Kustha Kandu Jantu Vikara Ajirna Prameha
7	Khadira	Kusthaghna, Kandughna, Kasaghna, Krimighna, Switrahara, Rucya	Kustha Kandu Krimi Aruchi, Ajeerna

Method of Preparation: As per *Acharya Charaka*, it is administered in the form of *Lepa*, *Pana* & used for *Snana*.^[22] As a specific preparation method is not mentioned, a general preparation method can be adopted.

All the above said 7 herbal ingredients are made into coarse powder by pounding in *Khalva yantra* separately and sieved. Then the fine powders of the ingredient are mixed well to form a homogenous mixture. Then the powder is mixed with luke warm water and applied as *lepa* and *snana churna*.

Mode of Administration: It can be taken as *pana* (Internal medicaments) as well as *snana* (Bath) & *lepa* (Ointment).^[23]

Indication: *Kustha* (Obstinate skin disease) & *Krimi* (Parasitic infestation).^[24]

Probable Mode of Action: The pharmacological properties of the particular ingredients of *Vrishadi lepa* are discussed here to get a clear idea about the mode of action in the management of *Dadru Kustha*.

Based on *Rasa*

About 50% of the ingredients of the formulation contain *Tikta rasa* (astringent taste). 40% of the ingredients have *Kashaya rasa* (astringent taste), 20% of the ingredients have *Katu rasa*.

Based on *Guna*

47% of the ingredients of the formulation have *Laghu Guna* (light), 33% of them having *Ruksha Guna* (dry), about 13% of the ingredients contain *Tikshna Guna* (Sharp properties) and 7% of them contain *Snigdha Guna* (Unctuous).

Based on *Virya*

In this formulation 57% of the ingredients have *Shita Virya* (Cold potency) and 40% of them are having *Ushna Virya* (Hot potency).

Based on *Doshakarma*

In *Vrishadi Lepa*, 64% of the ingredients have *Kaphapitta Samaka*, 21% of them are *Vata Samaka*, and 15% of them are *Vata Kapha Samaka karma*.

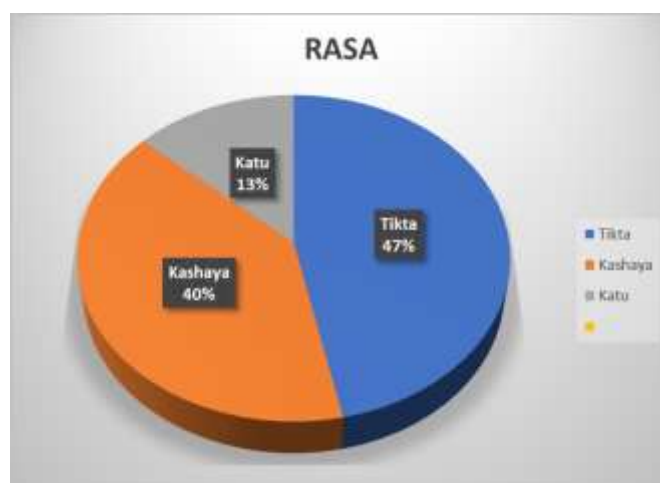


Figure 1

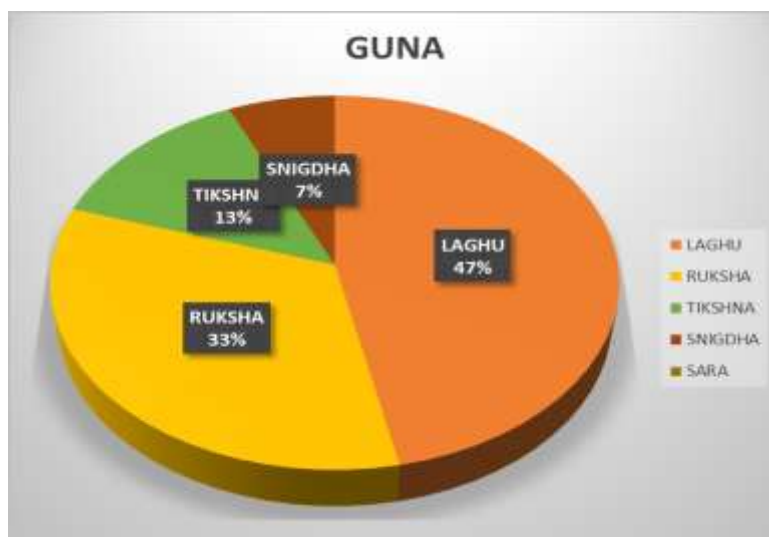


Figure 2.



Figure 3.

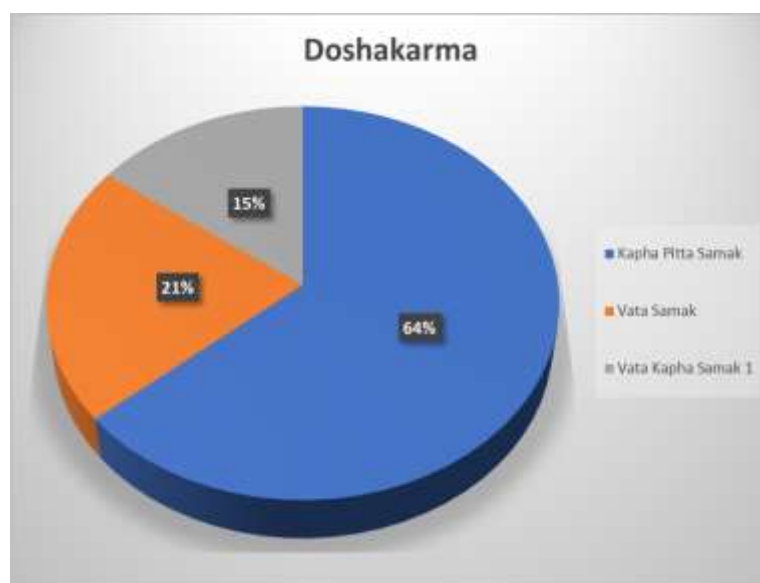


Figure 4.

DISCUSSION

Dadru Kushta is the prevalent disease in developing countries such as India, with the majority of the population living in unhygienic conditions. *Dadru* has mentioned nearly all the *Acharyas* along with their management. Thus, Ayurveda is able to cure the disease of the skin like *Dadru Kushta*. As this is one among the relapsing type of skin disease so patient was advised to follow *Pathyaapthya* like *Ahara*, *Vihara*, *Achara*, *Vichara*.

Vrishadi Lepa is mentioned to treat the patients of *Kustha* (obstinate skin disease). The formulation is simple with only a few ingredients which are very easily available. *Dadru* is *Pitta Kapha Pradhana Vyadhi*. As the ingredients of the formulations are *Tikta* and *Kashaya* rasa dominated, it helps to pacify *Piita Dosha*. Whereas, *Katu*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya* rasa pacifies *Kapha Dosha*. In *Dadru Kustha*, *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Ambu*, are the main *Dushya*. *Rasa dhatu dushti* is produced by *Rasa Dhatwagnimandya* and *Jatharagnimandya*. *Karma* like *Dipana*, *Pachana* and *Agni* that produce proper *Rasa Dhatu* which correct *Kapha* as it is *Aashraya* of *Rasa Dhatu* the drugs like *Saptaparna*, *Karanja* & *Kutaja* having properties like *Dipana*, the drugs having *Kusthaghna* and *Rakta Piitahara* properties are *Nimba*, *Vasa*, *Saptaparna*, *Khadira* and *Karaveera*. All the ingredients have the *Laghu*, *Ruksha* and *Tikshna Guna* help for fast spreading and penetration of the medicines thus providing faster action. It also helps to correct the vitiation of *Mamsa Dhatu*. *Snigdha Guna* (Unctuous property) provides strength as *Rogi bala* (patient strength) will be reduced in *Dadru Kustha*.

Katu (pungent) *Vipaka* subside the increased *Kapha Dosha* which is predominantly affected in *Dadru Kustha*. This formulation having *Shita Virya* (cold potency) which act as *Piitahara* as well as *Rakta Prasadaka* and *Stambhaka Karma*, whereas *Ushna Virya* (hot potency) helps to balance *Kapha* and *Vata Dosha*, hence equilibrium is maintained. This *lepa* is also having *Krimighna*, *Vishaghna*, *Kandughna* properties. *Dadru* is *Kapha* dominant. Upon topical application, the active principles of the *lepa* reach to the deeper tissue through *Siramukha* and *Swedavahi Srotas* and stain it with its *Sukshma* and *Tikshna* Property. Most of the ingredients have *Kapha Pitta samaka*, *Vata samaka* and *Vata Kapha samaka*, *Vedanasthapana*, *Ruchya*, *Kandughna*, *Vishaghna* and *Rasayana* properties. This article explores the potential application of *Vrishadi Lepa*, a traditional Ayurvedic formulation, in managing dermatophytosis/ Tinea, a prevalent skin condition in developing countries like India.

CONCLUSION

Dadru Kustha is a specific skin condition that is clinically replicated by dermatophytosis or tinea. It can be concluded that the use of *Vrishadi Lepa* mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* and *Harita* are effective in the management of *Dadru Kustha*. It is a herbal formulation where the majority of the ingredients mainly have *Kapha Pittahara*, *Kusthaghna*, *Kandughna* & *Krimighna* properties. Hence it can be used in *Dadru Kustha*. Majority of the patients prefer to get their skin diseases treated with topical administration of drugs rather than their systemic. *Lepa Kalpana* is an excellent scientific method of introducing the active principles of drugs to target the cells for a quick and effective healing process. The proposed mechanism of action involves the combined effects of *Vrishadi Lepa* constituent herbs, with potential anti-inflammatory (*Pitta*-balancing) and antimicrobial (*Kapha*-balancing) properties. Further research is necessary to validate these claims through in-vitro and in-vivo studies focusing on the phytochemical constituents and their efficacy against relevant pathogens associated with dermatophytosis. It's important to acknowledge that complete eradication of pathogens in chronic skin conditions like dermatophytosis may be challenging. Therefore, alongside *Vrishadi Lepa*, maintaining proper hygiene remains a critical element in successful management. Future research directions could explore the synergistic effects of *Vrishadi Lepa* with conventional therapies and investigate potential long-term maintenance strategies for optimal patient outcomes.

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