

MANAGEMENT OF SHWITRA THROUGH AYURVEDA - A SINGLE CASE STUDY

Renuka Swanandesh Joshi^{*1} and Kalpana Nilesh Gholap²

¹PG Scholar, Department of Panchkarma, Dr. G. D. Pol. Foundation's Y.M.T. Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra.

²Professor and HOD, Department of Panchakarma, Dr. G. D. Pol. Foundation's Y.M.T. Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Article Received on
01 Nov. 2024,

Revised on 22 Nov. 2024,
Accepted on 12 Dec. 2024

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr202424-34455



***Corresponding Author**

Renuka Swanandesh Joshi

PG Scholar, Department of
Panchkarma, Dr. G. D. Pol.
Foundation's Y.M.T.

Ayurvedic Medical College
and Hospital, Kharghar,
Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra.

ABSTRACT

Shwitra refers to a skin condition characterized by the appearance of white patches, classified under *Kushtha* in Ayurveda. This condition, commonly known as vitiligo, is attributed to various factors including improper dietary practices, disrespect towards spiritual entities, and past-life sins, leading to an imbalance in the *Tridosha*, particularly affecting *Bhrajaka Pitta*. With a global prevalence of 0.4-2%, *Shwitra* possess significant challenges, especially in children, impacting their self-esteem and social interactions. This case study focuses on a 7-year-old female patient presenting with a white patch in the left temporal area for six months. A comprehensive Ayurvedic treatment regimen was implemented, involving *Krumikuthar Ras*, *Vidangarishta*, *Arogyavardhini Vati*, *Bakuchi Ghanavat* and local applications such as *Gomutra bhavit Bakuchi churna* and *Bakuchi taila*, complemented by *Jalokavacharana* therapy. Clinical observations during treatment showed progressive colour changes from whiteto pinkish and

eventually to normal skin tone. The approach emphasized both internal and external therapies targeting the underlying imbalances. Notably, *Jalokavacharana* was effective in purifying the blood and alleviating symptoms, while *Bakuchi* preparations stimulated melanocyte function, promoting skin pigmentation. The results indicate that Ayurvedic management can yield satisfactory outcomes in repigmenting skin affected by *Shwitra*, highlighting its potential as an effective alternative therapy with fewer recurrence risks compared to conventional treatments. The study reinforces the importance of a holistic approach in managing chronic skin disorders

in paediatric patients.

INTRODUCTION

The word *Shwitra* is derived from Sanskrit word *Shweta*, which means white patch. So, *Shwitra* is a disease where white patches appear on body. In Ayurveda, all skin diseases are classified under the term *Kushtha*. It is mentioned in Ayurvedic texts concerning *Kushtha Roga Chikitsa*. It is also called as *Kilasa*, *Daruna*, *Aruna* and *Shweta Kushtha*. While discussing the *nidana* of *Shwitra*, Acharya Charak identifies several key causes: *Viruddha Ahara* and *Vihara*, *Adharma*, disrespect towards *Devas*, *Gurus* and *Brahmanas*, as well as sins from past lives.^[1] These factors disrupt the *samyavastha* of *Tridosha*, particularly affecting *Bhrajaka Pitta* in the skin, which contributes to the development of *Shwitra*.^[3] *Shwitra*, commonly referred to as vitiligo, is an acquired, chronic, pigmentary disorder characterized by the progressive loss of cutaneous melanocytes and abnormality in their normal function resulting in hypopigmented skin area which has progressively become amelanotic. It is a common disorder with worldwide prevalence of 0.4-2% of the population with half of cases being in childhood.^[2] This condition can appear in different ways and is especially concerning in children, as it can affect their self-esteem and social interactions. The presence of *Shwitra* in young people possess distinct medical and emotional challenges. It is believed to result from an autoimmune response where the immune system mistakenly targets melanocytes, the cells that produce skin pigment. Although the exact cause is unclear, genetic factors, environmental triggers and psychological stress may contribute. Early identification and intervention are vital, especially for children who may be more vulnerable to the psychosocial impacts of visible skin differences. In Ayurveda, *Shwitra* is seen as more than a skin condition; it reflects deeper imbalances in the body. Ayurvedic treatment emphasizes a holistic approach, targeting root causes with natural remedies and lifestyle changes. This includes dietary changes, herbal treatments and detoxification to restore harmony and improve skin health.

The treatment protocols for *Shwitra* in children must be tailored to their specific needs, considering their age, overall health, and emotional state. These traditional methods emphasize not only skin re-pigmentation but also overall health improvement, which is crucial in paediatric cases.

CASE REPORT

Female patient 7 years old, visited OPD of YMT Ayurvedic medical college on 14th September

2022 with complaint of white patch at left temporal area since 6 months. Patient was healthy before 6 months. Gradually she developed some white discoloration at left temporal area. Initially lesion was small, later progressively increased in size. There were no any symptoms associated to lesion like itching or burning or loss of sensation.

PAST HISTORY

No history of above skin complaints before 6 months. No history of any kind of trauma. No history of any other illness.

FAMILY HISTORY

Her paternal grandfather had a history of vitiligo.

LOCAL EXAMINATION

Site of lesion – Left temporal area

Character of lesion – Macule

Colour - White

Distribution – Segmental, Acrofacial

Itching- Absent

Swelling – Absent

Discharge – Absent

Pain – Absent

Paresthesia – Absent.

ASHTA VIDHA PARIKSHA

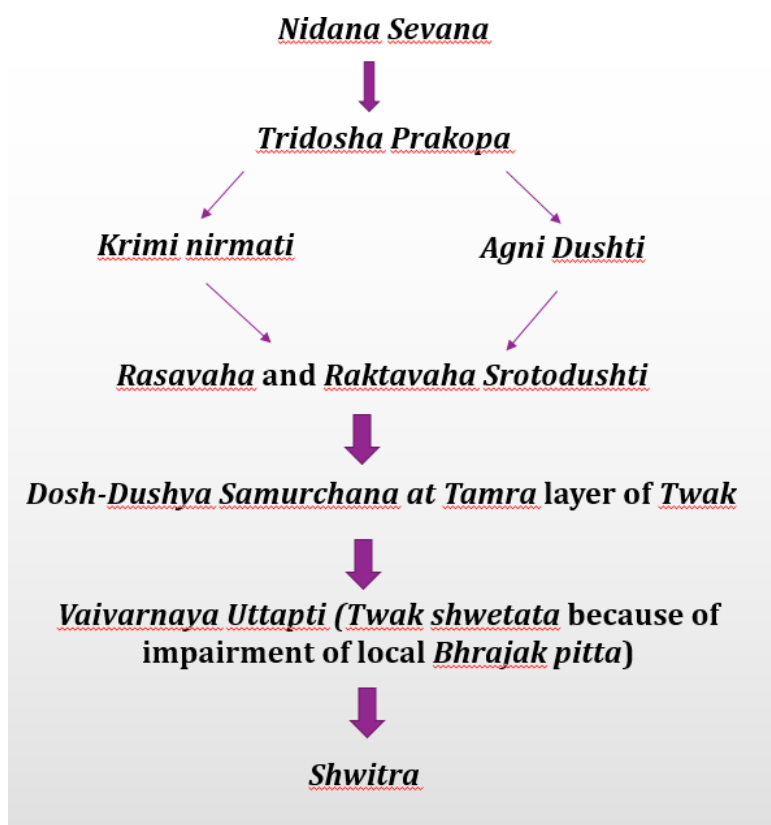
Nadi: 84 bpm

Mala: Pichhil with occasional guda kandu *Mutra*: 4-6 times /day

Jiwaha- Saam Shabda- Prakruta

Sparsha- Anushnasheet *Drik*- Prakruta

Akruti- Madhyam

SAMPRAPTI**SAMPRAPTI GHATAK**

Dosh – Tridosh

Dushya – Rakta, Mamsa, Meda Srotodushti – Sanga Rogamarga – Bahya

Udbhava Sthana - Amashaya Adhishthan – Twacha Vyaktisthan – Twacha

TREATMENT REGIMEN

Intervention	Dosage	Duration
<i>Krumikuthar Ras</i>	2 tablets twice a day after food with warm water	3 months
<i>Vidangarishta</i>	2 teaspoon twice a day after food with warm water	3 months
<i>Arogyavardhini vati</i>	1 tablet twice a day after food with warm water	42 days
<i>Bakuchi Ghanavati</i>	2 tablets twice a day after food with warm water	3 months
<i>Jalokavacharan</i>		5 sittings at an interval of 15 days
<i>Bakuchi taila</i>	Local application at affected area in the morning followed by <i>atapasevan</i>	3 months.
<i>Gomutra bhavit bakuchichurna</i>	<i>Lepa</i> at affected site	3 months

OBSERVATION AND RESULT

The patient underwent a comprehensive treatment plan that included *Kruminashak Chikitsa*, *Raktamokshan* and specific *shwitraghna chikitsa*. Along the course of treatment, color changes were observed, transitioning from white to pinkish and eventually to a normal skin color.



DISCUSSION

Shwitra can be effectively managed in Ayurveda using both *Shodhana* and *Shamana Aushadis*. When treatment begins in the early stages, satisfactory results can often be achieved. The results of this case study demonstrate the efficacy of Ayurvedic treatment in addressing management of *shwitra*. Acharya Charak^[4] and Sushrut have classified *Shwitra* as a *Raktapradoshaja vyadhi*. Acharya Charak recommended *Virechana*, *Upavasa* and *Raktamokshana*^[5], while Acharya Vagbhat emphasized *Raktamokshana* for managing *Raktapradoshaja* conditions.^[6] Additionally, Acharya Harita specifically mentioned *Virechana* and *Raktamokshana* for the treatment of *Shwitra*.

According to the schedule, the patient adhered to the medication regimen and was advised to follow a diet that avoids *Madhur*, *Lavana*, *Amla*, *Tikshna Dravya*, dairy products, spicy foods, daytime napping and staying up late at night. *Jalokavacharan* was done every 15 days for 5 sittings. In case of *Shwitra*, the treatment approach involves both external and internal use of *Kusthaghna Dravya* based on the patient's signs and symptoms.

JALOKAVACHARAN - *Shwitra* is a form of *Kushtha* (skin disease) characterized by *Tridosha prakopa*, *pradhan Raktadushti* and a chronic manifestation. *Acharya Charak* recommended *Raktamokshana*, while *Sushrut* placed significant emphasis on *Jalokavacharan* in the treatment of *Rakta pradoshaja vyadhi*.^[7] Clinical observations indicate that *Raktamokshana* through *Jalokavacharana* may offer greater relief compared to other *Shodhana karma*, especially when *Rakta dhatu* is involved, as emphasized in *Ashtang Hridaya*.^[8] According to *Sushrut*, *Raktamokshana* not only purifies the strotas channels but also effectively alleviates disease. Here recommended *Jalokavacharana* for treating superficial blood (*Avagadha Grathita Rakta*), as it can help eliminate *sadosha rakta* from *Kushtha* lesions.

Jalokavacharan has counter irritant effect on the lesion, which creates new cellular division which takes place removing dead cell layer, and result in reduction of local Swelling and Lichenification. It increases blood circulation to the affected part by removing *Sanga* which leads to change in skin colour.^[9]

GOMUTRA BHAVIT BAKUCHI LEPA – *Bakuchi churna* is triturated in the *Gomutra* and is applied over the affected patches for half an hour. It helps in removing white patches and in regaining colour of the skin by stimulating melanocytes function. *Bakuchi* has *Katu*, *Tikta Rasa*, *Katu Vipaka* and *Ruksha Guna*. *Gomutra* is also *Ushna*, *Tikshna* in nature. Due to these properties, irritation of skin occurs which leads to increased blood circulation to affected part which may lead to change in skin colour.

BAKUCHI TAILA APPLICATION – *Bakuchi taila* is applied over white patches and is exposed in early morning sunlight for 10-15 min. It stimulates pigmentation process and helps in regaining the normal pigmentation of the skin.

Bakuchi contains psoralen, isopsoralen, bakuchiol, bavchinin & corylin which have antioxidant properties, stimulates melanocytes for melanin synthesis and has immunomodulatory effect. Sunlight being the natural source of UV rays stimulates melanocytes for production of melanin which leads to normal skin colour. UV light along with *Bakuchi* leads to favourable environment for promoting growth of melanocyte migration & stimulate proliferation.^[10]

Bakuchi Ghan Vati, containing *Shuddha Bakuchi*, nourishes skin cells and aids in their rejuvenation. It possesses anti-inflammatory and rapid healing properties. In Ayurvedic texts,

Bakuchi is recognized as *kusthaghni*, known for its effectiveness in treating skin conditions.

Krumikuthar Rasa and *Vidangarishta* helps in intestinal worm manifestation and *krumi* responsible for *rakta dushti*. They help in detoxifying body by clearing the bowel which helps in proper production of *Rakta dhatu*, hence helps in curing vitiligo.

Arogyavardhini Vati is having *Raktadhushtihara* (blood purifier), *Kushthahara* (alleviates skin disease), *Sroto Vishodhana* (cleansing channels of body) and *Pitta Doshahara* (alleviates Pitta) properties. It also improves digestion and metabolic activities.

CONCLUSION

Shwitra is a *Tridoshaja Kriccha Sadhya* (difficult to cure) disorder. The effect of *Dravya chikitsa* has shown encouraging results in the repigmentation of affected skin. No any complication was observed in the patient at the end of the study. Ayurveda has *Chikitsa siddhantas* which work and stand for a long period of time. Since the therapy for vitiligo has limitation in other pathies, Ayurvedic management of vitiligo is one of the most effective therapy with less chances of recurrence.

REFERENCES

1. Vd. Y. G. Joshi, Charak Samhita, Edition 2015, Vaidyamitra Prakashan, Pune, Chikitsasthan, Chapter 7, Shlok 177.
2. Silverberg, N.B. The Epidemiology of Vitiligo. Curr Derm Rep., 2015; 4: 36–43. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13671-014-0098-6>
3. Dr. Gyanendra Pandey, Harita Samhita, Edition 2014, Chowkhambha Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, Uttarardha, Chapter 34, Shlok 50-51.
4. Vd. Y. G. Joshi, Charak Samhita, Edition 2015, Vaidyamitra Prakashan, Pune, Sutrasthan, Chapter 28, Shlok 12.
5. Vd. Y. G. Joshi, Charak Samhita, Edition 2015, Vaidyamitra Prakashan, Pune, Chikitsasthan, Chapter 7, Shlok 50-53.
6. Dr. Ganesh Garde, Ashang Hriday, Edition 2015, Chaukhambha Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, Chikitsasthan, chapter 20, shlok 18.
7. Sushrut, Sushrutasamhita, Sutrasthana, Jalaukavacharaniya Adhyaya, 13/4, Acharya VJ editor. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Surabharati Prakashana, 2008.
8. Dr. Ganesh Garde, Ashang Hriday, Edition 2015, Chaukhambha Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, Sutrasthan, chapter 14, shlok 5.

9. Gulve AC, Zade RR, Wagh VD. A systemic review of shwitra and importance of raktamokshan chikitsa. J Ayu Herb Med., 2020; 6(3): 189-193.
10. Gulve AC, Zade RR, Wagh VD. A systemic review of shwitra and importance of raktamokshan chikitsa. J Ayu Herb Med., 2020; 6(3): 189-193.