

MAINTAINCE OF THE HEALTHY HAIR THROUGH AYURVEDA: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Healthy, long and vibrant hair helps a lot in the improvement of personality. Therefore, keeping hair in a healthy state is entirely the important for human-being, because just like the face, hair is also a mirror of a healthy state of the body. The scalp and hair conditions also have more psychological impact on human societies. Even minor changes in hairs like greying of hair, early hair fall affect the self-confidence and self-esteem of an individual. Acharya Charka considered Hair as Mala (Waste product) of Asthi Dhatu (Bone), while Sharngdhara thinks it as a Updhathu (tissue) of Asthi. So This article mentions the possible ways of enhancement of strength and beauty of scalp hair through the principles of achieving good health (Swasthy

Prapti) as explained in Ayurveda. The scope of this article deals with understanding of all aspects of Kesha (Hair) mentioned in the Samhitas of Ayurveda. Like Dincharya and Rutucharya.

KEYWORDS:- Kesh, Kesh Swastya, Dincharya, Rutucharya.

INTRODUCTION

Healthy, beautiful, long and attractive hairs add charm to the personality. That's why the cascade of beautiful and healthy hairs measured every person. Locks of hair envisage in itself an element vital for beauty on contrary withering hairs may totally turn the picture bizarre and unacceptable, especially when it starts at younger age. According to survey up to 40% of men and 25% of women in India are victims of hair fall. Therefore, to keep the healthy hairs

in healthy state is entirely the duty of human beings, because just like face, hair is also a mirror of healthy state of the body.

In the fast world of today there is a race for cosmetics, changed life style or more specifically westernized culture. Indifferent dietary habits have made the hairs either grey at prematurity or to fall down. Allopathy has no appropriate answer to this problem. Different types of oils, shampoo, soaps, pharmaceutical propaganda to promote growth of hairs had made the condition worse.

According to modern medical science many factors contribute to hair diseases i.e family history (heredity), hormonal changes due to pregnancy, childbirth, menopause and thyroid problems. So hair problems are the manifestation of many diseases. Medical conditions i.e scalp infections such as ringworm and hair pulling disorder called trichotillomania. May be due to side effects of certain drugs, such as those used for cancer, arthritis, depression, heart problems, gout and high blood pressure. General thinning of hair after a physical or emotional shock. Excessive hairstyling or hairstyles that pull your hair tight, such as pigtails, can cause a type of hair loss called traction alopecia. The main reason behind the upsurge of hair problems are more frequently seen due to extremely busy schedule of working hours, pollution of the environment and unhealthy dietary habits. There are many types of treatments, medicines, supplements and Shampoos are available in the markets. Most of the formulation is over-the-counter products. So, without taking the advice of the expert, result of these is not getting proper. Most of the market products claim that they are safe because of herbal or Ayurvedic preparation

This study gives details of the various concepts mentioned in Ayurveda such as Dinacharya, Ritucharya, Sadavritta, etc. related to Kesha Swasthya and therapies like Nasya, Shiro Abhyanga, Shiro Lepan, Kesha Rasayanas etc.

Review of literature

According to Drug and Cosmetic Act (India) 1940, cosmetics are defined as any substance rubbed, poured, sprinkled or in any way applied to human body for cleansing, beautifying, and promoting attractiveness.^[1] Ayurvediya concept of beauty and cosmetics started from the inheritance and pursuance of ideal life style i.e, Dinacharya, Ratricharya, Ritucharya, Sadavrutta etc.

The healthy hairs should be soft, black in colour, small, firm, oily and with a single hair root. These qualities of healthy hairs are criteria to determine the "Dirghayu" of a person.^[2]

Twak is a Adhistan of Kesha. Some part of Kesha lies above the Twak which is known as Kaanda. The tip of Kaanda is known as Romaagra. The enlarged part in the twak is called as Mulabhaga. The Sira, Dhamanî, Snayu are connected to this region. This part is known as Romakupa. Sweating expelled out from this region and the nutrition is supplied by Rasavahini.^[3]

Kesha and Tridosha

There is a very close functional relation between Kesha and Tridosha. The health of Kesha is depends on Dosha when they are in equilibrium state. Kapha Dosha provides Brumhan and Pitta Dosha softnes to the hairs however functioning these two Dosha are depend on proper functioning of Vata Dosha. The Romakupa are a site of sensation and are supplied by a number of capillaries. The sensation is carried by Prana Vayu and Romaharsha is exhibited by the Vyana Vayu.^[4]

Kesha and Sapta dhatu

The skin receives nourishment from Rasa Dhatu. Kesha is a part of Twak. Therefore Kesha also receives nutrients from the Rasa Dhatu. Premature graying of hair is caused by the vitiation of Rasa Dhatu. Individuals having Twak Saarata are characterized by unctuous, smooth, soft, clear, fine, less numerous, deep rooted and tender hair and lustrous skin. A person possesses Meda Sara exhibits Snigdha Nakha, Kesha, Loma etc^[5] as it gets Snigadhata from Meda Dhatu.^[6]

Kesha and Mala

Kesha is the Mala of Asthi dhatu^[7] and Upadhatu of Majja^[9] consequently whenever there is a Vrudhi and Kshaya of Asthi Dhatu there it will affect the growth and development of the hairs. This is observed through the sign and symptoms of the Asthi Kshaya i.e. falling of hair, nails, hair of the beard, including mustaches and teeth, excretion and loosness of joints.^[10] There is close relation between Kesha and Shukra Dhatu. Appearance of mustache and beard is the sign of developed Shukra Dhatu. In female also Yoniromata (pubic hair) and Kesharajita are the signs of developed Shukra Dhatu. According to Dhalhana Acharya after the complete development of Shukra Dhatu there is appearance of its Mala i.e. Smashru.^[11]

Kesha and Strotas

The sites of origin of the Swedavah srotas carrying sweat are Medomula and Romakupa. The characteristic manifestations of their vitiation are the absence of perspiration, excessive perspiration (sweating), roughness of body, general burning sensation and horripilation (Romharsha).^[12] Adhyasthi, adhidanta, dantabheda, asthiśūla, discoloration, abnormality in hairs of head, body hairs, nails, beards-moustaches-these are disorders due to morbid affection of Asthivaha srotas.^[13]

Hair care**A) Dinacharya**

For the care of hair various methods were discussed in Samhita are as following.

1) Moordha tail (Oiling) and Paste for local application over scalp

Oil should be regularly applied on the scalp. It prevents falling of hair, baldness and also makes the hair black long and deep-rooted. It provides nourishment to the hair follicles and also gives strength to the cortex and fiber of hair.^[14]

2) Nasya (Nasal drop)

Everybody should take a nasal drop of "Anu tail" every year during the rainy, autumn and spring season when the sky is free from the cloud. Along with many other benefits, it prevents hair fall. Hair care and also accelerates the growth of hair.^[15] Nasya nourishes the Srotas present above the clavicle including the hair follicles which strengthen the hair and reduce falling.

3) Dhoomapana (Medicated smoke)

Along with health of head & senses, Dhoomapana cures the problem of hair fall by clearing the Dosha from the head region and also improves the firmness of hair on the head, beard & teeth.^[16]

4) Kshoura karma

Regular cutting of excess growth of nails, hair, beard and moustache is said to be followed in Dinacharya. Bathe daily as routine.^[17] Practicing (regular following) shaving, cutting and grooming of hair and nails regularly is described to be providing health, virility, longevity, spirituality and beauty to the person.^[18]

5) Snanam

Bathing is the process which removes dirt, itching, tiredness, sweat, lethargy, thirst, heat, and sins from the whole body and mind. It improves digestive fire, strength, luster and virility.^[19] Acharya Charaka described it to be Ojaskar i.e, healthy.^[20]

One should never do head bath with warm water. It harms the strength and health of hair as well as eye sight. Instead cold water head bath will protect the harmful effects on hair and eye sight.^[21]

6) Ushnishka

The wearing of Ushnishka (turban or cap) on head protects the hair from wind, heat, dust etc. which is pious and beneficial for hair.^[22] Covering of head protects the hairs from the environmental factors.

B) Ritucharya

Seasonal changes also bring causation of many diseases. Abhyang, Utsadana, Pradeha Pralepa etc have been quoted in accordance with the respective Ritucharya as explained in the Samhitas. There is no direct reference to pathology of hair with respect to Ritu, but in general, health deteriorates in these seasons if we do not follow the basic regime as advised. So by Yukti Pramana, Ritucharya should be followed to maintain good health of the body as well as hair.

1. Hemant ritu

In this season there is aggravation of Sheeta (cold) quality of Vata Dosha, which makes the digestive fire extremely powerful. If appropriate quantity of food is not supplied, then the powerful digestive fire destroys the Rasa Dhatu in the body. Thus it ultimately aggravates Vata Dosha.^[23]

As we know that Rasa Saara Purusha has good quality of skin and hair. If Rasa Dhatu gets destroyed then it affects the quality of skin and hair as well. So this Ritucharya should be followed to maintain the health of body as well as hair. In this season, Abhyang (Body oilation), Utsadana (Application of unctuous body masks), Murdhani Taila Dharan (Application of hair oil) etc is advised.^[23]

2. Shishira ritu

There is no much difference in Hemant and Shishir Ritu. It is advised to stay in warm houses i.e, house having lesser room temperature. This prevents excess aggravation of Vata Dosha in the body.^[24]

3. Vasant ritu

In this sseason the aggravated Kapha Dosha starts melting and impairs the digestive fire and thus creates a lot of body ailments. Hence in this season it is advised not to consume heavy (Guru), sour (Amla), sweet (Madhur), and oily (Snigdha) food. Also, the afternoon short snaps of sleep (Diwaswaap) post lunch is contraindicated.^[25]

This season is said to be ideal for treating diseases of Kapha Dosha by Vamana Karma. Khalitya, Palitya, Kesha Prapatan etc can be treated by this procedure.

4. Grishma ritu

In this season, due to scorching, heat the body turns week, perspiration is excessive, which leads to fluid loss and impaired digestion. Pungent (Katu), sour (Amla) and salty (Lavan) food consumption is contraindicated in this season.^[26]

7) Sharad ritu

In this season the body gets aggravated with Pitta Dosha. Virechana Karma is said ideal for the cleansing of Pitta Dosha from the body in this season. Rakta Mokshan is also considered best in this season which eliminates impurities (Dosha) which are accumulated in the blood.^[27]

Vata Dosh and Asthidhatu realation

Vata Dosha and Asthi Dhatu have inverse relation with each other as explained in 'Ashrayashrayee Sambandh^[29] of Dosha Dhatu and Mala'. Also Asthi Dhatu Mala is Kesha. So to the health of Kesha, it is necessary to keep homeostatic balance between Vata Dosha and Asthi Dhatu.

Kshar and Lavan

Kshara and Lavan Rasa consumption in excess quantity is one of the causes of Khalitya (Alopecia) as explained in Charak Samhita.^[30]

C) Sadavrutta^[31]

It is the practice of Good Conducts. Practicing and nurturing good conduct has two benefits good health (Aarogya Laabh) and control over senses (Indriya Vijay).

Praise the God, Cow, Gurus, Brahman, Siddha Purush, and Teachers.

Worship the Agni (lord of Fire).

Bathing in the morning and evening daily. Cleanse external openings (Eyes, ears nose, mouth, rectum and urinary orifice) regular.

Cut down the excess growth of nails, hair, beard, moustache twice a month.

Always wear clean, washed and unturned clothes daily.

CONCLUSION

Hair is an important part of body. It has very exceptional value enhance of the beauty. Incidence of hair diseases are increase very abruptly. Faulty dietary habits, lifestyle and stressful living, inappropriate nutrition or exasperating factors lead to depletion of the function of the hair root. Several types of oils and Lepa for Abhyang (Massage) greatly improve the blood circulation, thus increasing the nutrition of the hair roots & scalp. Hence all the therapeutic efforts in Ayurveda are aimed at keeping the features under normal physiological conditions i.e. Prakrit Avastha. "We are what we eat" but it's better to say "We are what we digest". So beautification begins with proper nutrition, efficient digestion and assimilation of nutrients by the body and regular elimination. Thus, hair disease can only be cure by strictly following the Ayurvedic Fundamental of treatment.

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