

INDRALUPTA AND ITS MANAGEMENT IN AYURVEDA**Malvika Badyal^{1*} and Veenu Malhotra²**

¹B.A.M.S, M.D (Final) P.G. Scholar, Department of Samhita & Siddhanta. Babe Ke Ayurvedic Medical College & Hospital, Daudhar (Moga- Punjab).

²B.A.M.S., M.D., Ph. D. Professor, H.O.D (Ayurveda Samhita & Siddhanta), Babe Ke Ayurvedic Medical College & Hospital, Daudhar (Moga- Punjab).

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Corresponding Author*Dr. Malvika Badyal**

B.A.M.S, M.D (Final) P.G.
Scholar, Department of
Samhita & Siddhanta. Babe
Ke Ayurvedic Medical
College & Hospital,
Daudhar (Moga- Punjab).

ABSTRACT

In today's world, external appearance has taken precedence over any other achievement of an individual. In this context, hair is critical to both your physical as well as mental well-being. Healthy hair enhances your confidence and also allows others to see you in a positive light.

Hair loss (Indralupta) is one of the most common problems people face owing to the present-day lifestyle. Indralupta, can be correlated to Alopecia Areata, wherein any or more parts of the body experience sudden hair loss. Due to limitations and side effects of modern medicine, some effective results are expected from Ayurveda. Ayurveda is more than a therapeutic system- it is a way of life. It epitomizes the way to achieve an appropriate lifestyle, which helps us to lead a healthy and long life. Improper Aahara- Vihara, not following

the principle of Dinacharya and Ritucharya and stressful work-life balance may lead to disorders like Indralupta. Ayurveda has great potential in treating disorders like Indralupta. Many curative and preventive measures such as Nasya, Rasayana, Murdha taila, Lepa, Pathya-Apathya are particularly recommended.

KEYWORDS: Indralupta, Alopecia Areata, Treatment of Indralupta.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the ancient system of medicine is not only a system of medicine, rather a way of life as it is easily available and eco-friendly due to its holistic approach. Now-a-days, occurrence of a few Kshudra roga is very high in the society. Their prevalence is experienced everywhere and they cannot be considered as minor in nature and be neglected. As the field

of cosmetics is vast, so to concentrate on one topic, the disease *Indralupta* from kshudra roga was selected.

In the present-day dynamic world, personalities and outlook have grown a deeper relationship between our functioning and how we appear to others and self while moving through our diverse functions. Hair have assumed a silent yet extremely significant role to our self-esteem and confidence in a conscious arena of our interactive lives.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- i. To study the concept of Indralupta
- ii. To study the etiopathogenesis of Indralupta
- iii. To study the treatment protocol of Indralupta

METHODOLOGY

The content related to concept, etiology, etiopathogenesis and treatment protocol of Indralupta has been collected from text book of Ayurveda and its commentaries. National and International peer reviewed Journals have been also referred to update the knowledge of diagnosis and management of Indralupta.

Conceptual study

Indralupta from pre-Vedic to medieval period

To go ahead is just as much important as to look behind because it holds a great value to keep the historical background of a disease in our mind. The chronological evidence of diseases of hair and its treatment are found in Vedic literature, Samhita and other contributions of medieval period. Even though there is no separate entity as disease of hair in ancient literature, scattered information regarding this disease is found in different texts.

It is not that hair did not form as the most integral part of our outlook since ages in human societies, still their role in today's persona reflections to others and self-have assumed deeper and new dimensions. Hence, any effect on hair have assumed direct psychological impact on human mind.

Vedic period

Many preventive and curative measures were observed and many drugs were used for its prevention and treatment, some of which are *Nitatni*, *Keshabrumhani*, and *Keshvardhini* etc. There is no complete description about the disease *Indralupta*, however, there are

instances which depict that *Khalitya (Indralupta)* was prevalent in that period also. For instance, Lord *Indra* cured the *Khalitya and Palitya* of *Apala's* father.^[1]

Ayurveda is considered as an *Upaveda* of *Atharvaveda* as this particular Veda deals with many medicinal plants and its use. Considerable amount of information, regarding terminology related to hair diseases and drugs used in different hair diseases are available. A vegetable drug named *Devatada* was used in the management of *Kesha*.

The case of **Rishi Jamadagni** (Father of **Parashu Rama**) who was able to enhance the hair growth of his daughter is also well known.^[2] This shows that desire for healthy hair growth is natural since time immemorial and diseases of hair were treated abundantly.

Samhita period

- **Charaka samhita:** In the **Trimarmiya Chikitsa adhyaya**, Caraka has described the etiopathogenesis, line of treatment and various modalities for the treatment of the disease **Indralupta**. It has been included in **Urdhvajatrugata Roga** and has been described to occur due to **Dushtapratishyaya**.^[3]

First chapter of *Vimana Sthana* points out that excessive use of various salts (yo.k) and alkali({kkj) serves as an etiological factor of hair loss.^[4]

- **Suśruta samhita:** In *Sushruta Samhita*, Acharya Sushruta illuminates **Indralupta** as a synonym of **Khalitya** and has described it under **Kshudra Roga** along with its pathogenesis in the **Nidana sthana**. He also explained the best treatment of *Indralupta* through different classical drugs in **Kshudra Roga Chikitsa**, and advised *Shira vedha* in *Indralupta* too.^[5]
- **Harita samhita:** Harita has elucidated this disease by proclaiming it as **Keshaghna** and he has given a full-fledged description along with the types, symptoms and treatment.^[6]
- **Kashyapa samhita:** Kashyapa Samhita has focused on the anatomy and physiology of the hair and it also adds that, the production, preservation and declination of the hair is due to *Swabhava or Prakruti*.

Samgraha kala

- **Ashtanga samgraha:** In Ashtanga Samgraha, Vagabhatta has mentioned **Indralupta** under the heading of **Shiroroga** and has also described its pathogenesis. Difference between **Indralupta** and **Khalitya** has been described here. Especially, the types of Khalitya along with symptoms and prognosis have been stated.^[7]
- **Ashtanga hridaya:** Ashtanga Hridaya deals with disease Indralupta according to Acharya Sushruta.^[8]
- **Madhava nidana:** Madhavakara has described the disease Indralupta according to Sushruta but in Madhukosha commentary, Kartika acharya has clearly differentiated Indralupta, Khalitya and Ruhya from each other.^[9]
- **Bhavaprakasha:** Acharya Bhavamishra has described Khalitya Roga in accordance with Sushruta Samhita.
- **Sharangdhara samhita:** He has described different types of lepa for Indralupta.
- **Yoga ratnakara:** He has followed the nidana and chikitsa of Sushruta for Indralupta.
- **Bhaishajya ratanavali:** Chikitsa of Indralupta has been explained in detailed form.
- **Vanga samhita:** Vangasen has given the description of pathogenesis of Indralupta, according to Sushruta but the therapeutic aspects are his own (Vangasen – Kshudra roga adhikara). Other contemporary writers have considered this disease in Kshudra Roga.

Indralupta - Definition

Indralupta refers to a skin ailment that affects all the hair-bearing skin that includes scalp and beard. Indralupta leads to loss of hair which is unlike the usual hair loss but sudden onset of hairfall over a short period of time.

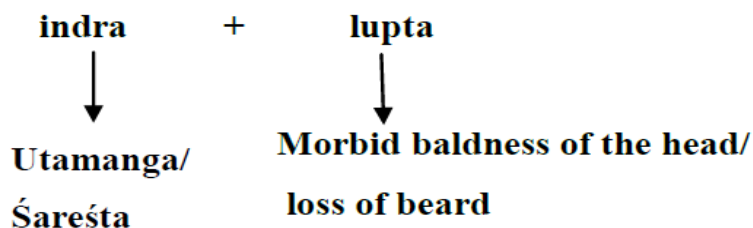
According to Ayurveda, Vata and Pitta get localized in the hair pores in the scalp region in heightened state. This impedes the supply of nutrients to the hair follicle ultimately resulting in falling of clumps of hair in that particular area and also averting further regrowth of hair, thereby leaving a bald patch.

From the classical references, nirukti and paribhaṣa of Indralupta can be deduced.

निरुक्ति- इन्द्रलुप्त – पु (इन्द्राणां इन्द्रनीलवत केशानां लुप्तं नाशो यस्मात्)

(शब्द कल्प द्रुम 1/211)

Indraluota



Synonyms of indralupta

Various synonyms of Indralupta are found in Ayurvedic as well as other texts of Sanskrit literature, which are as follows

According to ayurvedic texts

- *Indralupta*
- *Keshaghna*
- *Khalitya*
- *Ruhya*
- *Rujya*
- *Khalati*
- *Cacha*

HETU (Etiological factors of indralupta)

Ayurvedic texts clearly describe several factors which imbalance the state of equilibrium of Doṣa. These causative factors of any disease are termed as Hetu (etiological factors). Though, in case of Indralupta, there is no clear explanation of the causative factors of hairfall. However, by observing the pathogenesis described by different Acharya, it can be said that Vata, Pitta and Kapha Dosha and Rakta Dushya are the main internal causative factors of Indralupta.

According to Vagbhatta and Charka, Khalitya comes Śīroroga. Charka in Vimana sthana, while describing the disorders occurring due to the over indulgence in Kshara, Lavana and Viruddha Ahara has mentioned the occurrence of Hair Loss as a consequence of it.^[10]

In addition to this Acharya Charka, in Chikitsa Sthana 26 has mentioned that by ignoring Pratishtaya, Hair loss occurs as a complication.^[11]

The common etiological factors are Vega dharana (Suppression of urges), Abhyangadvesha (Avoidence of oil massage), Rajahsevana (exposure to dust), Jagarana (Night vigil), Diva swapna (Sleeping during day time), Atisitambusevana (excess intake of cold water), Atimaithuna (Excessive sexual indulgence), Pragvata (Facing direct wind), Rodana (Excessive weeping), Uccabhasya (Talking loudly), Ama (Undigested or semi-digested food), Atapatisevana (Exposure to excessive heat), Himahara (intake of cold food), Manastapa (Mental affliction), Madya (Intoxication). The study of these factors reveals that dietary habits, climatic changes, psychic disturbances and disturbances in sensory organs are significant in diagnosis and treatment of Indralupta.^[12]

Rupa (Signs and Symptoms)

The cardinal sign of Indralupta is loss of hair.

Along with this cardinal symptom, various Acharya have also mentioned some associated symptoms according to its type.

Acharya Hārīta has classified its symptoms according to its types, namely Vata Doṣa causes Rūkṣa and Pandu scalp, Pitta Doṣa leads to red and burnt scalp, Kapha Dosha leads to Snigdha scalp while Rakta causes pus formation and Sannipataja type bears characteristic of all the Dosha.

Rupa of indralupta as classified by ashtanga samgrahakara is as follows

- 1) **Vataja:** In this type, Keshbhoomi appears similar to Agnidagdha and it becomes Shyava and Aruna.
- 2) **Pittaja:** In this type, the colour of scalp is Peeta, Neela and Hārīta. The scalp is surrounded by the Shira (veins). Sweat may be found all over the scalp.
- 3) **Kaphaja:** In this type, the colour of the scalp is more or less same as the colour of skin but here it is Ghana and Snigdha in appearance and the colour tends towards whitish.
- 4) **Tridoshaja:** In this type of Khalitya, characteristics of all the three Dosha are observed. The scalp looks burnt and it bears nail like appearance.

Samprapti

रोमकूपानुगं पित्तं वातेन सह मूर्च्छितम् ।

प्रच्यावयति रोमाणि ततः श्लेष्मा सशोणितः ॥३३॥

रुणद्धि रोमकूपांस्तु ततोऽन्येषामसम्भवः ।

तदिन्द्रलुप्तं खालित्यं रुज्येति च विभाव्यते ॥३४॥ Su.Ni 13/33-34)

“The Pitta, triggered by its own factors penetrates into the Romakooapa and there it unites with the Vata to shatter the hair”. Then the Shleshma along with the Shonita creates an obstruction in the Romakooapa, so as to prevent the growth of new hair from that place.

Acharya Charka believed in the causation of Khālitya by mainly two Dosha – Vāta and Pitta, as Dehoṣma is due to Pitta only. Thus, according to Ācārya Charka, Dehoshma along with Vatadi (Vata, Pitta and Kapha) Dosha cause Khalitya.

Samprapti ghataka

Dosha: Vata: Samana, Vyana

Pitta: Pachaka Pitta and Bhrajaka Pitta

Kapha: Tarpaka Kapha

Dushya: Dhatu: Rasa, Rakta, Asthi

Mala: Sweda, Kesha

Agni: Jatharagni, Rasagni, Asthyagni

Ama: Rasa, Raktagata Ama

Srotasa: Rasavaha, Raktavaha, Asthivaha, Swedavaha, Manovaha

Udbhava: Amashaya

Sanchara: Rasayani (Rasavaha Srotasa)

Adhisthana: Keshabhoomi

Rogamarga: Bahya Rogamarga, including Trimarma (Shira)

Sadhya – asadhyata (Prognosis of indralupta)

There is no mention of prognosis of Indralupta in either Charka or Sushruta.

Ashtanga Samgrahakara has suggested some conditions of the scalp of patient when the disease turns out to be incurable.

These are

- Burnt like appearance
- Nail like appearance
- Absolute hair loss
- Injury due to burns

Tridoshaja or sannipataja type is Asadhya, rest Ek doshaja types are said to be Sadhya.

Chikitsa siddhanta

The line of treatment of Indralupta mentioned by different acharya is as under:

Acharya sushruta: Samshodhana (snehana & sodhana) along with Nasya, Shiroabhyanga, Raktamokshana and Shirolepa.^[13]

Oil prepared with jati, karavira, citraka and karanja should be used for Shiroabhyanga. It is an excellent remedy for Indralupta. Acharya Sushruta also emphasizes the importance of Rasayana therapy in the treatment of Indralupta. It is said that this disease is difficult to cure and as such cannot be eliminated without Rasayana.

Acharya charka: After adequate Samshodhana, patient of hair loss should be subjected to Nasya, massage with oil and Shirolepa.^[14]

Nidana parivarjana - Nidanaparivarjana should ideally be the first line of management. All the causative factors & risk factors should be examined prudently and must be avoided to reduce the growth of disease.

Hair care in ayurveda

Acharya Charka has suggested some procedures which keep hair healthy and attractive. Some of them are mentioned in Dincharya and Ritucharya, which are as follows:

Nasya: Proper administration of Nasya in appropriate time promotes hair growth. Moreover, the hair does not turn grey and does not suffer from hair fall.

Snana: Acharya Vagbhatta described that pouring of warm water over the head leads to strength loss of the hair and eyes.

Acharya Sushruta recommends that head and hair should not be washed with very hot water or with very cold water. He adds that snana should be according to season but the overhead bath with hot water should always be avoided.^[15]

Murdha taila: Regular application of oil on head (scalp) makes the scalp revitalized, keeps hair healthy, black and firmly rooted, induces sleep and keeps away Indralupta, Khalitya and Palitya.

Dhoompana: Acharya Sushruta said that inhalation of medicated fumes improves the firmness of hair on the head and beard.^[16]

Ushnisha: The wearing of Ushnisha (turban) on head protects the hair from wind, heat, dust etc. and is said to be pious and beneficial for hair.^[17]

Kshaurakarma – Hair cutting & proper care of hair of scalp & beard should be done regularly. Acharya Charka mentioned that everybody should have a haircut, shave and nail cut thrice every fortnight.^[18]

DISCUSSION

Indralupta is a medical condition that primarily affects the Kapala or Scalp. It is characterized by hair loss with restricted hair regrowth. The disorder is primarily manifested owing to Tridoshas along with Rakta.

Acharya Sushruta has stated that Pitta along with Vata by involving the Romakooopa (roots of hair) causes hairfall. Thereafter, Shleshma along with Shonita obstructs the channel of Romakooopa which results in poor replacement and revival of hair. This condition is known as Indralupta, Khalitya or Ruhya. Thus, Vata, Pitta and Kapha Dosha and Rakta Dushya are the predominant causative factors of Indralupta.

Acharya Charka mentions that Khalitya (Indralupta) results when Teja by involving Vatadi Dosha reaches the scalp. Charka in Vimana sthana, also mentions hair loss as a consequence of over indulgence in Kshara, Lavana and Viruddha Ahara.

The samprapti of Indralupta is characterized by two stages. The first stage involves sudden hair loss due to Vatapitta prakopa. If hair loss is observed at this stage, Vatapittahara - Brimhana Chikitsa can be implemented. However, it might progress to the next stage leading to prevention of regrowth of hair.

Since the hair pores are blocked by Doshas; the primary step involves the removal of the obstruction in order to promote regrowth of hair. It is then followed by external application of herbal oil massage and ayurvedic medicines to enhance hair growth. The purpose of the

entire process is to decrease Pitta Dosha by cleansing the body, according to the severity of the ailment.

Management of hair loss in Indralupta involves three imperative approaches, namely, balancing doshas, alleviating mental calmness and replenishing dhātu. Doshas can be balanced by Aharaja, for instance, diet like sweet, bitter, astringent, ghee, milk, sugar etc. should be preferred for aggravated Pitta. Moreover, smoking, tobacco, alcohol, heat, anger, irregularity in diet should be avoided.

Medicines like Bramhivati, Saraswatarishta, Sutasekhararasa, Guduciswaras, Yaṣṭi Madhucurna with milk etc are particularly beneficial. External application of medicated oil for massage like Neeli tail, Snuhyadi tail, Maltiyadi Tail, Bhringaraja Tail etc. is recommended. Moreover, Nasya with Neem tail, Chandanadi tail and similar oils can be advantageous.

Rasayana therapy, owing to its immune-modulators, antioxidant properties and rejuvenating action is considered beneficial for the hair loss. Some of the widely used Rasayana are Amalaki Rasayana, Bhringaraja Rasayana, Agastya haritaki, among others.

Dhatus can be replenished by plenty of water intake for Rasa dhatu, intake of Natural iron through herbs like Amlaki, Bhringaraja, Candanasava, Uṣīrasava, Sarivadyasava etc. For Ashti dhatu, intake of natural calcium like milk is beneficial. Majja dhatu can be replenished by Shiroabhangya using Maltiyadi Tail, Bhringaraja Tail etc.

Any number of stressful situations can trigger hair loss, so to counteract stress and protect your hair, one should learn and practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, or yoga regularly. Regular exercise helps manage stress and its effects. Healthy diet and lifestyle are equally helpful in alleviating mental stress.

CONCLUSION

The Ayurvedic management of Indralupta has a strong prospect to breakdown the pathogenesis of this disease. Ayurvedic drugs and therapies have Keshya, Balya, and Rejuvenating properties, so they will show an exceptional result on Indralupta. Since, causative factors are mostly environmental, dietary, habitual and mental, the approach of Ayurveda is basically preventive and the medicines can provide permanent and better cure for Indralupta.

As an initial step in treating Indralupta, physician must identify the cause and first treatment should be Nidana parivarjana. Other therapies like Abhyanga, Lepa, Shodhana, Nasya, Rasayana should be prescribed consequently.

Hence, it can be concluded that Indralupta can be successfully treated using Ayurvedic therapy and remedies without any side effects.

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