

LITERATURE STUDY OF *VICHARCHIKA* IN *AYURVEDA* WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ATOPIC DERMATITIS

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ABSTRACT

Illness, many a times is not a direct contrast to health and much less super added factor to the living organism, but they rob his joys and pleasures creating great deal of miseries, like skin diseases. The study of Indian medical classics reveals that all skin diseases were considered as one of the broad heading of “*Kushtha*”. ‘*Vicharchika*’ is described under *Kshudra Kushtha* in *Ayurvedic* classics, also mentioned as a curable disease yet the relapsing nature of this disease makes it much harassment for patient and troubles some for physician too. *Vicharchika* is not a life threatening, it makes worried the patient due to its appearance, severe itching disturbing routine and its nature susceptible to be chronic. According to *Charaka*, the ancient medical authority, *Vicharchika* is characterized by skin eruption with dark discoloration, itching and profuse discharge. Authors like *Vagbhatta*, *Madhavakara* and *Bhava Mishra* are in agreement with him whereas *Sushruta*, the Father of Surgery has mentioned the symptoms as dryness of the skin with intense itching and marked linings. As the opinion of modern dermatology, in Eczema, a similar

clinical presentation is seen which is defined as a non-contagious inflammation of the skin characterized by erythema, scaling, oedema, vesiculation and oozing.

KEYWORDS: *Vicharchika*, Atopic dermatitis, *Ayurveda*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda consists of two different words ‘*Ayush*’ and ‘*veda*’. It means it is the science (*veda*) of life. The aim of *Ayurveda* is to maintain the psychological as well as physical health of healthy individual and to treat the disease of the patient.^[1] *Kayachikitsa* is one of the eight main branches of *ayurveda* according to ‘*Vagbhata*’.^[2] It deals with sense organs, diseases affecting the organs and its management.

Chakshu, *shrotra*, *ghrana*, *rasana*, *sparshana* are the *Panchendriyas* of human body.^[3] *Sparshanendriya* (skin) is one of the 5 sense organs of human body. All of this five *Gyanendriyas* are described in *indriyopakramaniya adhyaya* of *Charaka samhita*. Nowadays we see increased incidence of skin diseases due to poor sanitation, unhygienic condition, unhealthy lifestyle, unhealthy food habits. Healthy skin reflects health of body of individual.

Vicharchika is one of the commonly seen skin disease. Deformities in the skin are known as ‘*kushtha*’ according to *ashtang hridaya*. There are two types of *kushtha* –*mahakushtha* and *kshudrakushtha*. *Vicharchika* is one of the type of *kshudra kushta*. According to *charaka* and *ashtang hridaya vicharchika* is *kaphdoshpradhan vyadhi*. According to *Acharya Sushruta vicharchika* is dominance of *pitta dosha*.^[4] The *lakshanas* of *Sushrutaokta vicharchika* are *raji*, *kandu*, *rukshata*, *ruja*. The symptoms of *vicharchika* according to *Charaka* and *Ashtang hridaya* are *kandu*, *pidika*, *srava*, *shyava varna*.

The symptoms of *vicharchika* can be correlated with Eczema aka Atopic Dermatitis in modern sciences. *Vicharchika* explained in *Ashtang hridaya* and *Charak samhita* can be correlated with ‘wet eczema’ and *vicharchika* explained in *Sushruta samhita* can be correlated with dry eczema. According to standardized definition of *vicharchika* by NAMASTE PORTAL designed by AYUSH govt of India, it can be correlated with wet eczema.

Eczema is a form of dermatitis with inflammation of upper layers of the skin. It is chronic in nature. It needs a proper and potent treatment which will cure the disease from the root. Due to many adverse effects of modern medicines, they can’t be used for long term. So many patients with skin diseases are turning towards *Ayurveda* for complete and safe cure of the

disease from its root.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Review on Vicharchika

Acharyas have classified *kushtha* into two types viz., *Maha kushtha* and *kshudra kushtha* as it is explained that total no of *kushthas* are 18 in number in which *maha kushtha* are 7 in number and *kshudra kushtha* 11 in number. *Vicharchika* is coming under *kshudra kushtha*, having the predominance of *vata* and *kapha dosha* respectively.

Vyutapatti^[5]

The word ‘Vicharchika’ is derived from – ‘vi + carch adhi + ayane’

Thus, the term Vicharchika means spreading of pruritic eruption over the skin.

Nirukti^[6]

- *Shabdakalpadruma* described two cardinal features for introduction of *Vicharchika*, i.e. cracking of the skin mainly occurs on the skin of hands and legs.
- The disease which coats / covers the skin in particular manner & cause cracking of skin of hands & feet mainly.

Definition

सकण्डः पिडका श्यावा बहुसावा विचर्चिका||’(च.चि.7 / 26)^[7]

The skin disease having eruptions over the skin appear with dark pigmentation, itching with profuse oozing from the lesion.

राज्योऽतिकण्ड्वर्तिरुजः सरूक्षा भवन्ति गात्रेषु विचर्चिकायाम् |....(सु.नि.5 / 13)^[8]

Marked lining, excessive itching and pain with dry lesion on the body called *Vicharchika*.

NIDANAPANCHAKA – NIDANA

The knowledge of *Nidana* plays a great role in the management of the disease. Because *Nidana Parivarjana* is the major part of the full treatment. Alike of all *Kushta*, *Vicharchika* is also *Tridoshaja Vyadhi*. At the description of *Kushtha*, Acharyas have described *Nidana* as a general for all diseases, hence etiological factors of *Kushta* should be considered for *Vicharchika*.

Table no. 4: Showing *Nidana* [Etiological factors].^[9,10]

Sr.No.	<i>Nidana</i>	C.S.	S.S.	A.H.	A.S.	B.S.	H.S.	M.N.	B.P.
Aaharaja <i>Nidana</i>									
A]	Viruddha Aahara	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
1	Intake of fish with milk	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Intake of mulaka and lasuna with Ksheera	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	Use of mulaka with guda	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
4	Excessive use of alcohol with milk	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
5	Intake of food mostly containing Hayanaka, Yavaka, Chinaka & Uddalaka along with Ksheera, Dadhi, Takra, Kola, Kulattha, Masha, Atasi, Kusumbha & Sneha	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Continuous intake of Gramya, Audaka & Anupa Mamsa with Ksheera	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
7	Use of meat of deer with milk	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
8	Use of Pippali, Kakamachi, Lakucha with Dadhi & Sarpisha	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
9	Intake of articles having sour taste with milk	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
10	Excessive use of green vegetables with milk	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
11	Intake of honey and meat after taking hot diet and vice-versa	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
12	Use of fish, citrus and milk together	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
B]	Mithya Aahara								
1	Excessive use of Navanna, Dadhi, Matsya, Amla & Lavana	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
2	Excessive use of Tila, Ksheera, & Guda	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
3	Drava, Snigdha, Guru Aharanam Atyarthasevanam	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
4	Excessive Oleation	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Continuous & excessive use of Madhu, Phanita	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Continuous & excessive	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-

	use of Madhu, Phanita								
7	Intake of food during indigestion	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+
8	Asatmya Aahara	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	Adhyashana	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+
10	Intake of polluted water	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Viharaja Nidana									
A]	Mithya Aahara								
1	To do physical exercise & to take sunbath after heavy meals	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	+
2	To perform sexual intercourse during Indigestion	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	+
3	To have a regular nap in the day	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+
4	To do exercise or to perform sexual Intercourse after Snehapana & Vamana	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Sudden change from cold to heat or heat to cold without judiciously following the rules of gradual change	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	+
6	Sudden change from Santarpana to Apatarpana & Vice_versa	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
7	Mithya Sansargasevana	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
B]	Vegadharana								
1	Withholding of the natural urges i.e. Mutra & Purisha Vega etc.	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
2	Suppression of the urge of emesis	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	+
C]	Panchakarma Apachara								
1	Panchakarmani Kriyamane Nishidha Sevanam	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Improper administration of Snehapana therapy	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Aacharaja Nidana									
1	Acts insulting Bramhanas, Teachers & other respectable persons	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
2	Indulgence in sinful Activities	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

3	Use of money or material acquired by unfair means	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
4	Censuring or killing virtuous persons	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-

POORVARUPA

There is no specific mention of *Purvarupa* of *Vicharchika*. But *Purvarupa* of *Kushtha* as a whole are given in many *Samhitas* which are applicable to *Vicharchika*.

ROOPA OF VICHARCHIKA ACCORDING TO VARIOUS LAKSHANAS ARE AS FOLLOWS

- ❖ *Vicharchika* consists of *pidaka* with itching and excessive discharge.^[11]
- ❖ In *Vicharchika*, rough streaks with intense itching and pain appear on limbs.^[12]
- ❖ *Vicharchika* is explained as a dark red coloured deep-rooted lesion with moisture or oozing.^[13]

Samprapti

Charaka has emphasized the dual part played by *nidana*, i.e. simultaneous vitiation of *tridoshas* & also *shaithilyata* in the dhatus such as *twak*, *rakta*, *mamsa* & *lasika*. Thus vitiated *tridoshas* gains momentum to vitiate *shithila dhatus* & hence the disease *kushtha* gets manifested. Due to indefinite permutations & combinations of *Dosha*, *Dushya*, *Sthana*, etc., *Kushtha* may present itself in infinite varieties.

Chikitsa

A] *Shodhana*

Samshodhan can be defined as the therapy which aims at the radical removal of the causative morbid factors of the somatic disease.^[14] *Shodhana* is advised in *Bahudoshavastha* results from the vitiation of *Tridosha* and *bahudoshavastha* is found in this disease.

Acharya Charaka has stressed the necessity of repeated *shodhana* by taking care of strength and vitality of the person. If excessive elimination of the doshas is carried out then the getting provoked quickly overpowers the debilitated patient.^[15,16]

According to different there are postulations regarding the *Shodhana* in *Kushtha*;

- ❖ *Acharya Charaka* says that in *vata* dominant *ghrutapana* is ideal, *kapha* dominant ***Vamana* and *pitta* dominant *virechana* and *rakta mokshana*.**^[17]
- ❖ *Acharya Sushruta* has explained the treatment depending upon the *Dhatugata Avastha* of

Dosha in *kushtha*. He recommends *Shodhana* when doshas are in *Poorvarupavastha* and also in *Twakagata*, *Raktagata*, *Mamsagata* and *Medogata Avastha*. He advised that *Shodhana* therapies should be performing depending upon the predominant *Dosha*.^[18]

- ❖ According to *Acharya Sushruta* repeated administration of *vamanadi* procedures are mentioned. *Vamana* must be administered once in every 15 days, *virechana* must be administered once in every 30 days, *nasya* must be done once in every 3 days and *siramokshana* to be done once in every 6 months.^[19]
- ❖ According to *Acharya Vagbhata*, *Shodhana* Therapy which is appropriate to the aggaravated *Dosha* should be followed.

B] Shamana Chikitsa

Specific *Shamana yogas* for *Vicharchika* are;

Arka taila, *marichadi taila*, *visha taila*, *shadbindu Taila*, *aragwadhadi qwatha*, *mahataleshwara rasa*, *kusthakutara rasa*, *sarveshwara rasa*, *kanakasundara rasa*.

DISCUSSION

Kushtha is a disorder of skin, so in the first part of the thesis, description of normal skin like, anatomy, physiology etc. are covered with *Ayurved* as well as modern point of view. Regarding anatomy and physiology, effect of *Dosha-Dhatu & Mala* on the skin has been detailed with also correlation with modern aspects. Skin structure from macroscopically and microscopically are also noted in this part. Skin is the most outer organ covering all over the body, more ever, it is also an *Adhithana* of *Sparshanendriya* and *Upadhatu* of *Mamsa*, which is originates from *Matruja Bhava*. *Kushtha* is always *Tridoshaja* in origin. *Charaka* opines at this context that most dominant symptoms of the *Dosha* should be tackled first and later the associated symptoms and their causative *Doshas* should be treated (*Ch. Chi. 7/32*). The classics have described *Vicharchika* as having three main features viz. *Kandu*, *Pidika* and *Bahu Srava*.

On the basis of these descriptions *Vicharchika* may be defined as a clinical entity, in which the lesion is Dusky (*Shyava*) coloured *Pidika* with profuse itching (*Kandu*) or *Ruja*, which may develop anywhere in the body, i.e. *Gatreshu* and may be wet or dry. (*Ch. Chi. 7*) *Sushruta* has described clinical appearance of dry Eczema (*Shushka Vicharchika*) with the symptoms of intense itching, pain and marked linings. In practice, Eczema is a foremost problem in skin diseases. Despite of great advance in dermatology and the advent of potent antibiotics and antifungals as well as steroids, Eczema continues to challenge the best effort of dermatologists. *Shodhana* therapy is a speciality of *Ayurveda* and plays a key role as a preparatory procedure

for further progressive treatment. In this process morbid *Dosha* the root cause of diseases are eliminated from main seat of lesion and thus the main cause of disease is eradicated.

CONCLUSION

Skin diseases were found in form of blemishes of skin since the time immemorial. Various ancient texts mentioned *Kustha* in general and the *Vicharchika* in particular since Vedic period to present era. *Vicharchika* has been mentioned in almost all *Ayurvedic* texts, either in form of *Kshudra Kustha*, *Kshudra Roga* or *Sadhya Kustha*. Various *Acharyas* mentioned *Vicharchika* with different *Doshik* involvement of vision of their symptomatological complex. *Vicharchika* is a major problem in skin diseases. Despite of great advance in dermatology and the advent of powerful antibiotics and antifungal as well as steroids, Eczema continues to defy the best effort of dermatologist. *Shodhana* therapy is a specialty of *Ayurveda* in which 'morbid *Doshas*' the root cause of disease are eliminated from main seat of lesion and thus the main cause of disease is eradicated.

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