

**AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE ON SHEETAPITTA W.S.R TO
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Article Received on 05 August 2026,
Article Revised on 25 August 2026,
Article Published on 01 Sept. 2026,

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22252583>

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How to cite this Article: Dr. Sukruta M. M.^{*1},
Dr. Kavita Bhadri². (2026). Ayurvedic
Perspective on Sheetapitta W.s.r to Urticaria.
World Journal of Pharmaceutical Research,
15(17), 1445-1451.

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INTRODUCTION

Urticaria is one of the most common skin diseases, characterized by weals with pale interiors and well-defined red margins; usually the result of an allergic response to insect bites, food or drugs.^[1] Urticaria is a common problem affecting up to 25% of the population at some point in their lifetime.^[2] In Ayurveda, the clinical features of urticaria closely resemble Sheetapitta, a disease primarily caused by Tridosha, but Vata and Pitta dosha are predominant and Rasa and Rakta are main dushya. Causative factors include viruddha Ahara (incompatible diet), Mandagni (impaired digestion), Environmental triggers, seasonal variations, psychological stress and Autoimmune. Rather than providing only symptomatic relief, Ayurveda emphasizes identifying and eliminating the root cause (Nidana Parivarjana), restoring Agni,

correcting Dosha imbalance, purifying vitiated blood where indicated, and preventing disease recurrence through appropriate diet and lifestyle modifications.

In some cases, the disability and distress caused by Urticaria can lead to serious impairment of quality of life, almost comparable to that experienced by patients with cardiovascular disease. Modern medicine not having any remedy for permanent cure but remission of the disease can be achieved by administering the medicine for lifetime, which are having some unwanted side effects. Ayurveda can provide permanent and better management for Sheetapitta.

The holistic principles of Ayurveda, including Shodhana therapies such as Virechana and Raktamokshana (when indicated), along with Shamana medications, Pathya-Apathya, and Rasayana therapy, offer a comprehensive approach to the management of Sheetapitta.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVE

1. To explore Sheetapitta from an Ayurvedic perspective
2. To evaluate Ayurvedic principles in the management of urticaria.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present review was carried out by critically studying the available information on Sheetapitta from both Ayurvedic and modern literature. According to classical Ayurvedic texts, in Brihatrayi (Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Astanga Hridaya) do not provide a direct reference for Sheetapitta. But in Charaka Samhita has described some allergic disorders, e.g., udarda under Kaphajananatmaja vyadhi and Kotha under Raktapradoshaja vikaras. Acharya Madhava and Bhavaprakash have defined Sheetapitta and described under allergic disorder. Acharya Madhavakara was the first to describe Nidana Panchaka, while Acharya Chakradatta was the first to provide a detailed account of its treatment. It is also mentioned in text like Bhaishajyaratnavali, Yogaratnakara, Bhavaprakasha. Contemporary research articles from database like PubMed and AYUSH portals were also reviewed to gather evidence on Ayurvedic therapies for Sheetapitta.

Ayurvedic view

Sheetapitta is a dermatological disorder described in classical Ayurvedic texts such as Madhava Nidana and Yogaratnakara (Laghutrayi). The condition is characterized by widespread skin eruptions associated with intense itching. The term Sheetapitta is derived from two words with contrasting meanings. Sheeta means himaguna. According to shabdakalpadruma, sheeta denotes Hima, Ritu or cold weather.^[3] which represents the the influence of Kapha and Vata, while Pitta means to heat. In Amarakosha.^[4] it is attributed to be one of the Dhatu vishesha of the body which denotes the involvement of the Pitta Dosha. Thus, the disease results from the combined vitiation of Tridosha, but vata and pitta dosha are predominant and rasa and rakta are main Dushya.

Sheetapitta is characterized by Varti Damsha Samsthana Shota (wheal-like swellings resembling insect bites), Kandu (itching) caused by Kapha vitiation, Toda (pricking pain) caused by Vata and Jwara (fever), Vidhaha (burning sensation) caused by Pitta vitiation.

Sometimes it also causes symptoms like Chardi, Hrillas, Aruchi, Dehasada, Angagaurava, and Pipasa. These manifestations closely correspond to the clinical presentation of Urticaria in contemporary medicine.

Urticaria is a common vascular reaction of the skin marked by the sudden appearance of the transient, erythematous, oedematous wheals of varying size and shape, usually accompanied by severe pruritus. The lesions may develop anywhere on the skin or mucous membranes and generally resolve spontaneously within minutes to a few hours without leaving residual marks. Episodes often begin with itching followed by the formation of raised red wheals. The severity of itching varies among individuals and may be aggravated by scratching, alcohol consumption, physical exertion, or emotional stress, significantly affecting the patients quality of life.

The disease Sheetapitta is not described as an independent entity in the Brihatrayi; however, detailed descriptions of Udarda, Kotha, and Utkotha are available in the Vyadhi.^[5], and Purvarupa.^[6] and Lakshana.^[7] sections. These three disorders exhibit many overlapping clinical manifestations, although they differ in certain etiological factors and dominant Doshas.

According to Acharya Madhavakara, Sheetapitta and Udarda are closely related disorders and often considered synonymous because of their similar clinical presentation. Sheetapitta is predominantly associated with Vata, whereas Udarda is mainly Kapha-dominant, and also describes the characteristic features of Udarda separately.^[8] Furthermore, Madhava Nidana describes the Nidana Panchaka of Sheetapitta-Udarda-Kotha collectively and identifies Sheeta Maruta Sparsha (exposure of cold wind) as an important causative factor.^[9]

Kotha is considered as Rakta Pradoshaja Roga according to Charaka and Kashyapa.

NIDANA

Exposure to sheeta maruta leads to manifestation of Kapha and Vata Dosha associated with Pitta results in vitiation in Rakta causing Twak vikaras.

1. Aharaja Nidana (improper dietary habits): Excessive intake of cold, incompatible, excessively sour, pungent, alkaline, salty, and spicy foods; consumption of stale or improperly processed meals; frequent intake of curd, fish, fermented foods, and incompatible food combinations (Viruddha Ahara).

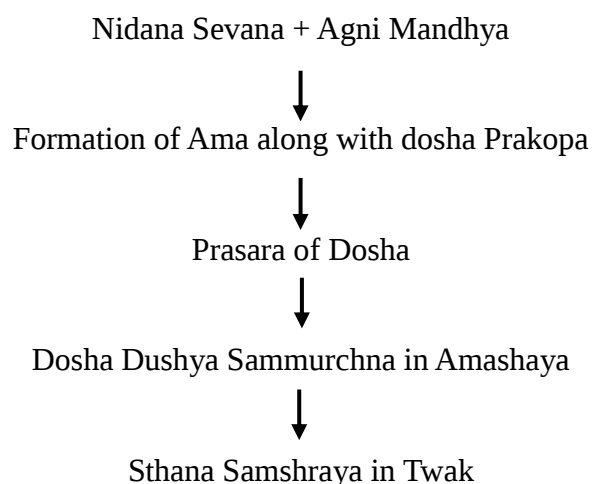
2. Viharaja Nidana (falty lifestyle practices): Exposure to cold wind, suppression of natural urges, excessive physical exertion, prolonged exposure to sunlight, irregular daily regimen and unhygienic living conditions.

3. Nidanaarthakara Roga (pathological conditions): Ajirna, Sannipata, Pitta and Kaphaja Vyadhis, Jwara, and Amlapitta may predispose an individual to the development of Sheetapitta.

4. Chikitsa Mithya Yoga (improper therapeutic measures): Inappropriate administration of Vamana and Virechana or incorrectly performed purification therapies, can also contribute to the occurrence of the diseases.

SAMPRAPATHI

Exposure to cold or suppression of natural urges causes vitiation of Kapha ana Vata Doshas. Pitta Prakopaka Vihara causes Pitta vitiation with more vitiation of Vata Dosha spreads all over the body lodges in the external layer of the skin and produces a sort of reddish rashes with intense itching and pricking sensation, thus resulting in Sheetapitta.^[10]



In modern medicine, the development of urticarial skin lesion is initiated by an inflammatory process increases the permeability of dermal capillaries, allowing fluid to escape into the surrounding tissues and produce localized edema. The resulting swelling persists until the accumulated interstitial fluid is gradually reabsorbed, leading to the resolution of the wheal.

PROGNOSIS

Sheetapitta is Bahyaroga Margashrita hence can be considered as Sukha Sadhya Vyadhi.^[11]

Most cases of idiopathic urticaria resolve spontaneously within a few weeks to several months. However, a small proportion of the individuals may progress to chronic urticaria, with symptoms persisting for several months or even year. Physical urticarias tend to have a more prolonged course, may persist for years, and can be relatively resistant to treatment.^[12]

RESULT

General Treatment Principles for Sheetapitta/Urticaria

The primary objectives of treatment are **Samprapti Vighatana** and **Nidana Parivarjana**.

The therapeutic approach should include,

- Deepana-Pachana to improve Agni and eliminate Ama
- Tridosha Shamana to manage the vitiated Tridosha
- Srotoshodhana to clear the obstructed channels
- Balavardhana to restore normal physiological functioning.

Management of Sheetapitta

- Chakradatta emphasizes Shamana Chikitsa based on the predominance of the aggravated Dosha. In Sheetapitta, Ushna Ahara is advised to counteract the effects of cold and pacify the involved Doshas.
- Bhavaprakasha has advocated a comprehensive approach comprising Shodhana, Shamana, and Bahya Parimarjana Chikitsa for the management of Sheetapitta.
- Yogaratnakara recommends the use of Krimigna and Dadrugna drugs in Sheetapitta.
- Bhaishajya Ratnavali has also described measures for the management of kotha, which is considered in the spectrum of Sheetapitta.

Specific Treatment

- Vamana: Emetic therapy by Sadya vamana- patola + nimba sal + vasa kwatha mentioned in Yogaratnakara.^[13]
- Virechana: Purgation therapy by Triphala + shudda guggulu + pippali advised in Yagaratnakara and Bhaishajyaratnavali.
- Raktamokshana: Bloodletting therapy for Raktapradoshaja vikara and Rakta dusti. After Mahatikta Ghrutapana, it can be done described in Yogaratnakara.
- Lepa: Saindhavadi yoga mentioned in Madhava Nidana.^[14]
- Udvartana: Ushna, Tikshna Dravya is advised in Yogaratnakara
- Abhyanga: massage with katu taila in Bhaishajya Ratnavali.

PATHYAAPATHYA

Pathya-Apathya plays an important role in the management of any disease.

Pathya: Purana shali, Mudga Yusha, Shigru Shaka, Patola Shaka, Triphala, Ushnodaka, Jangala Mamsa, Dadima Phala, Kulatha Yusha, Madhu, Katu, Tikta, Kashaya Rasa.

Apathya: Ksheerasadita, Guda, Matsya, Aoudaka Anupamamsa, Naveenamadhya, Chardivega Dharana, Diwaswapna, Sheetala Jalasnana, Viruddha Aharasevana, Atapasevana, Ati Snigdha, Amla, Madhura Sevana, Vyayama, Guruannapanani.

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda provides a comprehensive framework for the understanding Sheetapitta through concepts such as Tridosha, Agni, Ama, Dosha-Dushya Sammurchana and Twak involvement, which show considerable correlation with the clinical manifestations of Urticaria. The predominant involvement of Vata and Pitta along with Rasa and Rakta explains manifestations such as Kandu, Toda, Vidhaha, and Shotha. Improper lifestyle and other dietary and environmental factors contribute to Dosha Prakopa and subsequent localization in Twak. The Ayurvedic approach emphasizes Nidana Parivarjana, Deepana-Pachana, Tridosha Shamana and Srotoshodhana, along with Shodhana Therapies such as Vamana, Virechana, and Raktamokshana when appropriately indicated. Shamana and Bahya Parimarjana therapies, together with suitable Pathya-Apathya, further support disease management and prevention of recurrence. Thus, the Ayurvedic understanding of Sheetapitta offers a holistic approach by addressing the underlying causative factors and pathogenesis rather than focusing only on symptomatic relief.

CONCLUSION

Ayurvedic principles demonstrate comprehensive conceptual framework for understanding and managing Sheetapitta w s r to Urticaria. Concepts like Udarda and Kotha provide insights into the Twak vikaras. The Ayurveda emphasis on early detection, Dosha pacifying treatments, addressing root causes along with Pathya-Apathya and lifestyle modifications holds a holistic approach reducing symptoms, addressing predisposing factors and minimizing recurrence. Further well-designed clinical studies integrating classical Ayurvedic concepts with contemporary scientific evidence are necessary to establish the efficacy and safety of specific Ayurvedic interventions in the management of Urticaria.

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