

A CASE STUDY ON MANAGEMENT OF *INDRALUPTA* (ALOPECIA AREATA) BY AN AYURVEDIC REGIME

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ABSTRACT

Alopecia areata is a non-scarring autoimmune disease of the hair follicle that can present at any age. The condition affects children and young adults who present with discoid areas of non-cicatricial alopecia with exclamation mark at periphery. The common sites are scalp, eye lashes and eye brows. Alopecia areata can be cause of psychological stress individuals with it may experience social phobia, anxiety and depression. In modern medicine topical or injected corticosteroids are used to treat this condition. Due to side effects and limitations of the contemporary science, some harmless and effective medicines are expected from alternative medical science. In Ayurveda it can be correlated to *Indralupta* one of the *kshudra roga*. In the present case study, a case of a patient presented with patches of baldness on head since six months was successfully treated with 3 sittings of *Jalaukavacharana* (leech therapy) for one and a half months and 3

months *Ayurveda* medication. It provides a promising result in the patient of *Indralupta* through *Jaloukavacharana* and *Shamana Aushadhi*. It can be a choice of treatment, keeping in minds its cost-effectiveness and successful management as compared to conservative treatment.

KEYWORDS: *Indralupta*, *Jaloukavacharana*, *kshudra roga*, leech therapy, Alopecia areata

INTRODUCTION

Alopecia areata is also known as spot baldness. It is a common autoimmune skin disease causing hair loss on the scalp, face and sometimes on the other areas of the body.^[1]

Patient presenting with hair loss is a very common problem in whole world. In modern science hair loss is considered as “Alopecia”. Alopecia can be divided in Non-scarring alopecia and Scarring alopecia^[2] In India the life time risk of alopecia areata is 7% and its prevalence is 0.7 %.^[3]

Ancient Ayurveda scripts termed Alopecia Areata as *khalitya* if the hair is loss gradually. In case of sudden hair loss; it is termed as *indralupta*. *Indralupta* is a *Raktapradoshaja Vikara* characterized by loss of hair and has been mentioned underneath the caption of *Kshudraroga* by *Acharya Sushruta*.^[4] According to Ayurveda, the condition of the hair and scalp depends upon the harmony of vital biological energies in the body i.e *Vata*, *Pitta* and *kapha* any imbalances occurring in the *tridoshas* would lead to a variety of scalp and hair problems.^[5]

While treating such cases removal of obstruction at hair follicles is important and then starts with anti-hair fall treatment. *Acharya Sushruta* has explained the line of treatment of *Indralupta* in *Chikitsa-sthan*.^[6]

Due to its location, it affects the beauty of a person which makes the person look unpleasant and lowers his confidence. Also, contemporary treatment includes treatment with the use of steroids has many adverse effects with chances of recurrence^[7] Hence; there was a need for cost-effective and successful treatment. In Ayurveda, *Raktamokshana* (Bloodletting) is one of the treatment modalities mentioned for *Raktapradoshaja Vikara*. Leech therapy is one of the simplest techniques that can be used for *Raktamokshana* (Bloodletting), especially in old or a woman, or an infant, or a person of an extremely timid disposition, or a person of a delicate constitution as per *Samhitas*.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To evaluate the role of *Ayurvedic* regime in the management of *Indralupta* (Alopecia areata).

MATERIALS AND METHOD

1) *Jalouka* for *jaloukavacharna*.

2) *Shamana aushadhi*

- *Avipattikar Churna*
- *Mahamanjasthadi Kwatha*
- *Asthiposhak vati*
- *Keshya dravya*

3) *Pratisaran chikitsa- Jayapala beej churna lepa* over patches.

Study Design

The present study is a single case study conducted in the Department of Kaumarbhritya OPD Govt. Ayurved College, Nanded.

CASE REPORT

A 8-year-old female child patient with complaint of multiple patches of hair loss on frontal and parietal region, in the past 6 months. Patient came to *Kaumarbhritya* opd of GAC Nanded with above complaints.

History of past illness -There was no history of similar illness in the family, no history of drug intake, and no history suggestive of any systemic illness.

History of present illness- Patient was healthy before 6 months. Gradually she develops multiple patches of hair loss on frontal and parietal region with mild dryness.

Personal History

Aahara- Pitta vardhak like Fried food, ice cream excessive salt in diet, mixed dietary habits.

Vihara- Sedentary lifestyle

Behavioral habits-Could not tolerate warmth

Bowel habits-Regular

General examination

GC - Fair

Temp - afebrile

Pulse - 92/min

BP - 100/70 mmHg

RR - 20/ min

Built - moderate

Height - 124cm

Weight – 22.7 Kg

Ashtavidha Pariksha

Nadi - Pittapradhan

Mala - Samyak

Mutra - Samyak

Jivha – Sama

Shabda - Spashta

Sparsha - Samshitoshna

Druk – Prakrut

Aakruti - Madhyam

Systemic Examination

- RS - AEBE Clear
- CVS - S1S2 Normal
- CNS - Conscious and oriented

Local examination (Disease specific)

- **Site of lesion:** Parietal and frontal region of scalp
- **Distribution:** Asymmetrical
- **Itching:** Absent
- **Discharge:** Absent
- **Inflammation:** Absent
- **Sensation-** Normal

Diagnosis – Based on clinical features.

SAMPRAPTI GHATAK

Dosha: Tridosha

Dushya: Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda

Adhishtana: Twak

TREATMENT PLAN

Treatment was done for 3 months including follow-up. Total 03 sittings of *Jalaukavacharana* (leech application 03 sittings with a gap of 15 days), were done in a period of one and a half months. As the best treatment for *Rakta Dushti*, *Jalaukavacharan Karma* was chosen for the *Raktamokshana*^[8] Follow-up period was 15days. During this period application of *Jaypal Churna lepa* was applied on day 7 after 7 days second sitting of *Jalaukavacharan Karma* was done. In the interval of 7 days *jaypal churna lepa* for local application was given for 6 weeks. Internal medicines were also administered during the

treatment for 3 months. *Avipattikar Churna* was administered for the first 7 days in the dosage of 5 gm at night with Luke warm water. *Mahamanjisthadi kadha* were given 7ml with lukewarm water two times a day after food. One Tsf of *Keshya Drvya* and *Asthiposhak vati* was given two times a day after food and later *Jaypal Bija churna* application once in a week for 4 weeks along with *Pathyakar aahara* and *vihara*.

I. Leech Therapy

▪ Method of *Jalaukavacharana*^[9]

Two leeches were kept in a plastic jar filled with water. Before application leeches were kept in turmeric mixed water for some time to make them active, until then bald patch was cleaned. When the leech started to move fast and freely in water, it was assumed to be ready to use. Then the leech was held by wet cotton and made to adhere on a bald patch on the scalp. When the front portion of leech was seen slightly elevated, it indicated that leech had stuck and started sucking blood. Then it was covered with wet cotton and water was sprinkled on cotton during the whole procedure. Sucking of blood was confirmed by a pulsating wave seen in the body of leech. When that wave subsided, the swollen leech was removed after sprinkling some *Haldi Churna* on the mouth of a leech. *Haldi Churna* mixed with *Madhu* (honey) was applied to the area from where leech had sucked blood. Then leech was made to vomit the blood by putting its mouth in *Haldi Churna*. Then, it was held by the left hand in between the thumb and fingers and it was slowly and gently squeezed from the tail to the mouth by thumb and fingers of the right hand. The leech was made to vomit till complete emptying of blood. When the leech completely emptied of blood, it was left in a vessel of water.

II. Internal Medications

Table 1: Internal medicines			
Sr.no.	Medicine name	Dose	Duration
1.	<i>Avipattikar churna</i>	5gm	7 Days
2.	<i>Mahamanjisthadi Kwatha</i>	7ml	2 Month
3.	<i>Keshya dravya</i>	1 Tsf	3 Month
4.	<i>Asthiposhak vati</i>	1Tab	3 Month

III. External application

Jaypal beej churna lepa.

• Mode of Action

Jayapala beej has *katu rasa*, *katu vipaka* and *ushna virya*, Because of these properties it acts

as *kaphadosha shaman* which is vitiated in the course of *indralupta vyadhi* and helps in removing *avrodh* which is formed at the base of hair roots, so that normal growth of hairs occurs.^[10]

IV. Diet (*aahar*) and life style (*vihar*)

- To stop eating milk with fruit or food.
- To stop *atilavana sevana* and to used *saindhava lavana*
- Avoid consumption of excessive hot, cold and dry food (leads to delayed digestion)
- Avoid day sleeping

• OBSERVATION AND RESULT

There was appreciable hair growth on bald area of scalp after treatment, hair started growing. When the treatment started the patient had multiple patches of hair loss in the parietal area of the scalp [Figure1]. After two sittings of *Jalaukavacharana*, very small hairs started to grow from the hair follicles in that area. Significant growth of the hairs was noticed after 3 sittings.[Figure 3]



Before
treatment

Figure 1.



**During
Procedure**

Figure: 2.



**After
treatment**

Figure: 3.

DISCUSSION

In this case, the child had the history of faulty food habits like chips, wafers, noodles and biscuits. These food stuffs are generally highly salty, spicy and alkaline too. The preservatives in the packet foods may act like *Viruddha Ahara* if ingested in excessive quantity. Also, child had history of consumption of *Khichadi* with milk, may have acted like *Samyoga Viruddha Ahara*. These might have caused vitiation of *Pitta Dosha* in the child and caused the problem of hair loss. Thus, consumption of these food stuffs on regular basis causes *Agnimandhya* (low digestive capacity). Thus, the patient was complaining of defecation followed by meal which indicates *Agnimandhya* causing improper digestion of ingested food indirectly affecting the nutritional status of the child. *Avipattikar churna* has *Deepana*, *Pachana*, *Pittarechaka*, *Srotoshodhana* and Hepato protective properties. *Mahamanjisthadi kwatha* including drugs like *anantmula*, *daruharidra*, *devdaru*, *haritaki*, *manjistha* having *Pittashamaka*, *Raktashodhana* properties. *Mahamanjisthadi kashaya* pacifies vitiation of *kapha* and *pitta* humors. However, it is formulated such a way that it can be effective in all types of diseases cause by *tridosha*. It is mainly blood purifier. It detoxifies blood and aids to eliminate toxins accumulated in the body. It increases skin health. The ingredients of *Asthiposhak vati* are calcium, *guduchi*, *amalaki*, etc. which enhances the *asthidhatvagni* and promotes hair growth. According to *samhita* hair is the *mala* of *asthidhatu*. So the *asthiposhak dravya* are helpful in the growing hairs. Whereas *Keshya dravya* like *Bhringaraj*, *Amalaki*, *Bramhi*, *Musta*, also rich with many essential nutrients by its *keshya*, *pittashamak* activity it acts as a *shaman aushadhi*. Thus, this combination is helpful in removal of channel blockages, clearing of various types of toxins from the body and helps in reduction of accumulated cholesterol in the body. It also promotes digestive fire, clears body channels for the nutrients to reach up to the hair tissues. *Jalaukavacharana* is used to expel out impure blood containing *doshas* especially in skin disorder for local application. It has anti-inflammatory, increase blood circulation, anti-microbial, property best in skin diseases, by applying locally it removes local infection, itching. *Nidana Parivarjana* was also found helpful in the management of the disease.

CONCLUSION

Hair disorders cause negative impact towards the individual and his or her quality of life. Ayurvedic management with *Mahamanjasthadi kwatha*, *Asthiposhak dravya*, *Keshya dravya* and *Avipattikara churna* internally and externally use of *Jaloukavacharna* (leech therapy) and *Jayapal beej lepa* was found very effective in the management of case of *Indralupta*.

During case study no any side effects was found. Observed benefits may be attributed to *Raktashodhak*, Antioxidant, immunomodulatory properties. The above mentioned *ayurvedic* management suggests that *Indralupta* (Alopecia areata) can be managed without any form of hair transplantation.

By analyzing above result it can be concluded that the Herb mineral formulations, Leech therapy sitting along with *Nidana parivarjana* show a promising effect in this case of female child in treating *Indralipta* (Alopecia Areata). But, to confirm the efficacy of above treatment protocol needs further larger sample clinical evaluation.

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