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Single case study on the effect of shodhan followed by shaman chikitsa in the management of vicharchika W.S.R. chronic dermatitis

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Abstract

In *Ayurvedic* Classics skin diseases have been mentioned under the heading of *Kushtha Roga* which are of two types *Maha Kushtha* and *Kshudra Kushtha*, the former being graver than the latter. *Vicharchika* has been mentioned in *Kshudra Kushtha* in classics. Dermatitis can be correlated with *Vicharchika* due to similarity of the symptoms.

Aim of this study was to prove the efficacy of *Shodhana* and *Shamana Chikitsa* in the management of the disease, *Vicharchika* and also the role of causative factors in the progression or regression of the disease. Herewith, reporting a case of 27 years old female patient suffering from chronic dermatitis or *Vicharchika* on palms of bilateral hands who was treated effectively by *Shodhana* and *Shamana Chikitsa* in 4 months duration.

Keywords: *Vicharchika, shodhana, shamana, nidana parivarjana, eczema, dermatitis*

Introduction

Definition and symptoms

According to modern view, Dermatitis is a chronic and relapsing skin disease affecting the outer layer of the skin called epidermis. It results from a variety of different causes and has various patterns. The term eczema and dermatitis are often used interchangeably. Dermatitis though can be acute or chronic or both.

Contact dermatitis is a form of eczema that develops after someone has come in contact with an allergen, irritant or toxic substance. People can develop it anywhere but typically on exposed body parts like hands, face, feet, arms, legs and neck. Possible allergens can be wool, soap, cosmetics, poison ivy, chlorine, or latex. Symptoms include dry, flaky or scaly patches of skin, redness and swelling of skin, blisters that ooze, hives, burning or itching sensation and tightness of skin.

Paribhasha and lakshana

According to *Acharya Charaka*, it is a skin disease characterized by eruptions over the skin along with itching, dark pigmentation and profuse discharge^[1].

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, it is a condition in which skin has rough and linear lesions with intense itching, pain, dryness and burning sensation^[2].

According to *Acharya Vagbhatta*, when blackish eruptions occur with intense itching and watery discharge, it is known as *Vicharchika*^[3].

Thus, it shows that, *Acharyas Charaka* and *Vagbhatta* have described wet type of eczema which is usually seen in acute cases whereas *Acharya Sushruta* has described dry type of eczema which is seen in chronic cases more.

Nidana and samprapti

The etiological factors of *Vicharchika* vary with different authors as according to *Acharya Sushruta* the dominant *Dosha* is *Pitta*^[4] whereas *Acharyas Charaka* and *Vagbhatta* accept the dominance of *Kapha Dosha* in *Vicharchika*^[5]. But according to *Acharya Charaka*^[6], *Kushtha* is never caused by any one of the 7 elements. The 3 *Doshas*- *Vata, Pitta* & *Kapha* are vitiated first and later they vitiate the 4 *Dushyas*- *Twaka, Rakta, Mamsa* and *Ambu/Lasika*. These 7 factors together lead to the formation of *Kushtha* disease and hence *Vicharchika* occurs^[7]. These 7 body elements are usually vitiated by:

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- **Aharaj Hetu:** Due to intake of *Virudha Ahara*, like milk with fish, excessive *Guru* and *Snigdha Ahara* like junk food, excessive intake of alcohol, *Nav Anna*, curd, fish, tila, madhu, *Vidahi Anna*, *Adhyashana* [8]
- **Viharaj Hetu:** To do physical exercise and take sunbath after heavy meals, to perform intercourse during indigestion or after *Snehapana* or *Vamana*, to have regular day sleep, *Vegadharana*, sudden change from cold to heat or vice versa, entering into cold water after exhaustion or sunlight exposure, improper *Snehapana*, not following *Pathya* during *Panchkarma* [9]
- **Mansik Hetu:** Stress, depression, envy
- **Acharaj Hetu:** Sinful activities, insulting respectable people [10]

Samprapti ghataka

Dosha: Vata, Pitta, Kapha

Dushya: Twaka, Rakta, Mamsa, Ambu (*Lasika*)

Agni: Jathargni and Dhatwagni Mandya

Strotodushti: Sanga and Vimargamana

Sanchara: Through *Tiryaka Sira*

Udbhava Sthana: Amashaya and Pakwashaya

Adhishthana: Twaka

Rogmarga: Bahya

Sadhyasadya: Kricchasadya

Svabhava: Chirkari

Chikitsa

Ayurveda emphasizes on three -fold management viz. *Sanshodhana* (Bio-purification), *Sanshamana* (Pacification) [11], and *Nidana Parivarjana* (Avoiding causative factors) [12] for almost all the disorders including skin disorders. *Sanshodhana* is required because in skin diseases, condition is *Bahudoshi* [13] and *Tiryagami* [14] which is difficult to treat without *Shodhana*. *Shodhana* brings *Dosha Dhatu Samyata* by removing excessive morbid *Doshas* and toxins out of the body cleansing the channels which helps in better absorption and action of *Shamana Aushadha* and also enhances repair and regeneration of tissues as it increases digestion and immunity [15].

According to *Acharya Charaka*, all types of *Kushtha* are caused by *Tridosha*, so the treatment should be done according to the predominant *Dosha* [16]. According to *Dosha* predominance *Acharya Charaka* has advised *Snehapana* for *Vata Dosha*, *Vamana* for *Kapha Dosha* and *Virechana* and *Raktamokshana* for *Pitta Dosha* [17].

Acharya Sushruta has advised *Nasya Karma* every third day, *Vamana Karma* every 15th day, *Virechana Karma* every month and *Raktamokshana* in every 6 months for the management of *Kushtha* [18]. Repeated *Sanshodhana* is required in graver forms of skin diseases which have penetrated deeper into the tissues.

Acharya Charaka has described *Shamana* therapy with *Tika* and *Kshaya Dravyas* after *Shodhana* [19]. It pacifies the remaining *Doshas*. The main function of *Shamana* is to maintain and normalize all the three *Doshas* along with purification of *Rakta* and *Raktavaha Strotasa*, turning the *Twaka* healthy and to normal colour, and strengthen the *Dushyas*.

Nidana Parivarjana is must for prevention of recurrence and stopping disease progression.

Case presentation

Patient's name: ABC

Age: 27y/F

Address: Bahot, Mandi, HP.

Chief complaints: White scaly skin with redness, itching, burning, tightness and dryness on palms of bilateral hands, since 2 years

H/o present illness: 2 years back patient developed blisters on her hand which were yellowish in color and used to subside down on its own and turn brownish in color. Sometimes they used to break discharging yellowish substance. She used to feel burning sensation, stiffness and irritation in them. When this started patient was under mental stress and white wash was going on at her home. She also had habit of intake of spicy and junk food. Then she took allopathic treatment for 1 year for it where she was given steroids and phototherapy but she did not get any relief. After that she came to *Panchkarma O.P.D.* of Shri Dhanwantry Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Chandigarh for the treatment.

H/o past illness: No significant history

Family history

Father: K/C/O HTN, DM and Gout Mother: Healthy

Personal history

Nadi: Vatapittaja Mala: *Samyaka*

Mutra: *Samyaka Nidra: Samyaka*

Sparsha: *Anushnasheeta Drika: Samyaka*

Jivha: *Nirama Akriti: Madhyama*

Agni: *Mandya Koshttha: Madhyama*

Allergy: None Addiction: None

Menstrual history: Irregular, days extending from 28 to 56, with no pain and no clots, normal flow since, 9 years

Diagnosis: *Vicharchika*

Treatment: *Shodhana (Vamana and Virechana), Shamana Chikitsa, Nidana Parivarjana* and *Pathya Sevana*.

Patient was given *Vamana* in April 2019 followed by *Virechana* followed by *Shamana Chikitsa* for 3 months.

Vamana karma

Poorva Karma

- *Deepana-Pachana:* Was done by *Chitrakadi Vati* 500mg TDS after meals for 3 days
- *Snehapana:* Was done by *Mahatiktaka Ghrita in Aarohana Krama* empty stomach early morning for 5 days
- *Snehana- Swedana:* *Sarvanga Abhyanga* was done by *Tila Taila* and *Sarvanga Bashpa Swedana* was done by *Dashmoola Kwatha* for 2 days

Diet: During *Pachana* and *Snehapana*, *Laghu, Ushna*, freshly cooked, *Anabhishtyandi, Supachya Ahara* was advised like moong dal khichdi, one roti with ghiya (bottle gourd) or moong dal (yellow) on feeling hungry and intake of warm water only. A day before *Vamana* she was advised *Kaphotkleshaka Ahara* like curd, rice, vada etc.

Pradhana karma

Before administration of *Vamana*, vitals were recorded like

BP, PR, RR and Temp. *Vamana Karma* was started early in the morning and patient was advised to have gruel and come. During the procedure also vitals were checked at regular intervals and patient was observed carefully for any complications.

Vamana drugs used

- *Akantha Pana* of Godugdha: 1.5 litres
- *Madanphala Chatana Yoga*: Madanphala:6gms, Vacha:3gms, Saindhav:1.5gms, Madhu:10ml
- *Yashtimadhu Phaanta*: 2 litres
- *Koshna Jala*: 1 litre

Vamana Vega: 6

Shudhi: *Madhyama*

Pashchata karma

After *Vamana*, patient was kept on *Samsarjana Krama* for 5 days starting from *Peya*, *Vilepi*, *Yusha* and then normal diet.

Virechana karma

Poorva karma

- *Deepana-Pachana*: Was done by *Chitrakadi Vati* 500mg BD after meals for 3 days
- *Snehapana*: Was done by *Mahatiktaka Ghrita* in *Aarohana krama* empty stomach early morning for 3 days
- *Snehana- Swedana*: *Sarvanga Abhyanga* was done by *Til Taila* and *Sarvanga Bashpa Swedana* was done by *Dashmoola Kwatha* for 3 days

Diet: During *Pachana* and *Snehapana*, *Laghu*, *Ushna*, freshly cooked, *Anabhishtyandi*, *Supachya Ahara* was advised like moong dal khichdi, one roti with ghiya (bottlegourd) or moong dal (yellow) on feeling hungry and intake of warm water only. She was advised to take diet which is not much heavy or oily and does not increase *Kapha*.

Pradhana karma

Before administration of *Virechana*, vitals were recorded like BP, PR, RR and Temp. *Virechana* drug was given after passing of morning time and patient was advised to come empty stomach.

Virechana drugs used

Trivrita Ayleha: 20gms

Abhyadi Modaka: 1 tab (255mg)

After that when motions started patient was given hot water repeatedly and observed carefully for any complications till the motions stopped on its own.

Virechana vega: 22

Shudhi: *Madhyama*

Pashchata Karma

After *Virechana*, patient was kept on *Samsarjana krama* for 5 days starting from *Peya*, *Vilepi*, *Yusha* and then normal diet.

Shamana aushadha

After administration of *Vamana* and *Virechana* symptoms like itching, redness, dryness etc. reduced considerably. Also, patient's menstrual cycle got regular and digestion improved. Then *Shamana Aushadha* was given to curb the remaining *Doshas*.

For next 1 month

- *Mahatiktaka Ghrita*: 20 ml empty stomach followed by breakfast 1 hour later
- *Aarogyavardhini Vati*: 500mg BD after meals
- Lippu Oil for local application 3 times a day

For next 2 months

- *Mahamanjishthadi Kwatha*: 30ml Bd with 30ml lukewarm water half an hour before meals
- *Gandhaka Rasayana*: 500mg BD after meals
- Lippu Oil for local application 3 times a day

Pathya-Apathya: Along with the above medicines, patient was advised to avoid intake of *Guru* and *Snigdha Ahara* like junk food, udad, fried, Spicy food (*Katu*), dry fruits, *Vidahi Anna* like guda, tila, alcohol, tea, coffee, chocolates etc., non veg, fish, kulathi, mooli, *Abhishtyandi Ahara* like curd, rice, sugarcane, Sour (*Amla*) items like sauce, achar, citrus fruits, tomato, Excess salt (*Lavana*), Day sleep, Contact with garlic, ginger, detergent, synthetic or woollen clothes and was advised to follow *Pathya Ahara* like *Tikta Shaka* like bittergourd, *Laghu Ahara* like moong dal, purana dhanya, *Shashti Shali*, *Godhuma*, proper intake of water, goghrita, soup, Regular walking, light exercises, timely sleep²⁰.

Follow up & result

After this treatment plan patient had no blisters, burning, irritation, pain, stiffness, itching, redness or dryness. Scales were considerably reduced with minimal scaling left for which patient was asked to apply only Lippu Oil. Her menstrual cycle and digestion got proper. No relapse was found even after 6 months of treatment. (Can be seen in figures 1-4)



Fig 1: Before treatment left hand



Fig 2: Before treatment right hand



Fig 3: After treatment left hand



Fig 4: After treatment right hand

Discussion

Probable mode of action of shodhana

Vicharchika is caused due to vitiation of *Tridoshas* which causes vitiation of *Dushyas-Twaka, Rakta, Mamsa* and *Lasika*. These 7 elements were vitiated in this case due to intake of spicy and junk food, mental stress and contact with white wash which acted as irritant. This disease occurs in *Bahya Rogmarga- Twaka* [21]. *Twacha* and *Rasa Dhatu* are synonymous to each other. So, *Rasa Dushti* leads to *Twak dushti*. *Rasa Dushti* mainly occurs due to *Kapha Prakopa*. Also, *Rakta Dushti* occurs in skin diseases [22]. *Pitta Prakopa* leads to *Rakta dushti* and vice versa. Hence, *Rasavaha* and *Raktavaha Strotodushti* are involved here with dominant *Doshas* being *Kapha* and *Pitta*. Also, the *Udbhava Sthana* of this disease is *Amashaya* and *Pakwashaya* as initial *Dosha Sanchaya* occurs in these places. So *Koshtha Shodhana* is advised first in this disease and later on *Shamana Chikitsa* is advised.

Mode of action of vamana karma: *Kapha* being the dominant *Dosha* and *Rasavaha Strotasa* being the first and most important *Strotasa*, firstly *Vamana Karma* is done here. Before *Vamana Karma*, *Deepana- Pachana* and *Snehana-Swedana* are done to digest *Ama*, if any, and bring the *Doshas* from *Bahya Rogamarga* to *Koshtha*. Then *Vamana Karma* is done to remove *Doshas* from *Amashaya (Koshtha)*. *Kapha Dosha* usually causes itching, eruptions and discharge. By doing *Vamana Karma* this is corrected. Also, after removal of *Kapha Dosha*, *Virechana* becomes easier and more effective so *Vamana* is done first.

Mode of action of virechana karma: As *Pitta* is the second

dominant *Dosha* here and *Raktavaha Strotasa* is the second *Strotasa* involved, after *Vamana*, *Virechana karma* is done. *Virechana* removes morbid *Pitta*, cleanses *Pakwashaya (Koshtha)*, and stimulates the liver purifying *Raktavaha Strotasa* thereby combating *Rakta Dushti* which is one of the main cause of any skin disease. *Pitta Dosha* usually causes burning sensation or irritation and redness and swelling. By doing *Virechana Karma* this is corrected. *Virechana* also does *Anulomana* of *Vata*. *Vata* is also corrected by *Snehapana, Snehana* and *Swedana*.

Thereby, by *Vamana* and *Virechana karma*, *Rogamarga* and *Strotasa* are purified resulting *Samprapti Vighatana* and reduction in symptoms.

Probable mode of action of Shamana aushadha

After *Shodhana*, usually *Vata Prakopa* occurs. *Vata Dosha* causes dryness, scaling and stiffness. This is curbed by *Snehapana*²³ and local application of oil as *Sneha* possesses *Guna* which are opposite to *Vata Dosha*. Hence, after *Shodhana*, intake of *Mahatiktaka Ghrita* is prescribed along with application of Lippu Oil.

Mahatiktaka ghrita [24] has been prescribed in classics to effectively combat skin diseases as due to *Tikta Dravya* it pacifies *Pitta* and purifies *Rakta* and *Snigdha Guna* of *Ghrita* does *Snehana* of internal tissues and skin. Thus, it pacifies *Vata* and *Pitta Dosha* without increasing *Kapha Dosha*. It acts as an effective detox remedy and also helps in removing stress by nourishing all the tissues. It provides a soothing effect to the skin by relieving dryness, burning, irritation and pain. Due to *Sanskara Anuvartana* property, *Ghrita* possesses qualities of all the *Dravyas* added to it without losing its properties thus making it more effective.

Mahamanjishthadi kwatha [25] is an excellent blood purifier due to dominance of *Tikta* and *Kashaya dravyas* and is immune-modulator and anti-inflammatory as well. It eliminates excess *Pitta* from the body and also does *Vata Anulomana*. It also has antioxidant and antimicrobial activity. It acts as *Rasayana*, reduces stress, improves digestion, strengthens the liver, relieves burning, and digests toxins. It has been described as *Kushtaghna, Krimighna, Raktashodhaka, Varnya, Vishaghna* and *Vranaropaka*.

Aarogyavardhini vati²⁶ though is effective remedy in all the ailments but it is specially used to treat liver disorders thus skin problems as well. It acts as *Deepana, Pachana* and *Vata Anulomaka*. It has *Tridosahara* properties thereby corrects all the *Doshas*. It also enhances metabolism and corrects hormonal imbalance too. The abundance of triphala in this formulation is very effective in removing *Ama* or free radicals from the body. It also has anti-pruritic activity helping in skin disorders. It acts as anti-inflammatory and corrects liver and spleen disorders. Thus, it cleanses remaining *Doshas* from *Rasavaha* and *Raktavaha Strotasa*.

Gandhaka rasayana [27] is helpful in reducing skin problems like itching and burning sensation, is anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory, anti-pruritic, blood purifier, *Tridosha Shamaka*. It increases immunity and acts as a *Rasayana*. It also improves digestion and skin complexion.

Lippu oil by J.R.K Siddha Research and Pharmaceuticlas is a proprietary medicated oil used for local application in skin

diseases associated with dryness and hyperthickening. It contains *Karanja (Pungamia pinnata)* extracts and coconut oil (*Oleum cocus nucifera*). *Karanja* has anti-inflammatory, wound healing, anti-fungal and anti-microbial properties. It smoothens the eczematoid skin, removes hyper-thickened cells and minimizes itching. This oil is known to protect newly formed skin cells and minimize the infection. Coconut oil is naturally moisturising and antimicrobial. It contains nourishing fatty acids. It smoothens and lightens the skin.

Conclusion

In the present case study, depending on the *Nidana* and *Lakshana*, it was diagnosed as *Vicharchika*. This case study is a documented evidence for the successful management of *Vicharchika* by *Shodhana Chikitsa* followed by *Shamana Chikitsa*, *Nidan Parivarjana* and *Pathya evana*. There were no adverse effects found during the course of the treatment.

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