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Management of *Ekakushtha* through classical *Virechana Yoga*

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ABSTRACT

Skin is the signature of what's happening with in our body, it is also the medium for external biological and social contact. All chronic skin conditions such as psoriasis are caused by combination of genetic factors, immune stress, dietary deficiencies or sensitivities, and the accumulation of toxins in the body. The course tends to be chronic, unpredictable and refractory to manage according to contemporary medicine. In all skin diseases in Ayurveda are grouped under an umbrella term *Kushtha Roga* heading. *Ekakushtha* is one among them explained as *Kshudra Kushtha*, having similar signs and symptoms with psoriasis. In present case study, an effort has been made to treats 36 year male patient, diagnosed with erythrodermic psoriasis through the classical *Virechana yoga*. *Virechana* is one of the *Shodhana Chikitsa* that plays a very important role in the management of such chronic disorders. The results were evaluated on the basis of a reduction in the PASI score (48.4 to 10.6) and the improvement in dermatological life quality index (25 to 9) with reduction in Sign & Symptoms of *Ekakushtha*.

Key words: Psoriasis, *Ekakushtha*, *Shodhana*, *Virechana*, *Panchakarma*.

INTRODUCTION

Psoriasis is non infectious, chronic inflammatory disease of the skin, characterized by well defined erythematous plaques with silvery scale which have a predilection for extensor surfaces and scalp with a chronic fluctuating course.^[1] Incidence rate is 0.44% and is approaching 2.8%. Evidence has been accumulated, clearly indicating a role for T- cells in the Patho-physiology of psoriasis. In *Ayurveda*, all skin diseases are grouped under a broad heading of

Kushtha Roga. On the basis of signs and symptoms, psoriasis can be correlated with *Ekakushtha* described in *Ayurveda*. *Ekakushtha* is one of such disease explained under the heading of *Kshudra Kushtha* (minor skin ailments). Even though, in terms of Severity, Incidence and Prognosis, it is not a minor kind.^[2]

Clinical features of Psoriasis (*Rupa* of *Ekakushtha*) such as extended skin lesions (*Mahavastu*), Reduced sweating (*Aswedanam*), Pink discolouration of skin (*Arunavarna*), fish like scale (*Matsyashakalopama*), Blackening of the part (*Krishna varna*), Dryness (*Rukshata*) etc.

Virechana (purgation) is a widely practiced *Shodhana* (purification) therapy especially in skin disorders. Even though it is mainly indicated in the diseases of *Pitta* & *Rakta* origin, it is found effective in treating diseases associated with *Vata* & *Kapha* too.^[3]

CASE REPORT

A 36 year old male patient, UHID no. 431536 came to Panchakarma OPD of AIIA, New Delhi on 2/12/2019

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with chief complaint of Reddish patches with scaling over his abdomen, lower back, bilateral extremities, face and scalp region. He also complained of severe itching and pain with burning sensation and sometime discharge in the psoriatic patches since 8 years.

According to patient he was apparently well 8 years back suddenly he developed a reddish patch over his abdominal region after few days the patch increased in size with slight itching. He did not take any treatment at that time but after 1 year he also got patches over his bilateral lower limb and scalp region, after that he got concerned about his skin and visited to the dermatologist. He was taking some conservative treatment since last 7 years but did not get any significant result in his complaints. On detailed history he told the symptoms get more aggravated during winter season.

Past history - Not significant history

Family history - No such history

Personal history

Occupation - Works in private multinational company as a technical person

Diet - Mixed diet (habit of taking more sweet items)

Sleep - Disturbed

Bowel - Regular

Addiction - Alcohol twice a week since 12 years

Table 1: Ashtavidha Pariksha (general examination)

SN	Factor	Observation
1.	Naadi (pulse)	Kapha-Vataja 86/min
2.	Mala (stool)	Sa-Ama
3.	Mutra (urine)	Snigdhasheeta (Kaphaja)
4.	Jihwa (tongue)	Sama
5.	Shabda (speech)	Spashta
6.	Sparsha (touch)	An-Ushana-Sheeta
7.	Drik (eyes)	Samanya

8.	Akriti (built)	Pitta-Vataja
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Skin Examination

Inspection

Size and shape - erythematous lesion over whole body (mainly abdomen, lower back, bilateral lower limbs)

Color - reddish discoloration with peeling of scales

Uniformity - Generalised

Lesion - Reddish inflammatory lesions

Palpation

Moisture - Dry, no sweating

Temperature - warmth

Following signs are done

Auspitz sign : Positive

Candle grease sign : Positive

Koebner phenomena : Positive

Assessment criteria

Subjective parameters

Sign & symptoms of *Ekakushtha*

Grading criteria for subjective parameters

Aswedanam	Score
Normal	0
Improvement	1
Present in few lesions	2
Present in all lesions	3
Aswedanam in lesion and uninvolved skin	4

Matsyashakalopam (Scaling)	Score
No scaling	0
Mild scaling by rubbing/by itching (scaling from some lesions)	1
Moderate scaling by rubbing/by itching (from all lesions)	2
Severe scaling by rubbing/ by itching (from all lesions)	3

Scaling without rubbing/by itching (from all lesions)	4
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Mahavastu (extent of lesion)	Score
No lesions on <i>Mahasthanam</i>	0
Lesion on partial part of hand, leg, neck, scalp, hand, back	1
Lesions on most part of hand, leg, neck, scalp, trunk, back	2
Lesions on whole part of <i>Mahasthanam</i> (Vast area)	3
Lesions on whole body	4

Daha	Score
No <i>Daha</i>	0
Mild <i>Daha</i>	1
Moderate <i>Daha</i>	2
Severe <i>Daha</i>	3
Severe <i>Daha</i> affecting sleep	4

Srava	Score
No <i>Srava</i>	0
Mild <i>Srava</i>	1
Moderate <i>Srava</i>	2

Kandu	Score
No itching	0
Mild / Occasional itching	1
Moderate (tolerable) infrequent	2
Severe itching frequently	3

Very severe itching disturbing sleep and other activities	4
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Vaivarnayam	Score
Normal coloration	0
Near to normal which looks like normal color to distant observer	1
Reddish coloration	2
Slight black reddish discoloration	3
<i>Krishna Arunavarna</i> (deep black reddish discoloration)	4

Vedana	Score
No <i>Vedana</i>	0
Mild <i>Vedana</i>	1
Moderate <i>Vedana</i>	2
Severe <i>Vedana</i>	3
Severe <i>Vedana</i> affecting sleep	4

Objective parameters

- Koebner phenomena
- Candle grease sign
- Auspitz sign
- PASI SCORE
- DLQI

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Table 1: Showing the treatment plan & Schedule

SN	Treatment plan	Days
1.	<i>Deepana Pachana</i>	First 5 days (29/11/2019-3/12/2019)
2.	<i>Snehapana</i>	6 th -11 th day (4/12/2019-8/12/2019)

3.	<i>Sarvanga Abhyanga & Swedana</i>	12 th -14 th day (9/12/19-11/12/19)
4.	<i>Virechana</i>	14 th day (11/12/19)
5.	<i>Samsarjana Karma</i>	14 th -20 th day (11/12/19-15/12/19)

Medicine used

SN	Treatment given	Medicine used	Dose	Anupana
1.	<i>Deepana Pachana</i>	<i>Nagarmotha Churna</i>	3gm (two times in a day before food)	Lukewarm water
		<i>Panchakola Churna</i>	3gm (two times in a day after food)	Lukewarm water
2.	<i>Snehapana</i>	<i>Goghrita</i>	600ml (total quantity administered in gradual increasing dose for 5 days)	Lukewarm water
3.	<i>Sarvanga Abhayanga</i>	<i>Tila Taila</i>	400ml (for 4 days)	-
4.	<i>Sarvanga Bashpa Swedana</i>	<i>Dashmoola Kwatha</i>	Q.S	-
5.	<i>Virechana Yoga</i>	<i>Triphala Kwatha</i> <i>Trivrit Churna</i> <i>Danti Churna</i>	120ml (prepared from 30gm coarse powder) 10gm 5gm	Lukewarm water

Format for Snehapana

SN	Day	Time of Snehapana administration	Time at which Snehajirna Lakshana is observed	Dose	Symptoms of proper Snehapana observed on 5 th day
1.	Day 1	6:15 AM	11:45 AM	40ml	<i>Vata Anulomana</i>

2.	Day 2	6:30 AM	12:05 PM	80ml	(Normal functioning of <i>Vata</i>), <i>Dipta Agni</i> (increase in appetite), <i>Snigdha Varcha</i> (Unctuous Stool), <i>Asamhata Varcha</i> (Unformed Stool), <i>Anga Mriduta</i> (Softness of the body)
3.	Day 3	6:25 AM	1:30 PM	120 ml	
4.	Day 4	6:45 AM	2:45 PM	160 ml	
5.	Day 5	6:30 AM	4:30 PM	180 m	
6.	Day 6	6:35 AM	5:15 PM	200 ml	

Virechana format

SN	Virechana yoga with quantity	Time of Virechana Yoga administration	Time of last Virechana Vega Pradurbhava	No of Vegas observed	Symptoms of proper Virechana Lakshana observed
1.	<i>Triphala Kwatha</i> 120 ml <i>Trivrit Churna</i> 10gm <i>Danti Churna</i> 5gm	10:15AM	7: 30 PM	26 Vegas	<i>Kaphanta Virechana</i> (<i>Virechana</i> ending with expulsion of <i>Kapha</i>), Clarity of senses, feeling of lightness of the body.

OBSERVATION AND RESULTS

The following parameter are assessed according to grading

S N	Symptoms	B. T	After Snehapana	After Virechana	Follow up
1.	Aswedanam	4	4	2	2
2.	Matsyashakalopamam	4	3	1	0
3.	Mahavastu	4	4	2	1
4.	Daha	3	3	1	0
5.	Kandu	3	2	0	0
6.	Vaivarnayam	3	3	1	0
7.	Vedana	3	3	0	0
8.	Srava	1	1	0	0

Objective parameters

Assessment parameters	Before treatment	After Snehapana	After Virechana	Follow up
PASI Score	43.8	36.2	19.4	10.6
DLQI	25	21	9	3

Signs

Auspitz sign	Present	Present	Absent	Absent
Candle grease sign	Present	Present	Absent	Absent
Koebner phenomena	Present	Present	Present	Absent

RESULTS

When treatment started the patient had reddish Psoriatic patches with scaling and itching all over body (figure 1 before treatment). After *Snehapana* there is slight reduction noticed in redness and scaling over the body. A significant reduction in redness, scaling, itching was noticed after *Virechana Karma*. After follow up of 1 month the patches got cleared. During this period patient did not develop any other complaint.

Figure 1: Before treatment



Figure 2: After treatment



Figure 3: After follow up



DISCUSSION**1. Poorvakarma****Deepana Pachana**

Nagarmotha Churna^[4] & *Panchakola Churna* drugs consisting properties such as *Katu Rasa*, *Ushna Veerya* and *Laghu Ruksha Guna* with these properties drugs acts over the *Kapha* and *Vata Dosha* and helps in digesting the *Ama* and increases the appetite.

Snehapana

Snehana is the most important *Poorvakarma* before *Shodhana* as it helps to disintegrate the *Malas* which are associated with *Ekakushtha's* pathology. *Snehanapana* was given with *Go-Ghrita* after assessing the patient's *Agni* (digestive fire) every day being *Vata Kapha* dominant *Pitta* associated disorder having *Madhyam Koshta* took 5 days to achieve *Samayaka Snigdhta* with moderate quantity of *Snehapana*.

Sarvanga Abhyanga and Swedana

Sarvanga Abhyanga along with *Tila Taila* was done in patient during *Vishram Kala* for 3 days, it helps in bringing down the *Doshas* to *Koshta*. *Abhyanga* also alleviates *Vata* thereby regulating the movement of *Dosha*. The cell membrane made up of phospholipids acts as a barrier to the passage of water soluble molecules, but provides free passage to lipids and lipid soluble substances. Thus toxins from all over the body can easily come to the GIT dissolved with lipids.

Vashpa Swedana removes the obstruction of the *Srotas* and brings about perspiration. It also clears the channels of transportation due to *Srotoshodhaka* property, which helps for free movement of *Dosha* from *Shaka* to *Koshtha*.

2. Pradhan Karma**Virechana**

Combination of *Triphala*, *Trivrit* and *Danti* is mentioned as *Virechana Yoga* in the context of *Kushtha*.^[5] These drugs commonly possessed *Laghu Ruksha Tridoshara* and *Virechaka properties*.

On the day of *Virechana* patient was advised to remain empty stomach. Before administering the

Virechana Yoga, *Sarvanga Abhyanga* & *Vashpa Swedana* done and vitals were recorded. After administration of *Virechana Yoga* patient was asked to record number of *Vegas* and *Lakshana*, drink warm water frequently and hot water fomentation once a while on abdomen intermittently.

Virechana drugs are mild irritant to the stomach and the intestinal mucosa, to cause inflammation. Due to this, the permeability of the membrane changes and those substances come out due to the changed permeability which cannot come out in normal condition. Due to this change in permeability toxic materials can easily come to GIT. Thus toxic substances which cannot be removed in normal circumstances come to GIT and are removed by *Virechana*.

Before administration of *Virechana* (purgation) Drug, *Abhyanga* (massage) by '*Bala oil*' and *Svedana* (fomentation) by '*Dashamoola* decoction' was done. On *Virechana* day Pulse, blood pressure, respiration and temperature were recorded. It was recorded at regular interval during the *Pradhana Karma*. Patient was advised for empty stomach in the morning of *Virechana* day. As mentioned in classics, *Virechana* drug was administered after passing of morning time. Accordingly, the appropriate time for administration of *Virechana* drug was 9.00 A.M. on empty stomach. '*Virechana Yoga*' (purgative formulation) was prepared from 500 ml decoction of *Draksha Aragvadhya Kashaya* and *Abhayadi Modak* 2 tab. After that patients were observed carefully to avoid complications.

3. Paschat Karma

After completion of *Virechana Karma*, *Peyadi Sasmsarjana Karma* was advised to patient according to *Pravara Shuddhi* for 7 days. Normal diet should not be given as the *Agni* is hampered due to the *Shodhana*. The *Samsarjana Karma* increases *Agni* and gradually restore the proper bowel functioning.

CONCLUSION

In this case study satisfactory result was obtained in case of psoriasis after *Virechana Karma*. In terms of marked relief in erythrodermic patches, itching,

auspitz sign, candle grease sign, koebner phenomena, PASI score, DLQI parameter without any adverse effects. Hence *Virechana* can be safely practiced as an effective treatment modality in the management of erythrodermic psoriasis (*Ekakushtha*).

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