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Efficacy of *Romashatana Yoga* in Hypertrichosis - A Conceptual Study

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ABSTRACT

Smooth and unblemished skin boosts the confidence and self-esteem of an individual. When viewed in terms of Aesthetics unwanted hair present over the body causes cosmetological as well as psychological disturbances. Hair removal is practiced for the reasons like Cultural, sexual, religion and cosmetic purposes. Presently the methods followed include Shaving, Waxing, Electrolysis, Laser therapy, use of depilatory creams. For hair removal two main therapies are in practice 1) Depilation & 2) Epilation. Depilation includes Shaving, use of chemicals for hair removal. Epilation therapy is of two types permanent & temporary, this mainly includes electrolysis, laser hair removal etc. Our *Acharyas* have advised the timely removal of unwanted body hair. In various Ayurvedic classics many Hair removal formulations have been mentioned. Ex: *Romashatana Yoga* of *Chakradatta*, *Romashatana Lepa* of *Sharangadhara Samhita*, *Loma Shatana Lepa* of *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* etc. *Romashatan Lepa* is useful for the significance & symptom of hypertrichosis. Study. Drug contains *Shudha Hartal* (Yellow arsenic), *Shudha Manahsheela* (Red arsenic), *Shankhabhasma* (incinerated conch shell) & *Sudha* (chalk-calcium carbonate) with media of lime juice. When we look into the ingredients of these formulations the drug *Haratala* (Orpiment) is found to be the common ingredient and in various texts *Haratala* is called by the term *Romapaharaka*. This much importance is given to *Haratala* indicates that there must be some major role of *Haratala* in the Epilation/Depilation activity.

Key words: *Haratala*, *Epilation*, *Depilation*, *Romapaharaka*.

INTRODUCTION

Hair follicles populate the entire surface of the skin with the exception of palms, soles, dorsum of terminal phalanges of the digits, glans penis and mucocutaneous junctions. Hair is different biologically and morphologically in different parts of body x surface.^[7]

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In Ayurvedic classics there are lot of references available about *Roma/Loma*. It is considered as *Pitruja bhava*^[4] (Paternal factor). According to *Acharya Harita* the *Loma* are formed during the 4th month and according to *Vridha Vagbhata* it is during 6th month of fetal life from the skin.^[5]

Charakacharya described in *Sutrasthana*, *Ashtoninditiya* that is *Atisthula*, *Atikrishna*, *Atiloma*, *Aloma*, *Atidirgha*, *Atirhaswa*.^[1]

Atiloma is one of the condition that has been described by *Acharya* which is *Ninditiya*. In day today life we notice that beauty has very much importance in personal as well as the social facet. Excessive hair on the body is known as hypertrichosis. On that point are some herbal - mineral formulation described in Ayurvedic text for hair removal. *Romashatan Yoga* described in *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* contain *Hartal* (orpiment- As_2S_3), *Manahsheela* (realgar- As_2S_2) *Shankha Bhasma* (incinerated conch), *Sudha* (chalk)

and Lime juice.^[2] Hypertrichosis (Ambras syndrome) may cause by hereditary or PCOS, Other rare causes are Tumor or CA. of adrenaline gland, ovary, Cushing syndrome and so on.

Hirsutism it is type of hypertrichosis, exclusive to women & children resulting from an over abundance of androgen, sensitive hair growth.

Pathophysiology

Three phases of hair cycle are;^[7]

1. Anagen phase (hair growth)
2. Catagen phase(hair follicle death)
3. Telogen phase(hair shading)

If anagen phase increase beyond what is normal, that region of body will experience excessive hair growth.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim

To study effect of *Lomasathana Lepa* on unwanted hairs.

Objectives

1. To observe the effectiveness of lomasathana yoga in hypertrichosis.
2. To understand the duration of effect on hair growth.
3. To observe any adverse effect of drug on skin

MATERIALS & METHODS

Materials

Romshatan Lepa (Bhishajya Ratnavali)^[2]

- *Hartal* - 100mg
- *Manahsheela* - 100mg
- *Sudha* - 100mg
- *Shakha Bhasma* - 100mg, Triturated with lime juice. Dried and then applied with rose water.

Methods

Mix the *Romasathana Yoga* with adequate quantity of rose water. Apply it over the selected area, later it

dries for 10 minutes, remove it with slight pressure with cotton. Area of 2X2 cm should be selected for application. Observation of no. of hair follicles, hair length, skin texture should be made after every 30 days and results were noticed.^{[11],[13],[14]}

Haratala as Lomapharaka

Haratala is in used in the field of treatment for various diseases since the beginning of Prehistoric period. It is considered under *Uparasa* by most of the *Acharyas* of *Rasashastra* and few considered it as *Upadhatu*. There is no controversial opinion regarding the identity of *Haratala*. It is equated with the orpiment of mineralogy which is an orange to yellow mineral with a chemical formula As_2S_3 where 61% of arsenic 39% of Sulphur is present. In the classic we can find various formulations for depilatory / Epilatory action and *Haratala* is found to be a common ingredient.^[8]

DISCUSSION

The probable mode of action of *Haratala*, as epilating agent may be inferred as follows. The trivalent Arsenic inhibits the pyruvate dehydrogenase (PDH) complex¹⁶ – an enzymatic action taking place in the cell mitochondria. The dysfunction of PDH complex prevents regeneration of lipoamide that reduces the citric acid cycle activity and resulting in decreased production of ATP. It also affects other sulfhydryl containing enzymes, including membrane transport enzymes involved with insulin dependent cellular glucose uptake leading to lack of glucose. This reduces nutrient supply to hair follicle which hinders hair growth.

Similar action can be inferred by the cytotoxic action of the *Haratala* (As_2S_3) on hair follicle. As mentioned earlier many other ingredients will be present along with *Haratala* in the formulations and those would help to enhance the depilatory action. The drugs which are combined with *Haratala* in the various epilatory applications include *Palasha*, *Kadali*, *Shankha* etc. These contain Calcium, Potassium, Carbonate of Calcium and Potassium, Alkanes, Halogen, Ethers, Phosphorus compounds,

Hydroxides of Calcium promote the action of *Haratala*. The Carbonates of Calcium, Potassium having caustic property with alkaline pH might help in destroying hair follicle along with *Haratala*. The Alkanes and the Halogens might help in the entry of the drug into the site of hair follicle by their increased lipophilic activity, thereby helping the *Haratala* combination to cross the layers of skin including stratum corneum which is lipophilic in nature and reaching the site of action i.e Hair follicle. The phosphorous compounds and hydroxides of Calcium, ethers might help to maintain the healthy status of skin prevents irritation and provides soothing effect by adjusting the pH. From the above we can draw an inference that the *Haratala* (Arsenic trisulphide) works by decreasing the cellular energy level & thereby leading to decreased mitotic activity and cessation of hair follicle formation.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda, an ancient science of life, a boon to mankind has given immense gifts for the healthy and happy living and it also gives prime importance to Aesthetics and explains various formulations for the Epilation depilation of unwanted hair. *Haratala* is found to be a common ingredient of different epilatory formulations which act by its Cytotoxic effect at the hair follicle leaving behind smooth and clear skin.

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