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A critical review on Skin Care Routine according to Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT

Twacha is also called (skin) which covers the entire body. Skin is the largest organ plays an important role in maintaining normal physiological conditions in human. So, a detailed study of *Twak* is important as it is the seat for all *Twacha Rogas*. Ayurveda ancient science has noticed its characteristics many years back. This article highlights known and lesser known skin functions, their modality in patient health status, and it is a boon for Ayurvedic diagnostic methodology, which is described in detail in this article.

Key words: *Twacha, Skin, Skin Care, Ayurveda*

INTRODUCTION

Skin is the most important part of the human body, protecting the body from UV radiation, injuries, heat, controlling body temperature and manufacturing Vitamin-D. It is considered the largest organ in the human body.^[1]

According to *Acharya Charaka* mentioned 6 types: *Udakadhara, Asrigdhara, Tritya, Chaturthi, Panchami, Shasthi*.^[2] 6 *Prokaryotic Bhavas* for fetal development one of them *Matruja Bhava* is responsible for the *Twak* development. *Acharya Sushruta* states that *Twacha* develop like; cream on the surface of the boiled milk after the cooling.

Whereas *Acharya Sushruta* describes 7 skin layers:

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Avabhasini, Lohita, Sweta, Tamra, Vedini, Rohini, Mamsadhara.^[3]

Twacha is a *Upadhatu* of *Mamsa Dhatu* (i.e., muscle). Skin it is formed by *Rakta Dhatu* (i.e., blood) metabolism.

Based on development, skin can be divided into two parts.

- Epidermis
- Dermis

A. Epidermis is the outer layer of skin it is protective layer.

- Stratum Corneum - *Avabhasini*
- Stratum Lucidum - *Lohita*
- Stratum Granulosum - *Shweta*
- Stratum Malphigi - *Tamra*

B. Dermis it is a inner layer of the skin lying beneath the epidermis.

- Outer - Superficial Papillary Layer - *Vedini*
- Inner - Superficial Reticular Layer - *Rohini*
- Hypodermis - *Mamsadhara*.^[4]

Table 1: Seven layers of the Skin according to Acharya Sushruta with Modern Interpretation

SN	Structure as per Ayurveda	Structure as per Modern	Types of Skin
1.	<i>Avabhasini</i>	Stratum Corneum	Epidermis
2.	<i>Lohitha</i>	Stratum Lucidum	
3.	<i>Swetha</i>	Stratum Granulosum	
4.	<i>Tamra</i>	Malpighian Layer	
5.	<i>Vedini</i>	Papillary Layer	Dermis
6.	<i>Rohini</i>	Reticular Layer	
7.	<i>Mamsadhara</i>	Hypodermic Layer	

Description of modern and ancient skin layers is similar in number and order.

Colour of Skin

Colour of skin depends upon 2 important factors. The presence of pigmentation and the blood flow at the capillary level the skin gets colour.

The following factors have profound impact on skin colour.

- Melanin:** is a pigment that is secreted by melanosomes in the basal epidermis layer and it forms the major colour determined of human skin and it protects against harmful UV radiation.
- Melanoid:** is a bio transformative melanin derivative responsible for light absorption.
- Carotene:** coloured yellow pigment found in our body fat storage. Found more in females than in males. It is a vitamin A derivative.
- Oxyhaemoglobin:** gives the skin a warm reddish appearance.^[5]
- Reduced haemoglobin:** it gives cold and clammy skin a bluish appearance on the skin, ageing is most noticeable. Skin loses its elasticity with age resulting in wrinkles, texture, glow and structural changes from childhood (*Baalya*), to youth (*Tarunya*), to old age (*Vardhakya*).

In old age, the typical changes that occurs naturally are greying at the hair, wrinkles and looseness of the skin,

discoloration and dryness, loss of sleepless, brown spots and loss of luster. These changes are due to the non-optimal functioning of *Kapha*, *Vata*, *Pitta* due to ageing.

Dosha Sambandha to Twacha

Table 2: Dosha Sambandha to Skin & their Function

Dosha	Dosha type	Types of Skin
<i>Vata</i>	<i>Udana</i>	Colour of Skin
	<i>Vyana</i>	<i>Sweda Sravan</i> (sweating)
<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Bhrajaka</i>	Maintains complexion & colour of Skin
<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Kledaka</i>	<i>Sneha & Sthairyra</i> are present in the Skin due to <i>Kledaka Kapha</i> .

Skin houses *Vata Dosha*, which gives it the power of tactile sensations and awareness and a *Pitta Dosha* called *Bhrajaka Pitta*, which gives it a unique glow. Skin is considered as the derivatives of *Rasa*.

Functions of Bhrajaka Pitta

- The medicine applied to the skin i.e., *Abhyanga*, *Pariseka*, *Lepana* is digested.
- It gives the skin a natural colour.
- Provides the skin with luster.
- It gives adequate amount of heat.

Pitta dosha may cause skin disease, it is associated more with *pitta* imbalance any activity that increases the fire or heat element in the body aggravates *pitta* and can lead to skin problems.⁶

Functions of Skin^[7]

- Skin is the first line of defense against all foreign invading agents. It protects the inner structure from the invading agents like: injury, harsh sunlight, bacteria/viruses/fungi or other microbes and other pollutants.
- It regulates the body temperature. skin is the one which keeps your body temperature at a constant and adjusts it according to the seasons.

3. Sensory function: skin is the largest sensory organ in the body detects sensations like touch/pressure/pain/itching
4. Secretion: sebum - the sebaceous glands secrete a fatty substance which is rich in cholesterol called sebum. It helps to keep the skin greasy and prevents drying skin plays a vital role in keeping the body cool in hot environment.
5. Absorbtion and excretes: skin absorbs fat soluble substances and some ointments and it excretes waste materials like: urea, salt and fatty substances.
6. Storage: skin stores fat, water, chloride and sugar and blood.
7. Synthesizes vitamin D
8. Protects ultraviolet rays

None of the other body structures are more easily exposed to infections, diseases and injury. Hence, a proper and extra care of the skin is mandatory.

Major causes for the skin problems according to Ayurveda. Healthy skin is result of overall health condition of individuals and prescribes numerous skin care treatment that need to be pursued at every stage of life, the vitiated *Tridoshas* from the body as they are mainly responsible for skin disorders and other diseases.

Major causes of skin disorders are: change in lifestyle, decreasing body's nutritional level, poor quantity of blood disease attack, hormonal problems, age effect.

As per Ayurveda balance of *Doshas*, *Dhatus* and *Malas* this comprises ensuring normal status of bodily energies.^[8]

Skin care routine

When it comes to the skin care routine, there is no single skin care routine as it is subject to the types of skin. Therefore, prerequisite to the skin care is to identify your skin type.

Skin care routine according to Ayurveda - threefold treasure of *Twak*.^[9]

1. **Abhyanga:** According to *Vagbhata*, methodical application of medicated or plain oil (oil massage)

every day it gives strength, clarity and good skin, *Abhyanga* removes old age.

Benefits

- It provides attractive skin and face
- Delay ageing
- Ensures good sleep, strengthens the sensory organs, strengthens the skull vault by regular massage

2. *Udvaartana*

Massage gentle rubbing of the skin using herbal or medical powders this can be done after *Abhyanga*. It makes healthy and smooth skin. Clear away the dead skin cells. Improves blood circulation.

3. *Lepa*

Application of Paste can be applied locally to face / head, ears or to the entire body.

Benefits

Avoid fungal, microbial, bacterial infection. It has a healing action.

DISCUSSION

In this study, we have collected basic materials from the Ayurvedic classics, with the available commentaries and textbooks of contemporary modern medical science. Various articles have been compiled to understand better interpretation of skin and its correlation of layers of skin as per Ayurveda and Modern science with their functions. Acharya Sushruta and Charaka have described different skin layer. Under contemporary modern science, the skin is being understood with the synonyms of *Twak* or *Twacha*. Where the term *Twak* is used in various classical *Samhitas*. An individual's phenotype formed at the time of conception is called *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* plays an important role in the diagnosis and daily routine according to their *Prakriti*, if not so, it leads to vitiation of *Doshas*. Aggravated *Doshas* residing in *Twak*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa* and *Lasika* and influenced by other factors cause skin diseases correspondingly in the classical reference of *Twak*, if a person sets their lifestyle like, diet, daily routine according to their *Prakriti*.

CONCLUSION

The whole article concludes that skin not only protects the body's internal structure but its complex structure and function create a unique environment that protects the body's internal functioning and provides an amazing interface to interact with the outside world. Skin also acts as a medium for the absorption of various medicinal products in the form of *Abhyanga*, *Pariseka* etc. Ayurveda provides long lasting results and better result with its treatment mode like *Shodhana* and *Shamana Chikitsa*. Just like the head of a city takes care of his city and a charioteer take care of his chariot, a wise individual should take care of his body. This verse intends to convey that one should always be aware of his body mechanics.

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