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Role of *Dushivisha* w.s.r. to Allergic Skin Diseases

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ABSTRACT

The Today's life is far from the law of nature. As we all know that it is the age of advanced technology, that competing with the natural and organic world, making our life embedded in to the test tube of toxins. Use of intoxicating beverages, canned food, irregular eating and sleeping habits, food adulterants, preservatives, additives, fruit ripening chemicals, pesticides, synthetic drugs have taken modern man to a world, where immunity is declining day after day and many diseases evolving. These are various forms of toxins which enter in body through various routs if not excreted completely and stay remain inside the body will converted into *Dushivisha*. Allergic skin diseases are major problem affecting people of all age groups which are due to hypersensitivity of body's immune system to certain physical or chemical agent. The concept of *Dushivisha* in relation with allergic skin diseases are clearly mentioned in Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and other ancient ayurvedic texts. Some of the skin problems caused by *Dushivisha*, which are described in Samhitas are *Kustha*, *Mandal*, *Visharpa*, *Bhinna Varna* (discoloration of skin), [Su.K.Cha.2/30-31] *Shonit Dushti*, *Kitibha* and *Kotha*. [Cha.Chi.23/31]. The cause of all these diseases is *Dushivisha* which get aggravated due to its provoking factors like exposure to eastern wind, indigestion, cold, daytime sleep and on taking unwholesome food etc. [A.H. U.35/37] All these things suggested, the important role of *Dushivisha* in allergic skin diseases.

Key words: *Dushivisha*, Allergic Skin Diseases, *Avyadhisahatwa*, *Ojovyapad*, *Kotha*

INTRODUCTION

The Allergic skin disease is the common problem affecting the people of all age groups. Skin allergy is an adverse response by the body's immune system to an allergen, when it comes into contact with the skin or when it is inhaled or ingested. Allergic skin diseases include urticaria (hives), Allergic contact dermatitis, eczema, angioedema etc. The severity of the response is variable depending upon its aggravating factors. As we all know that it is the age of advanced science and

technology, that competing with the natural and organic world, making our life embedded in to the test tube of toxins. We are daily getting exposed to different kinds of toxins through various routes directly or indirectly in the form of food adulterants, preservatives, additives, fruit ripening chemicals, pesticides, synthetic drugs, through polluted air-water and so many things which are still unknown to us. All these are the various forms of *Garavisha* / *Kritrima Visha* which have been accumulating in our body since birth and get shelter in to cellular and organ level, becoming the raw material of cell structure. They disrupt the natural biochemistry of living system due to which immunity is subsided day by day resulting in conditions of different allergic reactions including allergic skin diseases.

The concept of *Dushivisha* in relation with allergic skin diseases are clearly mentioned in Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and other ancient ayurvedic texts. Some of the skin problems caused by *Dushivisha*, which are described in Samhitas are *Kustha*, *Mandal*, *Visharpa*, *Bhinna Varna* (discoloration of skin), [Su.K.Cha.2/30-31] *Shonit Dushti*, *Kitibha* and *Kotha*.

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[Cha.Chi.23/31]. The cause of all these diseases is *Dushivisha* which get aggravated due to its provoking factors like exposure to eastern wind, indigestion, cold, daytime sleep and on taking unwholesome food etc. [A.H. U.35/37] All these things suggested, the important role of *Dushivisha* in allergic skin diseases.

Concept of *Dushivisha* and its causes

The conceptual thoughts about *Dushivisha* is that, any poison whether of animal, vegetable or chemical origin and self-generated toxins produced in the body is not properly expelled out or is partially neutralized by the anti-poisonous remedies or suppressed by environmental factors like the fire, the wind, the sun etc. or is of mild potency by nature (*Visha* devoid of any quality out of its 10 qualities), it gets deposited in the tissues and assumes the form of *Dusivisha*. Because of its mild potency, it will not exhibit any symptoms and may remain latent for years because of *Kaphavarana* (enveloped by *Kapha*) [Su.K.Cha.2/25-26] and aggravated when get exposed to its provoking factors.

While go through the various ancient texts including traditional *Visha Vaidya Granthas*, the causative factors of *Dushivisha* can be summarized as *Sthavara Visha* (inanimate poisons), *Jangama Visha* (animate poisons), *Kritrima Visha* (artificial poisons), *Viruddhahara* (incompatible foods), *Ajeerna* (indigestion), *Vegavarodha* (suppression of natural urges), *Manasika Bhava* (psychic factors).

Sthavara Visha includes toxins of plant origin and toxic minerals which on repeated exposure led to cumulative toxicity and corresponding toxic manifestations. Chronic exposure of mercury, arsenic leads to skin diseases.

Jangama Visha includes animal toxins that exert their cumulative effect by means of their enzymatic activity or proteolytic activities that damage tissue integrity in a long run.

***Kritrima Visha* or concocted poison** has more importance in the present Scenario as we are exposed to a mixture of chemicals from multiple pathways. It is also called *Gara Visha* (Artificial poison) [A.H.U.35/4]. Combination or mixture of parts of the body and

excreta of different animals, incompatible drugs, ashes and poisonous substances of mild potency are known as *Gara Visha* [A.H.U.35/49].

Various sectors for this exposures are adulterization, Cosmetics, food additives, sweeteners, preservatives, Psychoactive drugs, Occupational poisoning, Toxicity by improper preparation of different *Bhasmas*. All these have the potential to produce toxicity. If such toxicity produced by *Garavisha* in the body is not properly expelled out and if remain inside the body for long time can be termed as *Dushivisha*.

Viruddh Ahara is incompatible combination of substances like diet, time, and processing etc. 18 types of *Viruddhaahara* is mentioned by Acharya Charaka results in decreased assimilation of products of digestion. *Virudhaharajanya Visha* has only mild potency and can be included in *Garavisha*.

Virudhahara (Incompatible food), *Adhyashana* (over eating) and *Ajirnahana* (taking food in indigestion) produce symptoms similar to that of *Visha*. [A.H.Su.8/13] Acharya Vagbhatta clarifies in the context of *Virudhaharas* that the ingestion of incompatible food produces toxicity and harmful effects on the body which on long run converts into *Dushivisha*. The diseases resulting from *Viruddhahara* as mentioned by Charaka have striking similarity with that of *Dooshivisha Lakshana* including skin diseases like *Visphota*, *Kushta* etc.

Ajeerna and Agnimandya - Almost all diseases are caused by impaired digestive capacity. *Viruddhahara* is one of the important causes for vitiation of *Agni*. This vitiated *Jatharagni* does not digest even the lightest of food substances resulting in indigestion (*Ajirna*). [Ch.Chi.15/44] *Aama* is a form of *Ajirna* predominant in *Kapha Dosh*. Importance of *Aama* in causing *Dushivisha* is that *Viruddhahara* and *Ajirna* will lead to a condition called '*Aama-Visha*' that is equivalent to poison. If the *Aama Visha* is of mild potency or subsided by immune response or partially neutralized by other factors, it gets lodged in the tissue and assumes the form of *Dusivisha*.

Natural urges like faeces, urine etc. are to be timely expelled from the body. Any delay in the clearance of

these bodily wastes will result in the accumulation of toxic contents present in them. Once these toxic products are absorbed it may manifest as functional disturbances in the body.

Social and environmental stressors can precipitate illness in vulnerable people. Their effect is modified by how they are perceived by the individual. Although some may be so severe that they precipitate illness in most people.

Modern concept of Allergy and its role in manifestation of Allergic skin diseases.

The word Allergy means hypersensitivity to a physical or chemical agent. It is defined as when an antigen, which is not harmful in itself, causes an immune response and reaction, which given rise to symptoms and disease in a few predisposed individuals only. The immune response/ Hypersensitivity reaction is classified into four distinct types. Generally, mechanism of type I hypersensitivity reaction or IgE mediated reaction is responsible for allergic skin diseases.

Various Allergens in Allergic skin diseases. Any substance that produces the manifestations of allergy is called allergen. It may be an antigen, protein or any other type of substance. Even physical agents can develop allergy. Following are the common types of allergen involving in manifestations of Allergic skin diseases.

Pathophysiology of Allergic skin diseases

When body is exposed to allergens, the IgE immunoglobins are produced; these immunoglobins bind with surface receptors of mast cells and circulating basophils where they do not harm until re-exposed to the same allergens. The mast cells are believed to be the major effector cell in Allergic skin reactions. In the skin, mast cells are located in the dermis and are distributed about blood vessels, lymphocytes, nerves and appendages.

During the subsequent exposure of the body to the same allergen, the allergen IgE antibody reaction takes place. This leads to degranulation of mast cells and basophils with the release of granules containing

histamines and some chemical mediators like cytokines, Prostaglandin D (PGD), leukotrienes C etc. 2 2 4 Histamine stimulates nerve endings, contracts smooth muscles and increase vascular permeability in the skin causes endothelial cell contraction that allows vascular fluid to leak between the cells through the vessel wall, contributing to tissue oedema, and wheal formation.

Allergic skin diseases and its symptoms

There are several types of allergic skin conditions. They are often itchy and red and may appear scaly, bumpy or swollen. Here some examples of skin Allergic conditions are given

Atopic Dermatitis (Eczema) - Symptoms includes, Dry, red and itchy skin, Rashes on the face, inside the elbows, behind the knees, and on the hands. It is more common in young infants and those who have a personal or family history of allergy.

Contact Dermatitis - Contact dermatitis is caused from skin contact with a substance that causes a rash-like reaction. People react to a variety of chemicals, including cosmetics, hair dye, metals, topical medications and dental materials. A contact dermatitis rash may look like atopic dermatitis, but the rash is typically located only in the area of contact with the offending chemical. Common locations include the face, especially the eyelids, neck, hands and feet.

Urticaria (Hives) - It is transient eruptions of circumscribed edematous and usually itchy swelling of the dermis. Red, itchy, raised areas of the skin that can range in size and appear anywhere on your body.

Angioedema (Swelling) - It is a swelling of the deeper layers of the skin that sometimes occurs with hives. Angioedema is usually not red or itchy. The areas often involved are the eyelids, lips, tongue, hands and feet.

Role of *Dushivisha* in Allergic skin diseases. The prime factors taking part in the pathogenesis of Allergic skin diseases are

Nija and Bahya (Agantuja) Gara Visha: Nija Gara Visha formed in the body by *Virudhahara* and *Agnimandya*. These causes (*Nidanas*), by interactions with intrinsic

factors produce toxicity of mild potency (endo allergens). Simultaneously body is exposed to *Bahya Gara Visha* in the form of different food preservatives and additives (food allergens), various drugs like NSAIDs, ACE inhibitors, penicillin (drug allergens), carbonated cold drinks etc. acts as exo allergens. All are on long term exposure converted into *Dushivisha*.

Dushivisha - According to *Acharya Charka*, *Dushivisha* on vitiation deranges *Rakta Dhatu* and produces various allergic skin manifestations, beyond this *Acharya Sushruta* mention that it produces respective *Dhatupradoshaja Vikara* in which it gets lodge. [Su.K.Cha.2/29] It means, when *Dushivisha* lodges in *Rakta Dhatu* it produces *Raktapradoshaja Vikar* on exposure to its provoking factors. Symptoms produced by *Dushivisha* when it gets vitiated such as *Mandal*, *Kotha*, *Vaivarnya*, various *Kushta Vikaras*, and many *Shonitadushti Vikara*.

Dushta Rakta (vitiating blood) - Improperly developed *Mamsa*, *Shonita* and *Asthi* are responsible for reduced *Vyadhikshamatva*. [Ch.Su.28/7]. The healthy condition of these three *Dhatu*s will naturally maintain equilibrium of the three *Dosha* as they have *Ashrayashrayibhava*. Vitiating *Rakta* produces derangement of *Pitta* and vice versa. Vitiating of *Raktadhatu* by *Dushivisha* is specifically emphasized *Acharya Charaka* resulting in various *Shonitaja Vikara* which has vital role in Allergic skin diseases.

Avyadhisahatva (Immune disorder) - The *Visha* has opposite qualities of *Ojas* and has special affinity towards *Ojas*. [A.H.U.35/8]. Hence *Dushivisha* on vitiation causes an altered immune response by producing symptoms of *Ojovypada*. As stated, earlier *Dushivisha* vitiate all the *Rasadi Dhatu*, vitiation of *Rasa Dhatu* due to *Dushivisha* when it exposed to its aggravating factors. This is occurred first as *Rasa* is the *Aadya Dhatu*. When *Dushivisha* vitiates *Rasadi Dhatu*, it ultimately vitiates its *Mala* also. Here *Prakrit Kapha* is the *Mala* of *Prakrit Rasa* which get vitiated due to *Dushivisha*. So that status of *Kapha*, *Rasa* and *Oja* depend on *Dushivisha*.

Excellence of *Malarupi Prakrit Kapha* and ultimately the *Oja (Prakrit Kapha)*, which brings excellence in the

Bala or *Vyadhikshamatva* all are depend on Excellence of *Rasa*.

DISCUSSION

Unwholesome diets and drugs with mutually contradictory characters with that of normal tissue elements initially produce toxicity in the blood. Conversion of *Viruddhahara* to *Gara Visha* and transformation of wholesome food to *Annavisha* due to *Agnimandya* and *Ajirna* acquires toxic potency which is of mild potency. The toxicity produced by this unwholesome diet vitiates *Rakta*. By the potency of *Visha* it reaches *Rakta* and with its properties it deranges *Rakta Dhatu*. Because of the insufficient strength of *Garavisha* or because of the *Vyadhikshamatva*, the toxicity might be partially neutralized or suppressed. The *Visha* of mild potency gets deposited in the *Rakta Dhatu* and assumes the form of *Dushivisha*. The suppressed toxin gets enveloped by *Kapha* and might remain latent. Potency of the *Dushivisha* aggravates in favorable conditions like *Abhisyandi* food, *Ajirna*, day sleep, *Dushit Anna*, *Dushit Desha*, *Dushit Kala* like *Pragwat*, cold etc. [A.H.U.35/37] [Su.K.Cha.2/33]

Acharya Dalhana explains that stressful and strainful activities also impart their effect or accentuates *Dushivisha* which is responsible for vitiation of *Kapha*, *Pitta* and *Rakta* and also the dysfunction of *Ojas (Avyadhisahatva)* producing various allergic skin diseases. When the potency of the toxin gets enfeebled, the *Visha* resolves back into the *Rakta Dhatu*. Again, in favorable conditions the symptoms of allergy resume. Correlating all these things with modern pathology of Allergic skin diseases we can say that, unwholesome substances have properties opposite to the tissues and also the basic components, cells. The unwholesome substances can be considered as antigens, which can react with the antibodies (*Dhatu*s). When an unwholesome substance reaches the blood, the resistance and the immune system act on them. The cytokines get activated and produce immunoglobins which in a healthy individual neutralize the antigens. In '*Avyadhisaha*' individuals, the IgE produced by the activation of cytokines (1L-5) instead

of neutralizing the antigens, gets sensitized and binds to the mast cells and basophils. They act as a mild toxin (enveloped by *Kapha*) or *Dushivisa*. They remain latent till next exposure to the antigen (unwholesome).

During the subsequent exposure of the body to the same allergen, the allergen IgE antibody reaction takes place. This leads to degranulation of mast cells and basophils with the release of granules containing histamines and some chemical mediators like cytokines, Prostaglandin D2 (PGD), leukotrienes C etc. Histamine 2 4 stimulates nerve endings, contracts smooth muscles and increase vascular permeability in the skin causes endothelial cell contraction that allows vascular fluid to leak between the cells through the vessel wall, producing symptoms of allergic skin diseases like tissue oedema, pruritic wheels (wheal and flare up reaction).

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it is clear that, prevalence of allergic skin diseases is very high. As we are exposed to various toxins daily, it is necessary to understand the role of *Visha* in pathology of various diseases. *Dushivisha* plays an important role in manifestations of allergic skin disease. So that treatment of *Dushivisha* likes *Vaman*, *Virechana*, administration of *Dushivishari Agada* and drugs having *Vishghna* as well as *Kushtghna* properties will helpful in defeating allergic skin diseases.

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