Role of Gandhak Rasayan in Kshudra Kushtha - A Review Article

Heena Kaushik¹, Brijender Singh Tomar², Satbir Kumar Chawla³

¹Post Graduate Scholar, 1st year, Dept. of Agada Tantra, Institute for Ayurved Studies & Research, Faculty of Ayurveda, Kurukshetra, Haryana, India.
²Professor, Dept. of Agada Tantra, Institute for Ayurved Studies & Research, Faculty of Ayurveda, Kurukshetra, Haryana, India.
³Associate Professor, Dept. of Agada Tantra, Institute for Ayurved Studies & Research, Faculty of Ayurveda, Kurukshetra, Haryana, India.

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an ancient medical science, which not only treats the diseases but it also emphasizing for a healthy life. Ayurveda’s main aim is to maintaining Dhatusamya of body. The person who follows the rules of Dinacharya, Ritucharya and Aahar Vihar able to live healthy life. But in today’s lifestyle it is difficult to follows these rules and due to sedentary changes in daily habits of diet, work etc. This continuous exposure to these factors various systemic changes are occurring in our body, these factors mainly vitiates Rakta Dhatu and in Kshudra Kushtha (Minor skin diseases) also the vitiation of Rakta Dhatu. There are two types of Kushtha, Maha Kushtha and Kshudra Kushtha. Mahakushtha is of eight types and Kshudra Kushtha is of eleven types. According to Ayurveda, Tvacha (skin) is a seat of Sparshanndriya. It carries the sensation of touch and it also covers the internal part of the body. Tvacha (skin) is ‘Panchbhaautik’ but out of them Vayumahabhuta is prominent one. Gandhak Rasayana is one of the oral medicines described for many skin diseases. Gandhak Rasayana mainly acts on skin, blood and it is Rasayan in action. So, it more or less acts on all Doshas and Dhatus.

Key words: Kshudrakushtha, Twakroga, Gandhak Rasayan, Rakta Dhatu.

INTRODUCTION

Skin is the largest organ of the body constituting the integumentary system, comprising of skin, hair and nails etc. It constitutes 16% of body weight. Skin has the total surface area varying 1.2 to 2.2 sq.m. It is a combined product of ectoderm as well as mesoderm. Kushtha (skin disorder or dermatosis) is a chronic disease which presents with ugly colors / complexion/ texture and altered tactile perceptions of the skin. Tvacha (skin) is a seat of Sparshanndriya. It carries the sensation of touch and it also covers the internal part of the body. Tvacha (skin) is ‘Panchbhaautik’ but out of them Vayumahabhuta is prominent one.¹

The word Kushtha is derived from Kushnati Vapuh meaning that “which alters complexion of body by extracting”. Kushtha is a compendium of various skin diseases, divided into two groups i.e., major (Maha Kushtha) and minor (Kshudra Kushtha). Seven types of major and eleven types of minor skin disorders. All the types of Kushtha are caused due to vitiation of Tridosha with involvement of skin, blood, lymph and muscular tissue. Skin is a sensory organ too, and is seat of Vata Dosha. In case of Kushtha vitiates vata in skin manifests as, horripilations, numbness, and loss of tactile perceptions.²

Skin is the sub-tissue or Upadhatus of Mamsa Dhatu, texture of skin depends upon muscle texture, so the
dermal deformities spread up to the Mamsa Dhatu or musculature and skin texture causing ugly shape of skin lesions.

**Etiology of Kshudra Kushtha**

Etihology of kushtha includes excessive intake of Vata after taking food, sleeping during day time, insulting peers like vomiting etc; exercising or coming in contact of excessive heat after eating excessive quantity of food. Indulging in habits such as, taking Ushna (hot) quality or either fasting followed by heavy meals. Having cold water and fear, eating uncooked or raw foods or having meals immediately after exposure to scorching sun, exertion and fear, eating uncooked or raw foods or having meals although previously taken meals have not been digested. Indulging in food and other habits which have been restricted during the phase of Panchakarma.

Consuming new grains, curds, fish, excessive salty and sour food items. Black grams, radish, food prepared from flour paste, sesame, milk and jaggery products. Indulging in sexual activity even if the food is not well digested (sexual intercourse immediately after taking food), sleeping during day time, insulting peers like Brahmin / Guru and other respected personal and doing sinful acts are the etiological and risk factors of Kushtha.\(^4\)

**Pathogenic factors of Kshudra Kushtha**

Pathogenic factors of Kushtha are doing sinful acts are the etiological and risk factors of Kushtha.\(^4\)

**Premonitory signs and symptoms**

Decreased touch sensation, excessive sweating or absence of sweating (which may be localized or generalized), change in color (discoloration), papules on skin, horripilation, pruritus, pricking pain, physical exhaustion, mental fatigue, severe pain in ulcerated area, sudden appearance and chronic the ulcers, burning sensation, numbness are the premonitory symptoms of skin disease.\(^5\)

**Types of Kshudra Kushtha**

Minor skin diseases are known as Kshudra Kushta. Kshudra Kushta can be classified into eleven and they are

1. **Eka Kushta** - Vitiation of Kapha-Dosha is the main factor behind Eka Kushta. Here the lesions are spread over an extended area of the skin.

2. **Kitibha** - The affected skin is very hard and rough in touch. The predominance of Vata and Kapha are the reasons for Kitibha disease. Here one can find blackish-brown discolouration of the skin.

3. **Charmkayam** - Here the skin looks like the skin of an elephant. Also, the skin would be very rough in touch. An increase in the Vata and Kapha Doshas causes Charmkayam. The infection spreads in a vast area.

4. **Dadru Mandala** - Redness and intense itching sensations are the main symptoms of Dadru Mandala. Pitta and Kapha predominance is the main reason for Dadru Mandala Kushta.

5. **Vipadika** - An increase in Vata and Kapho dosha leads to Vipadika. Cracks in the palm and severe pain are the symptoms of Vipadika.
6. **Vicharchika - Kapha Dosha** predominance causes **Vicharchika**. Here the symptoms are itching sensations and blackish-brown eruptions.

7. **Shataru - Redness** around the skin with multiple lesions is the major symptom of **Shataru**. **Pitta** and **Kapha** predominance leads to **Shataru**. Severe pain is the main symptom of **Shataru**.

8. **Sphota - Here one can find white colour skin around the lesion and the skin over the lesion would be thin. Pitta and Kapha Dosha predominance leads to Sphota.**

9. **Pama - Intense itching** of the affected skin is the main symptom of **Pama**. **Pitta** and **Kapha** predominance cause **Pama Kushta**. Here the eruptions look white, yellowish, red, and blackish-brown in colour.

10. **Charmadala - Here the symptoms are itching, severe pain, boils, redness around the skin, cracks on the skin, etc. An imbalance of Pitta and Kapha causes Charmadala.**

11. **Alasaka - Major symptoms of Alasaka are itching, redness around the skin, boils, etc. Vata and Kapha Doshas cause Alasaka.**

**Composition of Gandhak Rasayan[^6]**

**Sudha Gandhak** (purified Sulphur), **Twak** (Cinnnamomum zeylanicum), **Ela** (Cardamom), **Patra** (Cinnnamomum tamala), **Nagkeshara** (Mesua ferrea), **Haritaki** (Terminalia chebula), **Amalaka** (Emblica officinalis), **Vibhitaki** (Terminalia bellerica), **Shunthi** (Gingerber officinalis), **Bhrigarea** (Eclipta alba), **Sita Mishri**.

**Dose -** 4 to 8 Rati Morning and Evening with water.

**Mechanism of action of Gandhak Rasayan**

It mainly acts on skin, blood and it is **Rasayana in action.** So, it more or less acts on all **Doshas** and **Dhatus**. Gandhak is **Ushna Veeryatmaka** and Katu Rasa Vipaki so acts as best Kaphghna and Kledaghna. Gandhak Rasayan helps to destroy the **Sampnapti** (pathogenesis) of **Kshudra Kushta** due to its **Ushnaveerya and Katukashay Rasa.**

**Uses of Gandhak Rasayan**

It is used in **Kushta**, Blood related skin disorders, **Dhaatukshay, Premeh, Mandaagni** (poor digestion) and **Udarshool** (pain abdomen) etc.[^7]

**Gandhak Rasayana Vati** (tablet) exhibited good clinical improvement in term of relieving individual symptoms as well as reducing severity of disease. **Daha, Kandu, Ruja and Sparshaasahatva** were significantly reduced. Also, significant relief in **Tvak-Vaivarnyata** was observed. Thus, **Gandhak Rasayan** is very effective in **Shushka Vicharchika.**[^8]

**Gandhak Rasayan** appears to affect fibroblast activation and modulate the expression of proteins involved in tissue remodeling. Conditioned media from both the fibroblast cell lines facilitated gap closure in A549 cell layer.[^9]

**Gandhak Rasayan** is polyherbal drug which is **Rakta Shodhak** (blood purifier), **Kandughana** and **Rasayan** mainly indicated in **Kushtha Rog**. It is prepared by giving 12 Bhanwans to **Kwatha of Chaturjata, Trithala, Shunthi**, and with **Swaras** (juice) of **Guduchi, Bhringraja, Adraka** with pure **Gandhak**. It has antifungal and antibacterial properties. Thus, it reduces the infection. It reduces features of **Raag** (redness), **Pidika** (eruption) with **Rakta Shodhak** (blood purifier) and **Kushthaghana** properties.[^10][^11]

**Gandhak Rasayan** along with **Karpoo** mix **Nimba Taja** was effective in the treatment of **Dadru** (Tinea corporis) without any adverse drug reaction.[^12]

The formulation **Gandhak Rasayana** has multiple pharmaco-therapeutic properties. Among the **Tvavikara** property of **Gandhak Rasayana** was highlighted in **Basavarajeeyam.** Other than **Tvavikara** it is indicated in **Valipalita, Jara**, 18 Types of **Kushta**, 20 Types **Prameha, Mutrakruchra, Gandamala, Gudhakeela, Bhagandhara, Rajodosha, Haleemaka** important indication of **Gandhak Rasayan** is **Rasayan.**[^13]

By reviewing Yog Ratnakar and different articles it is found that **Gandhak Rasayan** can be used in various **Tvachovikar** with excellent results. Other study was done for screening of antibacterial and antifungal activity of **Gandhak Rasayan.** Its invitro antifungal and antibacterial activity was studied by cup plate method. It was found that **Gandhak Rasayan** solution in
different concentrations showed a significant zone of inhibition against three strains of bacteria and four strains of fungi.\[14]\]

According to *Brihat Yoga Tarangini* explained about *Gandhak Rasayana Aja Ksheera*, *Ikshu Danda Rasa*, *Guduchi*, *Madhu*, *Goksheera*, *Varahikandha*, *Yastimadhu*, *Kushta*, *Lavanga*, *Tulasi*, *Pippali*, *Pippalimula*, *Nagakesara*, *Triphala*, *Padmakabeeja* along with *Bhavana Dravya Bringaraja Swarasa* with *Sarkara* and *Madhu* indicated with *Valipalita*, *Jara*, 18 Types of *Kushtha*, 20 Types *Prameha*, *Mutrakruchra*, *Gandamala*, *Gudhakeela*, *Bhagandhara*, *Rajadosha*, *Haleemaka*.\[15\]

**DISCUSSION**

The use of herbal medicine in wound care has been very encouraging and several researchers around the globe have started to publish their results. *Gandhaka Rasayana* is one such preparation which finds use in wound repair. Sulfur is the major component of *Gandhaka Rasayana* and is known to be insoluble in the inert organic solvents which are employed as extractants in laboratories. Serum albumin is known to act as a carrier of many insoluble non-polar components. Complexation of albumin with sulfur has been reported by Jarabak and Westley.\[16\] *Gandhak Rasayana Vati* seems to be an effective in treatment of *Shushka Vicharchika*. It is *Kaphapradhan Vyadhi*, *Raktadushti* and *Agnimandya* is also observed. *Gandhk Rasayana Vati* with *Anupana* enters to all *Sukshma Strotasas* and acts on *Dosa*, *Dhatu* and *Mala*. Different *Bhavanadravyas* in *Gandhak Rasayan* acts as bactericidal and thus causes blood purification. From this *Bhavanadravyas Guduchi*, *Bhringaraj*, *Dolchini*, *Tamalpatra*, *Nagkeshar*, *Haritaki*, *Sunthi*, *Bibhitak* has properties of *Katukashay Rasa* and *Ushnavirya*. Thus, it does *Dipana*, *Pachana* and acts as *Kaphaghna Kledaghn*. In this way, *Gandhak Rasayana Vati* acts as *Agnideepak*, *Pachak*, *Kaphaghna*, *Kledaghn*, *Raktaprasadak*, *Krimighna*, *Kushtaghna* and thus helps to cure disease. According to *Brihat Yoga Tarangini* explained about *Gandhak Rasayana Aja Ksheera*, *Ikshu Danda Rasa*, *Guduchi*, *Madhu*, *Goksheera*, *Varahikandha*, *Yastimadhu*, *Kushta*, *Lavanga*, *Tulasi*, *Pippali*, *Pippalimula*, *Nagakesara*, *Triphala*, *Padmakabeeja* along with *Bhavana Dravya Bringaraja Swarasa* with *Sarkara* and *Madhu* indicated with *Valipalita*, *Jara*, 18 Types of *Kushtha*, 20 Types *Prameha*, *Mutrakruchra*, *Gandamala*, *Gudhakeela*, *Bhagandhara*, *Rajadosha*, *Haleemaka*.\[15\]

**CONCLUSION**

The results indicate the possible mechanism of *Gandhaka Rasayana* by fibroblast activation and by modulation of the proteins involved in tissue remodeling. *Gandhak Rasayana Vati* exhibited good clinical improvement in term of relieving individual symptoms as well as reducing severity of disease. *Daha*, *Kandu*, *Ruja* and *Spardhaasahatva* were significantly reduced. Also, significant relief in *Tvak-Vaivarnyata* was observed. Thus, *Gandhak Rasayana* is very effective in *Shushka Vicharchika*. The formulation *Gandhak Rasayana* has multiple pharmaco-therapeutic properties. Among the *Tvakkara* property of *Gandhak Rasayana* was highlighted in *Basavarajeevam*. *Gandhak Rasayana* can be used in many diseases and due to its different therapeutic actions, it is an important formulation mentioned in classics.

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Source of Support: Nil, Conflict of Interest: None declared.