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Role of *Kleda* in *Kushta* (Skin Diseases) - A Review Article

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ABSTRACT

The human body's outermost layer skin, shields interior organs and tissues. Skin disorders account for 1.79% of the world's total illness burden.^[1] The majority of the time, skin disorders are the external manifestations of underlying systemic disorders. Modern dermatological treatment strives to relieve symptoms and achieve a long-lasting remission, but Ayurveda seeks to cure patients completely by identifying and treating the underlying causes of their skin disorders. In Ayurveda, skin conditions fall mostly under the category of *Kushta*. The seven important components that Ayurveda believes are involved in the pathophysiology of *Kushta* are referred to as *Saptako Dravyasangraha*. It consists of *Tridosha*, *Tvak*, *Mamsa*, *Rakta* and *Ambu/Lasika* (body fluids).^[2] The *Ambu* described here is likewise a *Kleda*, signifying *Ap Mahabhuta* in the body.^[3] The goal of the current work is to emphasize *Kleda*'s function in *Kushta* and how treating *Kleda* can aid in the treatment of skin conditions.

Key words: *Kleda*, *Kushta*, *Skin-diseases*, *Leprosy*, *Body fluids*

INTRODUCTION

Skin is a window into the inner workings of the body. This proverb is accurate and has great significance. Every day, skin conditions are growing more prevalent. Most skin conditions don't pose a serious threat to life, but they can have a negative impact on mental and overall well-being. Skin conditions are primarily classified as *Kushta* in Ayurveda. The term *Kushta* refers to *Kushnati Tadvapu*, or the condition that causes abnormal skin tone.^[4] The word *Kushta*'s origin comes from the root word *Kush*, which signifies

something that emerges from inside. Pathogenesis of *Kushta* has seven important elements. They are *Lasika/Ambu*, *Mamsa*, *Shonita*, *Tvak*, and *Tridosha*. *Ap* is one of the Five Elements of Nature, according to the *Panchamahabhuta* doctrine of *Ayurveda*.^[5] In the pathophysiology of *Kushta*, *Lasika/Ambu* is mentioned as a representation of the *Ap Mahabhoota* in the body, or *Kleda*. The root word *Klid*, which meaning to wet, is where *Kleda* gets its name. The typical function of *Kledana* is performed by *Udaka* (water), and because of its *Drava Mridu Snigdha* qualities, it causes compact materials to soften and loosen.^[6] Thus, terms that are synonymous with *Kleda* include *Udaka*, *Ambu*, *Lasika*, and *Soumyadhatu*. In a healthy person, *Kleda* is found in all seven *Sharira Dhatus*^[7] and is essential for maintaining bodily elements in the proper consistency and hydration to support daily activities. In our scriptures, the term *Kleda* is discussed in relation to *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala*, and the pathophysiology of several ailments, including *Prameha* and *Kushta*. Therefore, an attempt is made in the present work to both understand and defend *Kleda*'s role in the *Kushta* manifestation and treatment as it is described in our classical writings.

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AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To establish the fact about role of *Kleda* in pathogenesis of *Kushta* (Skin diseases).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Information about *Kleda* and *Kushta* (skin illnesses) is gathered from websites, Ayurvedic text books, contemporary text books, and index medical journals.

DISCUSSION

Kleda in relation with mythological origin of *Kushta*

The author of *Charaka Samhita*, in *Nidana Sthana*, identified a single causative factor for each disease while recounting the mythical beginnings of illnesses during *Daksha Yajna*. This suggests that the causative factor's characteristics are crucial for the disease's manifestation. *Prameha* and *Kushta* are thought to have resulted from people taking *Havis* after *Daksha Yajna* ended.^[8] *Havis* is the oblation for the gods made of rice, milk, ghee, jaggery, etc. *Ishvara Samhita* describes *Havis* as an offering to the gods made of rice, milk, ghee, jaggery, etc.^[9] All of these ingredients are naturally occurring forms of *Kledakaraka* and *Santarpaka* food.^[10] This implies that diet and lifestyle choices that raise *Kleda* are crucial to the manifestation of *Kushta*.

Kleda in relation with etiological factors of *Kushta*

Ayurvedic scriptures typically list *Kledakaraka* variables as etiological factors for disease *Kushta*, either because of their direct vitiating effect on *Kleda* or because of their vitiating effects on *Rasa* and *Rakta*, as explained in the *Vidhishoniteeya Adhyaya* of the *Charaka Samhita*. *Kleda* have a tight relationship with *Rasa* and *Rakta*. Because *Tvak* is *Rasa's* reflector and expresses the quality of *Rasa* within, *Rasa Sara Purusha* is evaluated by looking at a person's skin. When *Pitta* is vitiating, the body produces *Kleda*, and *Kleda* is said to be the primary cause of ailments brought on by *Rakta*.^[11] In *Ashraya Ashrayee Bhava* with *Rakta*, *Pitta* exists.^[12] *Kushta* refers to *Raktadhatupradoshaja Vikara*,^[13] which are blood-related disorders. *Kleda* is described by *Vridha Vagbhata* as the low viscosity (*Tanu*), the foul-smelling (*Durgandha*), and the

discolored (*Krishna*) parts of *Rakta*.^[14] Thus, in order to reach other *Dhatus*, *Kleda* travels through *Rasa* and *Rakta*, and *Kleda's* vitiating always has a significant effect on *Rasa* and *Rakta Dhatus*, as well as the other way around.

Table 1: Relation of *Kleda* with etiological factors of *Kushta*

<i>Nidana</i>	Relation with <i>Kleda</i> ^[15]
<i>Atilavana</i> (excess salt)	Increases <i>Kleda</i> , <i>Vishyandana</i> (oozing) vitiates <i>Rakta</i>
<i>Ati Amla</i> (excess sour)	Vitiates <i>Rakta</i> , <i>Shithileekarana</i> of body (loosening of body)
<i>Viruddhahara</i> (incompatible food)	Vitiates <i>Rakta</i> .
<i>Guru Anna Pana</i> (heavy food)	Vitiates <i>Raktavaha Srotas</i>
<i>Snighda Anna Pana</i> (unctuous food)	Vitiates <i>Rasa</i> and <i>Raktavaha Srotas</i>
<i>Drava Anna Pana</i> (fluids)	Increases <i>Kleda</i> , Vitiates <i>Raktavaha Srotas</i> , Vitiates <i>Udakavaha Srotas</i> , Vitiates <i>Rakta</i>
Excess intake of <i>Sneha</i> (excess fats)	Increases <i>Kleda</i>
<i>Nava Anna</i> (Newly harvested grains)	Increases <i>Kleda</i>
<i>Mithyahara, Ahitashana</i> (improper intake of food)	Vitiating of <i>Rakta</i>
<i>Asathmya Ahara</i> (unwholesome food)	Vitiates <i>Rasa</i> and <i>Raktavaha Srotas</i>
<i>Ajeernashana, Adhyashana</i> (especially intake of honey, <i>Phanita</i> , Fish, Radish when previous food is not digested)	Vitiates <i>Rasa</i> and <i>Rakta</i>
<i>Sheethoshna Vyathyasa</i> without proper <i>Krama</i> (sudden transition from hot and cold environment)	Vitiates <i>Swedavaha Srotas</i> and Vitiates <i>Rakta</i>

Gramya Audaka Anupa Mamsa (meat of aquatic and marshy land)	Vitiates Rakta
Curd/Yogurt, Fish, Milk, Jaggery	Increases Kleda
Raddish, Blackgram, Pishanna (grained food), Sesame seeds	Vitiates Rakta
Holding on urge of Vomiting	Vitiates Rakta
Day sleeping	Vitiates Rasa and Rakta
Panchakarma Apachara (Improper cleansing through Panchakarma)	Deposit vitiated Doshas in Rasa Rakta Dhatu.

Kleda in relation with Kushta Adhishtana

The Adhishtana for the disease Kushta is Tvak, or skin. Tvak is Rasa's seat and embodies the essence of Rasa.^[16] Therefore, in situations such as Ashtasara Lakshana, Dhatugata Kushta, etc. the term Rasa is typically substituted with Tvak.^[17] The Ap Mahabhuta entities are transported by Rasa within the body.^[18] Thus, the quality of Kleda in relation to Rasa quality is crucial for maintaining skin health.

Kleda in relation with Tridosha

Table 2: Kleda in relation with Tridosha

Dosha	Properties of Dosha [19]	Relation with Kleda	Symptoms seen in Kushta [20]
Vata	Ruksha, Laghu, Vishada	Vata has property of drying up of excess Kleda.	Dry, rough lesions with minimal or no secretions.
Pitta	Drava, Sara, Snigdha	Function of Kledasruti (secretion and flow of Kleda)	Inflammatory changes and signs of suppuration and secretions are seen.
Kapha	Shita, Snigdha, Picchila	Kapha and Kleda shares similar properties as both Kapha and Kleda has	Excessive Kleda, thick secretions are seen externally with severe itching. May

		predominance of Jala Mahabhuta.	also be associated with maggots
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Because it participates in the Kledana function, a particular kind of Kapha is called Kledaka Kapha in honor of Kleda.^[21] Therefore, Pitta and Kapha Doshas are more likely to vitiate Kleda than Vata.

Kleda in relation with different types of Kushta

18 types of Kushta are classified into 7 Mahakushta and 11 Kshudrakushta.

Table 3: Kleda in relation with different types of Mahakushta

Symptom	Mahakushta [22]
Bahalasika, Bahalasrava (Excessive secretions)	Udumbara, Mandala, Pundarika
Kleda/ Bahukleda (Excessive Kleda)	Udumbara, Mandala
Picchila Srava (Thick discharge)	Mandala
Paka (Inflammation and suppuration)	Udumbara, Pundarika
Bahukrimi, Sakrimi (infection / maggot formation)	Mandala, Udumbara, Pundarika
Bahupuya (Pus formation)	Udumbara, Pundarika

Table 4: Kleda in relation with different types of Kshudrakushta

Symptom	Kshudrakushta [23]
Kledadhya (Excess Kleda)	Shataru
Kleda	Pama
Bahusrava, Lasikadhya	Vicharchika

Kleda in relation with Dhatugata Kushta

Table 4: Kleda in relation with Dhatugata Kushta

Dhatu	Symptoms seen in Dhatugata Kushta [24]
Rasa	Here, excessive Kledavastha is causing Sweda, or excessive sweating. Sweda disposes of extra Kleda since it is part of its responsibility to retain the proper amount of Kleda.
Rakta	excess Sweda, Vipuyaka (pus formation)

Mamsa	excessive Kleda in joints
Meda	Dourgandhya (foul odour), Puya (pus), Krimi (formation of maggots) and loosing of body parts
Asthi	Krimi and Nasabhanga (depressed nasal bridge)
Majja	Asthi and Majja shows same symptoms.
Shukra	Anganam Sambhedha (break down of body parts) are seen due to excess Kleda.

When discussing the meaning and etiopathology of Kushta, Acharya Vagbhata states that Dhatu is vitiated by Kleda one after the other, as time passes.^[25] There is fluid in every live cell in the body. Kleda/Udaka is an integral, flowing component of all Dhatus, according to Acharya Charaka.^[26]

Kleda in relation with Sweda in Kushta

Sweda is the most involved with Kushta among the three Mala. It aids in maintaining fluid homeostasis by assisting the body in retaining the necessary quantity of Kleda and excreting the excess as sweat.^[27] Both prodromal symptoms of Kushta and Swedavaha Sroto Dushti indicate similar symptoms.^[28] This suggests a close relationship between the body's Kleda imbalance and Kushta Vyadhi.

Table 5: Common symptoms of Swedavaha Sroto Dushti and Purvarupa of Kushta

Symptoms	Swedavaha Sroto Dushti	Purvarupa of Kushta
Asweda (no sweating)	✓	✓
Atisweda (excessive sweating)	✓	✓
Parushya (dryness)	✓	✓
Paridaha (burning sensation)	✓	✓
Lomaharsha (horripilation)	✓	✓
Atishlakshna (Excess smooth skin)	✓	✓

Stages of Kleda in Kushta

When vitiated, Kleda often exhibits an unexpected rise in amount. Kleda and Vishyandi (the Srotas coating and

blocking property) are complementary.^[29] Unless there is no exposure to Vishyandi variables, there is no growth in Kleda. Many Vishyandi Ahara are considered as cause of Kushta. Depending on how severe the Kleda is engaged, we can divide the Kleda Avastha into three stages.

1. Mild Kleda / Anabhishtyandi Avastha
2. Moderate Kleda / Alpa Abhishtyandi Avastha
3. Severe Kleda / Maha Abhishtyandi Avastha

Table 5: Stages of Kleda in Kushta

Stages of Kleda in Kushta	Samprapti	Symptoms
Mild Kleda / Anabhishtyandi Avastha	According to Dalhana, the phrase Anabhishtyandi in this context refers to very little Kleda rather than Kleda's absence. ^[30]	Dry lesions are signs of conditions here. Or the patient may not have any outward lesions yet still be experiencing symptoms like Supti (numbness) and Kandu (itching).
Moderate Kleda / Alpa Abhishtyandi Avastha	Dosha Dhatu Mala and Srotas are affected by moderately vitiated Kleda	Where there are external skin lesions like Vicharchika, Vipadika, Dadru with or without secretions.
Severe Kleda / Maha Abhishtyandi Avastha	Here all Dosha Dhatu Mala and Srotas are affected by highly vitiated Kleda	Here symptoms like severe oozing, necrosis, gangrene, maggots are seen due to excess Kleda.

Kleda in relation with complications of Kushta

Patients with Kushta get persistent wounds or lesions as a result of having an excess of Kleda in their bodies.^[31] Therefore, in order to avoid Kushta Upadrava, Kleda should be treated.

Kleda in management of Kushta

The therapeutic process known as Shodhana involves thoroughly cleaning Kleda, or bodily fluids, in order to prepare them for expulsion.^[32] The primary course of treatment for Kushta is repeated Shodhana.^[33] This is

meant to purge *Kleda* since it is the source and the means by which *Kushta* originates and spreads.

Shamanoushadis (palliative medicines) are also crucial to the management of *Kushta*. Most *Shamanoushadis* contain *Tikta* (bitter) herbs, such as *Nimba*, *Patola*, *Katuki*, and others. Medicinal preparations such as *Panchatikta Ghrita*, *Mahatikta Ghrita*, and *Tiktaka Ghrita* are recommended in *Kushta*. This is due to the fact that *Tikta Rasa* is *Kushtahara* (alleviates *Kushta*) since it purges and purifies polluted *Kleda*.^[34] Certain medicinal herbs such as *Nimba*, *Patola*, *Haridra*, *Khadira*, are primarily *Kapha-Pittahara* in nature. The primary function of *Kapha-Pittahara* medicines is to cleanse *Kleda*.

Light foods like *Puranadhanya* (aged grains), *Mudhga* (green gram), *Jangala Mamsa* (flesh of animals that live in dry land), and *Tikta Shakas* (bitter vegetables) are part of a *Pathya* (advisable diet) in patient's of *Kushta* because they aid to repair *Kleda*.^[35]

CONCLUSION

Kleda is a crucial but little-known Ayurvedic principle. In addition to hydrating bodily components and supporting regular physiological functions, *Prakruta Kleda* aids in the proper operation of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala*, *Agni*, and other bodily systems. When it crosses its threshold and becomes vitiated, it disrupts normal physiology and produces disorders like *Prameha* and *Kushta*. Every component of the illness, from *Utpatti* to the *Chikitsa* stage, mentions *Kleda's* association with *Kushta*. In order to properly treat *Kushta* by correcting *Kleda*, it is necessary to evaluate the degree of body fluid involvement, the stages of *Kleda* involvement, and the degree to which *Dhatu*s is impacted by *Kleda*, during the diagnosis process.

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