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A Review on *Lepa Kalpana* for Skin Diseases: Inherent Topical Formulations described In *Charaka Samhita*

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ABSTRACT

Skin is the most exposed and the largest organ of the body, serving as a barrier of defense. Its pathology needs to be treated through all possible ways. *Acharya Charaka* has classified *Chikitsa* into *Antahparimarjan* and *Bahirparimarjana*. The later one uses the topical application of various *Dravya* which helps to get rid of symptoms such as *Shoola*, *Vaivarnya*, *Shotha*, *Strava*, *Kandu* etc. The *Charaka Samhita* being the most ancient and prominent *Bruhatrayi* text of *Chikitsa* has already given number of *Lepa* formulations. Among these, 58 *Lepa* are indicated in skin diseases. Besides the tiding process of making them these preparations has an excellent immediate result. Here an attempt is made to cover all the preparations mentioned by *Charaka Acharya* for skin diseases to have an overlook on.

Key words: *Lepa Kalpana*, *Skin Diseases*, *Topical Formulations*, *Topical Application*

INTRODUCTION

Acharya Charaka has illustrated various skin pathologies under *Kushta* and *Visarpa Chikitsa Adhyaya*. Skin diseases vary greatly in signs, symptoms and severity; they can be infectious or not; can be painless or painful; can have only situational cause or the genetic or autoimmune one; they can be a temporary or permanent one. With all these diversities, the major issues of concern in patient are the disfigurement, disability and symptoms such as intense itch, burning, discharge, non-healing wounds, and recurrence of symptoms and chronicity of certain conditions. They may be either solitary one or shows

the systemic involvement. Majority of the skin diseases are mentioned and classified under *Kushta* and *Visarpa Chikitsa* in *Charaka Samhita* on the basis of the involvement of *Dosha*, *Dushya* and *Adhishthana*. Treatment of certain skin diseases become laborious because of involvement of *Saptadhatu Sangraha* (*Twak*, *Rakta*, *Mansa*, *Lasika* and all three *Doshas* i.e., *Vaat*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*.) It involves both *Shodhana* and *Shamana Chikitsa*. With this *Chikitsa Sutra*, certain local application also gives excellent results in minor skin conditions and also relieves the symptoms in severe skin pathologies and restores the disfigurement (*Varnyaprasadan Karma*) and helps in wound healing (*Vranaropan Karma*). While assigning the treatment of various skin diseases, most of time *Lepa* preparations are taken into consideration

In classics, the *Chikitsa* is classified into *Antaparimarjan* and *Bahiparimarjan Chikitsa*. The later one is the local application of medicines in various forms. *Lepa* is one of them. Application of drugs in the paste form over the concerned body part is widely acceptable method of *Lepa* preparation.

Acharya Charaka has mentioned different combinations at the starting of text in *Bheshaj Chatushka*. He gave different kinds of *Lepa* preparations in various conditions e.g. *Kustha*. *Vaatvyadhi*, *Shirashool* in *Argwadhiya Adhyaya* of

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Sutra Sthana. These number of combinations in *Kushta* and *Visarpa Chikitsa Adhyaya* of *Chikitsasthan*, increased up to fifty eight. Some *Lepa* preparation have only herbal drugs, some have mineral or metallic drugs while some have animal by products in it. Use of different medias as the base of *Lepa* while preparation increases its efficacy. In *Visarpa Chikitsa Charaka* has mentioned the method of preparation, utility, duration, thickness, operating procedure for *Lepa*.^[1] While applying the combination of drugs, every time *Charaka* has given the measures for its application for that particular *Lepa*. In *Charak Kushta Chikitsa Charaka* mentioned to use these *Lepa* formulations after achieving the proper *Shodhana* of *Rugna*.^[2] To see the efficacy of these formulations an attempt is made to collect the topical applications from *Charak Samhita* in skin diseases.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Acharya Charaka has not mentioned the exact classification of *Lepa* as *Acharya Sharangadhara* and *Acharya Sushruta* did in their texts. Rather than this *Charaka* every time mentioned the way of its application in various forms while their application. In *Charaka Visarpa Chikitsa Adhyaya Acharya* gave following rules for *Lepa* applications.

Method of preparation

Kalka Peshita Aushadi Dravya (paste form) should be applied with the width of $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ of thumb width.

Mode of Application

1. Overapplication of *Lepa* one over other should be avoided before the previous one gets absorbed fully.
2. Immediate application of second *Lepa* as soon as the previous one started to dry down (don't let the *Lepa* dry completely).

OBSERVATION

SN	Name of Lepa	Reference	Ingredients	Bhawana/Liquid Media/Base	Phalashruti
1.	<i>Kushtanashak Lepa- 6</i>	<i>Ch.Su.2/3-7</i>	<i>Aragawadha + Chakramara + Karanja + Vasa + Madanfjal + Haridra + DaruHaridra</i>	<i>Gopitta</i> (After Application of <i>Sarhapa Tail</i>)	1. <i>Kruchhrasadhya Kushta</i> 2. <i>Navkilas</i> 3. <i>Kitibha</i> 4. <i>Dadru</i>

3. For *Vaataj, Pittaj* and *Raktaj Visarpa - Aghana Lepa* (Thin) should be applied.
4. For *Kaphaj Visarpa - Ghana Lepa* (Thick) should be applied.
5. Width of *Lepa - Tribhaga-Angushta-Matra*.
6. *Lepa* should not be *Atisnigdha* or *Atiruksha* (too oily or too dry) also should not be in very *Pinda* or *Drava* form (too much liquid or solid in consistency)
7. Stale *Lepa* is not indicated in any conditions.

Probable mode of action

Ayurveda therapy suggests that *Lepa*, that is, the topical formulations should be gently rubbed in an upward or reverse direction of the hairs over the skin to make the action of application quick and more effective.^[3] Due to this, the drug enters into the pores at the root of the hair through which the drug gets absorbed in the capillary network to minor veins and then further into systemic blood circulation. This ultimately results in the absorption of medicament and desired effects. This method of rubbing increases the skin temperature, which might be speeding up the pilosebaceous uptake and skin permeation of the drug as heat causes dilation of the capillary end. According to our classical texts, *Twak* is *Stana* of *Bhrajak Pitta* responsible for skin integrity and texture. *Tiryag Dhamanis* are spread like a mesh all over the skin and number of *Romkupas* originates through this becomes the mediator of drug absorption for this route. *Rassar* is *Twaksaar*^[4] according to *Charaka* and *Vishudhha Rakta* also plays an important role in *Varnyaprasadan*.^[5] Through these *Romkupa* the sweat moves out and at the same time *Ras Rakta dhatu* reaches the *Romkupa* to nourish them.^[6]

					5.Bhagandar 6.Apachi 7.Pama
2.			<i>Shravhya (Gandhaviroja) + Surahya (Devdaru) + Khadir + Dhav + Nimba + Vidang + Karvirtwak</i>	<i>Gopitta</i> (Applied after application of <i>Sarshapa Tail</i>)	1.Kruchhrasadhya Kushta 2.Nav Kilas 3.Kitibha 4.Dadru 5.Bhagandar 6.Apachi 7.Pama
3.	<i>Gojivhadi Lepa</i>		<i>Granthischmaujo (Bhurjapatra) + Rason + Shirish + Salomasho (Jatamansi) + Guggulkrushnagandhe</i>	<i>Gopitta</i> (Applied after application of <i>Sarshapa Tail</i>)	1.Kruchhrasadhya Kushta 2.Nav Kilas 3.Kitibha 4.Dadru 5.Bhagandar 6.Apachi 7.Pama
4.			<i>Faninhako + Vatsak + Saptaparna + Pilu + Koshta + Suman Praval</i>	<i>Gopitta</i> (Applied after application of <i>Sarshapa Tail</i>)	1.Kruchhrasadhya Kushta 2.Nav Kilas 3.Kitibha 4.Dadru 5.Bhagandar 6.Apachi 7.Pama
5.	<i>Vachadi Lepa</i>		<i>Vacha + Harenu + Trivrutta + Nikumbha + Bhallataka + Gairika + Anjana</i>	<i>Gopitta</i> (Applied after application of <i>Sarshapa Tail</i>)	1.Kruchhrasadhya Kushta 2.Nav Kilas 3.Kitibha 4.Dadru 5.Bhagandar6.Apachi 7.Pama
6.	<i>Manshiladi Lepa</i>		<i>Manshila + Hartal + Gruhadhuma + Ela + Kasis + Lodhra + Arjuna + Musta + Sarja</i>	<i>Gopitta</i> (Applied after application of <i>Sarshapa Tail</i>)	1.Kruchhrasadhya Kushta 2.Nav Kilas3.Kitibha 4.Dadru 5.Bhagandar 6.Apachi 7.Pama
7.	<i>Kushtadi Lepa</i>	<i>Ch.Su.3/8</i>	<i>Kushta + Haridra + Daruharidra + Surasa + Patol + Nimba + Ashwagandha + Surdaru + Tumaru + Shigru + Dhanyak + Vanya + Chanda (Chorpushpi)</i>	<i>Takra</i> (After <i>Sarshapa Tail Application</i>)	1.Kandu 2.Pidka 3.Kotha 4.Kushta 5.Shof

8.	<i>Kushtadi Churna</i>	<i>Ch.Su.3/10</i>	<i>Kushta + Amruta + Morchuda + Daruhaldi + Kasis + Kampillak + Musta + Lodhra + Saugandhik + Sarjaras + Vidanga + Manshila + Karvirtwak + Hartal</i>		1.Dadru 2.Kandu 3.Kitibha 4.Pama 5.Vicharchika
9.	<i>Manshiladi Lepa</i>	<i>Ch.Su.3/12</i>	<i>Manahshila + Hartal + Marich + Tail + Arka</i>	<i>Tail</i>	<i>Kushtahar Yoga</i>
10.	<i>Tuthadi Lepa</i>	<i>Ch.Su.3/12</i>	<i>Morchuda + Vavding + Maricha + Kushta + Lodhra + Manashila</i>		<i>Kushtahar Yoga</i>
11.	<i>Rasanjanadi Lepa</i>	<i>Ch.Su.3/13</i>	<i>Rasanjan + Chakramard Beej</i>	<i>Kapithha Ras</i>	<i>Kushtahar Yoga</i>
12.	<i>Karanjadi Lepa</i>	<i>Ch.Su.3/13</i>	<i>Karanjabeej + Chakramarda Beej + Koshta Churna</i>	<i>Gomutra Pishta</i>	<i>Kushtahar Yoga</i>
13.	<i>Haridradi Lepa</i>		<i>Haridra + Daruharidra + Kutajabeej + Suman Praval + Hamarakasya + Til Kshar</i>	<i>Gomutra</i>	<i>Kushtahar Yoga</i>
14.	<i>Manshiladi Lepa</i>	<i>Ch.Su.3/15</i>	<i>Manshila + Kutaj twak + Kushta + Kasis + Chakramarda + Karanja + Bhurja Granthi + Karvirmool + Tushodak (Kanji) + Palash Swaras</i>	<i>Kanji+Palash swaras</i>	<i>Param Kushta Nisudanaya</i>
14.	<i>Aragwadhadi Lepa</i>	<i>Ch.Su.3/14</i>	<i>Aragwadha + Kakamachi + Kanher Patra</i>	<i>Takra</i>	<i>Kushtahar Yoga</i>
15.	<i>Agad Prayog</i>	<i>Ch.Chi.7/56-57</i>	<i>Need of Gharshan Chikitsa before application of Lepa and need use of Agad Dravya</i>	<i>Pradeh</i>	<i>1.Stabdha Supta Aswedan Kandu Yukta Kushta</i>
16.	<i>Eladi Lepa</i>	<i>Ch.Chi.7/84</i>	<i>Ela + Kushta + Daruharidra + Shatpushpa + Chltrak + Vidang + Rasanjana + Abhaya.</i>	<i>Alepan</i>	<i>1.Kushtanashak</i>
17.	<i>Chitrakadi Lepa</i>	<i>Ch.Chi.7/85-86</i>	<i>Chitraka + Ela + Bimbi + Vasa + Trivrutta + Nagar + Palashkshar + Gomutra.</i>	<i>Lepanottar Atapsevan</i>	<i>1.Mandal Kushta Bhedanarth.</i>
18.	<i>Masyadi Lepa</i>		<i>Jatanmansi + Marich + Lavan + Haridra + Tagar + Sudha + Godhuma + Gomutra + Gopitta + Palashkshai + Kushta</i>		<i>1.Kushtaha</i>
19.	<i>Trapwadi Lepa</i>	<i>Ch.Chi.7/88</i>	<i>Trapu (Vanga) + Sisa + Ayas (Lauha)</i>		<i>1.Mandalnut</i>
20.	<i>Falgwadi Lepa-</i>	<i>Ch.Chi.7/88</i>	<i>Falgu + Chitrak + Bruhati + Devdaru with Godha Ras + Lavan + Gomutra</i>	<i>Gomutra</i>	<i>1.Mandal Kushta</i>
21.	<i>Kadalyadi Kshar</i>	<i>Ch.Chi.7/89-90</i>	<i>Kadali + Palash + Patala + Nikuchkshar with Kinva and Medak</i>	<i>Pralepanottar Atap Sevan</i>	<i>1. Mandal Kushta. 2.Krumi</i>
22.	<i>Sidharthak Snan</i>	<i>Ch.Chi.7/92</i>	<i>Musta + Madafal + Trifala + Karanja + Aragwadha + Kalingak + Yava + Darvi + Saptaparna</i>		<i>1.Twakdosha 2.Kushta</i>

					3.Shopha 4.Pandurog
23.	Kushtadi Lepa	Ch.Chi.7/93	Kushta + Karanjbeej + Edgaj		Kushtasudan
24.	Prapunnadadi Lepa-	Ch.Chi.7/93	Prapunnad + Saindhav + Rasanjan + Kapithha		Kushtanashak
25.	Karviradi Lepa	Ch.Chi. 7/94	Shwetkarvir + Kutaj + Karanja Phal + Daruharidra Twak + Suman Praval		Kushtapah
26.	Lodhradi Lepa	Ch.Chi.7/95	Lodhra + Dhataki + Vatsakbeej + Karanja + Malati Pushpa Kalka	Unmardan evam Alepan	Kushtahar
27.	Shirishadi Lepa	Ch.Chi.7/96	Shirisha Twak + Karpas Pushpa + Aragwadh Patra + Kakamachi	Individual Lepa	Kushtanut
28.	Sidhamahar Lepa	Ch.Chi.7/11 7	Kushta + Tamalpatra + Marich + Manasheela + Kasis + Tailiyukta mixed in Tampra Patra	Use for 7 days without Snan	Sidhmakushtahar
29.	Mandalkushta nashak Lepa	Ch.Chi.7/12 2	Kinva + Varahrudhir + Ela + Saindhav		Mandal Kushtahar
30.	Tumbaru Kushta	Ch.Chi.7/12 2	Kustamburu (Dhane) + Kushta		Mandal kushtahar
31.	Mandal Kushtahar Itar Lepa	Ch.Chi.7/12 3	Putikaranjabeej + Devdaru + Jatamansi + Mudgaparni + Kaknasa		Mandal Kushtahar
32.	Vaat-Kaphnashak Kushtaghna Yoga	Ch.Chi.7/12 5	1.Chitrak + Shigarutwak 2.Guduchi + Apamarga + Devdaru 3.Khadir + Dhava pushpa 4.Shyama + Danti + Dravanti 5.Laksha + Rasanjana + Ela 6.Punarnava with Dadhi	Lepa	Vaat Kaphajanya Kushta
33.	Edagajadi Lepa	Ch.Chi.7/12 6	Chakramardadbeej + Kushta + Sandhav + Sauvirak + Sarshapa + Vidang		1.Krumighna 2.Mandalkushta 3.Dadrukushta
34.	Vasadi Lepa	Ch.Chi.7/12 7	Vasa + Triphala	Pralepa	Kushtarogat
35.	Pitta-Kaphaj Kushta	Ch.Chi.7/13 0	Jalvetas + Kushta + Nagkeshar + Patra + Plav + Chandan + Mrunal	Pralepan	Pittakaphaj Kushta
36.	Priyangwadi Alepan	Ch.Chi.7/13 2	Priyangu + Harenuke + Vastak + Ativisha + Chandan + Katurohini	Alepan	Pittaj Kushta
37.	Patapsu Kushta	Ch.Chi.7/15 7	Nimb + Vidanga with Gomutra	Pradeha	Prapatpsu lasikaprastrushhu jantugandheshu kushta
38.	Krumikushta	Ch.Chi.7/15 8	Vasa + Kutaj + Saptaparna + Karvir + Karanja + Nimb + Khadir with Gomutra	Snan Paan Lepa	Krumikushta

39.	Vishesh Lepa	Ch.Chi.7/15 9	Vidang + Khadir	Pradeh	Kruminashan, Kushtahar
40.	Agrya Kushtanashak Lepa	Ch.Chi.7/16 0	1.Chakramardbeej + Vidang + Aragwadh Mool 2.Shwadant + Godanta + Ashwadant + Varah + Ushtradant-after exaggerating 3.Chakramard + Vidang + Haridra + Daruharidra + Aragwadhool + Pimpali + Koshta	Lepa	Agrya Kushtanashak
41.	Manahshiladi Lepa	Ch.chi.7/16 7-171	1.Manashila + Vidang + Kasis + Gorochana + Kanakshiri + Saindhav - Shwitra Prashamanartha 2.Kadaliksharyukta + Khar Asthi + Gorakta 3.Malatipushpa Kshar + Hastimad 4.Nilotpal + Kushta + Saindhav + Hastimutra 5.Mulakbeej + Bakuchibeej with Gomutra 6.Kakodumbar + Bakuchibeej + Chittrak + Gomutra 7.Manahshila + Barhipitta 8.Bakuchibeej + Laksha + Gopitta + Rasanjan + Sauviranjan + Pimpali + Kanta Lauha		Shwitrahara

DISCUSSION

Topical applications are more effective only after *Shodhana Chikitsa*. Acharya Charaka used number of combinations of *Kushtahar*, *Krumihar*, *Vranaya*, *Varnya Dravyas* for above formulations of *Lepa*. Acharya mostly used *Katu*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya Raspradhan Dravya* for these skin diseases. *Twak-Sar* is *Ras-Sar*. Overall health of *Twak* is depend of *Vishudhha Rakta*. *Tikta Ras* causes *Raktatag Pitta Shaman* and ultimately causes *Raktaprasadana Karma*. *Katu* and *Kashaya Ras* causes *Kleda Shoshan* and ultimately helps to get rid of symptoms such as *Kandu*, *Vaivarya*, *Daha* e.g. *Nimba*, *Vasa*, *Patol*, *Chandan*, *Parpata*, *Raktchandana*, *Kutaki*, *Laudhra*, *Guduchi*, *Khadir*, *Bakuchi*, *Musta*, *Arjuna*, *Vidang*, *Chakramarda*. Dietary products such as *Kola*, *Kulathha*, *Godhuma*, *Yava*, *Dhanyak* shows *Vaat-Kaphaghna* properties. *Kola* is *Snigdha* and has *Vaatpittaghna*. *Kulatha* is *Ushna* and *Kapha Pittaghna* in nature.^[7] *Godhuma* is *Snigdha* and has *Sandhaniya* property and can be used according to *Dosh*

Pradhanya.^[8] Acharya also used *Rasdravya* like *Hartal*, *Mansheela*, *Gairik*, *Kasis*, *Sarja*, *Morchuda*, *Kampillak*, *Rasanjan*, *Trapu (Vang)*, *Sisak*, *Ayas* and used is in particular skin pathology. *Hartal* is *Katu*, *Snigdha Ushna* and can be used in *Vaat-Kapha Pradhan Kushta*. *Mansheela* is also *Kapha-Vaatghna* in nature. *Suvarna Gairika* is *Shita*, *Raktapittahar*. *Kasis Bhasma* is mild *Kashaya*, *Ushna* and *Amlaguna Yukta* and is effective in *Rakta-Mansagat Vrana*. It has effect on *Ras Rakta* and is *Vaat-Kaphaghna* in nature. *Sarja* is *Kushta -Pama-Krumihar* due to its *Kashaya*, *Tikta Guna*. *Morchuda* has *Lekhana*, *Bhedana*, *Kandunashan* property and acts on *Raktatag Vikar*. *Kampillak* is *Vrana Nashak*, *Krumighna*. *Rasanjan* is *Ushna* and has *Kaphaghna* and *Vran Nashak* property. *Trapu* is *Varnakarak*, *Krumighna* and has *Krumighna* property. It shows deep action on *Ras*, *Rakta*, *Mansa* and *Asthi Dhatu*. *Ayas (Lauha)* is used in *Pitta Pradhan Kushta Roga*.^[9] All these properties of *Ras Kalpa* are considered by acharya *Charaka* in above formulations. While some preparations have animal products such as as

Ajadugdha, Goghrut, Varah Rudhir, Hastimutra, Gopitta, Gorochana. Ajadugdha is used in *Rakta-Pitta Vikar.Ghruta* is *Pitta Anilahar* and also *Varnaprasadan*.^[10] *Hastimutra* Is *Ruksha, Lavana* in nature and is indicated in *Krimi* and *Kushta Vikar*.^[11] Also *Vaajimutra* can be used in *Kushta* and *Krimi Chiktsa* due to its *Tikta Guna*.^[12] These additional properties of binding agents or *Bhawana Dravya* enhance the effect of given combination. *Charaka* has found all above amalgamations to get the best results in particular skin conditions keeping the view of *dosha dhatu Awastha* of *Vyadhi*.

CONCLUSION

Drugs used in above preparations can be now used in advanced forms of topical preparations. These numbers of combinations increase the scope of managing multiple skin pathologies at the same time. Premixing of these preparations can show the *Vatghna, Pittaghna, Kaphaghna, Krimighna, Kandughna, Varnaprasadan* properties. Also, the use of *Ras kalpa* majorly shows *Krimighna* and *Vranahar* property and can be further thought for topical antimicrobial properties. Efforts should be made in direction to explore each element of composition for further use.

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