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Dandruff - Ayurveda management for better hair care

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A B S T R A C T

According to Ayurveda, hair and nails are the *Upadhatu* of bone metabolism. In some individuals, the skin are very sensitive to seasonal changes and factors like cold, heat, cosmetics and shampoo etc., that's why these peoples are on high risk of getting suffered from the condition like Dandruff. Dandruff can be considered as *Darunaka* in Ayurveda and refer as minor diseases (*Kshudra Rogas*). Dandruff is caused due to imbalance due to *Doshas*. The primary doshas involved are *Pitta* and *Vata*. The condition like dandruff can be managed with comprehensive approach like diet, *Panchakarma* along with some internal medicine.

Key words: *Kshudra Rogas, Darunaka, Dandruff, Upadhatu, Panchakarma.*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda believes that the human body is built of main seven body elements as Dhatus viz. Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi, Majja and Shukra. The hair follicles have been named in Ayurveda as *Romakoopa*. A specific manner has been thought of for the commencement of each and every *Dhatu* and their various manifestations by the learned Acharya.[1]

According to Ayurveda, hair and nails are the by-product (*Updhatu*) of bone metabolism. At the same time, diet must also purify the fat tissue, because healthy bone tissue depends on healthy fat tissue. Thus, taking care of the fat tissue, and simultaneously beneficial the bone, is the key to hair and nail health. Impurities in the fat tissue cause weakened bone

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production, and that is reflected in dull hair, weak nails and problem skin.[2]

In spite of some controversies the major part of them believe that the production of the latter *Dhatus* occur from the former by the functions of their respective *Agni* i.e. the *Rasagni* turns the *Ahara Rasa* into *Rasa Dhatu*, then the *Raktagni* converts the suitable *Rasa Dhatu* in *Rakta* and so on.

Dandruff

Dandruff can be considered as *Darunaka* in Ayurveda and refer this is under minor diseases (*Kshudra Rogas*).[3] Dandruff is a general condition of excessive shedding of dead skin from the scalp and it is non-infectious skin disease of the scalp. Skin cells die and sliver like and so a small amount of flaking is normal. It may be found even in face, ears, body folds, neck and front of the chest. Apart from being a physical condition, dandruff is also associated with social and self-esteem problems in many individuals. Thus the white dust gets seen on shoulders, in head of the patients.

Etiopathogenesis

There are various reasons which can cause dandruff in hair, e.g. increased intake of dry, oily, cold, spicy, stress, anxiety, certain diseases such as psoriasis, seborrheic dermatitis, eczema, hyperactivity of the

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sebaceous glands such as sweat glands, environmental allergens such as dust, sunlight, soaps, shampoos and even certain types of food are sometimes responsible for dandruff. These factors worsening factors of this complaint.

Above factors also leads into *Vata* and *Pitta Prakopa* aggravate the disease condition of Dandruff. The dryness of the skin is contributed by Vata Dosha. Excessive oily scalp also causes dandruff. The condition of dandruff has involvement of *Kapha* and *Vata Dosha*.[4]

In some individuals, the skin are very sensitive to seasonal changes and factors like cold, heat, some cosmetics and shampoo etc., that's why these peoples on high risk of getting suffered from the condition like Dandruff. As per Ayurveda, most of the skin diseases are related to blood impurities, *Dosha* imbalance in blood.[5]

Various habit like tobacco, tea, smoking along with stress is directly affect the dandruff. Excessive cosmetic hair treatments such as hair-conditioning and hair-coloring, frequent use of shampoos, using hair colors, result in a weak skin and eventually lead to dandruff. Those who indulge with this condition are more prone to dandruff.

Hetu (reasons) of Dandruff according to Ayurveda[6],[7]

1. Excess exposure to sun, hot environment.

2. Excess intake of sour tasting foods and food items.

3. Intake of cold water (*Sheet Jala*) for long time.

4. Exposure to dust, fog, smoke etc.

5. Excessive sweating and Suppression of natural urges (*Vegadharana*)

6. Not washing hair regularly and unhygienic condition.

7. Non application of oil to the scalp etc.

8. Night awakening

Clinical features of Dandruff

1. *Keshachyuti* (Hair fall)

2. *Kandu* (itchy feeling on the scalp)

3. *Twaksputana* (Cracking of the skin)

4. *Daruna* (Dryness followed with crack in the scalp, Appearance of white scales on scalp)

5. *Daha* (Burning sensation)

6. *Gaura* (Heaviness) and

7. *Toda* (Pricking sensation) etc.

Management of Hair treatment[8],[9]

Dandruff is relapsing type of a disorders, somehow troublesome also. In Ayurveda, Dandruff is considered under the heading *Kshudraroga* and its management also come under *Kshudraroga Chikitsa*. Though Dandruff is caused due to imbalance due to *Doshas*. The primary *Doshas* involved are *Pitta* and *Vata*. In an aggravated state, both *Doshas* cause impurities in body called as *Ama*. These impurities accumulate in the deep tissues of scalp. Due to contamination of the deep tissues and aggravated *Vata-Pitta Dosha* cause itching and patches, scaling on scalp. Due to these factors, the scalp sheds larger than normal amounts of dead epidermal cells, which leads to the causation of dandruff.

The Ayurvedic line of treatment is to normally mollify *Pitta* and *Vata* through herbal medicines, diet and lifestyle management along with Panchakarma therapy. Some special herbs are administered to purify the body of accumulated digestive impurities.

Appropriate management of dandruff can be done as per following;

a. Diet

Eating sweeter, juicy fresh fruits, cooked greens and leafy green vegetables with a bitter taste will help in hair treatment. Seasonal the vegetables like fenugreek, turmeric and coriander, cumin, ghee, oil will also help purify fat tissue and strengthen bone tissue. Food with good nutritive value; include fiber rich foods, salads, fruits and lentils. Adding coconut

water to diet and always using healthy fats like ghee in cooking is also recommended.

b. Panchakarma

Snehana **(Massage):** The warm oil head and scalp massage, especially when done with oil medicated with *Keshya* (hair-nourished) herbs, nourishes the hair and scalp, alleviates dry scalp, enhances circulation. Application of medicated hair oil improves nourishment to the scalp which helps to keep your hair long, lustrous, strong, shining and thick. Coconut oil or Sesame oil, infused with herbs like Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*), Bhringaraj (*Eclipta alba*) Amalaki (*Emblica officinalis*), helps maintain the color and luster of hair.

Raktamokshana: Blood letting therapy with *Jalaukavacharan* can help to remove impurities of blood and it would be also helpful in treatment of dandruff.

Nasya: *Nasya* is indicated in all *Urdhawa Jatrugatvyadhi* (the diseases of heads), medicated oil *Nasya* would improve the condition of hair.

Yoga and exercises can be done to minimize stress levels.

c. Medicinal management

Herbal hair oils for dandruff

1. Bhringaraja Taila

2. Triphaladya Taila

3. *Brahmi Taila*

4. *Awala* Hair oil

Internal medicines

1. *Saptamritaloha* - Contains Indian licorice and Triphala, useful in skin diseases

2. *Chandanasava* - improves immunity, relieves excessive oiliness.

3. *Panchatiktaka Kashaya* - used in treatment of fever and burning sensation

4. *Mahatiktaka Kashaya*

5. *Triphala Rasayana* - Improves immunity, purify the blood.

CONCLUSION

Dandruff is reverting disorders, hampers the quality of hair also may lead into hair falls. In Ayurveda Dandruff is treated under *Kshudraroga Chikitsa* (minor disease). Ayurveda described various medicated herbal oil for local application. However the dandruff can be managed with comprehensive approach like Diet, Panchakarma along with some internal medicine. Personal hygiene and hair care along with Yoga, exercises to minimize stress levels can be adopted for daily basis to get relief from the condition of dandruff.

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