

Twacha, Vata and Mann: An Ayurvedic Approach to Psychodermatology

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Introduction: In Ayurveda, Twak Vikar (Skin Disease) encompasses all pathological conditions affecting the skin physiology and anatomy, reflecting the body's and mind's state. The skin is influenced by psychological factors impacting quality of life. Acharya Charak emphasizes the connection between Twacha (skin) and Mann (mind), suggesting psychological involvement in dermatological disorders. This study explores how imbalances in Vata can impact both skin health and mental well-being, with an emphasis on the therapeutic benefits of Yoga, meditation and counselling.

Aim and Objective: To explore the relationship between Twacha, Vata, and Mann and explain the Ayurvedic approach to Psychodermatology.

Methods: A review of Ayurvedic texts and contemporary science to understand the relationship between Vata Dosha imbalances, skin conditions and mental health. The effectiveness of Yoga, meditation and counselling in balancing Vata and improving skin conditions.

Discussion: Psychodermatology combines psychological and psychiatric treatments to treat skin problems. Psychodermatology studies the relationship between mind and skin. Psychiatry focuses on internal, non-visible diseases, whereas dermatology focuses on external visible disease. The Ayurvedic approach to Twak Vikar involves both pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments, with an emphasis on Vata Dosha balance and calmness of Mann. The link between Sparshnendriya, Mann, and Vata promotes a complete treatment strategy for skin problems.

Conclusion: Ayurveda recognizes a strong link between Mann, Twacha, and Vata Dosha. Vata imbalances can cause skin problems as well as have an impact on mental health. Addressing these imbalances through techniques such as Yoga, Meditation and Counselling therapy benefits both skin health and psychological well-being, emphasizing the necessity of a comprehensive approach to treating dermatological problems.

Keywords: Beauty, Skin care, Spiritual therapy, Mann (mind), Yoga

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Introduction

The skin is our largest organ. It acts as a waterproof, insulating shield to protect our bodies from extremes of temperature, sunlight, and harmful substances. It is also wonderfully packed with nerves for keeping the brain in touch with the outside world and is the main visceral medium through which we connect physically with others. Healthy skin condition, thus, is integral to both our physical and emotional health

In *Twak Vikar*, we include all pathological conditions, whether acute or chronic, that disturb the normal physiology and anatomy of the skin. The skin is a mirror reflecting the state of the body and mind, disclosing both normal and pathological conditions through changes in its physiology and anatomy. It is the sensory organ (*Gyanendriya*) responsible for perceiving pain, tactile, and thermal stimuli. Many dermatological disorders involve psychological factors, affecting the individual's quality of life.

Aacharya Charak describes the relationship between *Twacha* (skin) and *Mann* (psychic) with the citation *Chetasamvayi*[1] showing the deep connection between the skin and the mind. This implies that a psychological factor is always involved in any dermatological disorder. Dermatological disorders not only create cosmetic issues but also cause anxiety, depression, and significantly impact on the quality of life.

Aim and Objectives

1. To explore the relationship between *Twacha*, *Vata*, *Mann*.
2. To explain the Ayurvedic approach of psychodermatology.

Materials and Methods

Relation of *Sparshnendriya* with *Mann*

Aacharya Charak mentioned *Vyapaktvam* (pervasiveness) of *Sparshnendriya*. [2] He state that sense of *Sparsh* alone pervades all the sense. There is *Samvaya Sambandh* (inseparable relation) of *Twacha* with *Mann*.

Mann is small unit. [3] It stays with *Sparshnendriya* (*Twacha*) and helps to get collaborated with other *Indriya* in pursuing knowledge. [4]

Mann is *Kriyawana* (functional unit) but *Achetana* (without consciousness). *Aatma* is *Chetana* (with consciousness) but *Akriyawana* (non-functional). [5] *Mann* get associated with *Indriya* and *Vishaya*. *Aatma* motivates the *Mann* so that *Mann* get united with other *Indriya* one after the other in order to pursuing knowledge. [6]

Rasvaha Srotas Dushti happen due to anxiety and stress. *Rasvahasrotas* is a representative of *Twacha* so *Mann* have impact on *Twacha*.

Relation of *Sparshnendriya* with *Aatma*

Aatma is *Vyapak* and *Sparshnendriya* also *Vyapaknendriya*. *Aatma* present in body and collaborate with *Sparshnendriya* to pursuing knowledge through *Mann*. [7]

Relation of *Vataa Dosha* with *Sparshnendriya*

In *Indriya Pancha Panchak* [8] concept *Aacharya Charak* mentioned *Panch Indriya*, *Panchendriya Dravya*, *Panchendriya Adhishtan*, *Panchendriya Artha*, *Panchaendriya Artha Buddhi*. In that the *Sparshnendriya* have *Indriya Dravya Vata*, *Indriya Adhishtan Twacha*, *Indriyarth Adhishtan Sparsh* and *Indriya Buddhi Sparsha Buddhi*.

So, there is a interrelationship between *Sparshaendriya* and *Vata Dosha*.

Indriya	Sparshan
Indriya Dravya	Vayu
Indriya Adhishtan	Twaka
Indriyarth	Sparsha
Indriya Buddhi	Sparshan Buddhi

Relation of *Vata Dosha* with *Mann*

Prakarta Vata karma are *Niyanta Praneta Cha Manasa* [9] means balanced *Vata* control and encourage *Mann*.

Vikrit Vata Karma are *Mano Vayaharshati* [10] means (give negative impact on *Mann*).

In *Jwara Chikitsa* *Aacharya Charak* mentioned, *Kama*, *Shoka* and *Bhaya* aggravate *Vata Dosha* and ultimately these factor disturb *Mann*. [11]

Effect of psychological treatment in various skin disease. [12]

Classification of Psychodermatologic Disorders

Psychophysiologic disorders

- Psoriasis

- Atopic dermatitis
- Acne excoriee
- Hyperhidrosis
- Urticaria
- Herpes simplex virus infection
- Seborrheic dermatitis
- Aphthosis
- Rosacea
- Pruritus

Psychiatric disorders with dermatologic symptoms

- Dermatitis artefacta
- Delusions of parasitosis
- Trichotillomania
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder
- Phobic states
- Dysmorphophobia
- Eating disorders
- Neurotic excoriations
- Psychogenic pruritus

Dermatologic disorders with psychiatric symptoms

- Alopecia areata
- Vitiligo
- Generalized psoriasis
- Chronic eczema
- Ichthyosiform syndromes
- Rhinophyma
- Neurofibroma
- Albinism

Psychophysiologic Disorders

Skin disease appears to be exacerbated by stress. stress management, relaxation techniques, benzodiazepines, and selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) have been found useful in these disorders.

Acne Excoriee

Acne excoriee is a condition where individuals compulsively pick at their skin lesions,

Often driven by psychological factors rather than the severity of their acne. This behaviour is most commonly seen in females with late-onset acne and is associated with psychiatric conditions such as body image disorders, depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and social phobias. Low self-esteem and immature coping mechanisms are also linked to this condition.

Hyperhidrosis

Hyperhidrosis is a condition characterized by persistent sweating triggered by emotional stimuli, often leading to significant social and occupational difficulties. Patients may experience social phobia, avoidance behaviors, and intense emotions such as tension, fear, and rage.

Psoriasis

Psoriasis is a chronic skin condition that can be triggered or worsened by stress, affecting up to 80% of patients. Those with early onset psoriasis, especially before age 40, are more likely to have stress-related flare-ups, and people who experience high levels of stress often have more severe symptoms.

Atopic Dermatitis

Stressful life events have been found to precede the onset of atopic dermatitis in over 70% of cases. The severity of symptoms is often linked to interpersonal and family stress, and patients frequently struggle with psychosocial adjustment and low self-esteem. Dysfunctional family dynamics can hinder treatment and affect a child's development. Studies show that children whose mothers received counselling had better outcomes, with 45% clearing lesions compared to 10% who only received standard treatment. Psychological interventions, like therapy, biofeedback, and relaxation techniques, are valuable additions to conventional treatment, and medications like benzodiazepines and antidepressants are also commonly used.

Urticaria

Severe emotional stress can worsen pre-existing urticaria, a condition characterized by hives. People with this condition often struggle with expressing anger and have a strong need for approval from others. Symptoms like depression and anxiety are common, and the severity of itching tends to increase with the severity of depression.

Specific types of urticaria, like cold urticaria, may be linked to seasonal mood changes, while recurrent idiopathic urticaria is sometimes associated with panic disorder.

Herpes Simplex Virus, Herpes Zoster, and Human Papillomavirus Infections

Stress can trigger HSV reactivation by weakening the immune system, and relaxation techniques may reduce recurrences. Chronic stress, including from child abuse, can also lower immunity, making individuals more susceptible to Herpes Zoster.

Psychological factors like depression and anger are associated with HPV infections, affecting sexual well-being. Additionally, stress can influence other skin conditions such as seborrheic dermatitis, rosacea, and pruritus.

Dermatologic disorders with psychiatric symptoms

Dermatologic disorders with psychiatric symptoms refer to skin conditions that cause emotional problems due to their severity and impact on a person's life.

While not life-threatening, these conditions can feel "life-ruining" to those affected. Common symptoms include depression, anxiety, work-related issues, and impaired social interactions.

Alopecia areata

Alopecia areata is a type of hair loss that can occur on any part of the body. Psychological factors, especially acute emotional stress, play a significant role in its development and progression.

Stress may trigger the condition by activating certain hormone receptors around hair follicles, leading to local inflammation.

Vitiligo

Vitiligo is a skin condition characterized by loss of pigmentation, leading to visible white patches on the skin. It often causes significant psychosocial distress, more than many other skin conditions.

Stressful life events are linked to its onset, and there may be connections between stress, genetics, and personality traits. About one-third of patients experience psychiatric issues, with adjustment disorder and depression being common.

Psychiatric Disorders with Dermatologic Symptoms

Dermatitis Artefacta

Dermatitis artefacta is a factitious skin disorder where patients self-inflict lesions but deny doing so. Treatment may include relaxation exercises, SSRIs, antianxiety medications, and low-dose atypical antipsychotics (e.g., olanzapine has shown good results in some cases). Avoid direct confrontation; use a supportive, nonjudgmental approach.

Trichotillomania

Trichotillomania is a hair-pulling disorder that leads to noticeable hair loss. Childhood trauma and emotional neglect may contribute to its development. Commonly linked to anxiety, depression, dementia, intellectual disabilities, mood disorders, substance abuse, and eating disorders. Treatment: Medications: SSRIs (fluoxetine, paroxetine, sertraline), clomipramine, lithium, buspirone, risperidone. Therapies: Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), habit-reversal therapy, hypnotherapy.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

People with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) often visit dermatologists due to skin damage from habits like excessive scratching, hair pulling, or skin picking.

Common behaviours include: Pulling scalp, eyebrow or eyelash hair; Biting nails, lips, or cheeks; Excessive hand washing. Treatment options include medicine (SSRIs, clomipramine), behaviour modification and therapy.

Psychogenic Pruritus

Psychogenic Pruritus is a condition where stress causes itching, and itching causes more stress. This cycle can be triggered by mental health conditions like depression, anxiety, or obsessive behavior. Treatment options include: Habit-reversal training, Cognitive-behavioral therapy, Antidepressants.

Discussion

Psychodermatology is a new branch in medical science. In psychodermatology the treatment of skin disorder using psychology and psychiatric techniques by addressing the interaction between mind and skin.

In *Ayurveda Twaka* have relation with *Vata Dosha* and *Vata Dosha* have relation with *Mann* ultimately three of them are connected. *Aacharya Vagbhatt* added *Satvavjaya Chikitsa* (psychological treatment) and *Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa* (Spiritual treatment) with medication in *Kustha Roga* (skin disease), so the concept of psychodermatology already mention in *Ayurveda* text.

The integration of Ayurveda into cosmetology offers a natural and holistic approach to skincare that addresses both the physical and psychological aspects of beauty. Ayurveda, with its use of Herbal and Herbo-mineral medicine and personalized treatments based on individual body constitutions, provides a gentle yet effective alternative to chemical-based products.

One of the key strengths of Ayurveda lies in its holistic approach to treating skin conditions. It recognizes the mind-body connection, understanding that stress and emotional imbalances can manifest as skin problems. By incorporating psychological treatments such as yoga, meditation and spiritual therapy, Ayurveda not only addresses the symptoms but also tackles the underlying causes of skin issues.

This ancient system emphasizes prevention through balanced living and proper nutrition, ensuring long-term skin health and radiance. As more people seek natural and sustainable beauty solutions, Ayurveda's comprehensive approach makes it an essential part of modern cosmetology.

Conclusion

According to Ayurveda *Mann* means the mind, *Twacha* means the skin and *Vata* is one of the three *Doshas*. An imbalance in *Vata* can lead to skin dryness and roughness, and also affect mental well-being. Stress and anxiety as *Vata* imbalances often manifest as skin issues. Counselling therapy and Practices like *Yoga*, meditation can help balance *Vata*, improving both skin and mental health. There is a relation found between *Sparshnendriya*, *Mann* and *Vata* in *Ayurveda* text. *Twak Vikar* give patients physical, mental and socioeconomical inferiority which leads to stress and aggravate the disease. Vitiated *Vata* also increased stress factor that leads to some dermatological conditions. Psychological conditions also create various skin problems.

The unique approach of *Ayurveda* to consider the whole body mind and spirit as one entity goes through the holistic approach to treat the disease. Pharmacological approach is to balancing the *Vata Dosha* and non-pharmacological approach are psychological and spiritual treatment in skin disease. So, in case of skin disease psychodermatological approach taken into consideration. In skin disease new aspect of treatment are focus on balancing *Vata Dosha* and tranquility of *Mann*.

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