

PSORIASIS (EKA KUSHTHA) THROUGH AYURVEDA – A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Eka kushtha is a type of *kshudra kushtha* described in different *Ayurvedic classics*. It is *Vata-Kaphaj* disorder. The classical symptoms of *Eka kushtha* described in *Ayurveda* resembles with Psoriasis. The clinical feature of *Eka kushtha* described by *Acharya Kashyap* represents remission, relapse and seasonal variation which are present in Psoriasis¹. Modern medical science treats Psoriasis with PUVA, corticosteroids etc. But these therapies give serious side effects like hepato and nephrotoxicity, bone marrow depression etc. Hence, it is the need of time to find out safe and effective treatment for Psoriasis and here *Ayurveda* plays an important role. The unique treatment modality of *Ayurveda* provides long lasting results and a better life to patients through its three basic principles i.e. *Shodhana*, *Shamana* and *Nidan parivarjana*. For present study, We have reported a 42 years female patient having symptoms of *Eka kushtha* since last 17 years. She was suffering from large round erythematous scaly patches over her trunk, both hands, both legs and head and also severe itching and dryness over affected lesions. There was no significant past history of any other chronic illness. The patient was treated with *Vamana* and *Virechana* therapies in *Panchakarma* followed by Oral medications. Patient reported symptomatic improvement after the course of *Vamana* and *Virechana*. The improvement was significantly increased during course of oral medications with *Nidan parivarjana*.

Keywords: *Eka kushtha*, Psoriasis, *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Nidan parivarjana*.

INTRODUCTION

In *Ayurveda*, all skin diseases are grouped under a broad heading of *Kushtha Roga*. *Eka kushtha* is one of such diseases explained under the heading of *Kshudra Kushtha* (minor skin ailments). Even though, in terms of severity, incidence and prognosis, it is not a minor kind. The classical symptoms of *Eka kushtha* described in *Ayurveda* resembles with Psoriasis. The clinical feature of *Eka kushtha* described by *Acharya Kashyap* represents remission, relapse and seasonal variation which are present in Psoriasis. Prodromal features of Psoriasis [*Purvarupa of Eka kushtha*]²–

- Reduced perspiration (*Aswedan*)
- Increased perspiration (*Atiswedan*)

- Discolouration of the skin (*Twak vaivaranya*)
- Itching (*Kandu*)
- Pricking sensation (*Nistoda*)
- Numbness (*Suptata*)
- Horripilation (*Lomaharsha*)
- Fatigue (*Klama*) etc.

Clinical features of Psoriasis [*Rupa of Eka kushtha*]³–

- Reduced sweating (*Asweda*)
- Extended skin lesions (*Mahavastu*)
- Scaling of skin similar to the scales of the fish (*Matsya shakalopama*)
- Pink discolouration (*Aruna varna*)

- Blackening of the part (*Krishna varna*) etc.

Line of Ayurvedic treatment for Psoriasis –

- *Ghritapana* (Oral administration of medicated Ghee)
- *Shodhana – Vamana* (emesis), according to the need *Virechana* (Purgation) can also be carried out or else both are also recommended one after the other.
- *Shamana Aushadha* (Medication) – Both external and internal medication is carried.

In *Panchakarma*, among *Shodhana* therapy, *Vamana* is principle treatment for *Kapha dosha*⁴. *Acharya Charak* defined *Vamana* as a process in which waste products or toxins (*doshas*) are eliminated through upper channels that is mouth⁵. *Acharya Sharangdhar* explains that the process in which *Apakwa Pitta* and *Kapha* are forcibly expelled out through upper route. Likewise in *Virechana Pitta* and *Kapha* are expelled out through lower route that is anus. *Vatadosha* is *Yogvahi* that means it functions according to the accompanying *Kapha* or *Pitta dosha*. Oral medications which are prescribed to the patients were *Mahatiktak Ghrit*, *Arogyavardhini Vati*, *Nimba Churna* and for Local application *Marichyadi Tail*. All these conservative medication were used for the pacification of *Vata* and *Kapha dosha*. These drugs possesses mainly *Tikta* and *Katu* properties. Thus it was assumed that purification mechanism in combination with oral medication and *Nidan parivarjana* (Avoidance of etiological factors) would be helpful in treatment of *Eka kushtha*.

CASE REPORT –

A 42 years old female was presented in OPD no.15 of *Rognidan* Department presenting with chief complaints as itching

and discolouration of skin, erythematous patches of rounded to irregular shape, appearance of silvery scales guarding the patches over her trunk, both hands, both legs and scalp. Around about 17 years back, she was in healthy state, later she started with itching all over her back, abdomen, chest, head, both hands and both legs. The area affected with itching slowly got discoloured and dry. Also, there was appearance of red erythematous patches guarded with scales. The patches were more pronounced over back and abdomen. Simultaneously she was suffering from constipation, loss of appetite, physical and mental stress and disturbed sleep. She had taken treatment of allopathic medicine for years but didn't get any relief.

When she visited OPD, first of all we carried out her all routine blood investigations as Complete Blood Count, Blood Sugar Level, Liver Function Tests, Renal Function Tests and Routine and Microscopic Urine Examination to rule out any possible associated disorder. But finding of these investigations were found within normal limits. There was no significant past history of any type of addiction was found.

Treatment Plan–

The treatment is carried out in two phases

I. First Phase :

First phase of treatment included *Sanshodhana Karma* (Purification Mechanism) i.e. *Vamana* (Process of vomiting) and *Virechana* (Process of purgation). It was strictly followed with *Purvakarma* and *Paschatkarma* (Before and after *Vamana* and *Virechana* respectively) Total period required for this process is 40 days.

II. Second Phase :

After *Shodhana*, second phase of treatment initiated in the form of oral medication and *Nidan parivarjana*. The composition of oral administration of drugs was

Mahatiktak Ghrit, Arogyavardhini Vati, Nima Churna and for Local application *Marichyadi Tail* for 6 months.

Preparation and Process Of Vamana And Virechana –

As *Eka kushtha* is chronic and relapsing in nature and also there is an involvement of *Tridosha* and *Twaka, Rakta, Mansa, Lasika* and *Kleda*. Hence, repeated *Shodhana* is required for treatment. *Shodhana* is one of the important treatments of *Ayurveda* which deals mainly with elimination of aggravated *Doshas* from body. These *Doshas* (toxins and waste materials) should be eliminated naturally as well as by *Panchakarma* from nearest route of the body

Purvakarma

Deepana Pachana :

It is very essential process before any purification process. As with this process, *Ama doshas* (toxins) present in the *Shakha* undergo digestion. For removal of *Amadosha*, stuck to the *Srotasas* should undergo the process of digestion through *Deepana Pachana*. Thus the free *doshas* (toxins) can be easily eliminated outside the body through *Vamana*. For this the patient was administered *Trikatu* (*Zingiber officinale, Piper longum* and *Piper nigrum*) *Churna* (powder form) and *Musta* (*Cyperus rotundus*) *churna* in dose of 3gms thrice a day for 5 days with luke warm water⁶.

Snehapana(Oleation) :

After five days of *Deepan Pachan* process, *Snehapana* (Oleation) therapy was carried out in patient. *Acharya Charaka* quotes that *Kapha* glides fluently towards *Koshtha* through the body, which is kept ready by Oleation and Fomentation, in the same manner as the water stream eloquently through the vessel coated with a layer of unctuous material⁷. For this patient was administered with *Mahatiktaka*

*Ghrita*⁸ in a dose of increasing order of 30ml, 60ml, 90ml, 120ml 150ml and 180ml with luke warm water for respective six days⁹. During this period, the patient was kept on semi liquid hot diet with less unctuous material.

Sarvang Abhyang (Whole Body Massage With Oil) And Swedan(Fomentation) :

After completion of Oleation therapy, on 7th day patient was subjected for *Sarvang Abhyang* (Whole body massage with oil) and *Sarvang Swedan* (Fomentation) for 20-25 mins or until profuse perspiration occurred. The patient was advised for complete rest on this day and to eat *Kaphavardhak Aahar* in the evening like *Dahi vada, Dahi bhaat* or *Khichadi*.

Pradhan Karma:

[A] Vamana¹⁰-

On this day, the patient was kept on nil by mouth (NBM) till the process of *Vamana* start. *Abhyanga* along with *Swedana* was given to the patient. *Phanta* of *Yashtimadhu* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) as *Vamanopaga* (helpful for vomiting), which was prepared by using *bharad* (coarse form) of *Yashtimadhu* 700mg mixed with 3 litres of hot water¹¹.

After general examination of patient, Pulse and Blood pressure was monitored. Then she was administered luke warm *Godugdha* (milk of cow) till she felt that her stomach was filled (1.2 litre) completely. The *Vamaka yoga* (preparation used for vomiting) that contained the drugs *Madanphala* (*Randia dumetorum*), *Vacha* (*Acorus calamus*) and *Saindhav* (Sodium Chloride) in proportion of 4:2:1 mixed with Honey in total quantity of 7 gms of it was administered to patient (Table 1). After 15 minutes of administration of *Vamaka yoga*, patient was follow for *Vamana vega* (acts of vomitings) to commence on her own. Time and quan-

tivity of administration of *Vamanopaga dravyas*, acts of vomiting (major, moderate or minor) and amount of vomitus along with the contents were noted. The process was continued till patient was undergone through 7 major and 3 minor vomiting acts (*vegas*). When the appearance of vomitus was composed of medicine along with *Pitta* and *Vata dosha*, the procedure was stopped¹².

Paschat Karma (Process After Vomiting) :
Dhumapana –

After rest of 10 mins, *dhumapana* was given with stick made of *Aguru (Aquilaria agallocha)* for 3-4 times by each nostril of patient¹³.

Sansarjana Karma –

Since patient was undergone in *pravar* (major) grade of purification (7major and 3 minor *vega*) of *vamana*, he was advised to follow the dietic and behavioural restrictions regimen of seven days¹⁴. In this dietic and behavioural restrictions were given to patient. The sequence of regimen was planned as *Peya, Vilepi, Akrita Mudga Yusha, Krita Mudga Yush*, rice with *Mamsarasa* were served for 3 *Aaharkaala* (diets).

[B]**Virechana-**

After 7days rest after *Sansarjana karma*, *Snehapana* therapy was carried out again as before for 6 days, which was followed by *Sarvang Abhyang*(Whole body massage with oil) and *Sarvang Swedan*(Fomentation) for 2 days. The patient was advised to take *Kapha avaradhak* and *Pitta Vardhak aahar* like Tomato soup or Panipuri, in the evening on the second day of *Abhyang* and *Swedan*.

On the day of *Virechana* patient was kept Nil By Mouth (NBM), till the process of *Virechana* start. *Abhyang* along with *Swedan* was given to the patient. *Triphala*(*Emblica officinale, Terminalia bellerica, Terminalia chebula*) kwath

100ml, *Erand Tail*(Castor oil) 10ml, *Abhayadi Modak* 2tablets, this *yog* was given to patient. After 1 hour of administration of *virechana yog*, patient was followed for *virechana vega*(acts of purgations) to commence on her own. Time and quantity of administration of *Virechana dravyas*, acts of *Virechana*(major, moderate and minor), amount of stool along with its consistency colour and other symptoms were noted. The process was continued till patient was undergone through 15 major and 2minor purgation acts (*vegas*). When appearance of stool was composed of *Pitta* and *Kapha* and also patient felt tired but light, the procedure was stopped. *Sansarjan karma* was followed as in *Vamana karma* but for 2 *Aahar kaal*(2diets) as *shuddhi* (purification) was *madhyam*(moderate).

OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

During the 40 days course of *Vamana*, patient had reported 60-70% improvement in his symptoms. She had got 50% relief from itching. The discoloured skin and red scaly patches had been improved by 40%. The silver scales were reduced. Also the patient had developed normal bowel habit. The treatment regime was planned in two phases. In the initial phase of the management patient was undergone through *Vamana and Virechana karma*. The principle of the therapy is until one expel out the morbid *Doshas* from the body. It acts mainly on vitiated *doshas* of psoriasis that is *Vata* and *Kapha*. In *Purvakarma* patient was administered *Mahatiktaka Ghrita*¹³ in an increasing manner. *Ghee* carries property of drug without leaving its own property. The ingredients are *Saptaparna (Alstonia scholaris)*, *Ativisha (Aconitum heterophyllum)*, *Shampak (Cassia fistula)*, *Kutaki (Picrorrhiza kurroa)*, *Patha (Cissampeloc pareira)*, *Musta (Cyperus rotundus)*, *Ushir (Andropogon*

muricatus), *Triphala* (*Emblica officinalis*, *Terminalia chebula*, *Terminalia belerica*), *Patola* (*Trichosanthes dioica*), *Nimba* (*Azadirachta indica*), *Parpataka* (*Fumaricaparvi flora*), *Dhanwayasa* (*Alaghi mouroum*), *Chandana* (*Santalum album*), *Pippali* (*Piper longum*), *Padmaka* (*Prunus cirasoidus*), *Haridra* (*Curcuma longa*), *Daruharidra* (*Berberis aristata*), *Vacha* (*Acorus calamus*), *Vishala* (*Citrullus colocynthis*), *Shatavari* (*Asparagus racemosus*), *Sariva* (*Hemidesmos indicus*), *Krishna Sariva* (*Ichnocarpus frutescens*), *Vasa* (*Adhatoda vasica*), *Murva* (*Clematis triloba*), *Guduchi* (*Tinospora cordifolia*), *Kiratiktika* (*Swerita chirata*), *Yashtimadhu* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), *Trymamana* (*Gentian kurroa*), *Goghrita* (*Butyrum parvum*) etc. The drugs possess *Ushna*, *Tikshna*, *Vyavayi*, *Vikashi*, *Katu*, *Tikta rasatmaka* and *Katu vipaka*. It was observed that the action of drugs was mainly due to properties of these drugs which have *Dipan*, *Pachana*, *Amapachaka*, *Strotoshodhaka*, *Raktaprasadan*, *Raktashodhaka*, *Kandughna*, *Kushthaghna* and *Varnya* mechanism of actions. They acted mainly for the eradication of *doshas* from whole body and brought them into *Koshtha*. It also pacified the symptoms like itching, discoloration and dryness due to aggravated *Vata* and *Kapha doshas*.

The main components of *Vamana* and their actions are as follows - *Madanaphala* (*Randia dumetorum*) in small doses acted as nauseant and provided useful as a nervine calminative and antispasmodic during vomiting process. *Vacha* i.e. *Acorus calamus* was having spasmolytic action. *Yashtimadhu* i.e. *Glycyrrhiza glabra* helped to lower the increasing blood pressure during the strenuous *Vamana* process. It also acts as smooth muscle relaxant. *Saindhava* i.e. Sodium Chloride was said to be the best in helping the process of em-

esis. According to *Acharya Vagbhata*, it possesses the properties like *Vishyandi*, *Aruksha*, *Sukshma*, *Ushna*, *Vyavayi*. *Acharya Indu* clears that it increases secretions through channels, penetrates the minute channels and spread quickly to the whole body. *Madhu* was effective in breaking the *Avarana* (shield) of fat tissue without aggravating the *Vata*.

Components of *Virechana* yoga and their action are as follow:-

Triphala kwatha- *Amalaki*(*Emblica officinale*) was *tridosahar* and *Vibandhanashak* action like *Haritaki*(*Terminalia chebula*) and *Bibhitaki*(*terminalia belerica*) had *Rechak* (laxative) action.

Erand Tail(*Ricinus communis*) acted as *Adhibhaghar*, *Virechak*, *Kruminissarak* and also did *shodhana* of *Kapha* in *Aamashaya*.

In *Abhayadi Modak*, *Haritaki* and *Aamlaki* is *Anulomak*, *Danti* is *Tikshna Virechak*, *Trivrut* has *Virechak prabhav*, *Pippali* is *Pitta Virechak* and *Marich* has *Pramathi* property. Along with *pitta rechan*, *kapha samshodhana* and *vatanuloman* take place. *Abhaydi Modak* is *Katu Rasa*, *Tikshna Guna* and *Ushna Virya* with *Katu Vipak*. *Doshas* expel out through anal route (*Gudamarga*) as *Virechak dravyas* have *Jala* and *Pruthvi Mahabhut pradhanya* and have *Adhobhaghar prabhav*. Thus *Vamana* and *Virechana* pacified itching, diminished red scaly patches, reduced dryness, depressed some silver scales and mildly normalized the discoloration.

In second phase of treatment, the patient was administered with oral medications like *Arogyavardhini Vati*, *Nimba churna*, *Mahatiktak Ghrit* and for local application *Marichyadi Tail*. *Arogyavardhini Vati*¹⁵ contains *Shuddha Parada* (Herbal Purified Mercury), *Shuddha*

Gandhaka (Herbal Purified Sulphur), *Shuddha Loha* (Purified Iron), *Abhraka bhasma* (Purified Mica), *Tamra bhasma* (Purified Copper), *Triphala*, *Shuddha Shilajit* (Asphaltum), *Shuddha Guggulu* (*Commiphoramukul*), *Twaka* of root of *Chitraka* (*Plumbago zeylanica*), *Kutaki* (*Picrorrhiza kurroa*) all are pasted in *swarasa* (juice extract) of leaves of *Nimba* (*Azadirachta indica*). It was administered in a dose of 500 mg thrice a day with water after meal.

Dysfunctions of large intestine lead to constipation. Further there is disturbance or *dushti* of *Vata* in large and small intestine and in this way the required *Pitta* for digestion get disturbed. Also there occurs vitiation of *Kapha*, which is required for regulation of peristalsis movement in large intestine. These leads to delay of movements of stool which further results in production of organic toxins and get absorbed in interstitial skin, *Rakta Mamsadi dhatu*. Vitiating of *Vata* results its spread among all over body. Thus there is development of *Kushtha vyadhi* in body. *Arogyavardhini Vati* worked as Purificatory agent for large intestine and mainly on the organic toxins produced in large intestine.

The second content of oral medication is *Nimba Churna* (*Azadirachta indica*). Due to its *Tikta Rasa* it purifies blood and acts on diseases caused by impured blood. It is given in quantity of 3gms thrice a day with luke warm water.

The other drug is *Mahatiktaka Ghrita* which has *Dipana*, *Pachana*, *Ama-*

pachaka, *Strotoshodhaka*, *Raktaprasadan*, *Raktashodhaka*, *Kandughna*, *Kushthaghna* and *Varnya* mechanism of actions. It is administered in dose of 10ml early morning empty stomach.

The drug used for external application is *Marichyadi Tail* which contains *Marich* (*Piper nigrum*) *Hartaal*, *Manahshila*, *Nagarmotha* (*Cyperus rotundus*), *Arkadugdha* (*Calotropis procera*), *Kaneramulatwak* (*Nerium indicum*), *Nishoth* (*Operculin ipomoca*), *Gorasa*, *Indrayanamula* (*Citrullus cococynthis*), *Kushtha* (*Saussurea lappa*), *Haridra* (*Curcuma longa*), *Daruharidra* (*Berberis aristata*), *Devdaru* (*Cedrus deodara*), *Raktachandana* (*Pterocarpus santalinus*), *Vatsanabha* (*Aconitum ferox*), *Sarshap tail* (*Brassica alba*). Most of the drugs are of *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kashay Rasa* which acts as *Kapha shamaka*, reduces *Kandu*, *Laghu Snigdha guna* reduces scaling, *Ushna virya* increases Swedan by *Vaat Kapha nashak Dravya*, *Rakta shodhaka*, *Immunomodulator*, *Kushtha Kandu Nashak* property.

Along with *Shodhana* and *Shamana* therapy patient was advised to avoid Non vegetarian food (Fish, Mutton, Chicken, Eggs etc), fast food (Chinese, Vada paav, Samosa, Kachori etc), fermented food (Idli, Dosa etc), *Katu Amla rasa* (Dahi wada, Spicy food), Contaminated water and environment. Patient was advised medication to reduce mental stress.

Table1: Preparation of Vamana

Ingredients	Quantity
<i>Madanphala</i> (<i>Randia dumetorum</i>)	4gm
<i>Vacha</i> (<i>Acorus calamus</i>)	2gm
<i>Saindhav</i> (Sodium Chloride)	1gm
<i>Madhu</i> (Honey)	Sufficient quantity

Table 2: Oral drugs, their Composition, Doses and Exact effect

Name of drug Compound	Ingredients	Dose	Frequency	Duration	Exact effect ²⁵
Arogya-vardhini Vati	<i>Shuddha Parada, Shuddha Gandhaka, Abhraka bhasma, Tamara bhasma, Triphala, Shuddha Shilajit, Shuddha Guggul, Chitrakmula twaka, Kutaki</i> all pasted in <i>swarasa(rasa)</i> of Leaves of <i>Nimba</i>	2tab (500mg each)	Thrice a day	6 months	<i>Amadosha-nashak, Hepatoprotective, Vata and Kapha nashaka</i>
Nimba Churna	Powder of <i>Nimba</i> Leaves	3gms	Thrice a day	6 months	<i>Kandunashaka, Raktashodhaka, Raktaprasadaka</i>
Mahatik-tak Ghrit	<i>Saptaparna, Ativisha, Shampak, Kutaki, Patha, Musta, Ushir, Triphala, Patola, Nimba, Parpataka, Dhanwayasa, Chandana, Pippali, Padmaka, Haridra, Daruharidra, Vacha, Vishala, Shatavari, Sariva, Krishna Sariva, Vasa, Murva, Guduchi, Kiratatikta, Yashtimadhu, Trymana, Goghrita</i>	10ml	Once a day	6 months	<i>Dipan, Panchana, Amapachaka, Stroto-shodhaka, Raktaprasadan, Raktashodhaka, Kandughna, Kushthaghna and Varnya</i>

Mari-chyadi Tail	<i>Marich, Hartaal, Manahshila, Nagarmotha, Arkadugdha, Kaneramulatwak, Nishoth, Gorasa, Indrayanamula, Kushtha, Haridra, Daruharidra, Devdaru, Raktachandana, Vatsanabha, Sarshap tail</i>	As per requirement on lesion	Once a day	6 months	<i>Vaat Kapha nashak, Rakta shodhaka, Immuno-modulator, Kushtha Kandu Nashak</i>
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Table 3: Overall Effect of Vamana and Virechana

Steps in Process of Vamana and Virechana	Mechanism	Exact effect showed
<i>Dipana Pachana</i>	Removal of <i>Amadosha</i> Increase in <i>Agni</i>	<i>Ama-doshanashaka</i>
<i>Snehapana</i>	Pacification of <i>Vata dosha</i> Decrease in Burning Sensation Reduction in Scaling and Dryness	<i>Vata-doshashamaka</i>
<i>Abhyanga</i>	Removal of Dryness Decrease in Scaling	<i>Vata dosha Shamaka</i>
<i>Sarvanga Swedana</i>	Removal of Obstruction Increase in <i>Swedana</i>	<i>Strotas Shodhana</i> (Purification of system)
<i>Vamana</i>	Reduction in Itching Pacification of <i>Kaphadosha</i>	<i>Kapha dosha Shodhana</i>
<i>Dhumapana</i>	<i>Kaphadosha</i>	<i>Shiro Virechana</i>
<i>Virechana</i>	Reduction in itching, discolouration and scales Pacification of <i>Kaphadosha</i> and <i>Pittadosha</i>	<i>Pitta dosha shodhana</i>



Figure 1: First visit of Patient to OPD



Figure 2: Visit of patient after *Shodhana* (*Vamana* and *Virechana*) Therapy



Figure 3: Visit of patient after Oral Drug Therapy

CONCLUSION

Eka kushtha (Psoriasis) though difficult to manage, but if proper diagnosis is made at proper time, it can give significant relief. In present case, the treatment was found very effective in treating Psoriasis. There was 60-70% relief in signs and symptoms after *Shodhana* Therapy and 80% to 90% relief after Oral medications and *Nidan parivarjana*.

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