A CASE STUDY: ROLE OF RAKTAMOKSHAN AND BAHYA LEPA IN MANAGEMENT OF PSORIASIS

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ABSTRACT

Psoriasis is an autoimmune skin disease characterized by red scaly patches over the skin. Broadly all the diseases of skin come under the umbrella of kustha. In ayurvedic text, Charaka samhita, kustha has been beautifully explained. Psoriasis is an immune mediated disease which mistakenly sends out faulty signals for a normal skin assuming it as a pathogen which causes overproduction of new skin cells. Fortunately, it is a non-contagious inflammatory skin disease. Psychological stress is one of the major triggering factors in the exacerbation of the disease. Ekkustha has similar features as like Psoriasis. Ayurveda is a holistic approach particularly correcting the root cause through shodhana (panchakarma). While explaining the treatment for kustha, acharya chakarapani explains repetitive shodhana karma to be done on regular intervals to cure the disease. Hence a single case of ekkustha was given Raktamokshana followed by bahya lepa at regular interval to access the effect of the procedures. Different assessment criteria were used to monitor the improvements. There was significant relief in the scaling, discolouration of skin, elevated patches & redness of the skin lesion which explains that detoxification of the body reduces the inflammatory condition of the body by bringing back the normalcy of the dosha in the body.

Keywords: Kustha, Psoriasis, Detoxification, Ayurveda, Shodhana karma.
INTRODUCTION

Any changes in the skin, affects the cosmetic look, physical wellbeing and the mental status is also affected. Psoriasis is a long lasting autoimmune disease which consist of sharply defined, slightly elevated bright red papules or plaques covered with dry silvery scales over the skin and therefore it not only affects the physical well being of a person but also affect his mental and social peace. [1] Most of the drugs used in psoriasis provide only a temporary relief but Ayurveda especially Panchakarma stands strongly with a positive result. Ayurveda, diagnose it as ekakustha which is vatakapha predominant Kshedrakushta. Vitiation of Vatakapha Dosha causes Aruna Varna, Kharta, Rukshata, Kandu and scales resembling Matsya Shakala. [2] This condition can be associated with psoriasis. There are seven factors involved in pathogenesis of Kustha, as per Charak Samhita these are Vata, Pitta, Kapha, Tvak, Rakta, Mansa, Ambu (Saptko Draya Sangraha). Kustha is considered as Raktaja Roga and hence the factors responsible for Rakta Dusti are also considered in the ethology of Kustha. Along with it Virudha Ahara, Mithya Ahara is also considered as causative factor for causing disease. A single case study was conducted on a patient to see the effect of Raktamokshana with Bahya Lepa in psoriasis.

Methodology: A 32 years old male patient with psoriasis came to OPD of Department of Panchkarma at Om Ayurvedic Medical College, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India (OPD: 108 IPD: 561). He had scaling and dryness in the back with severe itching for 6 years. He also had red scaly patches & plaques over his stomach, back, hands, legs and thighs. There was no history of fever, joint pain, burning, discharge and pain over the sight of patches. Patient has taken many allopathic medications like corticosteroids but there was only temporary symptomatic relief. Patient was consuming alcohol occasionally.

Before treatment: PASI Score (Psoriasis Area Severity Index)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plaque characteristics</th>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Upper limbs</th>
<th>Trunk</th>
<th>Lower limb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erythema</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thickness</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scaling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lesion score: 0-none, 1-slight, 2-moderate, 3-severe, 4-very severe

Vitals were normal. Appetite & bowel were normal, but his sleep was very disturbed. There was no significant family history of the patient. Psychological history suggests of his over-thinking nature and he is sometimes depressed due to cosmetic reasons and feels inferior.

Dashvidha Pariksha
1. Prakriti:Vatakaphaj
2. Vikriti:Vatakapha
3. Sara:Madhyam
4. Samhanan:Madhyam
5. Pramana:Madhyam
6. Satva:Alpa
7. Satmaya: Sarva Ras Satmaya
8. Aharashakti:Madhyam
9. Vyayama Shakti:Madhyam
10. Vaya:Madhyam

Asthavidha Pariksha
1. Nadi:Vata Pittaj
2. Mutra:Samanya Mutra Pravriti 5-6 Time /Day
3. Mala:Samanya
   a. Once /Day
   b. No Foul Smell
   c. Semisolid Consistency
4. Jivha:Niram
5. Shabda:Samanya
6. Sparsh:Rukha Twak
7. Drik:Samanya Pandu –Ve
8. Akriti:Madhyam

On dermal examination:
- There was a widespread round shaped erythematous scaly patches affecting the trunk, limbs and scalp with thickening of the skin.
- There was mild swelling and itching on nearby areas of the patches.

PASI (Psoriasis Area Severity Index) [3] score was recorded on regular intervals to access the improvement of the affected area.
**Fig 1:** Picture showing red scaly plaques over the skin on the 1st day

![Picture showing red scaly plaques over the skin on the 1st day](image1)

**Fig 2:** *Raktamokshana Karma*

![Raktamokshana Karma](image2)

**Fig 3:** *Bahya lepan karma*

![Bahya lepan karma](image3)

**Fig 4:** After 2 sitting of *Raktamokshana* and regular 7 days *Bahya Lepan*

![After 2 sitting of Raktamokshana and regular 7 days Bahya Lepan](image4)
Treatment
The treatment given was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Aushada /Material used</th>
<th>Time period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2/march/2020</td>
<td>Raktamokshan Karma</td>
<td>Leech – 4 in number</td>
<td>Until leech leaves the site of bite itself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9/march/2020</td>
<td>Raktamokshan Karma</td>
<td>Leech – 4 in number</td>
<td>Until leech leaves the site of bite itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/march to 9/March 2020</td>
<td>Bahya Lepan (external body pack) 7 days</td>
<td>Amlaki Churna + Takra</td>
<td>35-40 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9/march-16 march/2020</td>
<td>Bahya Lepan for 8 days</td>
<td>Aragvadha Patra paste + curd</td>
<td>35-40 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10/march/2020</td>
<td>Raktamokshan Karma</td>
<td>Leech – 4 in number</td>
<td>Until leech leaves the site of bite itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>16/march/2020</td>
<td>Raktamokshan Karma</td>
<td>Leech – 4 in number</td>
<td>Until leech leaves the site of bite itself</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Raktamokshana* was performed as per the procedure mentioned in Ayurvedic text.

**Fig 5:** Showing changes after proper Shodhan.
Before treatment                        After treatment

**Result:** *Panchkarma* is a specific method to expel out the morbid *Doshas* from the body and helping the normal physiology to continue. It is popularly practised for the management of many chronic and typical disorders. The patient was observed during the different steps of treatment for the accessing the changes in the skin lesions (skin colour, plaques, itching, scales, erythema) and to access the efficacy of the procedures. In the beginning of the treatment there were slight changes in the skin lesions like redness and scaling was reduced in some percentile hence there was mild progress in the condition. The improvement was slow, gradual and steady, which resulted with positive outcome and great results. Gradually with proper sitting of *Shodhana* at regular intervals, the scaling of skin decreased, plaques were removed by a normal skin with no erythema, no itching and finally lesion disappeared, and the normal skin started appearing.

Dermatological examination was done on regular intervals and PASI (Psoriasis area severity index) score was taken for assessment parameter of improvement. There was significant reduction in PASI score after *Shodhana Karma* (purification therapies).

**After treatment PASI score**

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DISCUSSION

Health as per Ayurvedic text is quoted as “one who have equilibrium in Dosha, normalcy in Agni, equilibrium in Dhatu, Mala and other physiological activities, delighted atma Mansa Indriya is considered as healthy (Swastha). To attain this equilibrium and normalcy in the body Samsodhan Karma has been explained to detoxify the morbid Doshas out of the body. Ekkustha is a Vatakapha Pradhana Vyadhi which is characterised by unhydrosis, fishy silvery scaling along with red patches over the skin. For such disorders Raktamokshan is the line of treatment to expel out the vitiated Rakta and Pitta henceforth breaking the Samprapti (pathophysiology) of the disease. Raktamokshan Karma was followed by Bahya Lepan Karma which is very much indicated in Samshristha Avastha of Vata and Kapha Dosha and is main Pitta Dosha. Raktamokshan pacifying the morbid Pitta and help Bhrajak Pitta to carry out its function normally hence helping the skin lesions to heal.

CONCLUSION

The complete course of Panchakarma including Vaman, Virechan, Raktamokshana etc. are very safe and effective methods in management of psoriasis. And it is helpful in preventing the reoccurrence of the disease. Panchakarma was done as per Ayurvedic text by properly following the Poorva Karma and Paschyat Karma (Samsarjan Karma). This case study reviles the effect of repeated Shodhan Karma (Panchakarma) in psoriasis. Thus, repeated Panchakarma should be done with a strategy to manage such diseases. As quoted in Ayurvedic texts:

पक्षात्पक्षाच्छर्दनान्यभ्युपेयान्मासान्मासात् स्नन्संनञ्चाप्यध्सस्नतात् ||

त्रयहात् त्र्यहात्न्नस्नततश्चावपीङान्मासेष्वस्त्रं मोक्षयेत् षट्सुषट्सु || चक्रपाणी 2

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3. Psoriasis Area Severity Index on Wikipedia
4. Charak Samhita based on Chakrapani Datta’s Ayurveda Dipika, Author name Dr. Ram Karam Sharma and Vaidya Bhagwan- Dash, Reprint edition 2007, Delhi, Published by Chaukhamba Sanskrita Series, Volume 1, Charak Nidana Sthana Chapter 5.

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