



EFFECT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS IN KESHA VIKARA (HAIR RELATED DISORDERS): A REVIEW ARTICLE

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<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj3409082021>

(Published Online: August 2021)

Open Access

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Article Received: 23/07//2021 - Peer Reviewed: 02/08/2021 - Accepted for Publication: 03/08/2021



ABSTRACT

Trichology is the study of hair and scalp, the Ayurvedic classics presents many such contexts which can contribute to understanding the concept of trichology in Ayurveda. Hair related disorders are one of the challenging diseases in today's world, where every person is conscious about their outer physical appearance, hair being one of most of the most important features. Nowadays, Stress has been one of the leading roles in causing diseases, many studies depict the relation of stress and hair related disorders also. Understanding and analyzing the various concept of trichology in Ayurveda, correlating with the other established studies would aid in a proper understanding of the role of a psychological factor in the causation of *Kesha Vikara* (Hair related disorder).

Keywords: Ayurveda, trichology, psychological factors, hair related disorder.

INTRODUCTION

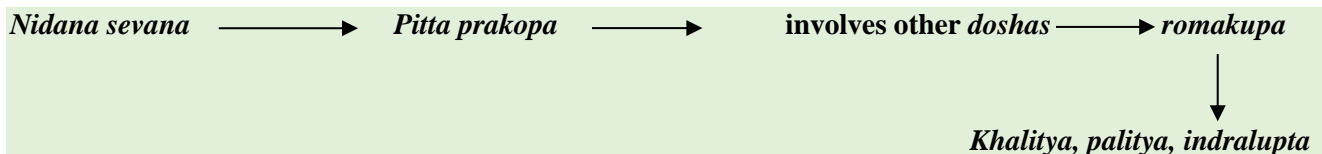
'Let your hair do the talking' The sayings highlight the significant role of hair for every person in society. It associates with youthfulness and beauty in women or masculinity and virility in men. It is an indicator of both social and professional status. *Ayurveda*, which propagates equal importance to curative and preventive aspects have described hair in a various context which can be co-related to Trichology, the study of hair and scalp. Hair is one of the important features in terms of appearance, has many other roles for the maintenance of health. Since the medieval period, it has been one of the neglected parameters. In the present scenario with the increased level of lifestyle disorders, the need for understanding the preventive aspects stands first. Many psychological factors like stressful situations, anxiety etc. are considered to have a leading role in the aetiology of hair related disorders. Trichology, being one of the important parameters to understand these disorders, a detailed study as per the reference given in *Ayurveda* is required. *Ayurveda* presents many such contextual presentations of psychological concepts in *Kesha vikara* (hair related disorders). Increased level of psychological factors hampering the normal physiology of hair is to be considered and analyzed.

MATERIAL AND METHOD:

Along with the multiple pathophysiological factors affecting hair, there is a very broad spectrum of possible psychological disorders related to hair disorders. Even though works and researches are being done, a complete understanding is still insufficient. As per *Ayurveda*, the study of the pathogenesis of hair related disorders and the *Dosha* involved provides a better understanding of the psychological impact. To understand the role of psychological factors in Hair related disorders according to *Ayurveda*, first most the general *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) of hair related disorders is considered, after which the other concepts can be correlated and analyzed to conclude.

1. Samprapti (pathogenesis) of hair related disorders in *Ayurveda*:

Hair related disorders are given differently by the various *Acharyas*. *Acharya Susruta* has mentioned *Darunaka* (dandruff), *Indralupta* (hair fall), *pallitya* (greying of hair), *Arumshika*.¹ *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned *Khalitya – pallitya* (hair fall and greying of hair).² Considering the pathogenesis of all of these disorders, the main aetiology is the involvement of *Pitta dosha* with other *Dosha*.



2. Role of psychological disorder in hair-related disorders:

Analysing the general *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) following inferences are interpreted:

- i. **Psychological factor causes MANDAGNI leading to an improper formation of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala-KESHA*.**

A/c Su. Su.46.500,501 – food is taken with *IRSHYA*(jealousy), *BHAYA*(fear), *KRODHA* (anger) ,*LOBHI* (desire) etc³

↓
This leads to improper *Anna Pachana* (digestion)

↓
Which can be taken as *Mandagni*



Improper Ahara rasa and successive Dhatu formation.



Rasa Janya vikaras (Ch.Su.28.9) - Pallitya ⁴

- ii. Psychological factors like *Adheeka krodha*(excessive anger), *adheeka shoka* (excessive depression), *adheeka shrama* (psychological exertion) leads to hair related disorders especially *Palitya*.⁵

Adheeka krodha, shoka, shrama



Increased *ushma* in the *Shiras*



Does pakti of Roma/Palitya

- iii. Considering *PITTA* – main *Doshas* in all *Kesha vikara* (hair related disorders).



Nidana of all *pittaja nanatmaja vikara*, *pitta jwara*, *kamala*, *pandu*, *pitta arshas* if observed are due to *Manseeka*(Psychological) causes like *krodha*, *shoka*, *bhaya* etc.



Thus it is inferred that *Pitta* aggravates due to psychological causes.

Pitta is the main *Doshas* causing hair related disorders. Understanding these concepts, it is understood that all psychological factors lead to *Pitta* aggravation and this in turn along with other doshas would either affect the *ahara paka krama* and alter the process of formation of hair or directly migrate to *romakupa* (scalp) and produces symptoms.

3. Stress and hair: On exposure to Stress various hormones are released as a response, known as the stress hormones. All living organisms are constantly challenged by a diversity of exogenous (environmental, psychological, social) and endogenous stimuli or stressors, which induce general or local biological responses to protect or adapt the organism to the stressors.⁶ The systemic biological response of the organism to exogenous stressors includes activation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis and release of specific hormones, which in turn modulate the function of various systems of the body.⁷ The hair follicle is richly innervated by sensory and autonomic nerve fibres. These nerve fibres form networks around the outer root sheath of the Hair follicle, they function as mechanoreceptors for all the neurotransmitters, hormones etc. There is various evidence that suggests that the neurohormones,

cytokines released during the stress response may significantly influence the hair cycle.⁸ Actively growing hair follicles in mice and humans show expression of CRH-R1 and melanocortin-1 receptor(MC-1R) in the follicular epithelium and mesenchyme.⁹ Administration of ACTH induces premature hair follicle anagen-catagen transition.¹⁰ Glucocorticoids stimulate apoptosis in the follicular epithelium leading to premature hair follicle involution.¹¹

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda presents many aspects of Trichology, the general *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) of hair related disorders signifies that pitta is the main *dosha* in *Kesha vikara* (hair related disorders). Psychological factor causes *Mandagni* leading to an improper formation of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala- Kesha* according to Sushruta Acharya, Charaka further mentioned *Mandagni* for improper rasa formation, which will cause *Rasajanya Vikara* like *Palitya*. Also, Sushruta Acharya quoted a direct concept where psychological factors like *Adheeka krodha*(excessive anger), *adheeka shoka* (excessive depression), *adheeka shrama* (psychological exertion) leads to hair related disorders

especially *Palitya*. Another concept where it is observed that in all pittaja Vikara (diseases caused due to Pitta dosha), *Mansika Nidana* (psychological aetiology) have been mentioned, and considering *Pitta* as the main *Doshas* in all hair related disorders, the psychological factor in hair related disorder can be considered. All psychological factors lead to *Pitta* aggravation which along with other doshas would either affect the *ahara paka krama* (digestion process) and alter the process of formation of hair or directly migrate to *romakupa* (scalp) to produce hair-related symptoms. There is various evidence that suggests that the stress hormones, neurohormones, cytokines released during the stress response may significantly influence the hair cycle. Co-relating as per the contemporary view where it can be inferred that all psychological stress causes aggravation of stress hormones which can be correlated as *Pitta dosha* which according to Ayurveda is the main dosha in the causation of *Kesha vikara* (hair related disorders).

CONCLUSION

Along with the multiple pathophysiological factors affecting hair, there is a very broad spectrum of possible psychological disorders related to hair disorders. As per Ayurveda, the study of the pathogenesis of hair related disorders and the *Dosha* involved provided a better understanding of the psychological impact. Correlating the general *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) of hair related disorders with other *Ayurvedic* concepts like *Rasajanya vikara*, the pathogenesis of *Palitya* according to *Sushruta*, *pitta vikara* (diseases caused due to *Pitta dosha*) and their aetiology reveals that psychological factor plays an important role in the causation of *kesha vikara* (hair related disorders).

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Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Verity Markhap et al: Effect of Psychological Factors In Kesha Vikara (Hair Related Disorders): A Review Articles. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2021 {cited August 2021} Available from:

http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/1815_1818.pdf