

## AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF SHITPITTA W.S.R. TO URTICARIA- A CASE REPORT

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<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj4609082021>

(Published Online: August 2021)

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Article Received: 09/07//2021 - Peer Reviewed: 14/07/2021 - Accepted for Publication: 15/07/2021



### ABSTRACT

Urticaria is an allergic reaction of the skin to a variety of exogenous and endogenous antigens. It is a common disease nowadays, characterized by pale red rashes and severe itching caused by an allergic reaction. Vascular dilatation, the resultant dermal oedema and pruritis are due to the releases of histamine and other mediators from mast cells. Ayurvedic classics mentioned this similar condition as *shitpitta*, among *twakroga* which is *vaatpradhan tridosha* in nature. Symptoms mentioned by *aacharyas* are *shotha*, *toda*, *kandu* and *daha*. Even after the availability of newer medicine, there is a lack of promising results against this ailment. Moreover, the use of drugs like antihistamines and corticosteroids lead to various side effects. The study aims to evaluate the effect of ayurvedic treatment in the management of *shitpitta* with special reference to urticaria. This study deals with a case of chronic urticaria, where a male patient was given an ayurvedic therapy which included *shodhan-shamanaushadi* and *sthanik* treatment on an OPD basis for 3 months. Criteria's like *shotha*, *toda*, *kandu* and *daha* were assessed before and after the treatment & significant result was found. The conclusion was drawn that given ayurvedic therapy was found to be significantly effective in the management of urticaria.

**Keywords:** *Shitpitta*, *Twakroga*, Urticaria, *Shodhan*, *Shamana*

### INTRODUCTION

As per the modern aspect, *shitpitta* is correlated with urticaria. It is described as primary cutaneous disorder

consisting of a recurrent, transient, cutaneous swelling with the erythema. There is a formation of 'wheal &

flare' cutaneous lesions involving only the superficial portion of the dermis.<sup>1</sup> The lesion varies in size from 1mm to several centimetres. It is defined as evanescent discrete areas of dermal oedema, often centrally white due to masking of local blood supply by fluid.<sup>2</sup> There are multiple potential causes for it. Most causes are idiopathic, other causes include allergies to endogenous and exogenous agents and physical forms (like heat, cold, friction and vibration).<sup>3</sup> Epidemiology of urticaria is increasing nowadays due to industrialization and agriculture. Approximately 15 to 20 % of the general population will have urticaria, at least once during their lifetime. A person of any age may experience urticaria, but it occurs most frequently after adolescence, with the highest incidence in young adults. Urticaria is classified into two types according to its duration. 1. Acute urticaria-it is of less than 6 weeks duration, 2. Chronic urticaria- it is of more than 6 weeks duration, with daily or episodic wheals. Due to urbanization, lifestyle is changed a lot, dietary habits are also changed; use of chemicals for fertilization and preparation of food, more use of junk food and packed food is found. All these conditions lead to the vitiation of *dosha* and *dhatu*. *Shitpitta* is a condition where all three *dosha* gets vitiated but *vata* vitiation is more. *Dhatu* involved in this is mainly *rasa* and *rakta*. In modern science, it has only symptomatic treatment (with antihistamines and steroids) and does not constitute a complete cure. Prolonged administration is often required, this places the patient at risk of adverse effects. Treatment for *shitpitta* according to ayurveda include both *shodhan* and *shaman chikitsa*. Various *aushadhi yoga* is mentioned for *udarda*, *kotha* which can also be used for *shitpitta*. The main advantage of ayurvedic treatment is that it helps to control the recurrence and severity of *shitpitta* with the correct use of *shodhan* and *shaman chikitsa* and *pathya-apathya palana*.

### **PATHOPHYSIOLOGY**

Most cases of urticaria are reactions of type 1 hypersensitivity which are mediated by IgE antibodies fixed on the mast cells, located on the surface of tissue mast cells and basophils. The antigen reaches the skin via the bloodstream, react with IgE antibodies fixed on

the mast cell. This leads to mast cell degranulation and release of histamine & other vasoactive mediators, which is the basis of urticaria. These mediators act on the vascular epithelium and cause vasodilatation and result in erythema, swelling and itching.<sup>4</sup> All these phenomena result in the formation of wheals. *Samprapti* of *shitpitta* occurs due to *hetusevan* (*katu*, *amla*, *lavana rasa* and *ushna*, *tikshan guna pradhana*) *agnimandya* and *apakva aahararasa* is produced, which is *vidagdha* in nature. It leads to *vidagdha* & *abhishyandi guna vriddhi* in *rasa- raktadi dhatu* and same *gunatmaka kapha pitta dosha* are produced. There is an indulgence of simultaneous *vata prakopaka hetu*, *tiryak gati* of *vata* spreads these *doshas* all over the body, and *sthana sanshraya* at *twak* occurs. Thus, due to *tikshna*, *ushna*, *vidagdha guna* symptoms like *saurambha*, *toda*, *kandu* & *daha* are produced.<sup>5</sup>

### **CASE STUDY**

A 50-year male patient, a fisherman by occupation, came to OPD with complaints of rashes and itching all over the body (on and off) for 2 years. The frequency of appearance of lesions was 2-3 times/week. The itching was severe, the patient was taking antihistamines during each attack (2 to 3 times a week).

On examination, the lesions were reddish, with wheals over the back region. It had severe itching, burning sensation, swelling and a pricking sensation also. There was no discharge or exudation seen. Symptoms were aggravated during exposure to cold and during the night.

No H/O DM/HTN/BA/or any other major illness

H/O alcohol addiction since for 5 years (taking once or twice a week), Family history- bronchial asthma to mother, Diet history – was taking nonveg (eggs and fishes) 3 to 4 times a week, taking spicy and oily diet, food predominance in *lavana*, *katu* and *amla rasa* (curd, pickle, papad etc.), History of repeated exposure to cold environment. Systemic examination- CVS- S<sub>1</sub>S<sub>2</sub> normal, CNS- conscious & oriented, RS- AEBE Clear, all routine blood investigations were done. *Rugna prakruti* was *pitta-vata pradhan* and *dosh-dushti* was *tridoshaja*.

## TREATMENT GIVEN

### Oral Drugs:

1. *Aarogyavardhani vati* 500mg BD
2. *Aaragvatha Kapila vati* 1gm HS daily
3. *Haridrakhanda* 5gm BD
4. *Mahamanjishthadi kwatha* 30cc BD
5. *Bhringaraja aasava* 30 cc BD

*Sthanik* treatment: *Bruhat marichyadi taila* was given for local application over lesions

*Shodhana: Siravedha* was done – 3 sittings

The above said treatment was given for 3 months and the patient was advised to give follow-up every 15 days. Criteria were assessed before and after the treatment i.e. after 3 months.

## OBSERVATION AND RESULT

**Table 1:** Parameters of assessment

Parameters of assessment	Before treatment	After treatment
1. Shotha (edema)	++	+
2. Toda (pricking sensation)	+++	+
3. Kandu (itching)	+++	+
4. Daha (burning sensation)	++	-
5. No of wheals	(11 to 30)	(<10)
6. Size of lesions	(>3cm)	(1-3 cm)
7. Frequency of appearance	(2-3 times a week)	Once a week
8. Frequency of use of antihistamines	(2-3 times a week)	Not required

{Mild (occasionally) - +, Moderate (disturbing normal activity) - ++, Severe (disturbing sleep) - +++}



**Fig. 1** [Before treatment]



**Fig. 2** [After treatment]

## DISCUSSION

In present case report, etiopathogenesis (*samprapti*) of the disease can be postulated as, *hetusevana like aahara- katu, amla, lavana rasa pradhan and ushna, tikshna guna pradhan* (eg. nonveg, chillies, pickle, curd, papad, alcohol) leads to *agnimandya and aama aahara rasa nirmitti (vidagdha, ushna, tikshna,*

*abhishyandi gunatmaka)*. *Rasa and rakta dhatu* are also produced of same properties, *vidagdha, ushna* and *abhishyandi guna vriddhi* of *kapha pitta dosha* occurs. Simultaneous indulgence of exposure to cold environment (eg. drinking cold water, ice-cream, *shita rutu, shita jala & vayu sparsh*) leads to *shita* and *chala guna vriddhi* of *vata dosha*. Both these factors lead to

avarodh to prakruta gati of vata dosha. Due to tiryak gati of vata, vidagdha, abhishyandi, ushna, tikshna guna kapha pitta dosha are spread through whole body, sthansanshraya at twacha occurs and asahtva is produced. Symptoms like saurambha, aaraktata, kandu etc are produced.

Probable mode of action of medicines, **Aaragvadha Kapila** tablet- It contains aaragvadha, which is rechan and said to be koshtashuddikar.<sup>6</sup> Thus helps in Kapha-pitta shodhana. It also has anti-inflammatory action. It contains kampillak which is also rechana and acts as rakta-shodhana. **Aarogyavardhani vati**- It contains parad -gandhak kajjali which is sukshma strotogami and yogavahi, it does strotoshodhana. It acts as kledahara and shothahara. Kutaki act as yakruttojak and acts on rasa rakta dhatu. Chitrak helps in normalizing dhatwagni. **Haridrakhanda**- It contains triphala, trivrutta which act as rechana and helps in pittarechana. Musta and nagakeshar acts on rakta dhatvagni & helps in rakta prasadana. Haridra is tikta, ushna helps in relieving itching. **Mahamanjishthadi kwath**- it helps in balancing vitiation of doshas, particularly effective in maintaining pitta dosha. It acts as a blood purifier, helps in maintaining healthy blood circulation. **Bhringarajasava**- it contains bhringaraja as the main ingredient. It is katu, ushna acts on the liver, helps in regulation of pitta dosha. It also has anti-allergic and anti-inflammatory properties.<sup>7</sup> **Bruhat marichyadi tail**- its main ingredient is maricha and sarshapa taila, which act as kapha pachana and vata shamana and helps in relieving itching. **Siravedha**- letting out of vitiated blood is siravedha. It improves micro-circulation in the sira and help in reducing oedema, itching and burning.

## CONCLUSION

The ayurvedic management given in shitpita, showed significant improvement. This was a case study, where multiple ayurvedic medicines were given and local applications used, which gave relief to the patient symptomatically. But still, further study is needed for more evaluation.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge my guide Dr. Meenakshi Rewadkar-Kole (Associate professor, Kayachikitsa department), this article was supported by her. I also thank my colleagues and our medical institute.

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Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Ashwini Shere & Rewadkar-Kole Meenakshi: Ayurvedic Management Of Shitpitta W.S.R. To Urticaria- A Case Report. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2021 {cited August 2021} Available from: [http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/1894\\_1897.pdf](http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/1894_1897.pdf)