

**EFFECT OF PRACCHANA IN VICHARCHIKA – A CASE STUDY**Muhammed Safeeque E.K¹, Sivakumar C.S², Sreelekha M.P³

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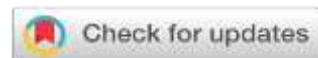
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**ABSTRACT**

Vicharchika (eczematous skin lesion) is one among *Kshudrakushta* (minor skin disease) and also coming under *Raktapradoshaja Vikara* (blood vitiated condition), having the involvement of three *Dosha* with the dominance of *Kapha*. According to *Susrutha*, it is *Pitta* predominant in nature. *Lakshanas* of *Vicharchika* includes *Kandu* (itching), *Pidaka* (papulation), *Syava varna* (discoloration), and *Lasika srava* (oozing). Most of these features show similarities with symptoms of Eczema. In *Vicharchika*, there is localized vitiation of blood. Hence *Rakthamoksha* (bloodletting) by *Pracchana* is an effective method of treatment. Here a patient with signs and symptoms of *Vicharchika* came to the OPD and she underwent a single sitting of *Pracchana* along with *Patolakaturohinyadi kashaya* 90 ml and 1 *Kaishora guggulu* tablet internally in the morning and evening and *kshalana* of the affected area is done with *Thriphala kashaya* twice daily for 21 days. Clinical assessments and the changes in local blood parameters were analysed before and after the treatment. The result showed that *Pracchana* along with medication shows an effect in reducing *kandu*, *shyava*, and *Lasika srava* of *Vicharchika* and improving local blood parameters -Total WBC, Eosinophil, ESR, pCO₂, and pO₂.

Keywords: *Pracchana*, *Vicharchika*, eczema

INTRODUCTION

Vicharchika is one among eighteen skin diseases mentioned in Ayurveda¹. It is a common and distressing condition that is perplexing to the patient and physician alike. Being a type of *kushta*, recurrence and chronicity are common for this disease. The common features like *Kandu* (itching), *Pidaka* (papules), *Syava* (pigmentation), and *Srava* (oozing)² show similarity with symptoms of the disease entity eczema. Eczema is a polymorphic inflammatory reaction pattern of the skin involving the epidermis and dermis which is well known for its remission and exacerbation. The prevalence of the disease has been reported to be one-third of the total cases of skin disease.

The word 'eczema' is derived from a Greek word meaning "to boil over" which gives a good description of its features³. The most common symptoms include inflammation of the upper layer of skin causing itching, blisters, redness, swelling, and often oozing, scabbing, and scaling. The etiology of eczema remains unclear but is likely to be multifactorial in nature involving genetic and environmental factors.

Ayurveda considers *Rakthadushti* as one of the prime causes of skin diseases and a *Rakthamoksha* gives a considerable quick relief from the symptoms in those patients. As *Vicharchika* is a localized skin lesion, *Pracchana* is the preferable mode of *rakthamoksha* to be adopted here.

Pracchana is a technique of letting the vitiated blood out of the body from a localised lesion in the superficial layer of the skin. This is done through artificially made cut wounds in the skin with the help of a sharp, pointed surgical instrument. The derivation of the word *Pracchana* is from the root 'cho' means to cut, to cut off, or cut as under⁴. The literal meaning of *Pracchana* is 'quick sharp incisions' The indication of *Pracchana* is a mild congregation of vitiated doshas, with raktam, in a single or localised region of the skin, when the blood is stagnated and coagulated in

the layers of skin etc⁵. In *Pracchana* blood is drained along with the stagnated fluids (*Rasa* and *Laseeka*) rich with the deraanged doshas. Every Cut that is made in the skin drains the area of about one Angula⁶.

The *Pracchana karma* is a very simple procedure of small superficial incisions in a specific pattern. It can be performed at the OPD level with the help of a surgical blade with full aseptic caution. It does not need any anaesthesia or any added care. In *Pracchana*, we are creating some pricking wounds over the skin of the affected area. Hence, we are inducing an acute physiological inflammatory response in that area which will promote the healing of the wound as well as the skin disease⁷. Removal of blood in the affected skin area reduces oedema and venous stasis in that region. This pathophysiological response will improve local haematological parameters and enhance micro circulation and nourishment to that area which in turn promotes the curing of the disease.

Patient information

A 59-year-old female came to the OP with blackish skin lesions on the lateral aspect of the right lower limb with more than 2 years of chronicity. It was associated with severe itching, occasional oozing, and few papulations. There was no pain associated with it. The complaints increased with exposure to cold and rain. The lesion was in an oval shape with a dimension of 6*5 cm

Treatment given

She was given *virechana* on the first day with *Avipathi choorna* 10 gm along with hot water before starting the treatment. Internal medications - *Patolaka-turohinyadi kashaya* 90 ml in morning and evening before food and *Kaishoraguggulu* tab 1-0-1 with *kashaya* for 21 days. *Kshalana* with *Thriphala kashaya* was done externally. *Pracchana* has done on the 8th day.



Before treatment



During Pracchana



After treatment

PRACCHANA KARMA

Poorvakarma (pre-operative procedure) - The patient is made to sit in a comfortable position. The affected part is first applied with *Sneha- Dineshakeram*. Then *Swedana* by using cotton dipped in hot water. A tourniquet is applied above the area.

Pradhana karma (operative procedure) - *Pracchana* of the prepared part is done with the No.11 surgical blade. The affected part is pricked in rows starting from below to above and left to right with a 1 cm gap in between pricks.

Paschat karma (post-operative procedure) - The blood is wiped out with sterile cotton. The dressing will be done with- turmeric powder and *murivenna* till the wound is healing.

Observation and result

Clinical assessments

Sl. No	Parameters	Before treatment	After treatment
1	<i>Kandu</i> (itching)	Grade 3	Grade 1
2	<i>Pidaka</i> (papulation)	Grade 1	Grade 1
3	<i>Syava</i> (pigmentation)	Grade 3	Grade 2
4	<i>Lasika</i> (oozing)	Grade 2	Grade 0

Local haematological parameters

Sl. No	Parameters	Before treatment	After treatment
1	WBC Count	7300 cells / cu.mm	5800 cells / cu.mm
2	Eosinophil	4 %	2 %
3	ESR	23 mm/hr	15 mm/hr
4	pCO ₂	53.1 mmHg	42 mmHg
5	pO ₂	35 mmHg	43.3 mmHg

Grading of assessment of parameters

***Kandu* (Itching)**

Grade 0 – absent

Grade 1 - Present once every 1-3 days
 Grade 2 - Present daily with <3 exacerbation
 Grade 3 - Very often exacerbation with disturbance of sleep

Pidaka (papulation)

Grade 0	-	Absent
Grade 1	-	Pidaka < 5 in the affected part
Grade 2	-	Pidaka 5- 10 in the affected area
Grade 3	-	Many or uncountable <i>Pidaka</i> in the affected area

Syava (Pigmentation)

Grade 0	-	Normal skin colour
Grade 1	-	Syava raktha / Syava pandutha (white light gray)
Grade 2	-	Syava (gray/ brown)
Grade 3	-	Syava Krishna (black)

Srava (oozing)

Grade 0	-	No srava
Grade 1	-	Srava at the time of scratching only
Grade 2	-	Occasionally
Grade 3	-	Frequent

DISCUSSION

Susrutha provides practical guidelines for blood-letting and claims it as the most effective therapy and it comprises half of the treatment. Among the methods for bloodletting, *Pracchana karma* is the ideal method to expel the vitiated blood safely, quickly, and effectively in localised vitiation of blood. Vitiation of *raktha* is the prime cause of skin diseases and *Vicharchika* is a localized skin lesion. Hence *Pracchana* is the preferable mode of *Rakthamoksha* in *Vicharchika*.

Discussion on data of outcome parameters

Kandu (itching): Here *kandu* reduced significantly after treatment. Localised impure blood may provoke *Kapha dosha* and *kandu* is directly related to *Kapha dosha*. Hence the removal of vitiated blood from that area also pacifies the vitiated *kapha*, which in turn reduces *Kandu*.

On the other hand, Itching is driven by a variety of mediators that interact with receptors and channels present on the surface of nerve fibers. These nerve fibers usually end in a dermo-epidermal layer of the skin. Hence the inflammatory and healing process

after *Pracchana* may also reduce the sensation of itching in that area.

Syava (pigmentation): Melanocytes are the epidermal cells that give skin its colour by producing melanin. Hyper-pigmentation in eczema is caused by inflammation, which stimulates the melanocytes to increase melanin synthesis. This increase in synthesis results in hyper pigmentation of the skin.

Hence, the skin colour becomes normal with a reduction in inflammation. But the time for complete regeneration of skin may take up to 84 days. So, it may take more time to get a better result.

Lasika (oozing): The result shows a significant reduction of oozing in *Vicharchika*. Whatever oozed out from a cut made in the process of *Pracchana* cannot be taken as blood alone. In its exact meaning here, the *dushtaraktam* includes the stagnated fluid from the cellular and inter-cellular spaces. These fluids will be called *Srava* when they ooze out as a sign of disease. *Pracchana* reduces intra vascular fluid pressure & intracellular oedema in that area. Also, the healing process following *Pracchana* may reduce oozing

TWBC: TWBC was found reduced after *Pracchana*. White blood cells are part of the body's immune system. They help the body fight against infection and inflammation. Here the decreasing TWBC count indicates decreased inflammation in that area after treatment

Eosinophil: Eosinophils are mainly responsible for allergic and infective reactions. It increases skin diseases and chronic inflammatory conditions. Decreased eosinophil value indicates reduced infection, chronic inflammation, and allergic reaction in that area.

ESR: The ESR before the treatment was 23 mm/hr and after the treatment, it was decreased to 15 mm/hr. Erythrocyte sedimentation rate increases in infectious and inflammatory conditions. A reduction in ESR value indicates reduced infection and inflammation in that area.

pO₂: Here pO₂ increased after the treatment. Removal of blood in the affected skin area reduces intra vascular fluid pressure, intracellular oedema, and ve-

nous stasis in that region. This pathophysiological response increases oxygen concentration in micro vessels. Here the increased pO₂ level after *Pracchana* is due to increased micro vascularization. In the skin, low oxygenated blood causes poor health conditions of the skin which in turn causes itching, discoloration, ulceration, etc. so improvement in pO₂ level also causes a reduction of the signs and symptoms of *Vicharchika*.

pCO₂: The result shows *Pracchana* has a reducing effect on pCO₂ level. After performing *Pracchana*, the superficial sensory nerves get stimulated which leads to the dilatation of local blood vessels resulting in increased blood circulation. Apart from this it also decreases the viscosity of blood and helps in the removal of accumulated waste products. It promotes inter cellular exchange of gaseous and other substances.

The effect of *Pracchana* can be analysed as follows:

1. It drains off the fluid rich in pathogenic factors (vitiated *Dosha*) from the skin layers and blocked *Srotas* (channels).
2. It stops passively the pathogenic factors from getting into the general circulation by draining them from the site of their collection.
3. It helps for the improvement of circulation of blood and tissue fluids by removing the obstructions.
4. It reduces chronic inflammation locally.

The utility of *Pracchana* in *Vicharchika* is:

1. It minimises the severity of the disease immediately and gives great relief to the patient.
2. It enables the person to maintain only the minimum required medicines.
3. It minimises the chances of recurrences when done properly.

4. The process is quite economical and not time-consuming.

CONCLUSION

Vicharchika is a *kshudra kushta* and also coming under *raktha pradoshaja vikara*. The main symptoms of *Vicharchika* are *Kandu* (itching), *Pidaka* (boils), *Syava* (discolouration), and *Srava* (oozing). The symptomatology of *Vicharchika* is similar to that of eczema. *Vicharchika* is a localized skin lesion, hence *Pracchana* is the preferable mode of *rakthamoksha*. *Pracchana* shows clinical significance in reducing *kandu*, *shyava*, and *lasika* of *Vicharchika* and improving local hematological parameters- Total WBC, eosinophil count, ESR, pCO₂, and pO₂.

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