INTRODUCTION

‘Urticaria’ is a disease characterized by itchy red rashes on skin on almost all over the body. In Ayurveda, Urticaria can be taken as ‘Śitapitta, Udarda & Koṭha’, as having similar symptomatology and causative factors as Urticaria. So, various types of ‘Urticaria’ can be taken as ‘Śitapitta, Udarda & Koṭha’. Though the disease, ‘Urticaria’ is not a life threatening, it makes worried the patient due to its appearance, severe itching disturbing routine and its nature susceptible to be chronic. Urticaria affects 20% of people at some point in their lifetime. The exact aetiology is unknown but some immunological factors play some role in its etiopathology. The sensitization towards antibody or allergen causes the pathology of Urticaria. Therefore, the challenge for the clinician is to try to identify a cause that could lead to a specific treatment or avoidance strategy. A carefully taken history may provide the clues to specific mechanisms in some cases. Often, however, it is impossible to pinpoint the exact cause. Modern medicine not having any remedy for permanent cure but remission of the disease can be achieved administering the medicine. Patients have to take those medicines for lifetime, which are having some unwanted side effects.

‘Mādhavakara’ described ‘Śitapitta and Udarda’ as synonyms of each other; but then he quoted that ‘Śitapitta’ having ‘Vātika dominancy’ while ‘Udarda’ having ‘Kaphaja dominan-
Talekar Manisha At Al: Tincidence Of Śitapitta, Udarda And Koṭha (Allergic Manifestation) In Context To Modern Dietary Habits

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cy’2 and also mentioned specific character of ‘Udarda’ as ‘Ma dala’ (rashes) having in-flamed edges with depressed center. 3

In the classics ‘Koṭha’ has been described as the ‘Itchy red rashes covering major part of skin and chronic in nature’. 4 Though these three Śitapitta, Udarda & Koṭha has been described as different entities, but they can be considered as different types of the ‘Śitapitta’ or ‘Urticaria’ as they all having same cardinal symptom i.e. ‘Itchy red rashes on the skin’. The western thinkers have considered it is an allergic condition. As mentioned Saṁhitā (classics), Viruddha Āhāra (incompatible diet) is one of the key roots for skin diseases. 5 Āyurveda attaches the greater importance to Nidāna (causative agents) and describes them in details as causes of diseases in diseases. Ācārya Suśruta mentioned that avoidance of Nidāna or causative factors is treatment.6 Hence to find out cause and effect relationship between Viruddha Āhāra (incompatible diet) and Śitapitta, Udarda & Koṭha (Urticaria), this survey study has been selected.

Aims and Objective: To perform a survey study (Epidemiological study) on specific types of Viruddha Āhāra (incompatible diet) in Śitapitta, Udarda & Koṭha (Urticaria).

Material and Methods:

Total 260 patients of Śitapitta, Udarda & Koṭha (Urticaria) fulfilling the diagnostic criteria viz. Severe itching (Kaṇdu), Pricking pain (Toda), Burning (Dāha), Rashes (Maṇdala) were selected after their informed consent irrespective to their age, sex, occupation, religion etc. from O.P.D. and I.P.D. of National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur. Survey was carried on the basis of specially prepared questionnaires. The questions of survey were based on examples of types of Viruddha Āhāra (incompatible diet) viz. De a (place), Kāla (time), Agni (digestive power), Mātrā (quantity), Sātmya (homologation), Do a (humours), Sa skāra (mode of preparation), Virya (potency) Ko ha (bowl), Avasthā (state of health), Krama (sequence), Parihāra (caution), Upacāra (treatment), Pāka (cooking), Sa yoga (combination), H daya (palatability), Sa pada (richness of quality), Vidhi (rules for eating) Viruddha described in Caraka Saṁhitā Sutrasthāna, & other Saṁhitās.

Observations:

In Survey study out of 260 patients, maximum patients (66.92%) were found in the age group of 20-35 years. 69.23% patients were female followed by 30.76% were male. Marital status in 260 patients of Urticaria revealed that maximum patients (62.69%) were unmarried. 60% patients were student. All patients (100%) were taking mixed diet (veg. & nonveg.). Regarding family history, 73.05% patients had no family history. 26.92% patients had positive history of allergy, skin diseases or asthma etc. in family. (Graph 1)

On considering the data of Śārirīka Prakṛti (body constitution), maximum i.e. 63.84% patients had Vāta- Pitta Prakṛti. In Mānasika Prakṛti, 69.61% patients had Rajo-Tama Prakṛti. 84.61% patients were having Avara Vyāyāmaśaktī. On analyzing the Agni (digestive power) of the patients it was found that, 92.69% patients were having Mandāgni (weak digestive power). All patients (100%) were found of Viruddha Āhāra consumer. (Graph 2)

Table: 1

Percentage prevalence of Patients according to Sātmya Viruddha in 260 patients of Urticaria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sātmya Viruddha Āhāra (food which is not habituated)</th>
<th>Number of Patients (n=260)</th>
<th>Percentage%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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On considering data of *Viruddha Āhāra* consumer in 260 patients of Urticaria. Egg, fish & meat were *Asātmya* (unacceptable) in 84.61%, 80.76% & 76.15% of patients respectively. Tomato, Milk, Curd & milk-products were *Asātmya* in all (100%) patients. This type of incompatible diet comes under *Sātmya Viruddha Āhāra* (incompatibility of homologation). *(Table 1)*

**Table: 2 Percentage prevalence of Patients according to Mātrā Viruddha in 260 patients of Urticaria:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mātrā Viruddha Āhāra</th>
<th>Number of Patients (n=260)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intake of Madhura like sugar and sweet food items in excessive quantity</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>80.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intake of Amla Rasa (food having sour taste) in excessive quantity</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>76.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intake of Snigdha Āhāra (unctuous food) like butter / Guru Āhāra like U adā &amp; Curd in excessive quantity</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intake of Lava a Rasa (salty) like pickle, papad, namkeen, spicy and salty food items</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>91.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intake of Navānna eg. Godhuma (newly germinated grains like wheat)</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>71.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intake of peanuts</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>63.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intake of citrus fruits in excess quantity viz. Orange, Lime, Tamarind</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>79.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserved &amp; packed food like canned foods with lots of sodium</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>76.15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data of incompatible diet consumer in 260 patients of Urticaria, all (100%) patients were consuming Snigdha Āhāra (unctuous food) like butter / Guru Āhāra (heavy food) like U adā & curd in excessive quantity. Intake of Lava a (salty) like pickle, papad, namkeen, spicy and salty food items was found in 91.92% patients. 80.38% patients were taking Madhura (sweet) like sugar and sweet food items in excessive quantity. Intake of citrus fruits in excess quantity viz. Orange, Lime, Tamarind was found in 79.61% patients. 76.92% patients were consuming Amla Rasa (food having sour taste). Consumption of preserved & packed food like canned foods with lots of sodium was found in 76.15% patients. Intake of Navānna eg Godhuma (newly germinated grains like wheat) & intake of peanuts was found in 71.92% & 63.46% patients respectively. This type of incompatible diet comes under Mātrā Viruddha Āhāra (incompatibility of quantity). *(Table 2)*

**DISCUSSION**

**Age:** In survey study, maximum no. of patients i.e. 66.92% belonged to age group of 20-30 years. This indicates more incidence of Urticaria in youngsters because of their uneven diet habit and due to exposure to food allergens (e.g., nuts, eggs,
fish, and milk), food additives and preservatives.

**Gender:** Out of 260 patients of Urticaria, 69.23% patients were female followed by 30.76% were male. This indicated its more incidence rate in females which supported by research works done by modern researchers.

**Marital Status:** Marital status in 260 patients shows that, maximum patients (62.69%) were unmarried. Even though, it is difficult to say that marital status has any relation with this disease. Probably, most of the patients were students so this result was found.

**Occupation:** Maximum patients (60%) were students. In this study maximum victims belong to student group because they were having irregular, improper, irrelevant diet habits, and regular intake of Viruddhā Āhāra (incompatible diet) & junk food.

**Diet pattern:** All patients (100%) of study were taking mixed diet (veg. & nonveg.) It may be due to dominancy of Hindu and Muslims religion in the area from where the patients were selected.

**Family history:** Regarding family history, 73.05% patients had no family history. 26.92% patients had positive history of allergy, skin diseases or asthma etc. in family. It indicates that, Urticaria disease have some relation with Bījado a (heredity). But that condition afflicts the Srotasa (body channels) & for the further progress of disease it needs particular Nidānas (cause).

**Śārirīka Prakṛti:** Majority of the patients i.e. 63.84% patients had Vāta-Pitta Prakṛti. These observations showed incidence of Urticaria is higher in Vāta-Pitta Prakṛti.

**Mānasika Prakṛti:** In this study, maximum numbers of patients (69.61%) were having Rajo-Tama Prakṛti. As mentioned in Āyurvedika classics it indicates that Rajo and Tamogu ṭ persons react more quietly to unfavourable condition.

**Vyāyāmaśakti (exercising power):** Maximum no. of patients (84.61%) was having Avara Vyāyāmaśakti (low exercising power). This observation supports the Āyurvedika claims because as mentioned in Caraka Sa hita one who does exercise daily remains unaffected by harmful effects of Viruddha Āhāra. 8,

**Agni:** On analysis of Agni of patients, it was found that maximum numbers of patients (92.69%) were having Mandāgni. Due to poor strength of Jātharāgni (digestive fire), a residue of Āhāra Rasa is still left behind undigested towards the end of digestion; it is then known as the Āma (undigested food toxin) which is initiator of pathogenesis of Urticaria. It is also mentioned in Sa hitas, Mandāgni patients can’t nullify the harmful effect of Viruddha Āhāra. 9,

**Viruddha Āhāra (incompatible diet) consumer:** Observations of etiological factors found in patients showed that, all patients (100%) were consuming Viruddha Āhāra.

**Prevalence of various types of Viruddha Āhāra:**

**Sātmya Viruddha Āhāra (incompatibility of homologation) (100%):** On considering data of Viruddha Āhāra consumer, prevalence of Sātmya Viruddha (100%) is more. The data of Sātmya Viruddha in 260 patients of Urticaria, shows that Egg, fish & meat were Asātmya (unacceptable) in 84.61%, 80.76% & 76.15% of patients respectively. Tomato, Milk, Curd & milk-products were Asātmya in all (100%) patients. Above observation supported the modern researches that numerous foods (eggs, milk, nuts, fish, selfish, wheat) have been blamed as a cause of Urticaria. 10,

(Table No.1) this is incompatibility of...
homologation. Sātmya is adaptability to any type of substances either beneficial or harmful. Hence in Sātmya Viruddha there is lack of adaptability of specific substances to body tissue which failed to accept or assimilate those substances in the body ultimately those substances act as a foreign body to give allergic reactions in many ways. An allergy is an immune failure in which person's body become hyposensitized to specific substances & react immunologically to typically non immunogenic substances with which other persons are very much comfortable. As mentioned in Āyurvedika texts, we can say that, Asātmya (unacceptable) is allergy today. 11, this type of allergy seems very common & can be incorporated as Sātmya Viruddha (incompatibility of homologation). Sātmya Viruddha is totally related to Śarīra (body) due to physiological changes has been observed to substances which are not adaptable to the body & there is no role of Manas (psyche) in the occurrence of allergy by Sātmya Viruddha. Mātra Viruddha Āhāra (incompatibility of quantity) (100%): On considering data of Viruddha Āhāra consumer, prevalence of Mātra Viruddha (100%) is also more. The data of Mātrā Viruddha in 260 patients of Urticaria reveals that, all (100%) patients were consuming Snigdha Āhāra (unctuous food) like butter / Guru Āhāra (U ada) & curd in excessive quantity. Intake of Lava ā (salty items) like pickle, papad, namkeen, spicy and salty food items was found in 91.92% patients. 80.38% patients were taking Madhura Rasa (sweet) like sugar and sweet food items in excessive quantity. Intake of citrus fruits in excess quantity viz. Orange, Lime, Tamarind was found in 79.61% patients. 76.92% patients were consuming Amla Rasa (food having sour taste). Consumption of preserved & packed food like canned foods with lots of sodium was found in 76.15% patients. Intake of Navānna (newly germinated grains like wheat) & Intake of peanuts was found in 71.92% & 63.46% patients respectively. (Table No.2) Diseases are the mirror images of the excess or less quantities of food which were taken by human beings. Here, Mātrā means quantity. Atimātrā (excessive quantity) & Hīnamātrā (less quantity) causing the increase & decrease in the Gu a (property) with which it is similar to the body element respectively giving rise to the Atiyogajanya (excessively) & Ayogajanya (deficiency) Vyādhī (diseases) belonging to that Gu a respectively. Guru Dravya (heavy food), Snigdha Bhojana (unctuous food), Dadhi (curd) which is Kaphaprakopaka and Abhiṣyandi Āhāra (food which causes blockage in body channels) are responsible factors for ‘Kaphaprakopa’ and production of ‘Mandāgni’, which plays major role in pathogenesis of ‘Śitapitta, Udarda & Koṭha’. They are also responsible for ‘Rasa Du ṭī’. Causes like Aṭilava a Sevana, Amla Rasa (intake of excessive salty & sour food) are responsible for Pitta Prakopa and Rakta Du ṭī’. On observation of survey study, it is hypothesized that, Agni mostly gets vitiated by Viruddha Āhāra. Viruddhāhāra are responsible for causing ‘Mandāgni’ and ultimately producing ‘Āma’ which having properties like ‘Viṣa’ (poison). Āmaviṣa (undigested food toxin) which is intensely toxic, may endanger life. As Viṣa possesses qualities which are totally antagonistic to ‘Ojas’ (essence of the body), its production leads eventually to the breakdown of immune system due to which body becomes vulnerable to produce diseases. He-tus (causes) like ‘Du ṭī a’ and ‘Vi a Annapāṇa’ are directly producing toxins-Vi adravya in body. The toxins are respon-
sible for ‘Tridosha Prakopa’ and ‘Rasa – Rakta Du tī’ in body.

According to contemporary science, Urticaria is allergic disorder. In Ayurveda, the concept of allergy can be simulated with the concept of Prak ti (body constitution). Yet, there is no appropriate similarity to the term allergy, however, reviewing the Ayurvedika texts we can think of following as parallel to concept of Allergy.

- Concept of Asātmya (unacceptable)
- Concept of Āma (undigested food products) particularly, which reacts as toxin.
- Concept of taking or using of incompatible articles.

CONCLUSION

Present survey study reveals that Viruddha Āhāra (incompatible diet) is an important aspect of today’s improper dietary habits. This can lead to ‘Dhātudurbalya’ (i.e. lower immunity) which causes sensitization towards allergens as well as antibodies and produces various types of allergic reactions. Consequently it is concluded that Viruddha Āhāra (incompatible food) is the mainly important etiological factor in Urticaria and should be avoided.

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