SWITRA: A CLINICAL APPROACH THROUGH AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT
Skin is the best indicator of general health. Skin is a mirror that reflects external and internal pathology, and thus helps in diagnosis of disease. It is the major sensory organ, as skin covers the whole body and is the first organ of the body interacting with environmental stimuli and has natural immunity. Switra is mentioned along with other types of Kushtha in Ayurvedic classics, caused due to vitiation of Tridosha and dhatus like Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa and Medas. Switra or Shweta-Kushtha can be co-related with skin disease "Vitiligo" in contemporary medicine. Vitiligo is an auto-immune disease against melanocyte characterised by depigmentation or hypo-pigmented patches. Vitiligo have major impact on quality of life of patients, many of Vitiligo patients feel distressed and stigmatized by their condition. Treatment available in contemporary medicine has its own limitations and side effects. Main line of treatment for switra in Ayurveda is punaha punaha Shodhana and Shamanoushadi.

Keywords: Switra, Nidana, Chikitsa, Vitiligo

INTRODUCTION
The skin is the largest and visible organ of the human body. The skin is one of the essential sense organs as the skin covers the whole body, bhrajaka pitta should be maintained in a proper state, and it needs continuous care. An imbalance in Vata and bhrajaka pitta may cause skin diseases. Switra is just not a disease of today’s era. The description of Switra is available since Vedic literature. The word Switra has its root in the Sanskrit word ‘Shweta’, which white patch¹ According to Kašyapa Samhita, Switra is, ‘Shweta Bhava Micchanti Switram’², This means reflection of white colour. Susruta called the disease as Kilasa instead of Switra. ‘Twagatm Eva Aparisravi’, means there is only involvement of skin and is Aparisravi i.e. non-exudative. Acharya Charaka has mentioned various causes out of which Virudhaaaharsevana, Papakarma important one. According to clinical manifestations Switra is more similar to Vitiligo. Vitiligo is a long term dermatological disorder characterized by patches of the skin losing their pigment. The patches of affected skin become white and the hairs from the affected skin may also become white. Vitiligo is hypopigmentation of the skin. It is also called hypo melanosis condition of the skin. This results in the destruction or hypo function of melanocyte. Melanocyte cell of the skin contains the Melanin which is very
important factor in respect of pigmentation. Proper Melanin synthesis into the melanocyte cell is essential for normal colour of the skin. According to modern medicine the cause of the Vitiligo is unknown till date. It may onset at any age but usually in childhood at 10 years of age or in second decade of life. It is Multifactorial disease. Genetic susceptibility is important factor in this case. Risk factors are positive family history, sufferings from inflammatory diseases or autoimmune diseases. Worldwide incidence of Vitiligo is observed in 1% of world population. Confirm diagnosis is possible by skin biopsy or tissue biopsy. 

Cardinal symptoms of Switra white coloured patches. So it is a cosmetic disfigurement, it affects human’s life psychologically. Treatment for Vitiligo in conventional medicine includes topical steroids, systemic steroids, topical PUVA, systemic PUVA, sometimes surgically grafting also done. PUVA therapy is having side effects like photo toxicity, hyperpigmentation, solar elastosis, cataract and squamous cell carcinoma in white skin individuals. UVB phototherapy is a safer alternative to PUVA therapy but is relatively expensive. It is a progressive disease, so treatment should start as quickly as possible. Acharya Vagbhata quotes that the fire should be controlled within time before it engulfs the burning forest. Acharya Charaka coated Switra under the Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara. Repeated application of Shodhana Karma as well as Shamana therapy is beneficial in this condition.

Nidana: 
Nidana of switra can be classified as 3 cataerogories, i.e.
1. Aharaja,
2. Viharaja and
3. Miscellaneous causes.

1. AHARAJA NIDANA: Ahara plays more important role than the medicine. Food is able to build up or repair tissue, protects against disease as supply material for the production of health and energy. Aharja Nidana can be divides as follows:
   A. Ati sevana
   B. Mithya Ahara
   C. Viruddha Ahara

A. Ati Sevana: Increased frequency of diet, increased consumption of Amla, Lavana, Katu and Kshara rasas, Guru and Snigdha Ahara, kshira, Payasaya, dhanya, Nishpava, Hayanaka, Udalaka, Kordusha, Kulutha, Masha, Tila, Sarshapa, Matsya, Mahisha, Gavya, Varaha, Madhu, Phanita, Guda sidha dravaya. Frequent consumption of such food or food habit leads to the formation of improperly metabolized substances and toxins.

B. Mithya Ahara: Mityahara as that which is not taken according to the Astavidhi viseshayatanani. Ajirna Bhojana, Adhyashana, Athyasana, excessive use of Madhu, Matsya, Mulaka, Lakucha etc. during Ajirna. This kind of meal interferes with normal metabolism and leads to disease.

C. Viruddha Ahara: Any Viruddha Ahara (Matsya& Dadhi sevana) just single time may not cause the disease. For disease manifestations continue consumptions must be there. Acharya Charaka has compaired Viruddha Ahara with Visha and has also emphasized that, diseases originated by Amavisha are most un curable and difficult to treat.

2. VIHARAJA NIDANA: Common Vihara hetu for Kushta are described like Diwaswapna, Vegavidhara, Ati Shrama, Santapa, Vyayama, Vyavaya, Diwaswapa, Chikitsa Vaishamya (Panchakarma with improper manner), Manasika karana like Bhaya, Shoka, Krodha, Chinta etc.

3. MISCELLANIOUS CAUSES:
a) Due to Kulaja nidana: Beejadushti,
b) Due to papa karma: Shivitra is a Karmaja Vyadhi, Vachansi atathyani, Krutaghna Bhava, Suranam Ninda, Guru Gharshan, purvakrutam karma,
4. **NIDANRTHAKARA ROGA:**

**TYPES OF SWITRA:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Switra</th>
<th>Dosha</th>
<th>Dhatu Gata</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vataja Raka gata</td>
<td>Vata</td>
<td>Rakta</td>
<td>Aruna Varna &amp; Krushna Varna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittaja Mamsa gata</td>
<td>Pitta</td>
<td>Mamsa</td>
<td>Tamra varna, Roma Shatana, Vidaha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaphaja Medo gata</td>
<td>Kapha</td>
<td>Medo</td>
<td>Sweta varna, Bahu Sitam &amp; Sakandu, Balavan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**According to Aetiology:**
1. **Doshaja**
2. 2. **Vranaja**

*Again Doshaja variety was subdivided into*

A. **Atmaja** - Due to Vitiation of Doshas
B. **Paraja** - Due to Sansparshana (According to Acharya Susrutha and Vagbhata – this disease spreads from one man to another due to prasanga, Gatrasamsparsha, Nishwasat, Sahabhojanat...etc)

**SAMPRAPTI:**

Detailed Samprapti of Switra has not been described by Acharya Charaka, Sushruta, Vagabhatta and other Samgraha Kalina workers, except Harita, Harita endeavours to mention the Samprapti of Switra separately and says that Vata provokes the Pitta, which is situated in Twak. This vitiated Pitta along with Rakta produces Pandura Varna, which is known as Switra8.

Nidana Sevana causes to vitiated doshas spread from Koshtha to Shakha. While travelling through all over the body wherever there is Sthanaavagunya. it gets lodged and shows the symptoms of the diseases. Then, these doshas move in triyakgata siras and get lodged in tamra layer of twacha causing sanga to the local rasavaha and raktavaha srotas. leads to the impairment of local Bhrajakapitta and causes Twak shwetata. Further the Samprapti continues and the deeper dhatus like mamsa and medas are also involved. The involvement of each Dhatu exhibits specific discoloration on the lesion. Doshas settled in Rakta Dhatu produces Aruna varna, Mamsa dhatu produces Tamra varna and Shweta varna when settled in medo Dhatu. Here mainly affected Udana, Vyana, Bhrajaka pitta and Shleshmaka Kapha which is responsible for Varna and related to Twak.

Acharya Charaka has described particularly Papakarma as the Nidana causative factors of this disease. Also the hereditary involvement of the disease is described by Acharya Sushruta. Purva Janam Krut Karma and Papa Karma are also called as Khavaigunya Karaka Nidana, as Sparshnendriya is Adhisthna. Shariraka dosha, Indriya and Mana are related each other. is stated to be under the control of Vata. Vitiation of Shariraka dosha causes to Vitiation of Manasika Dosha (Rajas & Tamas).

**LAKSHANA:**

White patches on the skin are the main sign of Switra. The skin remains of normal texture and there are usually no itching or other symptoms. These patches are more obvious in sun-exposed areas including the hands, feet, arms, legs, face and lips, patches to appear are the armpits and groin around the mouth, eyes, nostrils, navel and genitals. The colour of the skin is Pandura Varna due to parakupita pitta vitiataed by rakta9. Acharya Sushruta has also given the word ‘Kilasa’ for Shvitra.

He clarified that Kilasa is Aparsravai in nature and only Twak is involved. Acharya charaka has mentioned three varieties, namely Daruna, Aruna and Kilasa depending on Vitiation of dosha and involvement of dhatu.

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SADHYASADHYATA:
Sadhya Lakshana:
- only one Dosha is involved,
- The patches are not fused,
- Hairs are normal in colour (Arakta Loma, Ashukla Loma)
- having short duration of pathogenesis (Natichiroththita, Navama)
- Involvement of Uttana Dhatu

Asadhya lakshana:
- Tridoshaja
- Involtment of Gambhira dhatu (rakta , mamsa and meda)
- Agnidagdham and manifested in palms, soles, lips and genital organas
- Rakta loma
- Chirakari
- Patches are fused
- Janmataha

MANEGEMENT:
In Switra roga, all three types of treatment i.e. The principal of treatment are threefold in Ayurveda as Nidana Parivarjana, Apakarshana and Prakriti Vighata are to be followed while treating. Selection of any of them depends upon Roga Bala, Rogi Bala, Kala, Vaya, Agni, And vyadhi Avastha etc. When the morbid Dosha are more potent, the patient should be treated with Shodhana. General line of Kusta, also can adopt in this condition i.e. Rakta Mokshana is to be done at every six months, Virechana is to be given at every one month; Vamana is to be given at every 15th day respectively. This long term course of treatment is to eliminate vitiated Dosha and brings doshas in equilibrium state. The patient with Switra requires quick approach towards management, because it becomes Asadhya very quickly. Acharya Vagabhatta says that if the sinfulness of the person followed by Daana, Tapa etc. only then the Shodhana Raktamokshana, Rakshan and Saktupana can control the disease.

1. Nidana parivarjana:
The factors which are responsible for of disease. It is fact that Viruddha Ahara is the main causes of Switra. So the first step to avoid the Nidana; i.e. Viruddha Ahara, Ajirnabhojana, Vishamasana etc.

2. Apakarshana:
Shodhana:
Shodhana has its own important in this disease, Before shodhana Purvakarma (Snehana and Swedana) is must to get proper purification. The treatment should be started with snehapan with Tikta Ghrita, Mahatiktka Ghrita. After that Swedana is applied and this procedure liquefies the Dosha i.e. Pitta and Kapha which makes them ready to expel. Virechana is line of treatment for Pittaja and Rakta Vyadhi and involvement of Rakta and Pitta are very clear in Switra. After Virechana the Vata Dosha increases in Koshtha so it is necessary to give again Snehapan.

Raktamokshana:
Rakata Mokshana should be preceded by Shodhana and Virukshana. Sira Vedha should be applied on fused lesions and it requires surgical skill. If the number of patches is more and appears all over the body then Siravedha should done. If patches are small and less in number then Prachhanna is indicated.

Kshara prayoga:
The conditions where Rakta Mokshana is contraindicated, Kshara is to be beneficial. Palasa kshara with phanita is beneficial in this condition.

3. Prakriti Vighatana:
Shamana Therapy:
Shamana includes local application and internal medication

Lepana: Lepa should be applied after completion of the Shodhana.
- Manahsila, Vidanga, Kasisa, Gorochna, Kana-kapushpi and Saindhava
- Kadalikshara and Kharasthi Bhasmawith blood of cow
Hastimada along with Malati Koraka Kshara
Nilotpala, Kushtha, Saindhava with Hastimutra
Mulakabija, Avalguja with Gomutra
Kakodumbara or Avalguja Chitraka with Go-
mutra
Manashila with Mayurpitta
Avalgunja Bija, Laksha,,Gopitta, two types of
Anjana, Pippali, Kalaloha Raja.
Shodhana Lepa ((SU.Chi.9/6)

Table 2: Acharya Charaka mentioned shamana prayoga for treating Switra

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Formulations</th>
<th>Drugs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kwatha</td>
<td>Malapuyadi Kwatha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Churna</td>
<td>Hapushadi Churna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ghrita</td>
<td>Nilinyadi Ghrita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Asava</td>
<td>Lodrasava, Madhukasava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Arishta</td>
<td>Abhayarishta, Punarnavadyarishta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Avalehya</td>
<td>Endriya Rasayana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Animal Product</td>
<td>Astha Mutra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSION

Switra is a pitta pradhan tridosha Vyadhi. Progression of this disease is rapid, so the management should be taken in proper time to arrest the pathogenises. In switra roga, All three types of treatment i.e. Nidana Parivarjana, Apakarshana and Prakruti Vighatana are to be followed while treating. Bhra-
jaka Pitta and play major role in the repigmentation of white patches. Ushna, tikshna, sara, sukshma guna and katu tikta pradhan rasa dravya should select to improve agni and helps to remove srotava-
rodha and sanga and drugs having Lekhana, Ropana and Varnya properties. Lekhana property is to form blister, Ropana for healing of blister and Varnya to enhance Melanogenesis. By activate the Bhrajaka pitta, bring equilibrium in doshas and dhatus and ultimately breaks the chain of samprapti of Switra (vitiligo) effectively. A person is made to undergo all shodhana procedures first, after patient is fully evacuated, samsrama karma is done as primary step of treated by giving malapu rasa ( Kakodumbara) along with guda.( Cha.Chi.7/ 165). The mixture should be given according to the bala rogi, after that he should be exposed to the sun. This procedure continued for 3days. During this event if patient feels thirsty, peya is given to quench his thirst. By doing this patient develops blisters on the patches all over the body. The blister should be pricked and remove the fluid, after all the blisters are opened, a kwatha prepared from bark of kakodumbara, priyangu, as-
ana and shatapurpa should be given early in the mornings for 15 days or phanitham prepared from palasa can also be given.

Yogas beneficial in kusta roga, are recommended in switra also. Khadira proyogas are useful, it has tikta, kashaya rasa, sheeta veerya properties, both Pitta and kapha dosha shamaka. Laboratory studies have identified constituents shown to regenerate liver cells, as well as providing anti-fungal and anti-
inflammatory effects. Various Gomutra prayoga are explained in classics. Gomutra stimulates the Bhra-
jaka pitta (melanocytes) and effects the proper formation of the pigments. Seeds of radish and Bakuchi powdered mix with Gomutra apply paste for leukoderma, for external application is help in Krish-
neekarana of twacha. Gomutra stimulates the Bhra-
jaka pitta (melanocytes) and effects the proper formation of the pigments. Bakuchi is having Madhura, Tikta, Kattu, Sita virya, tridosahara properties and helps in absorb long wave ultraviolet radiations after exposure to sun light and become photoactive which stimulate the melanocytes. Mallasindoora, Ta-
lakeshwara Rasa which contains Haratala, having
Vyavayi, Ashukari properties breaks the pathogenesis and prevents the self-destruction of melanocytes. The preparations like Panchatiktaghrita guggulu, Tikta-ghrita, Khadiraristam, Amritabhallatakahya, all these internally and the medicines like Doorvadithailam, Mareechadi thailam and Avalgujabeejadilepa choornam used externally in treating used externally in a judicious combination in this condition. Nimba, Manjista, Khadira, Guduchi, Katuki, Haridra and Bhallataka prayoga are beneficial. Chitraka Rasayana, Eindriya rasayana are best for roga Apunarbhava chikitasa.

CONCLUSION

- Beauty and attraction of individual depends upon skins health including physical and psychological health. The colour of skin plays very important role in the society.
- Vitiligo is an important skin disease having major impact on quality of life of patients.
- Ayurvedic management give a blissful life by improving the immune system of the individual by doing repeated application of Shodana karma along with shamanoushadhi.
- Following pathya sevana is important preventive measure by improving immunity.
- Early intervention should adopt for better results.

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