STUDY OF PALITYA (PREMATURE GRAYING)

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INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the most ancient science amongst all therapeutic streams. In Ayurveda premature or graying of hair is called as Palitya.\(^1\) It is not a serious disorder but any changes in body abnormally is not good for health. It is counted as Kshudraroga.\(^2\) Graying of hair according to age is a common phenomenon but due to drastic changes in today’s life style and environmental pollution lead to untimely (premature) graying of hair, now a days it has become a burning issue, especially in young generation. Palitya occurs in two ways. Primary one is normal and second is abnormal phenomenon.\(^3\) According to W.H.O. incidence of premature graying of hair is common in age group of 25-30 years. In ayurvedic system of medicine it is described as “akalapalita” means graying of hairs before 32 years of age (Taruna stage), which is caused by excess of ushna guna of pitta.\(^1\)\(^4\)\(^5\) Premature graying occurs before 20 years in whites, 25 years in Asians and 30 in Africans in Clinical interventions in Aging.\(^6\) Behl PN, Agrawal A reported that vitiligo associated premature graying of hair is 37%.\(^7\) Color of hair is mainly due to melanocytes present in hair cells. Hair follicle melanocytes depletion leads to hair graying affected by bulb & outer root sheath.\(^8\) Here we have tried to review the palitya & premature graying of hairs.

Aim & Objects: To study the normal functions of pitta and ushna. The effect of ushnaguna & pitta on premature graying of hair as mentioned in ayurvedic lexicon in viewing the present scenario.

Study material: Palitya is studied with different lexicon present in central library & relevant matter described on journal, magazine & internet.

Functions of pitta: The pitta performs all changes in body. It involves from sysstem wise to cellular level. Digestion, Vision, body temperature, hunger, thirst, body lusture, softness & mental factors as forgiveness & intellect are governed by pitta dosha. In mandagni it produces aama & in excessive stimulation produces excess paka & destroys it.
Cause of Palitya: There are four main reasons. First one is dietary (Aharaja), second one is life style (viharaja), third one is psychological (mansik) & fourth one is other reason or unknown (adibalapravritta).

1. **Nutritional (Aharaja):** There is description of excess use of pungent (katu), sour (amla), salt (lavana), pungent (tikshna), hot (ushna), light(laghu), vidhai, sesamum oil (tilatala), pinyaka, kuathha, mustard (sarshapa), linseed (alasi), green vegetable (haritakashaka), flesh of godha, fish (matsya), goat (aja), sheep (aavika), curd (mastu), sauviraka,suravikara and amlaphala cause the vitiation of pitta and leads to palitya.\(^9\) The study shows that deficiency of Iron, vitamin B12, Calcium &Vitamin D3 causes the graying of hair.\(^10\) Excess use of salt causes palitya because lavana is pitta prakupita diet as mentioned in charaka sutra sthana atreya bhadrakapiya adhyay. Alsi or tisi and mustard aggravate the Ratakitta and vitiate the pitta as mentioned in charakasutra sthana annapanavidhyadhyay. There is no such study that mustard and linseed affect the absorption of iron and vitamin B12.

2. **Environmental & behavior (Viharaja):** Over indulgence in physical exercise & over exertion, awakening during night (raatrijagarana), excessive exposure to sunlight (atiatapasevan), use of smoking & dust particle (atirajo and dhumasevan), intake of vitiated air (dushitvayusevan), exess exercise (ativayama) and fast (upvasa) may cause the palitya.\(^11\)

3. **Psychological (Mansik):** Certain psychological factors like anger (Krodha), grief (shoka), afraid (bhaya)and mental stress (maansika shrama) vitiate the pitta dosha causes palitya & other paittik diseases.\(^12\)

4. **Unknown/Genetic (Adibalapravritta):** There is no exact pathology but it has inherited in autosomal dominant way. Graying of hair is from familial inheritance or pathologic condition. The genetic architecture of normal variation in human pigmentation and Genetic diversity within individual’s pacific population is very low. Molecular genetics of human pigmentation gene diversity tyrslc45a2, slc24A5 and OCA2 has accessed their impact on melanin content and tyrosinase activity\(^13\).

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**Samprapti of Palitya:**

- **Apathyaahar**
- **Vitaraj**
- **Psychological**

**Vitarian of pitta dosha**

- **Ushma** of body & vitiated Bhrajakapittadosha

**Ushma** carried by vata & lodging of kapha in hair follicle

- **Paka** of hair follicle (Discoloration of hair)

**Paka** of hair/palitya
In northern Europe people have brown black hair, possibly due to mutations in the melanocortin-1 receptor (MC1R), a G-protein coupled receptor. Mutations in the MC1R gene are believed to have contributed to white blonde, yellow blonde, and auburn colour of hair in individuals in the less sunny climates.(14) Due to causative factors like krodha, shoka & shrama pitta dosha get aggravated and this aggravated pitta makes an increase in pittoshma and shareer-ushma, now both of these ushma are carried by vata to the shiro-pradhesha, where along with kapha all of these dosha are setteled in romakupa and further vitiate locally available bhrajaka pitta, which gives colour to the hair in this way the natural color of the hair is affected and akala palitya occurred.(15) Palitya is considered as rasa pradoshaja vikara by acharya charaka and sharangadhar.(18) According to Vagbhata it is further classified on the basis of doshik dominance Vataja, pittaja, kaphaja, dvandaja & tridoshaja.(19) Yog-ratnakara divided the palitya as Vataja, Pittaja & Kaphaja.(20) as same way acharya Bhela also classified it in to Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, due to excessive exercise and in old age(Vriddhavasthajanya).(21)

Types: Palitya is divided on the basis of dosha predominance. Sharangadhar has classified the Palitya in to two on the basis of vaya. First one is kalajanita palitya second one is akalajanit palitya.(18) According to Vagbhata it is further classified on the basis of doshik dominancy Vataja, pittaja, kaphaja, dvandaja & tridoshaja.(19) Yog-ratnakara divided the palitya as Vataja, Pittaja & Kaphaja.(20) as same way acharya Bhela also classified it in to Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, due to excessive exercise and in old age(Vriddhavasthajanya).(21)

Symptoms: The symptoms of palitya as name indicated ripening of hairs. On the basis of doshik dominancy it has different symptoms. In vatika hairs are bifurcated, breaking, dry, rough & color appear like water. In pitta doshas head has burning & hairs are yellowish in color. In kapha dosha dominance hairs are snigdha, long, thick and specially white in color.(22)

Treatment Principal: The treatment of palitya, is like the treatment principle of any disease is that avoidance of causative factors like pittavardhak aahara and vihar.(23) Then patient should go under Sansodhanakarma which is performed by vaman, virechana, nasya, oleation on head with medicated oil and use of paste (lepa) on face with wholesome & unwholesome consideration.(24)

DISCUSSION: Function of doshas is performed by guna. There are three doshas in the body. Vata, pitta & kapha. Digestion is the major function of Pitta at non vitiated state. Pitta dosha has properties like slightly unctuousness (sneha), hot (ushna), swift (tikshna), liquid (dravam), sour (amla), mobility (sara) and pungent (katu) rasa in nature.(25) In head and skin, there is bhrajaka pitta, responsible for digestion of hair (palitya). Reflection of rasa dhatu status is represented by skin and hairs that’s why palitya is consider as rasa pradoshajavikar.(15) Here ushna guna of pitta is mainly responsible for digestion of all body.(26) Amla, lavana and katu rasa aggravate the pitta dosha. Ushnaguna is nonseparable character of pitta. There is a principle ‘sarvada sarvabhaavanam samananyam vriddhikaranam’(27) due to this principle homologous characters are aggrevated. Madhura, tikta & kashaya rasa diminish the pitta dosha on the principle ‘nhashhetu visheshashcha’.(27) The properties of Agni reside in pitta and perform all metabolic activity.(28) Palitya is due to vitiated pitta where the pitta shamakadravya subside the pitta. There are certain cases where pitta and agni get demarcated on the basis guna of dravya. For this view we consider an example of dravya having agnivardhaka, pitta vardhaka and other pittashamaka, agnivardhaka property are Chitraka and
gau-ghrita respectively gau-ghrita has sheet property.\(^{(29)}\)

On preventive aspect the use of anutaila as nasya in shiroroga and palitya helps because it removes the srotasavarodh & subsides the vata, pitta and kapha along with providing strength to the Indriya.\(^{(30)}\) Person should use regularly the tiltaila on head every day so there is less chance of palitya.\(^{(31)}\)

Sharangadhar, Charaka and Susruta has mentioned the palitya as a normal phenomenon, it is more dominant in pittaja prakriti purush due to ushna guna of pitta dosha.\(^{(4)(32)(33)}\) The guna directly affects the functions. It is advice to pittaja prakriti to use regular diet like shastika, shali, mudga, goghrita, dugdha, kushmanda, dadima, kharjura and narikela. Behavior and life style uses regular shiroabhyanga, pratimarshanasya of anutaila. Person having palitya should avoid excessive use of amla, katu and lava rasa, viruddha, ahara, masha, kulathha and avoid life style like exposure to rajo, dhuma and ati atapa seven, ativyayama, krodha, shoka etc, excessive consumption of alcohol and smoking, retention of natural urges and improper sleeping habits.

**CONCLUSION:** Graying of hair is result of ushna guna of pitta. It is of two ways first normal & second one is abnormal. In some people & old age people it is a normal phenomenon. Person having character of early graying of hair must avoid the amla, lava rasa, ushna, pittavardhak aaahir as well as avoid such behavior which enhances the pitta properties.

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