MANAGEMENT OF PSORIASIS WITH VIRECHANA THERAPY:
A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Psoriasis is a common autoimmune dermatological disorder in India with prevalence varies from 0.44 to 2.8 %. Allopathy has no concrete solution to this problem. They treat the disease with steroids. Psoriasis can correlate with Kshudra kushtha (skin diseases) described in Ayurvedic classics. The treatment for kushtha is mainly raktamokshana and virechana. The case of newly diagnosed psoriasis having severe itching, reddish patches, burning was managed with Virechana, one of the panchakarma therapy of detoxification by inducing purgation. Patient was on ayurvedic palliative treatment since one month. Internal oleation with Mahatiktaka Ghrita in increasing order for seven days was given. Oleation stopped after achieving the symptoms of proper oleation. Daily assessment for symptoms of oleation was done. External oleation and sudation was done with Sarshapa Oil for three days. On the fourth day virechana was given on empty stomach with Abhayadi Modaka 1 gm with 100 ml Triphala decoction. There was 90% relief in symptoms on the day of virechana. After completion of 7 days diet regimen the relief of symptoms were same except itching which occurs sometimes. The PASI score was 32.6 before virechana which comes down 1.8 after virechana therapy. This suggests that the virechana therapy gives significant results in Psoriasis.

Keywords: Psoriasis, Virechana, Kshudra kushtha

INTRODUCTION

Psoriasis is a common autoimmune dermatological disorder in India with prevalence varies from 0.44 to 2.8 %. The process begins when a person’s immune system fights against an infection, but the antibodies it makes continue to attack normal cells. A type of white blood cell that is supposed to regulate immune response fails to do its job, triggering inflammation and abnormal skin growth. There are five types of psoriasis: plaque, guttate, inverse, pustular and erythrodermic psoriasis. Plaque psoriasis is the most common form of psoriasis, affecting 80% of people. Having psoriasis can be embarrassing and many people avoid the situations where patches can show. Stress, anxiety and over exposure to sunlight can cause psoriasis to appear suddenly or can make symptoms worse. Psoriasis treatments divided into three main types: topical...
treatments, light therapy and systemic medications. Even though there is no cure, many treatments exist to ease the symptoms.

In ayurveda, all skin diseases are described as Kushtha. There are two types of kushtha: Maha kushtha and Kshudra kushtha; where kshudra kushtha means all other skin diseases except leprosy.\(^2\) In this case, plaque psoriasis can correlate with Dadru type of kshudra kushtha. Symptoms of dadru are kandu (itching), raga (burning), pidaka (patches), mandala (patches).\(^3\) These symptoms are similar to symptoms of plaque psoriasis. In treatment of kushtha, first we have to do treatment of that dosha whose dominant symptoms are there and after that treatment of anubandha dosha.\(^4\) In dadru kushtha, dominance of pitta dosha and anubandha of kapha dosha is there. Virechana is the supreme treatment of vitiated pitta dosha.\(^5\) Virechana is also indicated in kapha dosha. Hence here, virechana therapy has given.

**CASE REPORT**

A 54 years old male patient, PT teacher in higher secondary school, came with raised, red patches on the skin which is very itchy and painful from 1 month. Patient was diagnosed as severe type of Plaque Psoriasis by dermatologist. Hence he went to Ayurvedic physician who prescribed Ayurvedic palliative treatment for it. Patient took all medicines for 15 days, but didn’t get any relief. Hence he came to our hospital where I planned virechana therapy for him which is supreme detoxifying treatment for diseases of pitta dosha. Out of five types of pitta, Sadhaka pitta is located in the skin. Hence pacifying pitta in aamashaya (stomach) by virechana will pacify all five types of pitta.\(^6\)

**VIRECHANA**

It is one of the *Panchakarma* treatments of Ayurveda, which means induction of purgation for therapeutic purpose. It is mainly advised in Pitta and Rakta vitiated diseases.\(^7\) It is systematically carried out in three steps. Preparatory procedure comprise of, *Pachana* \(^8\) means internal medicines to facilitate proper digestion for four to seven days followed by internal oleation for three to seven days followed by external oleation (oil massage) and sudation which aims at bringing the vitiated disease causing dosha (basic elements) into alimentary canal.\(^9\) Main procedure is only oral medicines inducing purgation while in post procedure there is special diet regimen to follow for three to seven days.

**MANAGEMENT**

- Patient was described the whole treatment procedure in detail.
- Written informed consent and Physicians fitness for virechana was taken.
- **Pachana** (internal medicines to facilitate proper digestion) – As patient was came from another doctor, taking internal medicines prescribed by that doctor, Tab. Aarogyavardhini 500 mg BD with Mahamanjishthadi kadha 15 ml. These medicines were continued as a pachana treatment for seven days. Patient was mentally disturbed and didn’t get sleep properly from one month back. Hence With pachana treatment Shirodhar with Jatamansi oil was given for seven days.
- Internal oleation with Mahatiktaka Ghrita in increasing order for six days (internal oleation stopped, as symptoms of proper oleation achieved) was followed. Daily assessment for symptoms of oleation was done. Vatanulomana (proper
evacuation of flatus and stoola), deep-tagni (enhanced digestive function), snigdha varchas (oily stool), asanhata varchas (unformed stool), mrudvangata (suppleness of skin), snigdhata (oily skin), snehodvega (revulsion for sneha), glani (exhausted), vimalendriya (feeling fresh) these are symptoms of proper oleation,[10] which were assessed daily during internal oleation. Oleation was discontinued as soon as oily stools were observed in patient.

- External oleation and sudation on vi-shram din (next three days after completion of oleation) and on the day of virechana with sarshapa oil.
- On the day of virechana pulse, BP and systemic examination was done along with ashtavidha parikshana. P – 70/min; BP – 130/80 mm of Hg, RS – AEIBE, CVS – S1S2 normal, Stool/Urine – normal, Tongue – niram (uncoated).
- Virechana drug – Abhayadi modak 1gm with decoction of Triphala 100 ml was given on empty stomach in the morning.
- Patient was asked to take rest till virechana vegas (frequency of purgation) starts.
- Virechana vegas were assessed subjectively. Total 28 vegas occurred in which last stools were sticky indicating kaphanta virechana.
- Patients pulse, BP was recorded during virechana which was normal throughout the procedure.

- Samsarjana karma (special diet regimen) was advised for seven days.
- During internal oleation, virechana and during samsarjana karma, patient was asked to stop all medicines.
- After samsarjana karma, all previous medicines were started.

DISCUSSION

In Ayurvedic classics, it is described that virechana is the supreme treatment for pitta dosha. It is supreme detoxifying treatment for diseases of pitta dosha. Mainly virechana acts on Aamashaya (stomach) which is the main seat of pitta. Out of five types of pitta, Sadhaka pitta is located in the skin. Hence pacifying pitta in aamashaya (stomach), all five types of pitta also pacifies by virechana therapy.[11]

Pitta dosha and rakta dhatu are functionally related with each other[12] means diseases occurred due to vitiation of pitta and rakta dhatu are similar. Virechana acts on pitta dosha, it pacifies the functions and properties of pitta dosha. Ultimately it pacifies the properties and functions of rakta dhatu. Thus virechana acts on skin diseases. In this case, there was 90% relief in symptoms on the day of virechana. After completion of 7 days diet regimen the relief of symptoms were same except itching which occurs sometimes.

To assess the results of virechana therapy on psoriasis PASI score was noted before and after virechana which gives significant results. Before treatment it was 32.6 turns 1.8 after treatment means within seven days.
CONCLUSION
From all above observations it can be conclude that *virechana* therapy is significantly effective in an acute stage of psoriasis.

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