

## MANAGEMENT OF INDRALUPTA IN AYURVEDA – A CASE REPORT

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## ABSTRACT

*Indralupta* (Alopecia Areata) or Alopecia areata is a dermatological disorder of great concern whose key clinical feature is hair loss. The *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) of *Indralupta* is the vitiated *Tridosha* (Three vitiated factors) and *Rakta* (blood) affecting the scalp. It also reveals that the aggravated *Rakta* and *Kapha* (phlegm) block the hair follicles that prevent the hair regrowth, thereby leaving a bald patch. Most Ayurvedic manuscripts have described hair disorders under *Kshudra Roga* (Minor diseases) with names like *Indralupta*, *Khalitya* (hair fall), *Palitya* (greying of hair) etc. However, it has been mentioned as *Tridoshaja Vikara* (diseases) in *Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana* while Vagbhata has cited it in *Shiroroga* (diseases of head and scalp). Ayurveda offers an effective treatment approach for the management of *Indralupta*. In Ayurveda, both *Shodhana* (purification) and *Shamana* (palliative treatment) treatment are prescribed for *Indralupta*. Here, a case of a male patient suffering from *Indralupta* was successfully treated with Ayurvedic *Shamana* therapy. In the present study, *Shiroabhyanga* (head massage) is advised with *Bhringrajadi Taila*. For *Rasayana* (Immune-modulating medicines) action, *Amalaki Rasayana* is selected which is considered to be the best for *Pitta* (fire and water) *Shamaka* (balancing) in hair fall.

**Keywords:** *ashwagandha*, *Rasayana*, undernutrition, adaptogen, malnutrition, *apatarpanjanya Karshya*.

## INTRODUCTION

In today's world, external appearance has taken precedence over any other achievement of an individual. In this context, hair is critical to both your physical as well as mental well-being. Healthy hair enhances your confidence and also allows others to see you in a positive light.

Hair loss (*Indralupta*) is one of the most common problems people face owing to the present-day lifestyle. *Indralupta* can be correlated to Alopecia Areata, wherein any or more parts of the body experience sudden hair loss.

According to Ayurveda, *Vata* (space and air) and *Pitta* get localized in the hair pores in the scalp region in a heightened state.<sup>1</sup> This impedes the supply of nutrients to the hair follicle ultimately resulting in the falling of clumps of hair in that particular area and also averting further regrowth of hair, thereby leaving a bald patch.

### Some of the common factors contributing to hair fall/loss:

Ayurvedic texts clearly describe several factors that imbalance the state of equilibrium of Dosha. Though, in the case of *Indralupta*, there is no clear explanation of the causative factors of hair fall. As per Ayurveda, common etiological factors are over-consumption of *Kshara* (alkaline), *Lavana* (salt), regular consumption of *Viruddha Ahara*<sup>2</sup> (incompatible diets), Suppression of urges, Avoidance of oil massage, exposure to dust, Night vigil, sleeping during the daytime, excess intake of cold water, Excessive sexual indulgence, facing direct wind, Excessive weeping, Talking loudly, Undigested or semi-digested food, Exposure to excessive heat, intake of cold food, Mental affliction, Intoxication, among others.<sup>3</sup> The study of these factors reveals that dietary habits, climatic changes, psychic disturbances and disturbances in sensory organs are significant in the diagnosis and treatment of *Indralupta*.

There is always a difficulty to diagnose hair disorders as they may be a subjective complaint or true disorder and also to analyze its pathogenesis.

### Objective

To find out the efficacy of *Bhringrajadi Taila* in the management of *Indralupta*.

## CASE REPORT

On 26<sup>th</sup> December 2020, a Hindu male of age 45 years old, non-diabetic, not a known case of hypertension visited OPD of Babe Ke Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Moga (Punjab) with the complaints as cited below.

### Chief Complaints

Patchy hair loss for last six months with hair fall, dryness of hair and itching at patchy hair loss area; specifically in the frontal region of the scalp

### History of Present Illness

The patient was said to be asymptomatic six months back. Gradually, he noticed dryness of hair accompanied by hair fall. After a couple of weeks, he observed a patch of hair loss in the frontal region of the scalp which eventually increased in size in the following weeks. He also underwent allopathic treatment, however, it provided him only temporary relief. With these complaints, the patient approached the OPD of BKAMCH, Moga.

### Family History

No relevant family history

### Personal History

Diet- Vegetarian

Appetite - Medium

Sleep – Irregular

Bowel Movement- Normal

Addiction – Tea- 3-4 cups/day

### General Examination

Pulse - 78/min

Blood pressure - 130/82 mmHg

Height - 173 cm

Weight - 69 kg

Respiratory Rate - 21 /min

Tongue - Normal, No coating

*Prakriti* (nature) - *Pitta Pradhana* (prime) *Vata*

### Local Examination – Scalp and Hair

*Darshana* (Philosophy) – Patchy hair loss

*Site* – Frontal region of the scalp; no redness, no scaling, no dandruff

### Blood Examination

Blood investigations of the patient reveal: Hb-12.3g/dl, TLC, CBC, ESR, TSH are within normal limits.

### Hetu (Etiological factors)

Regular intake of spicy and salty food; Sedentary life-style; Stress and anxiety

### Samprapti

- **Dosha (bio-energy centre):** Vata, Pitta
- **Dushya (body tissues):** Rasa (taste), Rakta, Asthi (bones)
- **Srotasa (channels):** Rasavaha (cardiovascular system), Raktavaha (blood circulation), Asthivaha (bones), Manovaha (mind functions)
- **Udbhava (origin):** Amashaya (stomach)

- **Adhithana (site):** Keshabhoomi (hair follicle)
- **Rogamarga (pathway of disease):** Bahya Rogamarga (pathway of external diseases), including Trimarma (basic organs) (Shira- blood vessels)

### Chikitsa

1. Application of *Bhringrajadi Taila* for 8 weeks.
2. *Amalaki Rasayana* – 3 grams with warm water daily for 8 weeks.

Follow-up was taken after 4 weeks of treatment and for 2 months post-treatment.

The treatment was given by the treatment protocol for Indralupta as mentioned in Ayurvedic texts. It included the external application of *Bhringrajadi Taila* and the intake of *Rasayana* as mentioned by Dahlana in his commentary on Sushruta Samhita.

The ingredients of each medicine are detailed in the tables below:

### *Bhringrajadi Taila*<sup>4</sup>

Sr. No.	Name of drug	Botanical name	Family	Part used
1	<i>Bhringaraja</i>	Eclipta alba	Asteraceae	Whole
2.	<i>Neelkamala</i>	Nymphaea alba	Nymphaeaceae	Flower
3	<i>Mandura</i>	Ferric oxide		
4	<i>Amalaki</i>	Emblica officinalis	Phyllanthaceae	Fruit
5	<i>Baheda</i>	Terminalia bellirica	Combretaceae	Fruit
6	<i>Haritaki</i>	Terminalia chebula	Combretaceae	Fruit
7	<i>Anantamoola</i>	Hemidesmus indicus	Apocynaceae	Root

### *Amalaki Rasayana*<sup>5</sup>

Sr. No.	Ingredient	Botanical Name	Family	Part Used
1	<i>Amla Churna</i> (Amla Powder)	Emblica officinalis	Phyllanthaceae	Fruit
2	<i>AmlaSwaras</i> (Amla Juice)	Emblica officinalis	Phyllanthaceae	Fruit

### Hair Care

1. Always use clean and cold water to wash your hair.
2. Avoid using hot water to wash your hair.
3. Regular application of oil on the scalp.
4. Comb hair only after it gets dried after the wash.
5. Don't expose hair to over-heat.
6. Avoid using chemical-based shampoos and treatments.

### Observations

Observations made in the patient during the follow-up and completion of treatment are detailed below with pictures of the affected area of the scalp.

1. After 4 weeks- We observed hair becoming thick on the affected area.
2. After 8 weeks- We observed that new follicles were developing, and hair was becoming thick.

Satisfactory results were observed in the weeks following treatment. There were no side effects.



**BEFORE TREATMENT**



**FOLLOW-UP AFTER 4 WEEKS**



**FOLLOW-UP AFTER 8**



**AFTER TREATMENT**

## DISCUSSION

*Indralupta* is a medical condition that primarily affects the *Kapala* or Scalp. It is characterized by hair loss with restricted hair regrowth. The disorder is primarily manifested owing to *Tridoshas* along with *Rakta*.

Since the hair pores are blocked by *Doshas*; the primary step involves the external application of herbal oil massage and ayurvedic medicines to enhance hair growth. The purpose of the entire process is to decrease *Pitta Dosha* by cleansing the body, according to the severity of the ailment.

*Bhringrajadi Taila* has properties like *Keshya* (suitable for hair), *Vataghana* (wind-destroying), *Khālitya*

*Nāsaka* (nostrils), *Pālitya Nāsaka*, *Indriya Prasdaanaka* (Ayurvedic rejuvenation- sensory bliss) and *Indralupta Nashaka*. The oil has *Laghu* (light) and *Snigdha* (greasy) properties with *Madhura* (sweet) and *Keśya* and *Tikta* (bitter) and *Katu Rasa* (pungent) with *Madhura Vipāka* (final taste of drug) and *Ushna Virya* (hot potency) intended to have a *Tridosha -Shamaka* effect.

*Amalaki* is known to be a great rejuvenating herb; it is especially observed that *Amalaki* is a great *Rasayana* to protect from diseases and reduce the possibilities of premature ageing. Acharya Charak and Vagbhat have admired *Amalaki* as the best drug for *Vayasthapana*

*karma* (anti-ageing).<sup>6</sup> It is also extensively used for its *Keshya* and *Chakshushya* (good for eyesight) properties.

A person who does oil massage daily is less affected with headache, hair falling, hair greying, and his hair becomes strong-rooted, black and long, all senses of that person become healthy, his facial skin becomes soft, shiny and gets a good sleep.<sup>7</sup>

Premature hair fall is considered a sign of early ageing and *Rasayana* is the best anti-ageing therapy. *Rasayana* nourishes the *Asthi Dhatu* and thereby enhances the growth of hair. By the *Rasa Panchaka* (five factors of substance) of *Amalaki Rasayana*, the *Kapha* and *Rakta* which obstruct the roots of the hair will get subsided thus leading to the *Roma Koopa Vishodhana* (cleansing of Sebaceous gland). When the obstructed *Srotas* get cleared the *Ahara Rasa* nourishes the root of the hair which result in the growth of the hair.<sup>8</sup> Due to its *Amalaki Rasa* (Sour) it alleviates *Vata*, due to *Madhur Vipaka* (Sweet) it alleviates *Pitta*. While due to *Kashaya Rasa* (Astringent) and *Ruksha* (Dry) *Guna* (qualities) it alleviates *Kapha*.

## CONCLUSION

The Ayurvedic management of *Indralupta* has a strong prospect to break down the pathogenesis of this disease. Ayurvedic drugs and therapies have *Keshya*, *Balya* (strength promoting activity), and Rejuvenating properties, so they will show an exceptional result on *Indralupta*.

From our observation, it can be concluded that both *Bhringrajadi Taila* and *Amalaki Rasayana* aid in reversing the *Samprapti* of *Indralupta* and resulting in the *Dhatu Samya* (balance of dhatus) by which re-growth of the hair is achieved.

The locally applied oil cleanses channels while enhancing blood circulation towards the hair follicle. This facilitates absorption of drugs, end of hair loss, firming hair roots and promoting the growth of new hair.

This study confirmed the effectiveness of *Bhringrajadi Taila* and *Amalaki Rasayana* in *Indralupta* owing to significant hair growth on the patch of *Indralupta*, with no side effects.

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