



**ROLE OF VIRECHANA AND SHAMANA SNEHAPANA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF
SHWITRA W.S.R. VITILIGO: A CASE STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Vitiligo is one of the skin disorders presenting with white patches over the skin, which is occurring as a result of lack of colouring pigment melanin, due to the destruction of pigment forming cells known as melanocytes. Worldwide prevalence of vitiligo is observed as 1% of the world population. It is estimated between 3-4% in India. It affects the patient physically, psychologically, and socially as well. In Ayurveda, vitiligo can be considered as *Shwitra* and it has a predominance of *tridoshas*. Due to the chronic nature, long-term treatment, lack of uniform effective therapy and unpredictable course the disease are usually very difficult to treat. Various treatment modalities available in the contemporary system of medicine but, these are time-consuming and some even have adverse effects. So, it becomes a challenge to provide effective and safe treatment protocol for vitiligo. **Aim and Objective:** To evaluate the effect of *virechana* and *shamana snehapana* in a *shwitra* w.s.r. to vitiligo. **Materials and methods:** In the present case, a 21 years old female patient was diagnosed as a patient of *shwitra* having white patches on both hands, upper extremities (excluding hands), lower extremities (excluding feet), encroaching elbow and knee joints, and behind the ear. Severe itching with constipation and loss of appetite were associated complaints. The patient was treated by *shodhana* therapy like *virechana*, *raktamokshana*, and *shamana snehapana*, and *shamana aushadhi*. **Observation and Results:** Significant result was observed in white patches, discoloration, itching, and associated complaints. **Conclusion:** Panchakarma therapies like *virechana*, *raktamokshana*, and *shamana sneha* provides effective relief in the case of *shwitra* i.e vitiligo.

KEYWORDS: *Raktamokshana*, Vitiligo, *Virechana*, *Shamana snehapana*, *Shwitra*.

INTRODUCTION

The word *shwitra* has its root in the Sanskrit word *shweta*, which means white patch.^[1] So, *shwitra* is a disease where white patches appear on the body. The disease has got special importance as it causes vileness of the body. Probably keeping this in mind Ayurveda described the disease along with *kushtha*.^[2] It is caused by the same etiology as *kushtha*, it is classified as *kilasa*, *daruna*, *aruna*.^[3] *Shwitra* is characterized by non-discharging lesions and may occur in *rakta*, *mamsa*, *meda*.^[4] According to *Kashyapa Samhita shwitra* is, “*Shweta Bhava Micchanti Shvitram*” this means a reflection of white colour.^[5] *Madhavidana* classified *Shwitra* based on the causative factors viz., *doshaja* and *vranaja*.^[6] *Madhavidana* described that vitiligo (*shwitra*) in which hairs are black, in a small percentage, with ununited spots, new (<1 year) is curable.^[7] Others including those developed due to burns, in genitals, hands, and feet, lips, with a history of inheritance are non-curable or difficult for a cure. The treatment adopted for the condition are *shodhana karma* like *vamana*, *virechana*, *raktamokshana* using leeches are

recommended. *Shamana chikitsa*- done through oral medications and external applications i.e *lepa*.

Shwitra can be co-related with vitiligo. Vitiligo is characterized by the appearance of patchy discoloration evident in the form of typical chalky-white or milky macule(s). The size of the macules may vary from a few millimetres to several centimetres with the lesions affecting the skin or mucous membranes. Mostly, the lesions are asymptomatic and symmetrically distributed although in some patients itching or burning may precede or accompany the onset of the lesions.^[8] Worldwide prevalence of vitiligo is observed as 1% of the world population.^[9] The highest incidence has been recorded in India and Mexico. It is estimated between 3-4% in India. Although an incident as high as 8.8% has also been reported irrespective of race especially to dark-skinned people. Many times common causes are observed as severe emotional stress.

Due to its chronicity, long-term treatment, lack of uniform effective therapy, and unpredictable course of the disease,

it is very demoralizing for patients and creates a very bad social stigma for the victim. In the allopathic system, no satisfactory and permanent cure is available. Treatment is steroid-based, systemic psoralens with exposure to long-wave UV radiation. Topical potent corticosteroids are used. Other treatment options are Cosmetic makeup, Cryosurgery, Depigmentation, Dermabrasion Use of sun-protective devices, Intra-lesion therapy, Depigmentation therapy, Laser treatment Punch grafting, Chemical peeling off. Skin grafting is practiced but again it has its limitations and side effects.

In modern science PUVA (Psoralen + Ultra Violet A rays exposure) therapy is mainly used for the treatment of disease but these therapies have so many harmful side effects. Everyone is expecting some beneficial remedies. So, it is needed to find a safe, easier, less complicating, cost-effective, and fruitful approach for the management of disease, and Treatment needs a holistic approach. For homeostasis of hormones and detoxifying body with Ayurvedic body purification treatment i.e., Panchakarma is very useful. In fact, in Ayurveda, it is described as a powerful purificatory treatment and it should be done before commencing any specific medical treatment for the disease. In the present case study, one such case of *shwitra* i.e vitiligo is treated successfully with panchakarmas like *virechana*, *raktamokshana*, and *shamanasnehapana*.

CASE STUDY

A young female patient of 21 years reported to panchakarma OPD with a complaint of *twaka vaivarnya* (white patches) over both legs, b/l elbow area, behind the ear, for, 10 years. Also, she was having *kandu* (itching) on both forearm and legs for 1 month on and off,

kshudhamandya (loss of appetite), and constipation. On history taking patient was said to be normal 10 years back, one day she noticed a small white patch behind her ear with mild itching sensation, as it seems to be small which she neglected, later she noticed that it's getting increased and spreading to other areas. And gradually white patches started appearing around the legs and elbow joint, for the complaint she took treatment from the nearby allopathic hospital-like steroids for 11 years but got relief temporarily. When she was taking medicine that time, she felt increasing symptoms. For, 3 years she stopped allopathy medicine and the patches go on increasing all over legs and hands. So, for further management, she came to panchakarma OPD No. 15 of R. A. Poddar Hospital Worli, Mumbai. On history taking patient is K/C/O hyperacidity.

Dashavidha parikshana: *Prakriti - vat pradhan pitta anubandh, Vikrut- Rakta,mansa,twaka, Sara- madhyama, Samhanan- Krush, Vaya – Tarun, Bala – Alpa, Agni - manda , Kshudha- alpa since 2 months, Koshta - Madhyama koshta*

Astavidha parikshana

Nadi- 84/min, vatapittaja, sarpa gati Mala-Asamadhankarak, malavsthambh, Mutra- samyak, Jivha-sama, Shabda-spashta, Sparsh- anushnashit Drik-spasht, Akriti- krusha.

Local examination: Site of lesion- B/L arms, legs, elbow joint, ear, Distribution- asymmetrical, Colour- milky white, Itching- present, Inflammation- absent, Discharge- no discharge, Superficial sensation of lesion- no pain, no swelling.

OBSERVATION AND RESULT

Table no. 1: Treatment given in *Shwitra*.

Date	Chikitsa	Drug and Dose	Duration	Observation and Results
17/01/20	<i>Rukshana and deepana pachana</i>	<i>Vidanga 500mg+triphala 2g + musta 2 g+guduchi 2g Aarogyavardhini vati 500 mg Kaishor guggul 500mg Maharasnadi kwatha 20 ml</i>	20 ml <i>kwatha</i> BD BD before meal BD after meal BD after meal For 15 days	White patches on b/l elbow, legs and arms, behind the ear, hyperacidity, loss of appetite, severe itching
4/2/2020-8/2/2020	<i>Snehapana</i>	<i>Panchatikta ghrita</i>	50 ml in increasing dose up to 180 ml for 5 days	Itching reduced, acidity relieves
12/02/2020	<i>Virechana</i>	<i>Abhayadi modak 2 tab + Erand taila 50 ml + Mridvika phanta 100 ml</i>	At 10.00 am 8 <i>vega heenashuddhi</i>	
	<i>Sansarjanakrama</i>		3 days	Itching reduced by 60%, <i>twakvaivarnya</i> asit is
20/2/2020 And 4/3/2020	<i>Raktamokshana (Siravedha)</i>	2 sitting	50 ml	Itching 95% reduced
21/12/20-6/1/21 And 15/2/21-2/3/21	<i>Shamana snehapana</i>	<i>Panchatikta ghrita</i>	15 ml when the patient feels hungry in the morning for 15 days 2 sitting	White patches reduced, pinkish skin has appeared, itching reduced up to 80%, no discharge, new skin generated, increased appetite, weight gain

Table no. 2: Shamana treatment in Shwitra w.s.r. vitiligo.

Date	Drug	Dose	Symptoms
25/02/2020	<i>Aarogyavardhini</i> 500 mg <i>kaishor guggul</i> 500 mg <i>Maha Manjishthadi kwath</i> 20 ml	BD before meal after meal BD	New white patches on both elbows start increasing Itching reduced 95%
	<i>Bakuchi churna lepa</i> with <i>Gomutra</i> , <i>Bakuchi taila</i> for LA		
29/2/20- 4/03/2020	<i>Bakuchi</i> + <i>Haridra</i> + <i>Khadira</i> + <i>Sariva</i> + <i>Chakramarda churna</i> each of 1 gm 20 ml kwatha <i>Guduchi Ghana vati</i> 500 mg	Hold <i>bakuchitaila</i> for LA <i>Lepa</i> duration reduced to 15 min	all patches were reddish, itching increases Dryness of lips
12/03/2020	1. <i>Sutashekhar rasa</i> 250 mg +	With <i>Sharkara</i> at empty stomach } <i>Madhu</i>	White patches decreased (60-75 % relief) also in itching, giddiness, pain in back
	<i>Rasmanikya</i> 1gm + <i>Guduchi</i> 10 gm + <i>Yastimadhu</i> 20 gm <i>Amaltash churna</i> 1 gm + <i>Priyangu</i> 1 gm + <i>Sauf</i> 1 gm + <i>Bakuchi</i> 1 gm <i>Swayambhuva guggula</i> 250 mg	} after meal BD	
2/5/20 – 15/5/20	<i>Swayambhu guggul</i> <i>Khadirarishta</i> <i>bakuchi</i> + <i>gomutra lepa</i>	500 mg BD 20 ml BD	White patches decreased (60-75 % relief) also in itching, giddiness, relief in pain, increased appetite
16/5/20 – 8/8/20	Continue all above		<i>shwetvaivarnya</i> reduces - New pigmentation (blackspot) start appearing Itching on / off <i>Mala mutra</i> – <i>Prakrut kshudha prakrut</i>
9/09/2020	Continue all above + 1. <i>khadhir churna</i> 2 grams twice a day with lukewarm water 2. <i>Avipattikar churna</i> 1 gram	30 tab for 15 days HS	White patches reduced Itching-on/off Hyperacidity -on/off <i>Mala mutra</i> – <i>samyaka</i>
5/04/2021	<i>Bakuchi churna</i> 3 gm <i>Gandharva</i> <i>Haritaki</i> 5 gm <i>Rasmanikya</i> 1gm + <i>Guduchisatva</i> 10 gm <i>Yastimadhu</i> 20 gm with <i>ghrita</i>	With <i>ghrita</i> BD Warm water HS	Decrease in <i>Twakavaivarnya</i> , <i>kandu</i> , (100%), Generated new pinkish skin, no discharge, increased appetite, weight gain, improved bowel.

Images of patient before and after treatment

Fig 1: Before treatment.



Fig 1.1: After Virechana.



Fig 1.2: After Shamana sneha.



Fig 2: Before treatment.



Fig 2.1: After Virechana.



Fig 2.2: After Shamana sneha.

DISCUSSION

Here, in this case, the patient was diagnosed as a case of *shwitra* (vitiligo). *Akalaj bhojan, Kwachit paryusheet annasevan, Viruddha bhojana, Ati katu rasatmak aahar sevan, diwaswapa*, etc *hetus* were found. Etiopathogenesis of vitiligo takes place as follows- *Dosha - Vatakaphaj, Dushya - Rasa, Rakta and Mansa, Strotodushti – Rasvaha, Raktvaha, Adhistan – Twaka, Udbhavasthan – aamashaya*. Since *Shwitra* is one type of *kushtha* disease and has severe vitiated *dosha shodhana chikitsa (virechana)* was done and thereafter patient was treated with *shamana snehapana* and *shamana aushadhi* (see table no 1& 2).

Rukshana, Pachana and Deepana in Shwitra- In *kleda* predominance, *rukshana* can be adopted in *shwitra* before starting *shodhana snehapana*. In this patient *rukshana, pachana and deepana* were applied.

Snehapana- Internal oletion with *panchatikta ghrta* unctuous morbid *dosha*, liquifies and brings down it.^[10] *Tikta rasa* pacifies *pitta dosha*.^[11]

Mode of action of Virechana – *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation) is the process in which, the elimination of morbid humor occurs through the *Adhobhaga*.

It brings down the morbid *doshas*, particularly *pitta* from the body to *pakvasaya*. The *virechana* drug possesses properties like *Ushna, tikshna, Sukshma, Vyavayi*, and *Vikasi*. *Virechana* yoga gets absorbed and due to *virya*, it reaches the *hridaya*, then the *dhamani*, and thereafter it reaches to macro and microchannels of the body. *Vyavayi guna* causes quick absorption, *vikasi guna* causes softening and loosening of the bond by *dhatu saithilya karma*. *Dosha sanghata* is liquified (*vishayndana*) by *ushna guna*. The action of *tikshna guna* is to break the *mala* and *dosha* in microform. Due to *sukshma guna*, it reaches microchannels, disintegrates endogenous toxins, which are then excreted through microchannels. Mainly due to *prabhava, prithvi* and *jala* constitution and presence of *sara guna virechana* occurs.^[12] Skin is a site of *bhrajaka pitta* and *vayu* that enlighten the complexion of the skin. *Virechana* pacifies the *pitta dosha* and cures the *shwitra* disease.

Shamana snehapana- *Sneha* which pacifies the disease is called *shamana sneha*. *Sneha* pacifies the *doshas* all over the body. *Shamana* means to pacify the *dosha* in their *swasthana* i.e their site.^[13] *Shamana Sneha* pacifies the *dosha* leftover after *shodhana* and relieves symptoms like itching and discoloration in case of vitiligo. *Panchatikta ghrta* helps in cleansing the cells as *Ghrta* enhances the trans cell membrane transportation because the physiological constituent of cell membrane and *Ghrta* is same, i.e., lipids.

Raktamokshana- *Siravedha* acts as local therapy that expels out local morbid *pitta* and purifies *rakta dhatu*.^[14] *Varnaprasadana* is one of the functions of *rakta dhatu*.

Bakuchi beeja churna (seed powder of *Psoralea corylifolia* Linn.) is useful in skin diseases. The bioactive compound “*Psoralen*” of this powder has an ability to stimulate the development of melanin and used to treat leukoderma.^[15] Its use in the management of Vitiligo is recommended in the Ayurveda texts.^[16] The drug appears to have a purely local action with a specific effect on the arterioles of the sub capillary plexuses, which are dilated so that the plasma is increased in this area. The skin becomes red and the melanoblasts (pigment-forming cells) are stimulated.^[17] The photo conjunction involves thymine dimer adducts on the opposite strands of DNA. *Psoralen* has been found to intercalate into DNA, where they form mono- and di-adducts in the presence of long wavelength ultraviolet light and thus are used in the treatment of hypo-pigmented lesions of the skin, such as Leukoderma.^[18] *Psoralen*, when administered orally at a dose of 4 mg/g and exposed in sun, pigment deposition was noticed. The furanocoumarins, which contain *psoralens*, promote pigmentation.^[19] The powder is used internally for leprosy and leukoderma and externally in the form of paste and ointment.^[20]

CONCLUSION

As *Shwitra roga* is difficult to treat in other System of medicine, it can be managed successfully with *panchakarma* therapies like *virechana* and *raktamokshana*. Whereas leftover *doshas* are pacified by *shamana sneha* therapy. *Apunarudbhava* (non-recurrence) is the principle of Ayurveda treatment. This combination of *shodhana* and *shamana* satisfy this demoralizing disease.

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