MANAGEMENT OF EKAKUSHTA WITH SAMAHODHANA & SAMAHAMANA CHIKITSA A SINGLE CASE STUDY WSR TO PLAQUE PSORIASIS

Desai Sucheta¹*, Desai Ananta² and Borannavar Shaila³

¹P.G. Scholar, ²HOD & Professor, ³Guide & Associate Professor
Department of PG Studies in Panchakarma, Govt. Ayurveda Medical College,
Bengaluru, Karnataka.

ABSTRACT
A case of Psoriasis presenting with outrageous symptoms is a challenge to treat. Psoriasis an inflammatory skin disease, characterized by well-circumscribed erythematous dry plaques of various sizes, covered with mica-like scales. According to its clinical features, in Ayurveda it can be co-related with Ekakushta. Many treatment modalities have been adopted in medical sciences, but because of its recurrence tendency no significant result is obtained. Hence, it is need of the hour to find out a treatment by which such condition can be treated successfully, & if Ayurvedic principles mentioned for treatment of Kashta are followed correctly then such conditions can be managed effectively. Objectives: To study the efficacy of Virechana Karma followed by Shamana Chikitsa in the management of Ekakushta with respect to plaque psoriasis. Materials and Methods: A single case study of a 38 year old female diagnosed with plaque psoriasis since 2 years with symptoms such as redness, silvery, scaly, itchy skin along with burning sensation was treated with Virechana Karma followed by Shamana Oushadi’s. Result: Symptomatic assessment of patient was carried out after 2 months with satisfactory overall outcome and significant improvement in the quality of life. Conclusion: Virechana Karma followed by Shamana Oushadi’s brought about significant & satisfactory relief in symptoms of Ekakushta.

KEYWORDS: Ekakushta, Virechana, Psoriasis, Shamana Chikitsa.
INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda all skin diseases have been categorized under the umbrella of Kushta.[1]

Ekakushta is described as one among the Kshudra Kushta in Ayurvedic text.[2] In Charak Samhita Chikitsasthana Chapter 7, Ekakushta is described as Vata- Kaphaja disorder.[3] The signs and symptoms of Ekakushta i.e. Aswedanam, Mahavastu and Matsyashakalopamam,[4] can be compared with symptoms of Plaque Psoriasis. Hence it has been taken as analogue to Plaque Psoriasis in the present case study. According to W.H.O. the world wide prevalence of Psoriasis is 2-3%. In India prevalence of Psoriasis varies from 0.44 to 2.88%.[5] Psoriasis consist of itchy, deep pink to reddish, well demarcated, indurate plaques with silvery scaling present particularly over extensor surface and scalp[6] & affects both sexes equally. Pathogenesis is multi factorial, genetically associated, immune mediated. Psoriasis is a chronic, disfiguring, multisystem inflammatory, proliferative, non contagious disease with predominantly skin involvement.[7] Beyond the physical dimensions of disease, psoriasis has an extensive emotional and psychosocial effect on patients, affecting social functioning and interpersonal relationships; it can result in stigmatization, poor self esteem and increased stress with profound impaired quality of life.[8] So this calls for a better understanding of the disease and the available treatment options to provide optimal management of psoriasis.

There is no satisfactory treatment available for Psoriasis in modern system of medicine and long term use of contemporary medications causes other serious complications like liver and kidney failure, bone marrow depletion, etc in long run.[9,10] Ayurveda has advocated use of repeated Shodhana along with Shamana, Rasayana & Lepa Chikitsa. Acharya Charaka has mentioned that all Kushtas are Tridoshaja in nature.[11] Hence Shodhana Chikitsa, specially Virechana karma helps to remove the vitiated Doshas from the body. The present case was a female of 38 yrs suffering with plaque type of psoriasis since 2 years & to whom classical Virechana Karma was administered followed by Shamana Oushadi's. This has shown significant improvement in scaling, discolouration, elevated patches and itching.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

It is a single case study, and the informed consent of the patient was obtained in her own language. Patient was subjected for Shodhana with Virechana Karma followed by Shamana Chikitsa. No conventional modern medicines were used.
Case presentation
A 38 year old female was apparently healthy before 2 years, then she had gradual onset of red, silvery, scaly, itchy skin lesions along with burning sensation over the upper and lower limb, abdomen, chest and back, and absence of sweating over both forelimbs. So she took allopathic treatment for 1 year with temporary symptomatic relief. As the symptoms aggravated again she approached our hospital for further management. After examination, she was subjected to Shodhana i.e Virechana Karma followed by Shamana Chikitsa. Aggravating factors: Winter season, consumption of non – vegetarian food, curd, pickles, sour & oily foods, stress. Relieving factors: Application of oil over the lesions, consumption of vegetarian, non spicy, non oily food.

Demographic details: OPD No: 24990, IPD No: 1703, Nationality: Indian, Religion: Hindu, Socioeconomic status: Lower middle class, Occupation: Vegetable vendor, Address: Bengaluru

Past history: Nothing significant

Family history: All are said to be healthy.

Personal history
- Diet: Non-vegetarian thrice a week, Abhishyandi Ahara Sevana.
- Apetite was normal.
- Predominant Rasa in Ahara was Katu-ama-lavana.
- Addiction: Intake of coffee 4 times a day
- Sleep: Disturbed due to itching.
- Habit of incomplete evacuation of bowel.
- Skin examination specific to diagnosis: The diagnosis is primarily clinical.
- Inspection: Lesions on bilateral knee joints, lower limbs, hands, trunk region and back region. Size and shape: Erythematous oval shaped lesions of variable size. Colour - Redness of skin, silvery pinkish white scaly skin lesions. Morphologically lesions were well defined, dry, rough & raised. Widely distributed all over the body. Pattern: Generalized, scattered patches.
- Other signs: Candle grease sign - Positive. Auspitz sign - Positive. KOEBNER’S Phenomena - Present
• Ashtasthana pariksha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nadi</th>
<th>78/min</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mala</td>
<td>Asamyak (constipation, unsatisfactory bowel habit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mootra</td>
<td>Samyak (clear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jihwa</td>
<td>Saama (coated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shabda</td>
<td>Samyak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sparsha</td>
<td>Rukshatwak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drik</td>
<td>Prakruta (no pallor, no icterus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akriti</td>
<td>Madhyama</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Dashavidha pariksha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prkruti</th>
<th>Vatakaphaja</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vikruti</td>
<td>Vatakaphapradhana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara</td>
<td>Madhyama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satva</td>
<td>Madhyama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samhananana</td>
<td>Madhyama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satmya</td>
<td>Madhyama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pramana</td>
<td>Madhyama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahara Shakti</td>
<td>Madhyama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyayama Shakti</td>
<td>Avara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaya</td>
<td>Madhyama</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


• Treatment advised

By analysing the above mentioned pathogenesis of disease in this patient, all oral and local medicines were stopped and following treatment plan was administered.

• Protocol of treatment adopted:
  
  ➢ Deepana, Pachana
  ➢ Virechana for Shodhana
  ➢ Shamana Chikitsa
  ➢ Rasayana Chikitsa
Table 1: Showing the details of shodhana chikitsa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the procedure</th>
<th>Dosage</th>
<th>No of days</th>
<th>Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Deepana and Pachana with Tab Chitrakadi Vati | 1 tid | 2 Days | ✓ Agni deepana  
 ✓ Laghuta  
 ✓ Jihvaaliptata |
| Arohana Krama Snehapaana with Tiktaka Ghrita | 1<sup>st</sup> day: 30 ml  
 2<sup>nd</sup> day: 70 ml  
 3<sup>rd</sup> day: 100 ml  
 4<sup>th</sup> day: 150 ml | 4 days | ✓ Koshta Snigdhata  
 ✓ Adahasta Sneha Darshana  
 ✓ Asamhata Varcha |
| Sarvanga Abhyanga with Murchita Tila Taila t/b Ushnajala Snana | 200ml | 3 days | ✓ Laghuta of Sharira  
 ✓ Slightly increase in the symptoms |
| Virechana Karma with Trivrut Lehya | 60grms | One day | ✓ No of vega - 18  
 ✓ Madhyama Shuddhi  
 ✓ Kaphanta  
 ✓ Laghuta of Sharira  
 ✓ Agni Deepana |

After the Virechana Karma based on the Shuddhi, Samsarjana Krama was advised for 5 days.

Table 2: Showing Shamana and Rasayana chikitsa along with local applications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Aushadhis</th>
<th>Dose</th>
<th>Anupana</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Arogyavardhini Vati</td>
<td>2 bd after food</td>
<td>Koshnajala</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gandhaka Rasayana</td>
<td>1tid after food</td>
<td>Koshnajala</td>
<td>15 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Khadirarishta</td>
<td>15ml bd after food</td>
<td>With equal quantity of Koshnajala</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Avipattikara Churna</td>
<td>10 gm HS</td>
<td>Koshnajala</td>
<td>15 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tiktamrita Capsule</td>
<td>1 tid after food</td>
<td>Koshnajala</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Visora oil</td>
<td>For local application</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mahatiktak Ghrita</td>
<td>10 ml bd before food</td>
<td>Koshnajala</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Amruta Bhallataka Lehya</td>
<td>5gms bd after food</td>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>45 Days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Along with the above medicines she was advised to follow Pathya Ahara-vihar, avoid intake of junk food, spicy, deep fried food, sour and salty food items, day sleep, advised to take simple diet and follow lifestyle modifications. With a follow up for a period of 2 months, till date the patient has not shown any signs of recurrence.
OBSERVATION AND RESULT

- Assessment criteria
  - Subjective criteria
    - *Aswedanam (Absence of sweating)*
      - Normal Sweating: 0
      - Mild Sweating: 1
      - Mild Sweating on exercise: 2
      - No Sweating after exercise: 3
    - *Mahavastu (Big size lesion)*
      - No lesion: 0
      - Lesion on partial part of hand, leg, neck, scalp, trunk, back: 1
      - Lesion on most part of hand, leg, neck, scalp, trunk, back: 2
      - Lesion on whole part of hand, leg, neck, scalp, trunk, back: 3
    - *Matsyashakalopamam (Scaling)*
      - No scaling: 0
      - Mild scaling from all lesions: 1
      - Moderate scaling from all lesions: 2
      - Severe scaling from all lesions: 3

- Objective criteria
  - **Candle grease sign** - When a Psoriatic lesion is scratched with the point of a dissecting forceps, a candle grease-like scale can be repeatedly produced.
    - Absent: 0
    - Improved: 1
    - Present: 2

  - **Auspitz sign** - On complete removal of the scales, a red, moist surface is seen. On further scarping, punctuate bleeding points are seen.
    - Absent: 0
    - Improved: 1
    - Present: 2
Table 3: showing changes BT and AT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signs and Symptoms</th>
<th>Before Treatment</th>
<th>After Treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aswedanam (absence of sweating)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahavastu</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matsyashakopalopamam (scaling)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candle grease sign</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auspitz sign</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result of above medication before and after treatment is shown in following figures:

**Before treatment**

Presence of pinkish white scaly lesions BT

![Figure 1](image1.png)  ![Figure 2](image2.png)  ![Figure 3](image3.png)

**After treatment**

Absence of pinkish white scaly lesions AT

![Figure 4](image4.png)  ![Figure 5](image5.png)
Patient got relief from symptoms of *Ekakushta* (Psoriasis) when systematic assessment of patient was carried out after 2 months after *Virechana*. After treatment erythema and induration was fully reduced, desquamation (scaling) was huge before treatment and it was fully reduced in first follow up. There was no itching, no new skin lesions seen. Skin was almost normal after *Shodhana* and *Shamana*. Overall quality of life of patient was significantly improved. Patient was continued with the same treatment for next couple of months.

**DISCUSSION**

Psoriasis is a chronic inflammatory disorder of hyperkeratinisation characterised by the formation of well defined raised erythematous plaques, with silvery white scales; that mostly localize on the extensor surfaces. The basic defect is rapid displacement of epidermis in psoriatic lesion. *Ekakushta* is a *Kshudra Kushta* and have Vata- Kapha dominance and involvement of *Tridosha* can be evident from its signs and symptoms. The vitiated *Doshas* reaches to shithila dushya like *Twak* and results into *sthana samshraya avastha* and then produces *laxanas* of *Ekakushta*. Acharya Charaka says that in *Kushta*, shithilata is in whole *Twak*, so the lesions are produced at the enlodgement of *Doshas*.\(^{[12]}\)

Changes in life style, irregularities in dietary habits become major causes in current scenario. Excessive intake of yoghurt, non vegetarian, salty and sour foods acts as an aggravating factor in this disease. In this case onset of *Matsyashakalopanam* (silvery scaly lesions), *Mahavastu* (large surface area of body) with *Aswedana* was seen. In *Ayurvedic* classics for *Kushta*, the line of treatment mentioned are *Nidanaparivarjana, Shodhana, Snehana, Swedana, Raktamokshana, Prakriti vighatana, Shamana, Lepana, Rasayana*. As *Ekakushta* is mostly chronic and *Bahudoshshajanya*, both *Shodhana* and *Shamana* therapies have to be administered along with *Rasayana Chikitsa* to provide long lasting results and a better life to patients. *Samshodhana* (purificatory therapy) is one of the important treatments of *Ayurveda*, which deals mainly with elimination of the aggravated *Doshas* from the body. In classics *Virechana Karma* is prescribed once in a month because of the *Kleda* (moist discharge) accumulating on the account of *Pitta* due to its *Upasneha, Drava* (Liquid) and *Visra guna* & is relatively a slow process. *Ekakushta* (Psoriasis) is *Raktapradoshaja Vyadhi* (blood predominant diseases) and having *Bahudosha Avastha*. As *Pitta* is the *Mala* of *Rakta* and have *Asraya Asrayibhava*, so for the elimination of *Pitta Dosha*, *Virechana Karma* is the best...
Suchet a et al. World Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

line of treatment. A lot of research work has been done on effect of Virechana in psoriasis which justifies the effect of Virechana seen in this case.

15 days after the Virechana patient reported 50 % of improvement in her symptoms; she got complete relief from itching, the silvery scales disappeared, the discoloured scaly lesions developed quite normal luster. Also the patient’s bowel habit turned into regular. Patient was then administered Shamana and Rasayana therapy for next 2 months which cured the chronic plaque psoriasis without side effects which was not relieved by contemporary medicines. These Shamana drugs mainly possess properties like, Ushna, Teekshna, Katutiktarasatmaka, Katuvipaka, act as Aampachak, Srotoshodhaka, Raktashodhak, Twakraktaprasadana, Kandughna, Kushthaghna and Varnya hence pacify symptoms like itching, dryness, discolouration caused by aggrevated Kapha and Vata doshas. Rasayana drugs by virtue of their properties helps to maintain the Dosha and Dhatu Samyata and boost the immunity of the body.

Along with Shodhana, Shamana, Rasayana therapies patient was advised to avoid non vegetarian, fermented (idli, dosa etc), fast food (chinese, samosa, kachori etc) & Katu, Amla Rasa Pradhana Ahara (curd, paneer, spicy food).

**Specific mode of action of shamanaoushadhis in ekakushta**

- **Arogyavardhini vati:** It’s a herbomineral preparation praised as Sarvarogopashamani, indicated internally for Shamana and detoxification of Rasa and Rakta Dhatu. The main content is Katuki which causes Bhedana and Malashodhana. The abundance of Triphala in this formulation is very effective in removing the toxins from the body. Being loaded with antioxidants, this Vati scavenges free radicals the body. It effectively balances tridoshas, acts on the liver & leads to expulsion of toxins, helps in purification of blood. Its antipruritic nature alleviates itching sensation caused due to psoriasis.

- **Gandhak rasayana:** It contains purified Gandhaka, cinnamon, Ela, Patra, Nagakesar, Guduchi, Triphala, shunthi, Bhringaraja. It has antibacterial, antiviral and antimicrobial properties (Saokar 2013). It helps in reducing itching and infection. It improves complexion, & acts as a blood purifier. It is a potent Vranaropaka, Krimighna, Twachya.

- **Khadirarishta:** It mainly contains Khadira, Devadaru, Bakuchi, Darvi, Triphala, Makshika, Dhaksi, Twak, Ela, Patra, Pippali, Jatiphal etc. By virtue of these it is a
tremendous blood purifier, antihelmenthic, antibacterial, antipruritic, & anti allergic. It works mainly on symptoms like itching & rashes. It detoxifies blood, digests ama and helps kidneys to excrete toxins.

- **Avipattikara churna**: The key ingredients are *Trikatu, Triphala, Musta, Vidalavana, Vidanga, Ela, Patra, Lavanga, Trivrit* etc. It acts as *Nityavirechaka*, possesses strong carminative, antioxidant, anti inflammatory property that aid in curing imbalances related to *pitta dosha*.

- **Tiktamrit capsule**: It mainly contains *Patola, Nimba, Triphala, Kantakari, Vasa & Shudhdha Guggulu*. Its an excellent blood purifier, combats itching and cures rashes mainly.

- **Visora oil**: It’s a herbomineral preparation used for external application, consists of *Bakuchi, Karanja, Neem, Kutaja, Tuvaraka, Manjishta, Araghvada* etc most of these drugs are of *Katu-iktita-kashaya-rasa*, *Laghu-snigdha-guna*, *Ushnavirya* & acts as *Kaphashamaka, Kandughna, reduces* scaling, anti-inflammatory, antiviral & antifungal.

- **Mahatiktaka ghrita**: It calms *Vata and Pitta Doshas*. Its a polyherbal medicated ghee & the key ingredients are *Saptaparna, Ativisha, Kutaki, Shampak, Patha, Musta, Triphala, Patola, Nimba, Pippali, Haridra, Daruharidra, Vacha, Sariva, Shatavari, Guduchi, Yashtimadhu, Goghrita etc* by which it acts as *Srotoshodhaka, Raktashodhaka, Raktaprasadaka, Kandughna, Kushtaghna & Varnya*, so helpful in this condition.

- **Amrita bhallataka lehya**: Bhallataka is *Tikshna* but if administered properly it is useful like “*Amrita*”. Directly or indirectly the immune response of the body plays a major role in the manifestation of the disease Psoriasis. The main contents of this formulation are *Shuddha Bhallataka, Godugda, Goghrita, Sharkara*. It carries *Vatakaphaghna, Chedana, Deepana, Shothaghna, Shoolaghna, Vatanulomaka* properties. Bhallataka by its *Rasayana Karma* improves metabolism & promotes nutrition

- **Role of virechana in ekakushta**
  Aswedanam (absence of sweating) is due to obstruction in *Swedavaha Srotas* (channels carrying sweat), *Virechana* by *Srotoshodhaka* (channel purificatory) property opens the micro channels and improves circulation, resulting in perspiration. *Mahavastu* (big lesions) are mainly associated with *Dushita Kapha* and *Rakta, Virechana* with *Pitta*
**Kaphahara** property corrects **Rakta Dhatu**, thus reducing big lesions. Matsyashakalopamam (scaling), also called hyperkeratinisation, is due to vitiation of Tridosha, Virechana acts on all Doshas and controls scaling. Rukshata (dryness) occurs mainly due to Vata Dosh, Virechana corrects it by Vatanulomana and reduces Rukshata. Kandu (itching) indicates the involvement of Kapha, Rasa, Rakta, Virechana has Pitta Shodhaka and Rasa Rakta Prasadana property, which may be the reason behind reduced Pitta and Rakta, thus reducing Daha. “Candle grease sign” indicates extremely increased Ruksha and Khara Guna in Twaka caused by Vata Dosha, Virechana pacifies Vata Dosha and thus reduces candle grease sign. Auspitz sign is mainly due to Pitta and Rakta, Virechana is an ultimate therapy for this condition. In this way, Virechana helps in breaking pathogenesis, resulting in controlling the symptoms of Ekakushta.

**CONCLUSION**

Ekakushta can be co-related with chronic plaque psoriasis on the basis of its signs &symptoms. Ekakushta is a chronic condition well known for its course of remissions and exacerbations. Modern science advocates use of various medicines like corticosteroids, retinoid, PUVA, methotrexate etc. But these have their own side effects which could be resistance to treatment, thinning of skin, immune suppression and even as severe as formation of melanoma.\(^\text{[14]}\) So holistic potentials of Ayurvedic panchakarma treatments like Shodhana - Virechana, followed by administration of Shamana and Rasayana therapy combined with Nidanaparivarjana have shown significant results and thus helps in eradicating the disease from its roots and prevent from its reoccurrence. Commonly Virechana Karma is advocated in management of psoriasis as it corrects the basic pathogenetic factors with Pitta, Rakta, Kapha, Twak & Agni. In this case study 50% relief after Shodhana and 90% relief Shamana & Rasayana was observed. As this is only a single case study, further study with larger sample can help in establishing significantly effective Ayurvedic treatment to Ekakushta wsr to plaque psoriasis.

**REFERENCES**


