

EFFICACY OF AYURVEDIC TREATMENT IN VICHARCHIKA WITH SPECIAL REFERNCE TO JALUKAVACHARANA- A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Skin is the first organ of the body interacting with the environmental agents like physical, chemical and biological agents. Variations in the environmental stimuli and natural ability of body to deal with these factors result in spontaneous remissions and relapses. Skin is a mirror that reflects internal and external pathology and thus helps in diagnosis of diseases. Skin complaints affects all ages from the neonates to the elderly and cause harm in a number of ways, such as discomfort, disfigurement and disability. All the skin diseases in Ayurveda have been described under the heading of ‘*Kustha*’, which are further divided into *Maha Kustha* and *Kshudra Kustha*. *Vicharchika* one of the *Kshudra Kustha* runs a chronic course generally considered difficult to cure and even if it is cured relapses are common; *Vicharchika* has been simulated with the diseases ‘Eczema’ or Dermatitis by most of the scholars. *Rakta Dusti* as one of the prime causes of skin diseases; on the other hand, patients may get relief after letting out the vitiated blood. *Sushruta* provides useful guidelines for bloodletting and claims it as most valuable therapy in half of all ailments. Among various methods for bloodletting, *Jalaukavacharana karma* by *Jalauka* (Leech) is considered as the ideal method to expel out the vitiated blood safely, quickly and effectively. This single case study points out the efficacy of ayurvedic treatment modalities in *vicharchika* with special reference to *jalukavacharana*.

Keywords: *vicharchika, mahakushta, kshudra kushta, jalukavacharana*

INTRODUCTION: Skin is the most outer covering layer of the body, and hence, beautiful skin is looking like ornament of the body. The skin is an extremely compound organ. It is Out of the five ‘*Gyanindriyas*’ as described in Ayurvedic texts, which is responsible for touch sensation; therefore it plays a great role in physical and mental well being of any individual. The unbroken skin acts as an effective barrier against the entry of diseases and its damage results in various problems. Any weakness in the skin becomes a great stress for a person in the society, because it has a visible pathology. Even though, majority of skin diseases are not as fatal as to kill the patient, it create greater stress-strain to the patient and

irritation to nearer person of the patient. Usually society believes that, skin diseases are contagious so, patient is been neglected in the group. As per Ayurvedic classics, all dermatological conditions are coming under the broad heading of “*Kushtha*. *Vicharchika* is one of such kind of disorders. Its *Tridoshika* involvement, incurability and recurrence of nature attract the researchers to uncover systematic information regarding *Vicharchika*.

Vicharchika-Derivation: Derived from ‘*charch adhyayane*’ by adding prefix ‘*vi*’ to it. *Ayane* means to spread out. *Vicharchika* is derived from ‘*charch dhatu*, having *vee* prefix and *nvul* suffix. It means a type of *swalpa* (minor) *kustha*¹.

This is the disease which covers the skin in particular manner and causes cracking of skin of hands and feet². *Vichar* means to move in different directions, spread or extend. *Vicharchika* means coating, cover, a form of cutaneous eruption, itching with scab. Hence it is a cutaneous eruption with itching, scab which has spreading nature in different directions.

Definition: *Vicharchika* is defined as the *kshudra pidika* which spreads with *kandu* and is elevated on the surface of the skin .
Synonym: *Vikacha*.

Site of *Vicharchika*: According to *Charaka*, no sites has been mentioned. But *Sushruta* says that this can happen anywhere in the body. *Dalhana* commenting on that says it as *Panipadeshu*³. According to *Bhoja* when cracking of skin, dryness occurs in *pani*, then it is considered as *Vicharchika*. If the same occurs in feet then it is called as *Vipadika*.

NIDANA⁴-AHARAJA NIDANA: Intake of radish, garlic etc. with milk, different meat varieties with milk, Intake of prawns with milk, Excessive intake of alcohol and green vegetables with milk, honey and meat after taking hot diet and vice versa, Use of fish and milk together, *adhyashana*, *vishamashana*, *atyashana*, *Asatmya ahara*, Intake of food during indigestion, continuous and excessive usage of *madhu*, jaggery, fish, radish like vegetables, at the time of indigestion , are considered as some of the causative factors for the onset of *vicharchika*

VIHARAJA NIDANA: Intake of hot and cold substances by mixing, Use of nourishing and denourishing diet without sequence, Sudden diving into cold water or drinking cold water after fear, exhaustion after coming from sunlight, Practice of

physical exercise and sunbath after heavy meals, sex during indigestion condition, Suppression of urges like vomitus, urine, not following proper regimens during *Panchakarma*, daysleep after lunch are the causes for skin diseases.

ACHARA HETU: *Papa Karma* like not giving respect to elders and teachers, Use of money and material acquired by unfair methods, killing the virtuous people are some deeds mentioned as responsible factors for skin diseases.

PURVARUPA⁵ : The following symptoms are considered as the *Purvarupas* of *vicharchika* in different classics like *Aswedanam*, *Atiswedanam*, *Parushyam*, *Atislakshnata*, *Vaivarnyam*, *Kandu*, *Nishtoda*, *Suptata* ,*Pariharsha*, *Lomaharsha*, *Kharatvam*, *Usmatha*, *Gauravam*, *Svayathu*, *Shrama*, *Klama* *Visarpagamanam*, *Kayachidreshu upadeha*, *Ashrubah* *Krishnata*,*Vrananam* *shighrah utpattichirah sthiti*,*Swedadhikya* .
Vitiated *dosha* settled in *Rakta*, leads to excess *sweda* formation

Atisweda: is a symptom found in *Pittavrita samana vayu*

Asweda: happens due to *Srotorodha*, which result in *Swedavaha srotodushti*.
Asweda is a symptom found in *Eka kustha*. In *Kaphavrita samana vayu* also this symptoms is found.

Parushya: means roughness in skin according to *Yogindranatha* sen and absence of *Chikkanata* according to *Gangadhara*. Due to reduction in the amount of sweat, dryness of skin occurs thereby roughness can be seen.

Atislakshnata: means *Atimridu*. Normally *twak sneha* is the mala of *Majja dhatu*. Excessive *sneha* production leads to *Atislakshnata* which is due to excess of *sebum*.

Vaivarnyata: It is said to be a discolouration apart from the normal colours of the skin like *Krishna, Shyama, Shyamavadata and Avadata*.

Kandu: It is produced as a result of *Kapha dusti* and is also mentioned in the function of *Sleshma*. This symptom even continues as a cardinal symptom in *Vicharchika*.

Toda : This symptom is explained under *Vataja karma*. It is suggested as pricking sensation.

Suptata: "Sparshajnyata or Nishkriyatwa". *Shunangata or Jadata* according to *Yogindranatha sen*. *Sparsha jnana abhava* according to *Gangadhara*. It is due to *Vata* and *Kapha dushti*.

Paridaha/Daha: It is a *Pittaja Nanatmaja vikara*-. It is a symptom even found in *Ashayapakarsha* of *Pitta*. Vitiated *Pitta* along with *Vata* produces such symptoms.

Pariharsha: Feeling of excessive coldness due to *Anavasthitatwa* of *Vayu* due to *Prabhava*.

Kharatwa : Lack of *snigdhatva*, is *Rukshata* with *Karkasha sparsha* is *Kharata*.

Ushmana: It is due to increase of *ushna guna* of *Pitta*. *Ushmadhikya* is also a *Pittaja nanatmaja vikara*

Gourata : is due to *ashayapakarsha* of *Kapha*. Also said to be due to *Kapha vridhhi*. It is even mentioned as a symptom in the *Kapha prakopa*.

Shwayathu: The word *sopha* of *Kapha prakopa lakshana* is commented as *Shwayathu*.

Visarpagamanam abheekshnam: Spreading of *doshas* in the body within short time indicates acuteness or severity of pathology due to vitiation of *Pitta and Rakta dhatu*.

Kayachidreshu upadeha : It means *upadeha* in *Chiddra*. Due to *kshaya* of *rukshaguna* of *Vata dosha, Snigdha and*

Mridu guna of *Kapha* tends to increase and this leads to *agnimandhya and ama* formation takes place which will deposit or form coating in porous areas of body and thus oozing occurs.

Vrananam sheegrotpatti & Chirasthiti: Due to fast spreading nature of *doshas*, easy onset of *vrana* occurs and due to the involvement of deeper *dhatu*s, *vrana* tends to remain for a longer duration. In *Vicharchika*, *Kandu* being a *pratyatma lakshana*, is being continued from *Purvarupa* state to be manifested fully in *Rupa* state along with other symptoms like *pidika, shyavata and bahusravata*.

RUPA⁶ : Full manifestation of *Vicharchika* is mentioned in various Ayurvedic classics which is being listed as follows :

Kandu ,Vedana ,ati-ruja ,Daha,Shyava ,Shweta,Rakta Srava (Nature of discharge)*Bahusrava Ruksha ,Lasikadhya ,Praklinna(Mamsenopachita),Raji ,Pakavati* .According to *Sushruta*, the lesion of *Vicharchika* is *Ruksha* so it becomes *Ruksha Vicharchika* (dry eczema) others have mentioned either *Srava* or *Lasika* in lesion called wet type of eczema.

SAMPRAPTI: In this context, Commentator *Gayadasa* quotes the reference of *Bhoja* and states that the *samprapti* of *Kustha* can be taken as the *samprapti* of *Vicharchika*. *Charaka* has emphasized the dual part played by *nidana*, i.e. simultaneous vitiation of *tridoshas* and also *shaithilyata* in the *dhatu*s such as *twak, rakta, mamsa and lasika*. Thus vitiated *tridoshas* gains momentum to vitiate *shithila dhatu*s and hence the disease *kustha* gets manifested.

According to *Sushruta*⁷: due to *doshaja* and *karmaja hetu*s, vitiated *pitta* and

shleshma along with vitiated *vata*, enters into *tiryak sira*, inturn vitiating them and move towards *bahya rogamarga* wherein *twak,rakta, mamsa* and *lasika* are situated. Wherever the *doshas* spread there will be formation of patches which in untreated condition enters into deeper *dhatu*s.

Thus it can be asserted that in *Vicharchika* the morbid involvement of *dhatu*s like *meda*,

asthi, *majja* etc are not found. The knowledge of *dushya* is helpful in treatment as well as in prognosis.

Srotas and Srotodusthi: In *Vicharchika*, *sanga* and *vimarga gamana* are the basic *srotodusthi*. The signs and symptoms of *Vicharchika* points towards the involvement of *Rasa*, *Rakta* an *Mamsavaha srotas* and their *dusthi* also. *Vicharchika* is also an *agnimandhyajanita vikriti* affecting both *jataragni* and *dhatwagni*. The consequence of this is the production of *ama* which by its properties circulates in *tiryak siras* along with vitiated *doshas* and accumulates within the *rasadi dhatu*s and causes obstruction and this may result in *dosha dushya sammurchana* which further progresses to *srotodusthi* and presents itself as specific *rupa* in *Vicharchika*.

TREATMENT: Line of treatment: All the varieties of the *kustha* are caused by the simultaneous vitiation of *tridoshas*, hence depending upon the signs and symptoms one should decide the line of treatment. Initially the more vitiated *doshas* should be alleviated, later the remaining less vitiated *doshas* should be alleviated.

General treatment⁸: In *vata* predominant *kustha* intake of *ghrita* in larger dose is done, *shleshma* predominant *kushta* *vamana*, in *pitta* predominant *kustha*

virechana and *raktamokshana*, in *alpa dosha kustha pracchana* and in *mahat dosha siravyadha* is advocated. In *Kustha* with *bahudosha* predominant condition, *samshodhana* therapies should be given frequently. According to *Sushruta*, the treatment should be started in the *purvarupa* stage itself. During *purvarupa* stage, *ubhaya bhaga shodhana* i.e. *vamana* and *virechana* should be done.⁹ *chikitsa* is explained for *twagadi dhatugata kustha*. Initially *snehapana* should be done before *vamanadi shodhana* purpose¹⁰.

Snehamatra in *Kustha*¹¹-*Madhyama matra sneha* is advised in *kustha*.

Swedana- According to *Charaka*, if the lesion is *sthira*, *katina* and *mandala*, then *swedana* can be done with *prastara* and *pranadi*¹²

Shodhana chikitsa¹³ : when the *doshas* are located in *hridaya*, or the centre of the body, in a state of *utklesha*, then the patient having *kustha* in the upper parts should be treated with *vamana*, with *kutaja*, *madana phala*, *madhuka* mixed with decoction of *patola* and *nimba*.

Depending upon the nature of the therapy, *samsarjana krama*¹⁴ should be followed.

Raktamokshana: If the patches of *kustha* are fixed,hard, patchy type then it should be fomented with *prastara* and *nadi sweda* and rubbed with *kurcha*. The blood oozing out through this process should there after be eliminated¹⁵. *Bhela* , mentions that the *raktajanya* and *sannipataja kustjha* are initially treated with *siravyadha*. In *alpa kustha pracchanna* is indicated, either with the help of *jalouka*, *alabu* or *shringa*¹⁶.

Site for *raktamokshana*¹⁷ is mentioned *Siravyadha* is done at forehead region, hands and feet also. In *Vicharchika*, 2

angula above the kshipra marma, siravyadha is done¹⁸.

Snehapana is necessary after raktamokshana and virechana to control the aggravation of Vata¹⁹.

Eventhough bahudoshavastha is found in kustha, only little quantity of doshas should be

eliminated repeatedly otherwise vata dosha will be vitiated and this will decrease the bala²⁰

Repeated administration of vamanadi procedures are mentioned in vicharchika

Shamana chikitsa: Some of the yogas like Guduchi swarasa kwatha or siddha ghritha for one month helps to nullify all types of Kusthas²¹. Kwatha of darvi, khadira and nimba is said to be kusthahara²². Specific treatment for Vicharchika are with Arka taila, marichadi taila, visha taila, shadbindu taila aragwadhadi qwatha, rasamanikya.

Kshara prayoga: In case of patches, shastra is contraindicated and kshara should be applied after elimination of blood and doshas²³

Only after the elimination of impurities in the blood and in kostha, the lepa prescribed

for kustha becomes instantaneously efficaceous. In case of Vicharchika, for avachurnana process, the drugs like kustha, amrita, daruharidra, kaseesa, kampillaka, musta, lodhra, sougandhika, sarja rasa, vidanga, manashila, haratala, karaveera twak are indicated.

Acharya Charaka has highlighted the role of Panchakarma therapy by stating that the disease treated by Shodhana will never recur whereas the treatment with Shamana therapy may recur in due course of time. In addition if the Shamana drugs are

administered after taking the proper course of Shodhana then it provides additional relief and thus helps in eradicating the diseases completely. Rakta Dusti as one of the prime causes of skin diseases; on the other hand, patients may get relief after letting out the vitiated blood. Sushruta provides useful guidelines for bloodletting and claims it as most valuable therapy in half of all ailments. Among various methods for bloodletting, Jalaukavacharana karma by Jalauka (Leech) is considered as the ideal method to expel out the vitiated blood safely, quickly and effectively. Acharya Charaka has advocated, about the line of treatment of Kustha, Vamana karma for Kapha predominant dosha and Jalaukavacharana karma for Pitta pradhana dosha and Rakta predominant vitiation. Sushruta counts the benefits of Raktamokshana for the Chikitsa purpose, that is it not only purifies the channels but also let the other parts become free from disease and action is faster than other therapies.

The father of Surgery, Sushruta has listed procedures like Shringa, Alabu, Ghati yantra, Prachhana etc for bloodletting process. Out of these, Jalaukavacharana (bloodletting by Jalauka – Leech) is been renowned for its safest, quick acting nature and less complicating effect. All Samhita have given detailed description of Raktamokshana and Jalaukavacharana. Charaka has enumerated Raktaja Roga and their treatment by Shonitavasechana and various techniques of Raktamokshana is also mentioned. Sushruta has dealt in clear detail with Raktamokshana and its type. He described special chapter only for Jalaukavacharana. types of Jalauka, their habitat etc. has been described first time in detailed in this chapter.

Case Study:

Place of study- Sri Jayendra Saraswathi
Ayurveda College & Hospital, Chennai

Case Number: 4903/15

Patient Initials: VV

Initial Date of Patient Consult/Treatment:
March 31, 2015

Patient Age: 30 Years Gender: Male

Occupation: Painter

Chief Complaints:

A male patient of 30 years was a painter by profession brought to the Kayachikitsa OPD of Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Ayurveda College & Hospital, Chennai. The patient was suffering from skin lesions in exposed parts of the body with profuse itching and blood stained watery discharge while scratching.

The patient presented with from skin lesions in exposed parts of the body with profuse itching and blood stained watery discharge while scratching .

Itching increases when exposed to sunlight and during winter season .

Associated symptoms- Patient complained about occasional constipation coupled with less appetite. Bloody discharge was decreased during summer season. Onset-complaints started 6 months back as a small vesicle in right palm

Personal history:

Occupation- painter by Profession.

Bowel- Occasional constipation

Appetite-Poor

Sleep-Disturbed due to itching

Addiction- Cigarette smoker-1 packet per day- Chewing tobacco occasionally.

Previous History:

No relevant previous history

Family History:

Mother had similar symptoms

Physical Examination findings:

1.Sleep-Night sleep disturbed due to itching

2.Social life-Reduced social life due to itching.

3.Diet-mixed diet-itching was increased if patient frequently took nonveg food items

DIAGNOSIS: From the above clinical findings, Investigations and physical examinations, the case was diagnosed as *Vicharchika*.

OPD treatment done: Prescribed internal medicines for 1 week and patient was advised to get admitted for *Sodhana* procedures after 1 week.

Internal medicines prescribed.

1.*Patolakaturohinyadi kashayam* – 15 ml *kashayam* mixed with 45 ml warm water at 6 AM along with *Vilwadi gutika* -I tablet

2.*Aragwadhadhi kashayam* in the same manner at 6 PM along with *vilwadi gutika* 1 tablet.

The above medicines were prescribed for 3 months during the hospital stay and after discharge also from the hospital. *Kshalanam* with *triphaladi choornam* was advised to the patient. When discharge was decreased after 2 weeks of intake of medicines *durvadi kera tailam* was prescribed for external application. Strict *pathya* in terms of food like avoidance of non veg food ,curd etc was advised.

IPD Treatment done: Started with *snehapanam* with *aragwadha mahathikthaka ghrita* 50 ml.It continued upto the attainment of *samyak snigdha lakshana*.*Vamana karma* was performed after that with *madana phala* combined emetic medicines.*Rakthamokshana* was performed by means *or jalukavacharana* once in 7 days for extraction of vitiated blood. The patient got discharged after two weeks of treatment. He was advised to do *virechana* with *Avipathti choorna* once in

every month as this *choorna* is a best *pitta samana* drug. *Pitta sudhi* causes *rakta sudhi* also. Patient was advised to take medicines for 3 months and he got considerable relief from the symptoms

DISCUSSION: *Patola katurohinyadi kashayam* is advised in *pitta kapha* predominant conditions. *Aragwadhadi kashayam* is effective in *kapha ,medodhatu* vitiated stages. As itching and discharge is a *pitta* associated *kapha* manifestation both these medicinal preparations helped to reduce the above mentioned complaints considerably. *Kshalanam* with *triphaladi choorna* helped to decrease the oozing and itching .The patient was adviced to apply *tailam* only after the cessation of discharge as *taila* may increase the discharge. *Snehana karma* is advised as *poorvakarma* of *sodhana* procedures. Hence *snehapana* with medicated *ghrita* is given to the patient for 7 days to attain *snightatwam* which helped to expel the vitiated *doshas* during *vamana* procedure. Monthly wise purgation helped in achieving *raktha sudhi*.

CONCLUSION: *Vicharchika* as a *Kshudra Kustha* has *Kapha* dominance and even involvement of *tridosha* can be evident from its signs and symptoms. *Vicharchika* in modern view has similarity with Eczema and its types. *Vicharchika* condition is more aggravated by dry and cold weather, and also when excessive sweating occurs. Sunlight, irritant material also precipitates the conditions. Excessive intake of *Madhura, Amla and Lavana* rasa are common causative factors for *Vicharchika*. General emotional expression also interfere in skin condition i.e. anxiety, depression, tensile mood activate the sympathetic nerve stimulation which produce indigestion and skin

manifestation. *Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa and Swedavaha Srotodushti* are found mainly and *Kapha , Vata* are main *dosha* involved in this Disease. Frequently *Shodhana* is indicated in *Kustha* due to involvement of *bahu Dosha*, which even holds good for *Vicharchika*. *Jalaukavacharana* is safest and scientific method amongst *Raktamokshana* which provides comparatively better relief in the symptoms of *Vicharchika* like discharge, burning sensation and itching

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