

A CASE STUDY: ROLE OF RAKTAMOKSHAN AND BAHYA LEPA IN MANAGEMENT OF PSORIASIS

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<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj0807332020>

(Published online: August 2020)

Open Access

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Article Received: 14/07/2020 - Peer Reviewed: 02/08/2020 - Accepted for Publication: 06/08/2020



ABSTRACT

Psoriasis is an autoimmune skin disease characterized by red scaly patches over the skin. Broadly all the diseases of skin come under the umbrella of *kustha*. In *ayurvedic* text, *Charaka samhita*, *kustha* has been beautifully explained. Psoriasis is an immune mediated disease which mistakenly sends out faulty signals for a normal skin assuming it as a pathogen which causes overproduction of new skin cells. Fortunately, it is a non-contagious inflammatory skin disease. Psychological stress is one of the major triggering factors in the exacerbation of the disease. *Ekkustha* has similar features as like Psoriasis. Ayurveda is a holistic approach particularly correcting the root cause through *shodhana* (*panchakarma*). While explaining the treatment for *kustha*, *acharya chakarapani* explains repetitive *shodhana karma* to be done on regular intervals to cure the disease. Hence a single case of *ek-kustha* was given *Raktamokshana* followed by *bahya lepa* at regular interval to access the effect of the procedures. Different assessment criteria were used to monitor the improvements. There was significant relief in the scaling, discolouration of skin, elevated patches & redness of the skin lesion which explains that detoxification of the body reduces the inflammatory condition of the body by bringing back the normalcy of the *dosha* in the body.

Keywords: *Kustha*, Psoriasis, Detoxification, *Ayurveda*, *Shodhana karma*.

INTRODUCTION

Any changes in the skin, affects the cosmetic look, physical wellbeing and the mental status is also affected. Psoriasis is a long lasting autoimmune disease which consist of sharply defined, slightly elevated bright red papules or plaques covered with dry silvery scales over the skin and therefore it not only affects the physical well being of a person but also affect his mental and social peace. [1] Most of the drugs used in psoriasis provide only a temporary relief but *Ayurveda* especially *Panchakarma* stands strongly with a positive result. *Ayurveda*, diagnose it as *ekakushta* which is *vatakapha* predominant *Kshudrakushta*. Vitiating of *Vatakapha* *Dosha* causes *Aruna Varna*, *Kharta*, *Rukshata*, *Kandu* and scales resembling *Matsya Shakala*. [2] This condition can be associated with psoriasis. There are seven factors involved in pathogenesis of *Kushta*, as per *Charak Samhita* these are *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*, *Tvak*, *Rakta*, *Mansa*, *Ambu* (*Saptko Draya Sangraha*). *Kushta* is considered as *Raktaja Roga* and hence the factors responsible for *Rakta Dusti* are also considered in the ethology of *Kushta*. Along with it *Virudha Ahara*, *Mithya Ahara* is also considered as causative factor for causing disease. A single case study was conducted on a patient to see the effect of *Raktamokshana with Bahya Lepa* in psoriasis.

Methodology: A 32 years old male patient with psoriasis came to OPD of Department of *Panchkarma* at Om Ayurvedic Medical College, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India (OPD: 108 IPD: 561). He had scaling and dryness in the back with severe itching for 6 years. He also had red scaly patches & plaques over his stomach, back, hands, legs and thighs. There was no history of fever, joint pain, burning, discharge and pain over the sight of patches. Patient has taken many allopathic medications like corticosteroids but there was only temporary symptomatic relief. Patient was consuming alcohol occasionally.

Before treatment: PASI Score (Psoriasis Area Severity Index)

Plaque characteristics	Head	Upper limbs	Trunk	Lower limb
Erythema	1	3	3	3
Thickness	0	2	3	2
Scaling	1	2	3	3

Lesion score: 0-none, 1-slight, 2-moderate, 3-severe, 4-very severe

Vitals were normal. Appetite & bowel were normal, but his sleep was very disturbed. There was no significant family history of the patient. Psychological history suggests of his over-thinking nature and he is sometimes depressed due to cosmetic reasons and feels inferior.

Dashvidha Pariksha

1. *Prakriti: Vatakaphaj*
2. *Vikrtiiti: Vatakapha*
3. *Sara: Madhyam*
4. *Samhanan: Madhyam*
5. *Pramana: Madhyam*
6. *Satva: Alpa*
7. *Satmaya: Sarva Ras Satmaya*
8. *Aharashakti: Madhyam*
9. *Vyayama Shakti: Madhyam*
10. *Vaya: Madhyam*

Asthavidha Pariksha

1. *Nadi: Vata Pittaj*
2. *Mutra: Samanya Mutra Pravriti 5-6 Time /Day*
3. *Mala: Samanya*
 - a. Once /Day
 - b. No Foul Smell
 - c. Semisolid Consistency
4. *Jivha: Niram*
5. *Shabda: Samanya*
6. *Sparsh: Ruksha Twak*
7. *Drik: Samanya Pandu -Ve*
8. *Akriti: Madhyam*

On dermal examination:

- There was a widespread round shaped erythematous scaly patches affecting the trunk, limbs and scalp with thickening of the skin.
- There was mild swelling and itching on nearby areas of the patches.

PASI (Psoriasis Area Severity Index) [3] score was recorded on regular intervals to access the improvement of the affected area.

Fig 1: Picture showing red scaly plaques over the skin on the 1st day



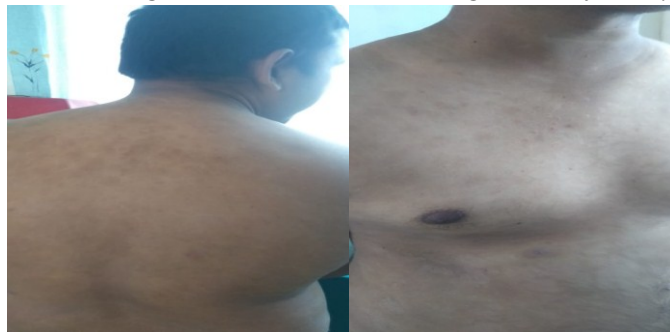
Fig 2: Raktamokshana Karma



Fig 3: Bahya lepan karma



Fig 4: After 2 sitting of Raktamokshana and regular 7 days Bahya Lepan



Treatment

The treatment given was as follows: -

S.No	Date	Procedure	Aushada /Material used	Time period
1	2/march/2020	Raktamokshan Karma (blood-letting)	Leech – 4 in number	Until leech leaves the site of bite itself.
2	9/march/2020	Raktamokshan Karma (blood-letting)	Leech – 4 in number	Until leech leaves the site of bite itself
3	2/march to 9/March 2020	Bahya Lepan (external body pack) 7 days	Amlaki Churna + Takra	35-40 min
4	9/march-16 march/2020	Bahya Lepan for 8 days	Aragvadha Patra paste + curd	35-40 min
5	10/march/2020	Raktamokshan Karma (blood-letting)	Leech – 4 in number	Until leech leaves the site of bite itself
6	16/march/2020	Raktamokshan Karma (blood-letting)	Leech – 4 in number	Until leech leaves the site of bite itself

*Raktamokshana was performed as per the procedure mentioned in Ayurvedic text.

Fig 5: Showing changes after proper Shodhan.

Before treatment

After treatment



Result: Panchkarma is a specific method to expel out the morbid Doshas from the body and helping the normal physiology to continuo. It is popularly practised for the management of many chronic and typical disorders. The patient was observed during the different steps of treatment for the accessing the changes in the skin lesions (skin colour, plaques, itching, scales, erythema) and to access the efficacy of the procedures. In the beginning of the treatment there were slight changes in the skin lesions like redness and scaling was reduced in some percentile hence there was mild progress in the condition. The improvement

was slow, gradual and steady, which resulted with positive outcome and great results. Gradually with proper sitting of Shodhana at regular intervals, the scaling of skin decreased, plaques were removed by a normal skin with no erythema, no itching and finally lesion disappeared, and the normal skin started appearing.

Dermatological examination was done on regular intervals and PASI (Psoriasis area severity index) score was taken for assessment parameter of improvement. There was significant reduction in PASI score after Shodhana Karma (purification therapies).

After treatment PASI score

Plaque characteristics	Head	Upper limbs	Trunk	Lower limb
Erythema	0	1	1	1
Thickness	0	0	0	0
Scaling	0	0	0	0

Lesion score: 0-none, 1-slight, 2-moderate, 3-severe, 4-very severe

DISCUSSION

Health as per *Ayurvedic* text is quoted as “one who have equilibrium in *Dosha*, normalcy in *Agni*, equilibrium in *Dhatu*, *Mala* and other physiological activities, delighted *atma Mansa Indriya* is considered as healthy (*Swastha*). To attain this equilibrium and normalcy in the body *Samsodhan Karma* has been explained to detoxify the morbid *Doshas* out of the body. *Ekkustha* is a *Vatakapha Pradhana Vyadhi* which is characterised by unhydrosis, fishy silvery scaling along with red patches over the skin. For such disorders *Raktamokshan* is the line of treatment to expel out the vitiated *Rakta* and *Pitta* henceforth breaking the *Samprapti* (pathophysiology) of the disease. *Raktamokshan Karma* was followed by *Bahya Lepam Karma* which is very much indicated in *Samskrishtha Avastha* of *Vata* and *Kapha Dosha* and is main *Pitta Dosha*. *Raktamokshan* pacifying the morbid *Pitta* and help *Bhrajak Pitta* to carry out its function normally hence helping the skin lesions to heal.

CONCLUSION

The complete course of *Panchakarma* including *Vaman*, *Virechan*, *Raktamokshana* etc. are very safe and effective methods in management of psoriasis. And it is helpful in preventing the reoccurrence of the disease. *Panchakarma* was done as per *Ayurvedic* text by properly following the *Poorva Karma* and *Paschyat Karma* (*Samsarjan Karma*). This case study reviles the effect of repeated *Shodhan Karma* (*Panchakarma*) in psoriasis. Thus, repeated *Panchakarma* should be done with a strategy to manage such diseases. As quoted in *Ayurvedic* texts:

पक्षात्पक्षाच्छर्दनान्यभ्युपेयान्मासान्मासात् स्नानञ्चाप्यधस्तात् |

त्रयहात् त्र्यहात्स्ततश्चावपीडान्मासेष्वस्नं मोक्षयेत् षट्सुषट्सु || चक्रपाणी 2

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Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Abhishek Saxena & Bhanu Priya Kaushik: A Case Study: Role Of Raktamokshan And Bahya Lepa In Management Of Psoriasis. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2020 {cited August, 2020} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/4254_4258.pdf