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A CASE STUDY OF MANAGEMENT OF PSORIASIS IN AYURVEDA THROUGH VAMAN KARMA

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ABSTRACT

Psoriasis, known as *Ekakustha* in *Ayurveda*, is a chronic inflammatory skin condition that presents with well-defined erythematous scaly plaques, causing significant physical discomfort and emotional distress. This case report discusses the successful management of psoriasis using *Ayurvedic* principles and therapies. A 28-year-old female patient presented with reddish dry scaly lesions affecting her entire body, including the limbs and back, accompanied by intense itching for six years. Despite previous attempts with allopathic medications and steroids yielding no relief, the patient sought treatment at our institution. Upon examination and diagnosis, the patient was classified as having *Ekakustha*, a subtype of *Ksudrakustha* in *Ayurveda*, which correlates with psoriasis in modern medicine. Treatment was initiated with a combination

of *shodhana* (purification) and *samana* (pacification) therapies, along with dietary modifications. The *shodhana* therapy included *Vamana Karma*, a purification procedure aimed at eliminating vitiated *doshas*, particularly *Kapha* and *Pitta*. Additionally, the patient was prescribed *Panchatikta Ghrita* for local application, comprising herbs with bitter taste and light and dry properties to alleviate symptoms and balance *doshas*. Following the treatment regimen for a duration of 4-5 months, significant improvement was observed in the patient's symptoms, with the resolution of erythematous plaques and scaling. The treatment approach demonstrated the efficacy of *Ayurvedic* interventions, particularly *Vamana Karma*, in managing psoriasis and providing hope for patients with this challenging condition. This case highlights the holistic approach of *Ayurveda* in addressing chronic skin diseases like psoriasis, considering not only the physical symptoms but also the individual's constitution, lifestyle, and dietary factors.

Keywords- *Ayurveda, Ekakustha, Psoriasis, Vaman karma*

INTRODUCTION

Skin diseases are prevalent among people of all ages, ranging from minor irritations to severe chronic conditions. *Ayurveda*, an ancient holistic system of medicine originating from northern India, offers comprehensive approaches to health that emphasize the balance of body, mind, and spirit. In *Ayurveda*, skin diseases are categorized under the topic of "*Kustha*," which encompasses various dermatological conditions. These skin disorders are often attributed to the vitiation of *doshas*. *Kustha* is considered a *tridoshaja vyadhi*, meaning it involves an imbalance of all three *doshas*: *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*. Depending on the predominant *dosha*, skin diseases may manifest differently and are named accordingly. Psoriasis is believed to have autoimmune origins and follows a relapsing and remitting course. It can significantly

impact patient's physical, mental, and social well-being due to the visible symptoms, which may cause embarrassment and discomfort. Heredity plays a significant role in psoriasis, with a higher likelihood of occurrence if one or both parents are affected. *Ayurveda* offers holistic treatment approaches for managing *Ekakustha*, including *Shodhana* (purification) and *Samana* (pacification) therapies, along with dietary and lifestyle modifications. These treatments aim to balance *doshas*, cleanse the body of toxins (*ama*), improve immunity, and alleviate symptoms such as itching and inflammation. This case report highlights the successful management of psoriasis using *Ayurvedic* interventions, demonstrating the potential of *Ayurveda* in addressing chronic skin conditions. In *Ayurveda* the diseased condition of *Ekakustha* can be correlated with

Psoriasis. Almost all the people have ever experienced either minor or severe skin problems in their life. *Acharya Sushruta*, a renowned ancient *Ayurvedic* physician, classified *Kustha* into two subtypes: *Mahakustha* and *Kshudrakustha*. In *Ayurveda* *kustha* are said to be *tridoshaj* and it is also placed under *Asthamahagada* [1]. According to *Acharya Sushruta*, *kustha* are of *vataj*, *pittaj*, *kaphaj* or *krimij* based on their predominance of *doshas* [2]. The Psoriasis can be correlated with *ekakustha* which is a type of *ksudrakustha*. *Ekakustha* presents specific symptoms such as failure to perspire, extensive lesions, fish-like scaling, and discoloration, which closely resemble the clinical features of psoriasis. Psoriasis, a common chronic inflammatory skin disorder in modern medicine, shares similarities with *Ekakustha* described in *Ayurveda*. It is characterized by well-defined erythematous plaques with silvery scales, often affecting extensor surfaces, the scalp, and nails. The symptoms associated with *ekakustha* are *aswednam* (failure to sweat), *Mahavastu* (extensively spreaded), *Matsyashaklopamam* (fish-like appearance) and *aruna varna* (reddish discoloration) [3]. Psoriasis is a skin disease commonly affects the skin of the elbows, knees and scalp. Psoriasis can be caused by a variety of reasons, among them

hereditary one is more common. And it is said to be that, if one parent is affected then there is 15% chances of getting this disease to the child. And if both the parents are affected then the possibility of child getting the psoriasis is 60%. The Psoriasis is characterized by well-defined erythematous scaly plaques, particularly affecting extensor surfaces, scalp and nails [4]. This disease usually follows a relapsing and remitting course. While psoriasis affects males and females equally and can occur in individuals of all races, its onset varies, with early onset typically occurring between ages 16-20 and late onset peaking at age 55-60 [5]. There was also previous studies which had reported the effective management of *Ekakustha* (Psoriasis) through *Ayurveda* [6-10].

Case Report

A female patient of age 28 yrs on April 2022 came to *Panchakarma* OPD of Sir Sunderlal Hospital, Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University on April 2022 with complaint of dry scaly lesion in whole body including both upper and lower limb and back, these symptoms are associated with intense itching since 6 yrs.

History of Present illness:-

According to patient, she had developed this scaly lesion in 1998, where the lesion is only over the Head, then it spreaded to back since

2003 and after Delivery of her fourth child the symptom spreaded to both upper and lower limbs and also to back in 2016. The symptoms get aggravated after eating curd or lemon juice. There was no relieving factors. She had no any associated symptoms. Previously the patient had tried by taking allopathic medicines and steroids but did not got relief. So for better treatment she came to our hospital.

Past history- No history of DM/HTN/Thyroid dysfunction

Family History- No significant history

Personal History-

- Bowel- inadequate bowel evacuation
- Appetite- Normal
- Micturition- Normal
- Sleep- Disturbed Sleep
- Diet- Vegeterian diet

General Examination:-

- Pallor- Absent
- Icterus- Absent
- Cyanosis- Absent
- Clubbing- Absent
- Lymph node- Not palpable
- Odema- Absent
- BP- 122/82 mmHg

- PR- 78/min

Local examination:

Inspection- erythematous dry thicken scaly lesion on both upper and lower limbs and back.

Systemic Examination-

- **Central Nervous System-** The patient is well oriented to person, place and time.
- **Respiratory System Examination-** Chest is clear and Bilateral equal air entry and no abnormal sound is noted.
- **Cardiovascular System Examination-** S1S2 is normal and no added sound is observed.
- **Abdominal examination-** the abdomen was soft and non-tender and no organomegaly is seen.

After performing history and local and systemic examination, She was diagnosed with *Ekakustha*, a type of *Ksudrakustha* and in modern science it can be correlated with Psoriasis.

Criteria for assessment:

Patient is assessed with Psoriasis Area and Severity Index (PASI) Score (British Association of Dermatologist n.d.) for the presenting symptoms [11].

Table 1: Showing the PASI Score calculation Index

Plaque characteristics	Lesion Score	Head	Upper Limbs	Trunk	Lower Limbs
Erythema	0= Absent 1= mild				
Induration/Thickness	2- Moderate 3- Severe				
Scaling	4- Very Severe				
<i>Add together each of the 3 scores for each body region to give 4 separate sums. (A)</i>					
Lesion Score Sum(A)					
Percentage area affected	Area Score	Head	Upper Limbs	Trunk	Lower Limbs
Area Score(B) Degree of involvement as a percentage for each body region affected(score each region with score between 0-6)	0= 0% 1= 1-9% 2= 10-29% 3= 30-49% 4= 50-69% 5= 70-89% 6= 90-100%				
<i>Multiply Lesion Score Sum(A) by Area Score(B),for each body region ,to give 4 individual subtotals(C)</i>					
Subtotals (C)					
<i>Multiply each of the subtotals (C) by amount of body surface area represented by that region i.e, x 0.1 for head, x 0.2 for upper body, x 0.3 for trunk, and 0.4 for lower limbs.</i>					
Body Surface Area		x 0.1	x 0.2	x 0.3	x 0.4
Totals(D)					
<i>Add together each of the scores for each body region to give the final PASI Score</i>					

PASI Score =

Methods:

- Diet regime (*Pathya- Apathya*)

Treatment Plan:

- *Shodhana chikitsa*
- *Samana chikitsa*

Patient was strictly advised to avoid eating of sour, junk foods, spicy food and curd.

Treatment Advised:
1. <i>Vamana Karma</i>
2. <i>Panchatikta Ghrita</i> for LA
3. <i>Karwan Moola</i> - 100 gm <i>Rasanjana</i> - 25 gm <i>Saariva</i> - 50 gm <i>Khadir saar</i> - 50 gm <i>Suddha tankan</i> - 10 gm Mixed with buttermilk and applied to affected parts
4. <i>Panchatikta Ghrita</i> 10 ml OD

OBSERVATION AND RESULTS



Figure 1: Before Treatment



Figure 2: After Treatment

Table 2: Showing gradings of symptoms before treatment (BT) and After treatment (AT):

Plaque Characteristics	Head		Upper Body		Trunk		Lower limbs	
	BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT
Erythema	1	0	3	1	3	1	3	1
Induration/Thickness	2	1	2	0	3	0	2	0
Scaling	2	0	3	1	3	1	3	1
Area Score	2	1	3	1	4	2	3	1

After following the treatment the PASI Score was significantly reduced from 26.2 to 2.6 which is a very significant relief in the symptoms of the disease. This study showed how the *vaman karma*, a procedure under *Panchakarma* has provided hope for patients of psoriasis and the symptoms and area affected was significantly reduced by following this treatment protocol for three months. And as per the PASI score the severity of the patients disease got a significant reduction from 26.2 to 2.6.

DISCUSSION-

The presented case report underscores the correlation between Ekakustha in Ayurveda

and psoriasis in modern medicine, emphasizing the efficacy of Ayurvedic principles and therapies in managing this chronic inflammatory skin condition. Psoriasis, characterized by well-defined erythematous scaly plaques, shares similarities with the symptoms described for Ekakustha, including failure to sweat, extensive spread, fish-like appearance, and reddish discoloration. Understanding the Ayurvedic perspective of skin diseases as Kustha and their classification into Mahakustha and Ksudrakustha based on dosha predominance provides a holistic framework for diagnosing and treating

psoriasis. The treatment plan employed in this case consisted of Shodhana (purification) and Samana (pacification) therapies, aligning with Ayurvedic principles of addressing the root cause of the disease while alleviating symptoms. Vamana Karma, a purification procedure aimed at eliminating vitiated doshas, was performed to cleanse the body of toxins and restore balance. *Vaman* aids in the removal of the *koshtha's* vitiated *Doshas*, primarily *Kapha* and *Pitta*. The *Ushna*, *Tikshna*, *Vyavayi* and *Vikasi guna* characteristics of *vamonopaga dravyas* such as *Madanphal Churna*, *Vacha churna*, *Saindhav*, *Madhu* and *Yastimadhu phanta* increases absorption rate and aid in reaching *Hriday* (Heart). It travels to *Dhamani* from *Hriday* and reaches all *sthula and sukshma srotas* there. It works at the cellular level and eliminates all the toxins from the body. In *Vamak dravyas*, the *agni* and *Vayu mahabhutas* are more prevalent. As a result, it possesses the *Urdhwabhagar prabhav*, which causes the *Doshas* to be expelled from the mouth in an upward direction. All the ingredients of *Panchatikta ghris* is having *tikta rasa*, *laghu* and *ruksha guna*, with this it shows action over the *kleda* and *meda* which is vitiated in the *Ekakushta*. *Panchatikta Ghris*, a medicated ghee formulation, was prescribed for local application to soothe

inflammation and promote healing. The lipophilic property of *Ghris* helps transfer ions to a target organ. *Ekakushta* which in modern science can be correlated with psoriasis is a skin disease which is very difficult to cure both in *Ayurveda* as well as modern medicine. The dietary regimen (*Pathya-Apathya*) advised the patient to avoid sour, junk, and spicy foods, as well as curd, which are believed to aggravate dosha imbalances associated with psoriasis. Observations post-treatment revealed a significant improvement in the patient's symptoms, as evidenced by the reduction in plaque characteristics and PASI scores. The success of the treatment regimen highlights the effectiveness of Ayurvedic interventions in managing psoriasis and improving the quality of life for affected individuals. The discussion also delves into the mechanism of action of Vamana Karma and Panchatikta Ghris in treating psoriasis, emphasizing their role in eliminating toxins, balancing doshas, and promoting tissue healing.

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