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Ayurvedic management of Ekakushta in Kaumarbhritya: A single case study

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Abstract

Eka Kushta is a form of Kshudra Kushta that resembles psoriasis in its clinical presentations and is primarily caused by an imbalance of the Vata and Kapha Doshas. Round plaques covered in silvery scales and erythematous, clearly delineated papules are the clinical features of psoriasis, an immune-mediated illness. The elbows, scalp, knees, and gluteal cleft are the most often affected locations. Ayurveda describes a number of therapy methods, including Shamana and Shodana, for managing Eka kushta. As a result, in the current case study, an 10 -year-old boy who presented to the Kaumarbhritya Out Patient Department with elbow, knee, hand, and foot symptoms of Eka kushta was treated with internal medication (Shamana chikitsa) and Shodana chikitsa(virechana).

Keywords: Ayurveda, ekakushta, psoriasis, shaman chikitsa, shodhan chikitsa

Introduction

Ayurvedic writings have a broad description of skin problems grouped together under the word Kushta. Kshudra kushta has been cited in relation to Eka kushta. The same elements that cause Kushta also cause Eka Kushta. The primary aetiologies are dietary variables such as Viruddha ahara, excessive eating of Drava, Snigdha, Guru ahara, Navanna, fish, curd, salt, sour substances, Vegadharana, particularly Vamana, and other immoral behaviors ^[1]. The main clinical features of Eka kushta are Aswedanam (Absence of sweating), Mahavastu (extends skin lesion), Matsya shakalopam (skin scales resemble the scales of fish ^[2]). These clinical characteristics resemble those of psoriasis. Because of this, psoriasis can be treated using the Eka Kushta therapy protocol, which has been used in this case study. In every case of kushta, the treatment protocol consists of repeated Samsodhana in conjunction with Samshamana. Psoriasis is one of the most common dermatologic conditions, impacting around 2% of the global populace ^[3]. The Greek words Psora, which means itching, and sis, which means acting condition, are the origin of the word psoriasis. Psoriasis in childhood is comparatively common, affecting 1-3% of the overall population ^[4]. Psoriasis is a immune mediated disease clinically characterized by erythematous, sharply demarcated papules and rounded plaques covered by silvery scales. The most common variety of psoriasis is called plaque type ^[5]. The aetiology of psoriasis is still poorly understood, but there is clearly a genetic component to the disease. 30-50-% of patients with psoriasis report a positive family history. Psoriatic lesions contain infiltrates of activated T cells that are thought to elaborate cytokines responsible for keratinocyte hyperproliferation, which results in the characteristic clinical findings ^[6]. Auspitz's sign (pinpoint bleeding when scale is removed), Koebner phenomenon (new skin lesion appears at the site of trauma), is a valuable diagnostic feature ^[7].

Embryogenic relationship

Skin and GIT have a common origin from the embryoblast. As the development precedes the cranial end of foregut and the blind caudal end of the hindgut, eventually shares on ectodermal component. The former gives rise to oral epithelium and the later to the epithelium of the lower part of the anal canal. Thus, many skin disorders concomitantly involve gastrointestinal membrane and epithelium, including all connective tissues. The dermis and sub-mucosa of gut arises from mesenchymal cell. The glandular part of the skin and GIT develops from common histogenic process.

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Biochemical relationship

Skin disease can be caused by the primary disturbance of common biochemical mechanism, or can be secondary to general metabolic alterations, induced by dysfunction of these systems.

Atyashana

Taking excessive amount or constant usage of certain foods like Navanna (new formed rice) Guru Anna (heavily digestible foods), Amla Rasa (citrus fruits), Dugdha (She buffalo milk), Dadhi (curd), Matsya (fish), Guda (jaggery), Tila Taila (unrefined sesame oil), Kulattha (Horse gram), Masha (black gram), Nishpava (field beans), Ikshu pishta (food articles (sweets) prepared by sugars), Piskta-Vikara (carbohydrate rich foods)

1. **Mithya Ahara:** Improper food habits are another major causative factor of Kushtha. There are certain a code of conducts of eating which when not followed is called Mithya ahara. The codes of conduct of eating have been termed as "Ashtaaharavidhi vishesha Ayatani" [8].
2. **Viruddha Ahara:** "Viruddha" or "Fairodhika" is the technical term for incompatible or antagonistic. All substances which act as antagonist to normal Dhatu (tissues) of the body are to be regarded as 'Viruddha' in Ayurveda. According to Ayurveda, Ahara can sometimes become fatal just like the poison & in some case it may become Gara Fisha (artificial poisoning) in long run. Type of food combination which directly produce the disease Kushtha are described here as per the classics.
3. **Fish with Milk:** It is the example of Samyoga and Veerya Viruddha. Gramya, Anupa or Audaka Mamsa with Milk It makes Samyoga Viruddha. Diet consisting mostly of cereals like Hayanaka, Yavaka, Chanaka, Udalaka, Kodrava, Kola, Kulattha, Masha, Atasi or Kuvionbha with milk, curd, butter milk, are Viruddha.
4. **Vishamaashana:** Taking food at irregular time is called Vishamaashana. Vishama Ashana is best known to produce Vishama Agni.
5. **Asatmya Ahara:** Taking food which is not homogenous and not pertaining to the person is called Asatmyaahara.
6. **Ajirne Adhyashana:** Intake of food in state of indigestion is called Ajirne Anne. According to Acharya Charak, taking food in state of indigestion is best known to cause Grahani Dushti

Case report

Basic information of the patient, Age - 10 years, Sex - Male, Religion - Hindu, Socioeconomic status - middle class Pradhana Vedana (Chief complaints) Child's parents presented with the complaints of Erythematous, scaly lesions on both elbows, hands, knee, foot from 1 year of child's age, associated with difficulty in holding objects, and reduced range of movements of interphalangeal joints of both hands since 1 year. Vartamana vyadhivritta (History of present illness) The child was asymptomatic till 1 year of age, after that he gradually developed reddish scaly lesions over both feet, later gradually progressed and involved his knee, elbow, palm. There is severe itching, burning sensation, and blood discharge on scratching. Also, since 1 year, the child developed difficulty in holding objects, and decreased range of movements of fingers was present. Child was on medication which provided symptomatic relief, and symptoms aggravated with the discontinuation of the medication. Hence, the child came to Kaumarabhritya

Department of our Ayurvedic Hospital and was treated on Out Patient basis.

Stasthana Pareeksha

Nadi: Prakrita, 102b/minute

Mala: Prakrita, regular once a day

Mutra: Prakrita, 4-5 times/day

Jihva: Anupalipta

Shabda: Prakrita

Sparsha: Anushnasheeta

Drik: Prakrita

Aakriti: Prakrita

Rogapareeksha

- **Nidana:** Virudhahara Vihara
- **Purvarupa:** Kharasparshatha, Twaksphutana
- **Rupa:** Kandu, Toda, Bheda, Aswedana, Mahavastu, Matsyasakalopama
- **Upashaya:** Moisturizing
- **Anupashaya:** Playing in Mud, Intake of Virudhahara
- Samprapti

Nidana → Vata Kaphadusti → Rasa Raktadushana → Sthanasamshraya in Paada, Hasta, Vankshana, Shiras → Kandu, Toda, Aswedana, Mahavastu, Matsyasakalopama → Eka Kusta.

Lower limb**Inspection**

Skin: Multiple scales of lesions with diffused margin on the soles of foot, over heels and central dependant part of soles. Bilaterally symmetrical lesions. No defined shape.

Nail: pitting is present, Greyish discoloration at the tip of nails.

Palpation

Dry, rough lesions over the palms & heels. No raise in temperature. No local tenderness.

Upper limb

Inspection: Undefined shape and margins.

Palpation: Dry, unelevated lesions. Itching and pain was present.

Diagnostic Criteria

Diagnosis was made based on the Lakshanas of Ekakushta and signs and symptoms of plaque psoriasis.

Auspitz Sign: Positive,

Candle Grease Sign: Positive,

Koebner Phenomenon: Negative.

Treatment Given

1. Arogyavardhini vati 250 mg bd with kosha jala for 21 days.
2. Gandhak rasayana 250 mg bd with kosha jala for 21 days.
3. Virechana with Trivrit lehyam total procedure taken 7 days.

Observations and Results

Sign	Before treatment	After treatment
Kandu	3 +	1+
Twak sputana	3+	1+
Daha	3+	-
Raga	2+	-

Discussion

Ayurveda describes the main 18 types of skin disorders under the umbrella term the 'Kushtha'. Despite this all Ayurveda classics defines the innumerable and infinite numbers of Kushtha on the basis of Ruja (types of pain or burning or itching), Varna (color of skin lesion), Samutthana (types and extend of Doshainvolve in etiology of skin diseases), Sthana (location of Skin lesion on body parts), Samsthana (causative factors responsible and type of symptoms). As explained in Ayurveda classics innumerable numbers of permutations and combination of Dosha Amshansa Pariaklpana with above mentioned factors, there are infinite types and variation of Kushtha is possible. Considering this fact, one can understand the reason behind the difference of opinion in 2 ancient Ayurveda scholars on the same type of Kushtha. Hence differ of opinion regarding the types of Kushtha and its clinical presentation is prevailed even since ancient time. Therefore there is wide range of analysis and interpretation of Kushtha has been found in today's Ayurveda literature. Considering the variation in colour, shape and associated symptoms different Ayurveda scholars correlate different Kushtha with different modern skin ailments. Even In this article we try to evaluate and correlate different childhood skin disorders on Ayurveda fundamentals of skin and skin disorders. After analysis of literature review of Ayurveda classics, Modern dermatology and childhood skin diseases along with the clinical experience of treatment of skin diseases we observed that there is a wide range of correlations possible among Ayurveda Kushtha and Modern skin diseases. Present article is an attempt to highlight the different types of neonatal and childhood skin disorders and to provide nearer modern interpretation of the same Psoriasis is a chronic inflammatory disease and commonly manifest as plaque or guttate form in childhood age exhibits more pruritus and less scaling. It is characterized by disfiguring, scaling, and erythematous plaques that may be painful or often severely pruritic and may cause significant quality of life issues.

It can be correlated with kushtha, having predominance of tridosha and rasa, rakta, mamsa dhatu involvement has been mentioned in most of our Ayurvedic texts. Kushtha is a chronic and deep-seated disorder as described in its pathogenesis and also termed as krucchasadhya (intractable)/asadhya (incurable) disease may be due to its nature of recurrence and very slow rate of improvement. The management of kushtha required frequent shodhan and shaman chikitsa to give satisfactory results.

In this patient, symptoms were suggesting the involvement of tridosha and rasa, rakta, mamsa dhatus and skin is the updhātu of mamsa dhatu. The known cause, in this case, was daily ingestion of bakery products like bread of refined flour which will cause to agnimandya which is responsible for improper production of rasa dhatu and further vitiation of rakta and mamsa dhatus due to long-term ingestion of this food item.

Hence, the pathyapathya was advised to follow strictly throughout the treatment regimen.

Considering the chronicity of the disease we have to use purification procedures like vamana or virechana to remove the accumulated doshas but considering the pediatric age and sukumara-vastha of the patient, the treatment has been planned with only shaman therapy.

The treatment has been planned to improve status of agni, sroto shodhana and after that rasayana therapy as per dosha predominance and also add krimignadravya considering krimirog in this age.

Initially, we have started the Mahamanjisthadikwath and Khadirarista to pacify Vata Pitta Dosha and directly act on Rakta Dhatu but the effect was not very satisfactory. Hence, we discontinued these and started Aragwadhadi Kashaya to combat itching by considering kapha dominance.

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mentioned in most of our Ayurvedic texts ^[14]. Kushtha is a chronic and deep-seated disorder as described in its pathogenesis and also termed as *krucchasadhya* (intractable)/ *asadhya* (incurable) disease may be due to its nature of recurrence and very slow rate of improvement. The management of kushtha required frequent shodhan and shaman chikitsa to give satisfactory results.

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The treatment has been planned to improve status of *agni*, *srotoshodhana* and after that *rasayana* therapy as per dosha predominance and also add *krimignadravya* considering *krimirogi* in this age.

Initially, we have started the *Mahamanjisthadikwath* and *Khadirarista* to pacify *Vata Pitta Dosha* and directly act on *Rakta Dhātu* but the effect was not very satisfactory. Hence, we discontinued these and started *Aragwadhadi Kashaya* to combat itching by considering *kapha* dominance *Shamana* therapy was given after completion of *Shodana* therapy as palliative therapy. Internal medicines administered after *Pancha karma* includes *Gandaka rasayana*, *Arogya vardini vati*, *Gandhak* (sulfur) in *Ayurveda* has *Kushthaghna* property. It's *Garavishahar* (anti-poisonous) and *Rasayana* (rejuvenation) properties help to cure and correct the causes of skin diseases. According to modern science, sulfur possesses an anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant property which plays an important role in the treatment of autoimmune diseases such as psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. It is known for its *Kushthaghna*, *Kledaghna*, *Ampachana*, *Raktaprasad ana*, and *Rasayana* properties. In *Gandhak rasayana*, purified sulfur has been treated with different medicinal herbs to improve its pharmacological actions to many folds (8). *Arogyavardini Vati* is the best formulation told by *acharyas* specially in the management of *kushta rogas*. The maximum ingredients are useful in skin diseases. The *vati* improves the function of *grahani* due to which there is proper functioning of *Rasadhatwagni* and *Rakta dhatwagni* which is very important factor to cure the disease because *Eka kushta* is disease of *Raktavaha sroto dushti* ^[9].

Virechana After *Abhyangam* and *swedanam*, *Virechanam* with *Trivrit lehyam* was done as it causes *suka Virecham*. *Virechana karma* helps to expel the doshas accumulated in *Koshta*. It helps in removal of disease from its root cause, hence the chance of relapse of *Before treatment* After disease is less. *Draksha Jala* was administered to the child which enhances the *virechana karma* as it is *Virechanopaga dravya* ^[10]. No complications were observed during and after the procedure. After *Virechana* moderate progress was observed in itching, burning sensation, scaling and stiffness of interphalangeal joints.

Pathya Ahara

Acharya Charaka has defined 'Pathya' as- they are the wholesome drugs and regimen which do not adversely affect the body and mind. *Laghu Anna* The patient has to consume (light food articles), *Tikta Shaaka* (bitter vegetables), *Purana Dhaanya* (old cereals & grains), *Jaangala Maamsa* (unsaturated animal fat), *Mudga* (greengram), *Patola* (snake guard), *Purana Shaali* (old stored rice), *Shashtika Shaali* (variety of rice explained in *Ayurveda*), *Yava* (Barley grain), *Godhuma* (wheat grain), food and ghee prepared by *Triphala & Nimba* (*Neema*). *Khadira Jala Pana* (Drink prepared from the extraction of (*Acacia catechu* plant), & *Aushadha Samskruta Takra* (medicated buttermilk),

Pathya Vihara

They are the wholesome drugs and regimen which do not adversely affect the body and mind *Abhyanga* with *Karanja taila* (massage with *Pongamia pinnata* oil), *Parisheka* (type of medicated bath where in water is sprinkled on the body), *Avagaha* (bath) with *Khadira Kashaya* (*Acacia catechu* plant), *Brahmacharya* abstinence from *Ashana* is "*Amapradosha hetu*". *Ahita bhojana* when taken in *Atimatra* (excess) and at improper time (*Akala*) leads to *Dushti* in *Annavaha Srotas* and also disturbs the *Paka Prakriya* (Process of food digestion). *Lavana* It provokes the *Pitta*, increases the blood, aggravates *Rakta*, formation of the dermatic lesion, depletion of the Muscle tissue: *Ati-Madhura-Amla Rasa Sevana* leads to *Ajirna*, *Raktadushti*, *Raktaprakopaka*, *Mamsa Shaithilya* & *Pittavruddhikara*, finally suppuration of wounds takes place (21) *Amin dudat Mamta Guru Suiduka Ajirne Adhyashana*: Intake of food in state of indigestion is called *Ajirne Anne*. According to *Acharya Charak*, taking food in state of indigestion is best known to cause *Grahani Dushti*.

Vihara Hetu (Recreational activities)

All kinds of activities done physically, vocally or mentally are considered as *Vihara*. *Mithya Vihara* means improper activities. The activities. opposite to '*Swasthavrita*' (Personal health maintenance activities) are the '*Mithya Vihara*'.

Conclusion

Eka kushta (*Psoriasis*) though difficult to manage, but if proper diagnosis is made at proper time, it can give significant relief. And *ayurvedic* herbs along with *panchkarma* therapy shows highly significant results in *ek-kushta*.

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