THE ROLE OF VIRECHANA KARMA ON PSORIASIS VIS-A-VIS KITIBHA: A SCIENTIFIC REVIEW

K.S.Girhepunje\textsuperscript{1*}, Varsha Gupta\textsuperscript{2}, Amit Vaibhav\textsuperscript{3}, O.P.Singh\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{1}Junior Resident-III, Dept. of Kayachikitsa, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, BHU, Varanasi, India
\textsuperscript{2}Junior Resident-I, Dept. of Rachana Sharir, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, BHU, Varanasi, India
\textsuperscript{3}Lecturer, Dr. Vijay Ayurvedic Medical College, Hospital and Research Center, Kaithi, Varanasi
\textsuperscript{4}Professor, Dept. of Kayachikitsa, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, BHU, Varanasi, India

ABSTRACT

Today most of the people have heard about the psoriasis and they are more or less familiar about it in the sense of difficult management. Psoriasis is non infectious chronic autoimmune inflammatory dermatosis. There is no specific treatment over it in modern science and so its management is a very challenging task. In the Ayurvedic texts, Kitibha Kushtha and Eka-Kushtha both involving Vata-Kapha dominating doshas clinically presents the symptoms which can be correlated with Psoriasis. But most of the clinical presentations of Psoriasis are same as that of Kitibha Kushtha and so it is taken as Kitibha here. Ayurveda believes that Shodhan Chikitsa(Cleansing therapy)should be done repeatedly and prior starting of any medication in the management of all the types of Kushtha. Virechana is one of the Shodhan Chikitsa specially advised in the Pitta and Rakta pradhan disorders and is very effective in various skin diseases. Though Kitibha is Vata-Kapha dominating skin disorder, it primarily due to vitiation of Rakta Dhatu and Tridosh. Current study is to reveal effect of Virechana Karma in Psoriasis granting it as Kitibha Kushtha.

KEYWORDS: Psoriasis, Kitibha, Shodhan Chikitsa, Rakta Dhatu, Tridosh, Virechana.

INTRODUCTION

Psoriasis is a common dermatological problem characterized by papulo-squamous dermatosis of unknown etiology with spontaneous remission and exacerbations clinically presenting with erythematous, well defined, dry, silvery white or micacious scaly papules and plaques of varying size on trunk, back, limbs or scalp region\textsuperscript{1}.

All types of skin disorders are said as ‘Kushtha’ in Ayurveda. Two types of Kushthas have been described in Ayurvedic classics as Kshudra and Maha Kushtha. The former variety comprises some of the obstinate forms of skin diseases whereas the later variety includes conditions corresponding closely with the different benign and malignant forms of leprosy.

Kshudra Kushtha is further divided into 11 subtypes. Among those types, Clinical presentation of Psoriasis is correlated with that of Eka-Kushtha and Kitibha. But the majority of the
presentations resemble with Kitibha and so in Ayurveda, Psoriasis is correlated mostly with Kitibha Kshudra Kushtha.

Psoriasis like other skin disorders is challenge to the medical sciences. In modern medicine, there is no definite treatment for this disease. The medicines which are available to treat the disease are not very effective and cannot be used for long term management because of their local and systemic side effect as well as toxicity.

Medicines which are used in Ayurvedic texts are safe and being practiced since thousands of year. A large number of drugs are described in Ayurveda. It has unique treatment modalities which has long lasting results with no side effects gives better quality of life. For better understanding of Kushtha Chikitsa, it is necessary to study basic principles of Ayurvedic management described in Krimi Chikitsa i.e. Shodhana, Shamana and Nidana Parivarjana. Virechana is one of the Shodhan Chikitsa mainly done in the Pitta and Rakta dosha pradhan disorders acts by Srotovishuddhi (cleansing of body channels) which lead to eliminate various toxins and inflammatory markers out of body. As like in water filled pond, aquatic creatures and plants die after removal of water from it. The same happens in Virechana. The Pitta and Rakta doshaj disorders vanish after elimination of Pitta dosha from body.

Review of Researches:

1. Paradkar Hemant et al. has done observational study on 48 years old male patient to show effect of Virechana in Psoriasis (Aug-2014)
2. M. Ashvini Kumar et al. published article over role of Virechana Karma in Psoriasis (Jul-Aug 2013)
3. S. Sangeeta Sharma et al. presented a case study over 19 years old male patient to show effect of Virechana Karma in the treatment of Psoriasis (Sept-Nov 2013)
4. Alva Gautham has done clinical study over 20 patients into 2 groups to show effect of Virechana in Psoriasis (2005)

Prevalence:
It affects 2% population of the world and the 1.5% of Indian population. It is predominant in both the sexes equally. It has been reported that psoriasis appears for the first time between the ages of 15 and 30 years.

Aetiopathology:
T- lymphocyte mediated Th1 type of immune response is responsible for Psoriasis\textsuperscript{9}. Activated T-cells secrete cytokines which promote dermal inflammation and lead to hyperproliferation of the epidermis.

A high familial occurrence of psoriasis (7-36\%) suggest that genetic factors play a role in its aetiology\textsuperscript{10}. Genetic factor (PSORS 1-8 genes) plays important role in the family history\textsuperscript{11}.

In Ayurveda, certain factors are responsible for all type of skin diseases such as-

1. Diet dependent causes: Excessive intake mutual contradictory food, excessive milk products, curd, fish diet, salty foods, etc
2. Life style modifications: Excessive exercise, Late waking, day time sleeping, late night dinner and sleep, etc.
3. Behavioural habits: Sinful acts
4. Other causes: Hereditary cause, psychological factors, infective causes

These all above mentioned causative factors are responsible for vitiation of all three Doshas Vata, Pitta and Kapha which in turn vitiate Twaka (skin or Rasa dhatu), Rakta (blood), Mamsa (muscle tissue) and Ambu (body fluid like tissue fluid, lymph and serum). These taken together constitute the seven fold pathogenic substance of Kushtha leading to different types of skin disorders\textsuperscript{12}.

**Co-relation of Psoriasis with Kitibha:**

Psoriasis is correlated to Eka-kushtha\textsuperscript{13} and Kitibha in Ayurveda

Eka-Kushtha is characterized by absence of perspiration, occurring in very vast area, resembles the scales of fish.

Psoriasis is diagnosed by its clinical feature i.e. erythema, scaling and induration but presence of only scaling cannot make the conclusive diagnosis of psoriasis because there is no or minimal scaling present in flexural type of psoriasis. Hence due to presence of only scaling like fish in Eka-Kushtha, it cannot be made equivalent to psoriasis.

The signs and symptoms of Kitibha given below are almost identical with sign & symptoms of Psoriasis which are presented by Acharya Charak and Acharya Kashyap.

1. Ruksha - Dryness of the skin
2. Kinakharasparsa - Hard an torturous skin
3. Kandu - Itching
4. Parushya - Roughness
5. Asita - Hyperpigmentation
6. Punahpunarutpadhyante - appearing again and again

Kamod et al. / Pharma Science Monitor 8(3), Jul-Sep 2017, 290-296
So Kitibha can be co-related with Psoriasis especially with Stable Plaque psoriasis.

**Role of Virechana in Psoriasis:**

Acharya Sushruta described Nityavirechana for Kushtha as it is Bahudoshaj Vyadhi. So daily Virechana medication can be given to the patients of Psoriasis.\(^{(14)}\)

Virechana is performed in three steps:

1. Pre-operative: a) Snehapana  b) Snehana-Swedana
2. Operative: Virechana
3. Post-operative: Sansarjan krama

**Process of Snehapana and its role:**

In the pre-operative step, Snehapana is done with medicated cow ghee as Panchatikta ghrita, Mahatiktak ghrita or Khadiradi ghrita up to proper oleation of the body or upto maximum 7 days. In this step, 30-40ml medicated ghee is given to patient on the first day and then same quantity is raised up to proper Snehan lakshana. Gradual increment in dose of Snehapana is important for loosening of Dosh-Dushya bonding and therefore helps to break pathogenesis of Psoriasis.\(^{(15)}\)

**Snehana-Swedana and its role:**

First Snehana is done with medicated oil Mahamarichyadi tail, Til tail or Sarshap tail is applied externally over whole body. Then Swedana (steaming given to the patient up to the proper sweating) is done for 3 days. Loosening of the Dosha-Dushya after Snehapana lead to melting of the Doshas at the site of Sthansanshraya (site of lesions).\(^{(16)}\)

**Virechana and its role:**

Certain drugs are used for the process of Virechana as Trivritta leha, Abhayadi modak or Aaragwadh kapila vati. Dose is decided by Bala of the patient. These drugs carry the melted Doshas to the gut and expel them out through alimentary canal by the process of purgation.

**Properties of Virechana drugs**\(^{(17)}\):

1. Saratva (Laxation)
2. Sukshma (Fineness)
3. Tikshna (Strong potency)
4. Ushna (Hotness)
5. Vikasi (Dispersibility)

**Mode of action of Virechana Drugs:**
1. By virtue of the Sukshma guna, Virechana drugs can pass through minute channels of body and reach at cellular level to act at the site of pathogenesis of Psoriasis\textsuperscript{18}.

2. Due to Vikasi guna, Virechana drugs are dispersed in the whole body without their digestion and help to loosening of Dosh-Dushya sanghatan\textsuperscript{19}.

3. Tikshna guna has strong potency to open various channels to flush out toxins by enhancing the opening of various Srotas (channels), softening of tight Dosh-Dushya sanghatana and make them ready to flow from open Srotas\textsuperscript{20}.

4. By virtue of Ushna guna, Dosh-Dushya get melt due to its hotness and easily moves towards elimentary canal after liquification\textsuperscript{21}.

5. Due to Saratva guna, collected Dosha-Dushya are encouraged to pass out through rectum by its laxative property\textsuperscript{22}.

**Sansarjan Krama and its role:**

In this step, Peyadi diet schedule is given to patients with daywise planning of qualitative and quantitative diet on the basis of Shudhhi for 3 to 7 days. During this schedule, light diet is started first and keep on increasing the heaviness of diet upto normal diet. The whole planning is done in order to overcome Agnimandyata (loss of appetite) because Agnimandyata is said to be route cause of all diseases\textsuperscript{23}. Sansarjan krama helps to improve appetite and digestive power as like the small fire is burned into large one with the help of dry grass and cow dung cake\textsuperscript{24}.

**CONCLUSION**

Psoriasis is commonest dermatological problem today. Modern medicine has no satisfactorial management for it as being autoimmune in nature. Long term use of allopathic medication causes other complications. So the Virechana therapy can be the new hope in the management of Psoriasis so as to avoid complications and betterment of patients.

**REFERENCES**


2. Charak Samhita (Hindi) Volume-1, Edited with Vaidyamanorama Hindi Commentary by Acharya Vidyadhar Shukla and Prof.Ravi Dutt Tripathi, (Vyadhitrupty Vimanadhyay Ch.Vi.7/30; pg.613) published by Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratisthan, Delhi

3. Charak Samhita (Hindi) Volume-2, Edited with Vaidyamanorama Hindi Commentary by Acharya Vidyadhar Shukla and Prof.Ravi Dutt Tripathi, (Kalpanasiddhi- Ch.Si.1/17; pg.879) published by Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratisthan, Delhi
4. Paradkar Hemant et al., Effect of Virechana Without Prior Vaman in Psoriasis, IAMJ, Volume-2; Issue 4; July-August 2014
7. Alva Gautham, Comparative Study Between Pure Ghee and Panchatikta Ghee as a Purvakarma for Virechana in the management of Eka-kushtha, Psoriasis, Department of Panchakarma, SDMCAH, RGUHS, Hassan, 2005
12. Charak Samhita (Hindi) Volume-1, Edited with Vaidyamanorama Hindi Commentary by Acharya Vidyadhar Shukla and Prof.Ravi Dutt Tripathi, (Kushthanidanam- Ch.Ni.5/3; pg.513) published by Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratisthan, Delhi
15. Ashtanghridayam (Hindi), Edited with Nirmala Hindi Commentary by Dr.Bramhanand Tripathi, (Swedavidhi- A.Hr.Su.17/29; Line no.1; pg.218) published by Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratisthan, Delhi
16. Ashtanghridayam (Hindi), Edited with Nirmala Hindi Commentary by Dr.Bramhanand Tripathi, (Swedavidhi- A.Hr.Su.17/29; Line no.2; pg.218) published by Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratisthan, Delhi

17. Sushruta Samhita (Hindi) Volume-2, Edited with Sushrutvimarshini Hindi Commentary by Dr.Anant Ram Sharma, (Vamanvirechana-sadhyopadravadhyay- Su.Chi.33/32; pg.429) published by Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi

18. Sushruta Samhita (Hindi) Volume-1, Edited with Sushrutvimarshini Hindi Commentary by Dr.Anant Ram Sharma, (Annapanavidhiraksha- Su.Su.46/523; pg.450) published by Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi

19. Sushruta Samhita (Hindi) Volume-1, Edited with Sushrutvimarshini Hindi Commentary by Dr.Anant Ram Sharma, (Annapanavidhiraksha- Su.Su.46/522; pg.450) published by Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi

20. Sushruta Samhita (Hindi) Volume-1, Edited with Sushrutvimarshini Hindi Commentary by Dr.Anant Ram Sharma, (Annapanavidhiraksha- Su.Su.46/517; pg.449) published by Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi

21. Sushruta Samhita (Hindi) Volume-1, Edited with Sushrutvimarshini Hindi Commentary by Dr.Anant Ram Sharma, (Annapanavidhiraksha- Su.Su.46/514; pg.449) published by Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi

22. Sushruta Samhita (Hindi) Volume-1, Edited with Sushrutvimarshini Hindi Commentary by Dr.Anant Ram Sharma, (Annapanavidhiraksha- Su.Su.46/521; pg.450) published by Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi

23. Ashtanghridayam (Hindi), Edited with Nirmala Hindi Commentary by Dr.Bramhanand Tripathi, (Udaranidan- A.Hr.Ni.12/1; pg.512) published by Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratisthan, Delhi

24. Charak Samhita (Hindi) Volume-2, Edited with Vaidyamanorama Hindi Commentary by Acharya Vidyadhar Shukla and Prof.Ravi Dutt Tripathi, (Kalpanasiddhi- Ch.Si.1/12; pg.877) published by Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratisthan, Delhi