



Review Article

IMPORTANCE OF RAKTAMOKSHANA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF TVACHAVIKAR

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays *Tvachavikar* is most common skin disease, and it has social impact. It is a skin problem mentioned in Ayurvedic literature with *Kapha* and *Pitta* morbidly or pathology. In classical different text of Ayurveda and Acharyas emphasize the *Shodhana* therapy as the line of treatment at various places. In *Shodhana* treatment *Raktamokshan* is highlight specially because in *Samprapti Ghataka Rakta* is mainly involved as *Dushya*. In the present topic, *Raktamokshana* Acharya Sushruta propounds practical guidelines for bloodletting and claims it as most effective therapy in half of the body ailments. In all different methods for bloodletting such as *Jalaukavacharana Karma*, *Prachhanna Karma* and *Siravedhana Karma*, *Jalaukaavacharna Karma* (leech therapy) is considered as the ideal method to expel out the vitiated blood safely, quickly, and effectively. The vitiated external environment undoubtedly affects the body's internal ailments. Large community prevalence studies have demonstrated that about 20-30% of the world population have various skin problems requiring attention. So *Raktamokshan* is one of the important *Panckarma* treatments to cure various type of *Tvacha vikar* highlighting in this topic.

KEYWORDS: *Raktamokashna, Tvachakivar, Ayurveda, Vata, Pitta, Kapha, Dosha.*

INTRODUCTION

Tvacha is derived from "*Tvach Samavarne*" *dhatu* meaning the covering of the body. There are 7 layers of skin named from superficial to deep as *Avabhasini, Lohita, Sveta, Tamra, Vedini, Rohini* and *Mamsadhara*.^[1] The disease affect on these layers which are *Avabhasini sidhmam* and *Padma kantakam*, in *Lohita tilakalakam, Nyaccam* and *Vyangam*, in *Sveta charmadalam, Masakam* and *Ajagallikam*, in *Tamra kilasam* and also *Kusta* in *Vedini kusta* and *Visarpa* in *Rohini Granthi, Arbudam, Apache, Slipadam* and *Galagandam*, in *Mamasadhara bhagandharam, Vidradi* and *Arsas*.^[2] Any disease that involves skin hampers many functions and gives the person a hideous look. As skin diseases are perceptible to others, they are more painful for the patient and troublesome for the physician. Several skin diseases affect the person's psychological status and disturb the social life, thus patient have some kind of inferiority complex The texts of Ayurveda consider *Rakta Dusti* as one of the prime causes of skin diseases. On the other hand, patients may get relief after letting out the vitiated *Rakta*. Acharya Sushruta said practical guidelines for bloodletting and claims it as most effective therapy in half of the body ailments. Among various methods for bloodletting such as *Jalaukavacharana Karma, Prachhanna Karma* and *Siravedhana Karma, Jalaukaavacharna Karma* (leech

therapy) is considered as the ideal method to expel out the vitiated blood safely, quickly, and effectively. *Tvacha* is the largest organ of the body and constitutes 16% of the body weight. Nowadays drastic changes have occurred due to global warming, unfavorable food regimes, stress, unpredictable weather transitions etc. The vitiated external environment undoubtedly affects the body's internal ailments. Large community prevalence studies have demonstrated that about 20-30% of the world population have various skin problems requiring attention.^[6]

Raktamokashan

In *Panchakarma* Ayurvedic treatments *Raktamokshana* is one of the treatments even can say the five basic techniques of detoxification. *Raktamokshana* that is made with two words *Rakta* which mean blood and *Mokshana* means to leave and combining. The both these words makes the word *Rakta-mokshana* it means 'to let out blood'. *Raktamokshana* treatment is very effective for blood purification and also carefully controlled removal of small quantities of blood. It is conducted to neutralize accumulated *Pitta* toxins of many blood borne diseases that is happened because the *Raktamokshana* decreases the quantum of enhanced

Pitta dosha and thus all types the diseases caused by *Pitta* are also relieved.

It is mostly focus the procedure of Ayurvedic *Panchakarma* on throughout the vitiated *Dosha* out of the body after that checks the recurrences of the disease. *Raktamokshana* is one the procedure among *Panchakarma* which aims at excreting vitiated blood from our body. Those all Ayurvedic procedures explained almost the thousand years ago and is still hold and important place in Ayurvedic treatment which is use in curing many diseases and have become a necessity in today's world due to changing food habits and lifestyle for curing ailments and maintain health. In Ayurveda Samhita it is the treatment of *Panchakarma* works as curative as well as preventive therapy. It is considered as partial and complete treatment of Ayurveda surgery text. Ayurveda said about many modes of healing arts like even surgery and Para-surgical techniques. Surrounded the Para-surgical measures, *Raktamokshana* or bloodletting enjoys a pride of place from the dawn of medical history. Earliest references of bloodletting are found in the basic works of all systems of medicine. The oldest civilization of the world too used this method to bestow health on its subjects from time immemorial.

Raktamokshana is a scientific term employed to indicate a Parasurgical method to throughout the vitiated blood from selected areas of the body by specific methods. In Ayurvedic Sushruta Samhita which is the oldest available manual on surgery has devoted an entire chapter for the description of *Raktamokshana* and a chapter on *Raktamokshana* for the purpose of bloodletting. It is stated to be *Raktamokshana* is the prime treatment because of its safety and high efficacy in the disorders involving the vitiation of blood. It is safely indicated even for the king, rich, old, fearful, weak, women and the people of tender nature.^[4]

Embryology of skin

Acharya Sushruta described that as soon as fertilization of ovum occurs *Tvacha* develops and covers the embryo which is either in the form of *Pind* (circular), *Peshi* (oval) or *Arbud* (tumor like structure). Initially *Tvacha* looks like cream on the surface of milk during the course of development of embryo (*Garbha*). As the development proceeds differentiation of the layers of the skin takes places particularly by the *Pitta*. *Vagbhata* described the formation of *Tvacha* due to metabolic activity (*Paka*) of *Rakta dhatu* by its *Dhatvagni* (an entity responsible for process of conversion/transformation of substance in to particular cell found at various cellular level) in the fetus. After *Paka* (i.e., proper metabolic activity), it dries up (blood) to

form *Tvacha*, just like the deposition of cream over the surface of boiled milk.^[11,12]

Layers of skin and some modern correlation

The different layers of skin are mentioned by Charaka and Sushruta in different ways. The following has correlated the layers of skin mentioned by Sushruta with the latest anatomy of skin as follows and diseases according to layers of skin by Dr.Ghanekar.

Modern term Diseases

1. *Avabhasini* Stratum corneum *Sidhma*, *Padmakantaka*.
2. *Lohita* Stratum lucidum *Tilakalaka*, *Vyanga*, *Nyachchha*.
3. *Shweta* Stratum granulosum *Charmadala*, *Mashaka*, *Ajagallika*.
4. *Tamra* Malpighian layer *Kilas*, *Kushta*
5. *Vedini* Papillary layer *Kushta*, *Visarpa*
6. *Rohini* Reticular layer *Gandamala*, *Apache*, *Shlipad*, *Arbud*.
7. *Mamsadhara* means muscular layer and subcutaneous tissue *Bhagandara*, *Arsha*, *Vidradhi*.^[14]

Aims & Objectives

Importance of *Raktamokshana* in the management of *Tvacha Vikar*:

Objectives

1. To assess effect of *Raktamokshana* Karma in the management of *Tvachavikar*.
2. To aware the *Raktamokshana* importance in *Tvachavikar*.

Material and Method

Rakta mokshana is the process of bloodletting. It is of two types viz., *Shastrakrit* i.e., bloodletting done by using instrument and *Ashastrakrit* i.e., done without using instrument. Textual references from *Charak samhita*, *Sushruta samhita* and *Astang hriday* were used for this study and these references are analyzed and interpreted logically. It develops from *Maansa dhatu* as mentioned above. *Pancha mahabhoota* is also responsible for *Varnotpoatti*. Thus colour and complexion of skin, shape and contour of the body organs are very much depending on *Pancha Mahabhoota* constitution, which are very much important for personality of individual. Earlier seen that there is contribution of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala*, *Panchabhuta* in formation, as well as generation of disease when get vitiated. As per Ayurveda vitiation of skin layer which responsible for generation of specific (*Vyadhi*) disease in specific layer. Out of which fifth layer named as *Vedini* is the location of *Visarpa* as well as *Kushta*. According to *Pracchana* and *Siravyadhaare* the types of *Shastrakrit*

raktamokshana while use of *Shringa*, *Alabu* and *Jalooka* are types of *Ashastrakrit raktamokshana*. *Charaka* have advised *Siravedha* by classical instrument *Alabu*, *Shringa* etc. In Ayurveda Acharya Sushruta has indicated *Siravyadha* for *Maha kusta*. The plot for *Siravyadha* has been identified as 5 superficial veins that located in *Hasta* (2 no.), *Pada* (2 no.) and *Lalata pradesha* (1 no.). The maximum amount of blood to be removed is one *Prastha* i.e., $13\frac{1}{2}$ *Phala*.

There are two types

1. **Shastra vistravan** a) *Pracchana* b) *Siravyadha*.

2. **Anushastra Visravana** a) *Jalaukasvacharna*
b) *Shrugavacharana* c) *Alabu*.^[3]

Method of Raktamokshana- For *Siravedha* a tourniquet is tied about 4 *Angula* above the selected site and the vein is then tapped with the fingers and made prominent then vein is punctured using a *Kutharika sastra*. Before all procedure should do *Snehana* and *Swedana* as *Poorvakarma*. In present days with (no.18 or no.20) needle are using for *Rakthamokshana*.

Procedure of Raktamokshana Panchakarma

Since *Raktamokshana* is a specialized procedure, *Purva karma*, *Pradhan karma* and *Paschat karma* are explained.

Purva Karma (Pre procedure) of Raktamokshana

- Indications of *Raktamokshana*- when it is on healthy persons it is done at regular intervals diseases appears from blood does not occur.
- Diseases such as edema, gout, psoriasis, filariasis, tumors, glaucoma, trachoma, erysipelas, diseases of liver and spleen etc.
- Contraindications: Anemia, generalized edema, emaciation, ascites, pregnancy etc.
- Proper instruments, herbs, tourniquet, gauze pieces, cotton swabs, bandages etc.^[2]

Pradhana Karma (Main procedure) of Raktamokshana

1) **Pracchana:** The part should be tied with tourniquet to dilate the vessels. Then without injuring *Marmas*, tendons multiple incisions are given parallel to the local blood vessels By this method, the superficial *Doshas* are removed and also relieves tension on that part. *Praechana* is a type of *Raktamokshana*. Superficial incisions are made over the skin with the help of a scalpel, fine needles or instruments. It is applied over the elevated portion of the skin locally where few superficial incisions should be made. The point of to the incision should not be made in *Marmasthalas*, *Snayus*, *Sandhis* and *Asthis*. Bloodletting with this method is commonly used in localised blood disorders and in certain skin

disorders. *Pracchana* must be done after taking aseptic measures. Antiseptic dressing should be applied over the mankind.

2) **Siravyadha:** The vein is selected according to the disease. After proper location and sudation, liquid gruel is given. Then patient sits in erect position or lies down.

3) **Jalaukavachaana:** Small nicks are given around the disease part when blood starts oozing, leech is applied when it starts sucking mouth takes the shape of horse's hoof and lift its neck. Then cover its neck with wet cotton. When leech has sucked enough blood, it leaves that spot and drops down. If it doesn't leave, turmeric powder is sprinkled around the mouth.

4) **Shringa Yantra:** It is applied on a flat, round, fleshy part of the body. 2 -3 nicks are given on the site of bloodletting. Horn is applied and air is sucked out from narrow part creating a vacuum. The blood comes out.

5) **Alabu Yantra (Cupping):** A small nick is given on the skin. Put a leaf by the side of nick. Keep a cotton ball dipped in spirit and light it. Immediately put *Alabu* on that. As fire extinguishers the skin edges are caught tight with margins of *Alabu yantra*. When bloodletting completes, the base gets slackened.

Paschat Karma (Post Procedure) of Raktamokshana: After completion of procedures, whenever blood flow stops tourniquet and instruments are removed. Tight dressing is applied and gentle massage around the wound with medicated oil is done.

Benefits of Raktamokashana in Tvachavikar *Raktamokshana* is a unique way to get rid of skin disease. Skin diseases are manifestation of contaminated blood tissues. Skin is an important parameter to interpret one's health status, such as dehydration, febrile state, allergic manifestation and infection the diseases that are not cured by dry, cold, hot therapies should be better treated with *Raktamokshana*. *Rakta* is contaminated with vitiated *Vatta*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* respectively, and manifest into various type of *Tvachavikar* like *Kushta*, *Mahakushta*, *Shudrarog*, etc. When all *Shaman*, *Shodhan (Virechan)* treatment fails, *Raktaokshan* shows fantastic results. It's also perform in *Anupdesha*, *Pittaj prakruti* despite of disease free conditions in order to prevent skin diseases.^[5]

Skin diseases are more prevelant in *Anupdesha* as compared to other *Desha*. *Raktamokshana* discards the contaminated *Rakta* with the help of *Shiravedha*, *Jalaukavacharana* in case of generalised *Raktaj Dushti*. Small incision at unhealing wound proved best in healing process considering *Vattaj*, *Pittaj* and *Kahaj* contamination of

blood *Shringavcharana*, *Ghatiavcharana* and *Allabuvacharana* is conducted. *Raktamokshana* conducted with proper *Karma* such as *Purva karma*, *Pradhana karma* and *Paschat karma* gives best results.^[7]

Once who timely execute *Raktamokshana* treatment never suffers through skin diseases and even other toxicities like *Raktaja vyadis*, *Pitta dosha* and *Rakta* imbalance toxicity. This is highly effective in diseases in various *Tavhavikar*, edema, etc, also *Raktamokshana* in allergies, skin disorders such as *Eczema*, *Allergic Dermatitis*, *Tonsillitis* and *Sciatica*.^[1]

Ideal time for Raktamoakshana: *Rakthamokshana* is best indicated when

- 1) Day is neither too cold
- 2) Day is neither too hot
- 3) Nor the day is bad
- 4) It is not cloud

Schedule of Raktamokashana According to Rutu

- 1) Rainy season – on a clear day
- 2) Summer season – when it is cold
- 3) Early winter – mid day.^[4]

Indications and Contraindication of Raktamokashna in Tvachavikar

Name of Disease
1. <i>Kushtha</i> (Obstinate skin diseases)
2. <i>Vipsara</i> (Infective disease of the skin)
3. <i>Pidaka</i> (Skin Eruption)
4. <i>Raktapitta</i> (Bleeding Disorders)
5. <i>Vyanga</i> (Pigmentation of Face)
6. <i>Tilakalaka</i> (Moles)
7. <i>Dadru</i> (Fungal infection of Dermis)
8. <i>Shitra</i> (Lucoderma)
9. <i>Pama</i> (Scabies)
10. <i>Asramandala</i> (Reddish patches on the skin)
11. <i>Kandu</i> (Itching), <i>Mashaka</i> (A type of mole)
12. <i>Raktatwaka</i> (Redness of the skin)
13. <i>Charamadala</i> (A Form of skin disease characterized by abnormal thickening of the Dermis)

Contraindications of Raktamokashna in Tvachavikar

Name of Diseases
<i>Sarvang shopha</i> (anasarca)
<i>Kshina</i> (emaciation)
<i>Amlabhojana Nimitta Pandu</i> (Anemia due to intake of sour food)
<i>Arsha</i> (hemorrhoids)
<i>Udara</i> (ascites)
<i>Garbhini</i> (pregnancy)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Rakthamokshana is pondering as *Ardha chikitsa* and due to *Asraya asrayi bhawa*, it acts on *Pitta dosha* too. By *Rakthamokshana*, *Srotos hodhana* is to reach, which further helps in abatement of *Tvachavikar*. *Raktamokashan* is the perfect dealer for many skin diseases. According to Ayurveda, *Tvacha* is formed at the time of gestation. According *Acharya Sushruta* there are seven layer of skin, named as *Avabhasini*, *Lohita*, *Shweta*, *Tamra*, *Vedini*, *Rohini*, *Mamsadhara* whereas *Acharya Charaka* said them as *Udakdhara*, *Asrukdhara*, *Trutiya*, *Chathurthi*,

Panchami and *Shasti*. *Sushruta* mentioned the measurement of seven *Tvacha* layer from 1/18 *Vrihi* to 2 *Vrihi* and also stated that each layer is location of specific disease, in *Avabhasini- Sidhma*, *Padmakantaka*.

In *Lohita* - *Tilakalaka*, *Vyanga*, *Nyachha*,

In *Shweta* - *Charmaaadala*, *Mashaka*, *Ajagallika*,

In *Tamra* - *Killas*, *Kushta*,

In *Vedini* - *Kushta*, *Visarpa*,

In *Rohini* - *Gandamala*, *Apache*, *Shlipad*, *Arbud*,

In Mamsadhara - bhagandhara, *Arsha, Vidradhi. Sweda* is one of the trim alas which maintains luster and turgidity of skin. *Sneha* of *Tvacha* (moisture and luster) is *Mala* of *Majja dhatu* as described by Charak in *Grahnidoshachikitsa adhyay*. *Charaka* has referred that the person of *Kaphapradana prakriti* is attractive, which indicate that *Kapha* is mainly responsible for luster and texture of skin. In this way all the three *Doshas* have impact on skin. *Tvaka* is a seat of *Rasa Dhatu*. *Rasa Dhatu* plays an important role in the formation of colour and complexion of skin. It good explained by the *Tvakasara purusha* is *Snigdha, Shlakshana, Komal, Prasanna, Sukshama* and *Prabhayukta*. *Charaka* has said that *Sudhha Rakta* as a responsible factor for *Sharira Bala, Varna, Sukha* and *Ayu*. *Charaka* mentioned skin as *Updhatu* of *Maansa* or skin nourishes from *Maansa dhatu*. Also the skin is considered as *Moolsthana* (prime organ) of *Maansvaha Srotasa*. *Tvacha*, though *Panchbhautic*, has *Pruthvi Mahabhutadhikya*. *Tvacha* is the *indriya Adhithana* of *Sparshanendriya* which has *Vayu Mahabhutadhikya*. It means *Sthool tvacha* has *Pruthvi Mahabhutadhikya*.

Demand of *Raktamokasha* is increased day by day from physicians all over the world. The clinician who knows all about the *Raktamoakshan* and their method of application is successful in treating the disease. Various *Tvachavikar* are *Rakta pradoshaj* and *Tridosha prakopaj* and *Chirkari vyadhi*. *Raktamokshana* gives best effect in various *Tvachavikar* by expelling the morbid, vitiated *Dosha* and *Dhatu*.^[1-3, 13]

CONCLUSION

Rakthamokshana is ponder as *Ardha chikitsa* and due to *Asraya asrayi bhava*, it acts on *Pitta dosha* too. It is used on site of particular "*Twacha-vikar*", layers of skin nomenclature only in Ayurveda. By *Rakthamokshana*, *Srotoshodhana* is achieved which further helps in abatement of *Tvachavikar*. Various *Tvachavikar* are *Rakta pradoshaj* and *Tridosha prakopaj* and *Chirkari vyadhi*. *Raktamokshana* gives best effect in various *Tvachavikar* by expelling the morbid, vitiated *Dosha* and *Dhatu*. But the effect of therapy is not only by expelling the vitiated blood but *Raktamokashan* also emits some enzymes in the wound. So *Raktamokashna* has also provided normalization and improvement of capillary as well as collateral blood circulation, expressed anti-inflammatory effect, Immune stimulation and Immune-modulating effect and early wound healing effect. All of this reaction may be effect of such salivary enzymes like Hirudin anticoagulant effect with diuretics, antibiotic action, Colin prevent blood coagulation, Eglin, antitrypsin hyaluronidase, antithrombin and antichymotrypsin etc. *Raktamokashan* are the perfect solution for many

skin diseases. Demand of *Raktamokasha* is increased day by day from physicians all over the world. The clinician who knows all about the *Raktamoakshan* and their method of application is successful in treating the disease. So *Raktamokshan* is one of the important *Panckarma* treatments to cure various type of *Tvacha vikar*.

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