



Case Study

AYURVEDA PERSPECTIVE ON VISARPA VYADHI AND ITS MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Skin is the largest organ of the body which acts as a first line of defense in providing resistance to the body. The aggravation of various *Dhatus* and *Doshas* result in skin diseases. More than one-fifty skin related diseases are mentioned in various Ayurvedic texts. They are categorized as *Visarpa, Kustha, Shotha, Upadansh* etc. *Visarpa* is a very common disease mentioned in Ayurvedic texts which spreads in body in various directions. It is said to be caused by Varicella zoster virus as per modern concept. It manifests as *Daha, Jwara, Anunnatashopha* and *Vedana*. Around 20-30% sufferers of various skin ailments are demonstrated through large community prevalence study. A 40-year-male presented along with the vesicular lesions on his neck region associated with mild fever, itching, and pain on the local lesion. He was administered with 250mg of *Kamadudha rasa* (plain) twice a day before meals with milk, *Chandrakala rasa* 250mg twice a day, *Paripathadi kwatha* 2 tsp twice a day and *Shatadhauta ghrita* for local application on the lesions. The patient reported on the 5th day with significant relief in the size and shape of the facial lesions and other symptoms. The scars limited to minimal without any inflammatory signs by the 7th day of follow-up. Above medications are two readily available and cost-effective compound Ayurvedic formulations, which can be used in the management of herpes zoster infection, especially in low-resource settings.

INTRODUCTION

Twacha word in Ayurveda is derived from the word '*Tvak*' which means 'to cover something'. It is first line of defense which protects body in various ways. According to Ayurvedic classics, *Twacha Rogas* are produced by the imbalance of *Tridoshas-Dhatus* and *Raktadushti*. As per conventional medical field, skin is an organ which is supplied by blood vessels, nerves and it is rich in hair follicles and sweat glands. Skin diseases occur as a result of any change in these components. Any abnormality in skin is a visible pathology and thus has a negative impact on the person's life. It gives financial, social and psychological stress to the person. According to the report, skin diseases contribute around 1.79% to the global burden of diseases. Around 0.16% is the contribution of viral

skin diseases and such percentage place skin diseases as the 18th leading cause of diseases. According to a study conducted in India, higher incidence of *Visarpa* observed in younger age group (21-40 years of age). Recent studies have revealed that the incidence of skin problem and skin diseases caused by virus are increasing. It is a painful disease which immediately catches the eyes of the doctor with its symptoms. It is characterized by the localized painful spread of skin rashes and blisters. Ayurveda classics mention that *Visarpa* spreads like a snake and thus it is considered as *Pradhan Vyadhi*. Many skin diseases are mentioned in Ayurveda classics on the basis of their origin. Most of the skin diseases are caused due to *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha Dosh* aggravation. Some are *Raktaja Vyadhi* and some are caused by *Agantuja* (foreign agents). It is an *Aashukarvyadhi* (acute disease) of skin whose complications such as post therapeutic neuralgia can affect till many years.

Case Report

A 40 yr male patient came to OPD with c/o Vesicular formation on neck region
Burning sensation

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Redness since 4-5 days

Fever since 2 days

Sticky discharge from vesicles

History of Past illness- Patient is known case of Hypertension since last 2 yrs taking regular antihypertensive medications.

No any surgical history

No any addiction

On Examination

Febrile - 100°F

P- 104/min

BP - 130/80mmHg

RS - B/L Clear

CVS - S1S2 normal

CNS - Conscious and oriented

P/A- Soft and non tender



Classification of Visarpa

Ayurvedic scholars have classified *Visarpa* into following categories^[13]

- *Vataja Visarpa*
- *Pittaja Visarpa*
- *Kaphaja Visarpa*
- *Agni Visarpa*
- *Kardama Visarpa*
- *Granthi Visarpa*
- *Sannipataja Visarpa*

Charaka also categories *Visarpa* into three based on *Adhishtana* ^[12]

- 1) *Bahir Visarpa*
- 2) *Anthar Visarpa*
- 3) *Ubhayashrita Visarpa*

Sushruta - *Sushruta* has classified the disease into two major varieties as *Doshaja Visarpa* and *Kshataja Visarpa*. ^[15]

Vagbhata - *Ashtang Hridaya* classifies *Visarpa* into eight varieties as that of *Sushruta*. ^[14]

Definition of Visarpa

विविधं सर्पति यतो विसर्पस्तेन स स्मृतः |

परिसर्पोऽथवा नाम्ना सर्वतः परिसर्पणात् ||११||

It spreads in various ways hence known as *Visarpa*. It is also called *Parisarpa* due to its extensive spreading.

Vitiated factors

रक्तं लसीकात्वङ्गंसं दूष्यं दोषास्त्रयो मलाः |

विसर्पणां समुत्पत्तौ विज्ञेयाः सप्त धातवः ||१५||

Blood, lymph, skin, flesh and three *Dosha*, these seven elements are involved in the pathogenesis of *Visarpa* of all kinds.

Etiology of Visarpa

The *Nidana* for *Visarpa* is just not one but many which can be included under different headings like *Ahara*, *Vihara*, *Panchakarma* procedure and as an *Upadrava* of other *Vyadhi*. ^[11]

The following are the causative factors of the Visarpa

Excessive indulgence in *Lavana* (salt), *Amla* (sour), *Katu* (pungent) and *Ushna* (hot ingredients); as also in *Amla dadhi* (sour curd), *Dadhi mastu* (whey), *Shukta* (vinegars), *Sura* (type of liquor) and *Sauviraka* (type of wine); the use of *Vyapanna madya* (contaminated wine) or excessive liquor or heat inducing *Raga* (condiments) and *Sadava* (confectionery), the use of *vidahi* (causes burning), *Shaka* (vegetables) and *Harita* (*Lashunadi harita* group *Dravya*), *Kilata* (cheese), *Kurchika* (inspissated milk) and *Mandaka* (immature curd), the use of *Sandaki* (fermented wine), as also of *Paistika* (one made up of *Pistamai padarth* or pastries) and oils made of sesame, black gram and horse gram, the use of flesh of domesticated, wet land and aquatic animals and garlic, the use of the *Praklinna* (putrified food), *Asatmya* (unwholesome) and *Viruddha* (mutually contradictory ingredients), over eating, sleeping during day time, *Ajirashana* (eating during indigestion), *Adhyashana* (eating food immediately after the meal); *Kshatat* (traumatic injury), *Kshata* (wounds), *Bandha* (ligatures), *Prapatana* (trauma due to falls) over exposure to sun, strain full work, poisons, poisonous air, burns etc.

By combination of above mentioned etiological factors, the provoked *Vatadi dosha* affect the susceptible body elements such as *Rakta*, *Lasika* etc.

and spread in the body in those indulged in unwholesome diet.

Externally situated (pathogenesis in *Shakha, Rasa Dhatu* and *Rakta Dhatu*), internally situated (pathogenesis in internal organs and other *Dhatu*) and situated in both (externally as well as internally) pathways *Visarpa* is to be known more and more serious consecutively.

Externally situated *Visarpa* is curable, internally situated *Visarpa* is very serious and difficult to cure whereas externally as well as internally situated type is incurable.

The humors provoked in internal regions spreads internally, if provoked in external regions spreads externally and if provoked in both regions spreads all over the body.

Etiopathogenesis and Lakshana of various types of Visarpa

Various etiological factors cause aggravation of all the *Doshas* in the body affecting muscular and vascular tissues.

There is development of *Ama* due to diminished *Agni* which is caused due to vitiation of *Doshas*. The *Ama* results in the vitiation of *Mamsa, Rakta* and *Twak*. *Visarpa* is caused due to *Dosha* and *Dushya sammurchhana* in *Abhyantara* or *Bahya* path. Production of *Vistruta, Anunnata shopha* that has *Sarpana prakruthi* associated with *Daha* and *Vedana*.^[16]

According to modern medicine, Herpes is caused by *Varicella zoster virus* which affects the central nervous system, internal organs and musculocutaneous surfaces predominantly. Herpes zoster is a viral infection that causes an outbreak of a painful rash or blisters on the skin caused by the *varicella-zoster virus*, which is the same virus that causes chickenpox. The rash most often appears as a band of rashes or blisters in one area of your body. The *varicella-zoster virus* is spread through direct skin-to-skin contact with the fluid that oozes from the blisters. After receiving treatment for the primary infection, sometimes the virus goes into the dormant stage in the ganglion. Due to some triggering agents such as trauma, ultraviolet light, change in cell mediated immunity, the virus gets reactivated again. *Vatika Visarpa* is the result of obstruction caused by

Visarpa Chikitsa (Treatment)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Table 1: Shows Shaman Aushadhi chikitsa

S. No	Drugs	Dose	Duration	Anupan
1	<i>Kamdudha rasa</i>	250mg twice a day	Before meal	With milk
2	<i>Chandrakala rasa</i>	250mg twice a day	After meal	Lukewarm water
3	<i>Paripathadi kwath</i>	2 tsp twice a day	After meal	Lukewarm water
4	<i>Shatadhauta ghrita</i>	Local application	-	-

aggravated *Doshas*. It shows resemblance to the acute skin infections such as *Erysipelas*. Its clinical features are burning sensation, fever, pain, affected area becomes edematous and red, small blackish or reddish blisters with thin clear reddish and scanty discharge are seen. In *Pitta* dominant *Visarpa*, *Pitta* aggravated by the use of hot regimen, by eating irritant and sour foods vitiates the susceptible body elements and by feeling the vessels, begins to spread. Pustules are formed in the affected part causing intense pain and burning sensation. It can be co-related with the skin diseases such as *Erysipelas*, *Herpes* and burns etc. *Kaphaja Visarpa* spreads slowly in the body and it shows resemblance to the *Erysipelas*. It causes fever, vomiting, chills etc. The affected area becomes edematous, red with pale colored eruptions covered by thick skin. In *Agni Visarpa vata-pitta* vitiated severely due to their respective etiological factors and strengthened mutually, spreads producing severe burning pain in the body. The patient affected with this type of *Visarpa* feels as if his body is sprinkled with flaming coals. One suffering from *Agni-visarpa* is to be regarded as incurable. In *Kardam visarpa* excessively aggravated *Kapha pitta* due to their respective etiological factors, spreads in the body causing suppuration of the tissues in particular part. It is localized and spreads with slow speed. The affected part becomes muddy, black, dirty, unctuous, excess hot, heavy, dull aching, edematous, with deep seated suppuration, having no discharge, rapidly become sloughy, sweated suppuration, having putrid flesh and skin, gradual little pain, when touched bursts and gives space on pressing, throws out decomposed and putrefied flesh, shows blood vessels, ligaments and has cadaverous smell and causes disturbed consciousness as well as memory. This is called *Kardam visarpa* and is incurable. In *Granthi Visarpa*, *Kapha* and *Vata* gets vitiated due to the use of firm, heavy, hard, sweet, cold, unctuous, and *Abhishyandi* (which increase discharges and cause obstruction) ingredients of diet, lack of physical exercise etc., not following preventive seasonal *Panchakarma* purification. The *Visarpa* which is caused by all etiological factors, manifesting with all signs and symptoms, spreads in all body elements very rapidly and great disastrous is known as *Sannipataja Visarpa* and is not treatable.

Shodhana Chikitsa

Raktmokshana was done by *Siravedhana* method. Every detail was explained to the patient. Written consent taken from the patient. *Siravedhana* was done on the left upper arm of the patient. Needle no. 20 was used for *Siravedhana*. *Siravedhana* was done as per SOP of *Siravedhana* 50ml blood was let down.

DISCUSSION

Kamadudha rasa^[1] is one of the most commonly used in the management of the *Pitta*-predominant disorders. *Kamadudha rasa* contains *Amalaki swarasa*, *Guduchi satva* and *Swarna gairika* treated with cow's ghee. On the basis of its composition, *Kamadudha rasa* is a safe *Kharaliya rasayana*. *Kamadudha rasa* is a widely used Ayurveda formulation for the management of *Pitta vikriti*. A variety of hydrolysable tannins present in *Amalaki* have demonstrated its antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and immune-regulating activities.^[5] An in vitro study demonstrated the free radical scavenging activities of Amla extract for the cellular defense which explains its antimicrobial and antiviral activities.^[6] Phytoconstituents such as saponins, alkaloids, phytosterols, and triterpeoids present in *Guduchi* extract demonstrate virucidal effects and explain its antiherpetic properties.^[7] *Swarna gairika* is clinically reported as metabolism modulator and antioxidant and can act as an iron supplement.^[8] Hence, *Kamadudha rasa* by virtue of its versatile pharmacological effects, i.e., immunomodulator, antioxidant, and antiviral effects, can be used internally in the management of herpes zoster infection. It is the best *Pitta* hara medication which is also used in fever, malaise, and pain in patients.

Shatadhauta ghruta^[9]

Shatadhauta Ghruta is one of the formulations mentioned for topical application in *Visarpa*. It is a very effective management in *Visarpa* for good results in reducing the symptoms of the disease. It is highly useful for skin hydration and cooling effect due to its increased moisture content. Also it is beneficial to tackle skin irritation due to pH change from acidic to neutral. Application and its rate of absorption is easier due to reduction in particle size with non-granular and homogenous consistency. It is also used along with other *Sheeta veeryatmak*, *Daha prashamana dravyas* to subside *Daha* (burning sensation) and *Shoola* associated with the disease.^[9]

Chandrakala rasa^[3]- This contains *Kajjali*, *Tamrabhasma*, *Abhraka bhasma* etc with the *Bhavana* of *Mrudvika* in it. It acts on *Pittajanya vyadhi*. It reduces *Daha*.

Paripathadi kadha^[4]- This *Kalp* explained in *Panchbhoutik chikitsa* of Vd. Datar shastri. This *Kalpa* contains *Dravya* which are *Kashaya* and *Tikta rasa*,

which are *Pittaghna ras* and reduces *Kshariya guna* of *Rakta dhatu*.

CONCLUSION

The signs and symptoms of herpes zoster and that of *Visarpa* match very closely and thus a correlation can be drawn between the two. *Visarpa* is a disease characterised with acute manifestation of symptoms that can be easily manageable by using Ayurveda treatment protocols. The above drugs are easily available and effective in reducing the symptoms and curing the disease by their medicinal properties as mentioned above. Also *Shatadhauta ghruta* applied as *Lepa* give cooling and calming effect and reduces burning pain and sensation. *Raktmokshana* i.e., *Siravedha* is the best *Panchakarma* procedure for eliminating the *Rakta doshas* in the body. Thus, *Kamadudha rasa*, *Chandrakala rasa*, *Paripathadi kwatha* and *Shatadhauta ghruta* can be used to support management of skin manifestations such as herpes zoster infection (*Visarpa*).

OBSERVATION AND RESULTS

On administration of *Shaman aushadhi*, reduction of *Pitika* over *Udara* and *Prushtha pradasha* was noted. Thus, relief from *Kandu* and *Daha* occurred. *Shamana aushadhi* was continued for 20 days. *Mala* and *Mutrapravrutti* became *Samyaka*. On 15th day, *Raktmokshana* by *Siravedhana* was performed. Total 50ml of vitiated blood was withdrawn. It was observed that *Shyava aruna varna rakta*, thick, slow flowing and fast coagulation occurred.

Day	Kandu	Daha	Toda	Jwara
1 st	+++	++	+++	+
6 th	+	+	++	+
11 th	+	-	+	-
20 th	-	-	-	-

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