



## **Virechana - A Traditional Ayurveda Principle in Combating Ekakushta (Psoriasis) - A Case Study**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Chronic skin diseases are always associated with significant mental and physical discomfort along with reduced self-confidence level in social life. It is the most common health problem worldwide and counts to considerable amount of visits to hospitals and clinics. With the availability of wide range of health facilities, patients suffering from chronic skin disease have a tendency to frequently change physicians and adopt multidisciplinary treatment options when they don't get expected results. In Ayurveda Kushta is considered as one among the AshtaMahagada1(eight dreadful diseases). Ekakushta is included under Kushta as kshudrakushta2. Though all the kushtas have tridosha involvement, but ekakushta has prominence of vatakaphadosha. Ekakushta can be compared with Psoriasis which generally has the symptoms of red, itchy scaly patches most commonly on knees, elbow, trunk and scalp3. Shodhana principle tries to eradicate the imbalanced doshas and brings them to normalcy. Virechana expels out the vitiated doshas from the adhobhaga (anal route) and thus reduces the symptoms of ekakushta (psoriasis). The aim of this article is to highlight the efficacy of treatment principle Ayurvedic Traditional system of medicine in reducing the magnitude of burden in chronic skin disorder like ekakushta (psoriasis) and improving the quality of life and social being.*

**Keywords:** Ayurveda, traditional system, ekakushta, psoriasis, virechana

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Chronic skin disorders adversely affect many aspects of patient's life [1]. It not only affects the physiological aspect of a person but also affects the psychological and social life which many a times go unrecognized by the society [2]. Psoriasis is a common chronic recurrent inflammatory skin disease characterized by erythematous, itchy scaly patches which has a prevalence of 3% worldwide and over 0.44-2.88% in India [3,4]. Psoriasis can be well compared with *Ekakushta* which is defined as of having *asvedanam* (absence of perspiration), *mahavastu* (occurring all over the body) and *matsyashakalopama* (as of scales of fish). According to the *bala* (strength), *dosha* and *vyadhiavastha* (disease condition) of the patient Ayurveda prescribes treatment principles of *shaman* and *shodhana*. *Kushtavyadhi* being a *mahagada*, *bahudoshavastha* is a general phenomenon and thus repeated *shodhanachikitsa* has been indicated as a *chikitsa* for *Kushta* followed by *shaman* and *rasayanachikitsa*. To highlight the efficacy of Ayurveda Traditional principle of *Virechana* in combating *Ekakushta* (Psoriasis).

### **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

#### **Study Design**

A single case study

#### **Source of patient**

Patient was registered at Dr. D.Y. Patil College of Ayurved & Research Centre, Pimpri - Pune

**Diagnostic Criteria-**

1. The patchy skin lesion with symptom of *matsyashakalopama* / scaling must be present
2. Symptoms of *Asvedana* (anhedrosis), *mahavastu* (large sized lesion), *raktaarunavarna* (erythematous), *kandu* (itching), *rukshata* (dryness) must be present.

**Inclusion Criteria -**

1. Patients presenting with signs and symptoms of *Ekakushta* / psoriasis.
2. Patient with age group of 16-70 years of either gender.
3. Patient fit for *Virechana karma*.

**Exclusion Criteria -**

1. Patients suffering from pustular, guttae psoriasis, psoriatic arthritis, exfoliating dermatitis etc.
2. Patient with other systemic illness like Diabetes mellitus, uncontrolled hypertension, S.L.E, Tuberculosis, Bronchial asthma etc.

**Assessment Criteria -**

1. **Subjective parameters** – The improvement in patients was assessed on the basis of relief in the signs and symptoms of the disease.
2. **Objective parameters** – *Samyakvirechanalakshana* and P.A.S.I. score (Psoriasis area and severity index)  
P.A.S.I. is an index to express the severity of psoriasis and combines the extent of body surface involvement in 4 anatomical regions (Head, trunk, arms & legs). For each region the percent area of skin involved is estimated from 0 to 4 (none to maximum) for assessing the three clinical signs of erythema, induration and desquamation.

**CASE REPORT**

**Present History** - A 38-year male patient from Moshi –Pune came with complaint of reddish, itchy lesions all over the body since 1.5 years. The lesions started from the back and gradually spreader to the trunk, upper limb, lower limb and to some extent to the scalp. Patient approached a Dermatologist and he was diagnosed with chronic plaque psoriasis. He was under his medications but found no much significant results even after a long term of treatment. Thus, finally patient came to Dr. D.Y. Patil Ayurved Hospital, Pimpri –Pune for ayurvedic management.

**Past History** – No family history of any members of family had similar dermatological disorders. No history of any systemic disorders like Hypertension, Diabetes, Tuberculosis etc. No history of any surgical interventions.

**Personal History** – The patient had no history of any addictions but he was frequently having spicy and oily junk food. Due to the skin lesions, he was having disturbed sleep and emotionally stressed with low self -confidence. His bowels were also irregular and had constipation.

**Ashtavidha Pariksha(Eight folds of examination)** – Patient was obese with unsatisfactory bowels and coated tongue. Urination, vision of eyes, speech all were normal. Skin was dry and scaly with severe itching. On examination all the vitals were said to be normal. Pulse rate was 78/min, Blood Pressure was 110/80 mm of Hg, Respiratory rate was 18/min and Temperature was 97.5° F.

**Before Treatment - Lesions on skin**



**Intervention –**

Table no 1. - Treatment Protocol

Medicine	Action	Dose	Route	Duration
<i>Chikttakadi Vati</i> <i>Triphala Guggulu</i> <i>Arogyavardhini</i>	<i>Deepana &amp; Pachana</i> (Appetizer & Carminative)	250 mg Twice a day	Oral (before meal with lukewarm water)	3 days
<i>Mahatiktaka</i> <i>Ghrita</i>	<i>Abhyantar Snehapan</i> (internal oleation)	25 ml - 1 <sup>st</sup> day 50 ml - 2 <sup>nd</sup> day 100 ml - 3 <sup>rd</sup> day 150 ml - 4 <sup>th</sup> day	Oral (empty stomach at morning )	4 days
<i>Nimbataila</i>	<i>Bahya Snehana</i> followed by <i>Bashpa Svedana</i>	As required according to body surface	External Application	3 days
<i>Abhayadi Modak</i>	<i>Virechana</i>	3 tablets of 250mg.	Oral	1 day

*Chitrakadi vati* and *Triphala guggulu* acts as *deepanapachana*(appetizer& carminative). *Arogyawardhini vati* works on *pitta* and *raktadushti*, improves the *pachakapitta* and corrects digestion adding to *deepana* and *pachana* effect. *Mahatikta ghrita* with its *tiktarasa* predominance reaches the *sukshmasrotus* (minute channels) does *aamapachana* and pacifies *vata* and *pitta dosha* along with its oleation effect. Further *abhyanga* with *Nimbataila* reduces itching with its *kandughna* and *kushtanghna* effect by its antibacterial, antifungal and anti-inflammatory actions. *Svedana* liquefies the morbid *dosha* and finally *virechana* was given with *Abhayadi modak* which has *lekhaniya* and *virechana* effect. After the *madhyamshuddhi* of the patient *Samsarjanakrama* was followed for 5 days followed by *Shamanaaushadhi*.

**Table 2: Showing the area involvement with gradation**

No involved area	Grade : 0
< 10 % of involved area	Grade : 1
10-29 % of involved area	Grade : 2
30-49 % of involved area	Grade : 3
50-69 % of involved area	Grade : 4
70-89 % of involved area	Grade : 5
90-100 % of involved area	Grade : 6

**Table 3: Gradation of assessment of Signs and Symptoms of Psoriasis.**

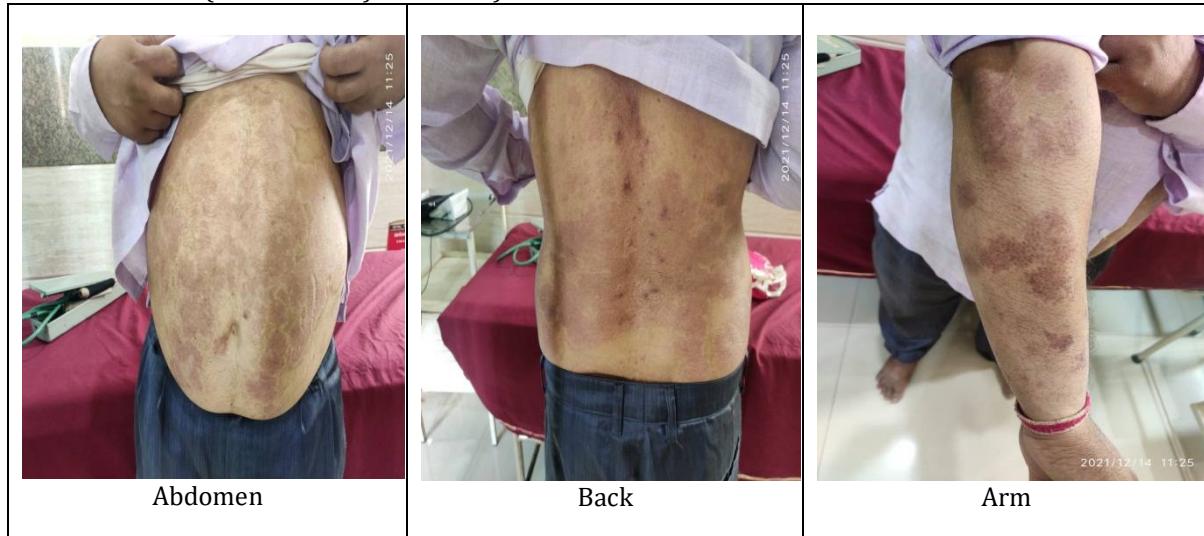
<b>1. TWAKDARAN (SCALING AT THE SITE OF LESION)</b>	
SR.NO.	SCORE
1.	0
2.	1
3.	2
4.	3
5.	4
<b>2. RAGA (REDNESS AT THE LESION SITE)</b>	
SR.NO.	SCORE
1.	0
2.	1
3.	2
4.	3
<b>3. RUKSHATA (DRYNESS)</b>	
SR.NO.	SCORE
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
<b>4. KANDU (ITCHING)</b>	
SR.NO.	SCORE

1.	No itching	0
2.	Mild or occasional itching	1
3.	Moderate (tolerable) in frequency	2
4.	Very severe itching	3
<b>1. AUSPITZ SIGN</b>		
SR.NO.		SCORE
1.	Absent	0
2.	Improvement	1
3.	Present	2
<b>1. PASI SCORE</b>		
SR.NO.		SCORE
1.	Score before treatment	
2.	Score after treatment	

## RESULTS

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### After Treatment ( After *SamsarjanaKarma*) - Reduced Lesions on skin



**Table no 4 - Showing assessment criteria after 15 days of treatment**

Table A6-1: Showing assessment criteria after 15 days of treatment				
Skin Area	Trunk		Arms	
	B.T. 0 day	After Samsarjana Krama (15 <sup>th</sup> day)	B.T. 0 day	After Samsarjana Krama (15 <sup>th</sup> day)
Erythema (redness)	4	2	4	0
Induration (Thickness)	2	1	2	1
Desquamation (scaling)	2	0	2	0
Total PASI score	4.8	1.8	14.4	1.5

**Table 5: Signs and symptoms chart**

SR.NO.	SIGN & SYMPTOMS	GRADATIONS			
		Trunk		Upper Extremities	
		B.T.	A.T.	B.T.	A.T.
1.	<i>TwakDaran</i> (Scaling at the site of lesion)	2	0	2	0
2.	<i>Rukshata</i> (Dryness at the site of lesion)	4	1	4	1
3.	<i>Raga</i> (Redness)	4	0	4	2
4.	<i>Kandu</i> (Itching)	3	1	3	1
5.	Auspitz sign	2	0	2	0

## DISCUSSION

**Virechana** or purgation is a process where in the medicine expels the alleviated *doshas* from the body through the *adhobhaga*(anal route) and the disease process is arrested [1,2].

The *ushnaguna* of the medicine increases *agni* which causes *vishyandana* or oozing of the *doshas* which is then brought to the *koshta*. *Tikshnaguna* does the *chedana* of morbid *dosha* and later it glides down the *koshta* due to the oleation effect. *Vyavayi* and *vikasiguna* spreads all over the body compelling the *dosha* to come out and due to the dominance of *prithvi* and *jalamahabhuta* with the *prabhavaguna* the *doshas* are expelled out of the body. Here the osmotic and hydrophilic action causes the increase volume of colonic content which is thrown out of the body through purgation [3, 4].

## **CONCLUSION**

Ayurveda is a traditional system of medicine of India which has attained recognition worldwide. Panchakarma which is a distinct principle of biopurification is well known for its promotive and therapeutic cure. *Virechana* one among is the best biopurification procedure to pacify the *tridosha* and ailments related to *raktadosha*. It is widely prescribed treatment protocol for many skin disorders. *Virechana* shows excellent result in combating the symptoms of *Ekakushta* / Psoriasis and improves the Quality of Life of the patient.

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