



Case Study

## EFFECT OF WET CUPPING WITH RASAYANA CHIKITSA IN MANAGEMENT OF ALOPECIA AREATA (INDRALUPT)

Pooja Kalal<sup>1\*</sup>, Gyan P. Sharma<sup>2</sup>, Achla R. Kumavat<sup>3</sup>, Sandeep K. Swami<sup>1</sup>

\*1PG Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Associate Professor & HOD., <sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Panchkarma, PGIA, DSRRAU, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India.

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### ABSTRACT


**Abstract:** Alopecia areata, or *Indralupt* in *Ayurveda*, is a dermatological condition characterized by localized, non-scarring hair loss. It presents as circular or oval patches of baldness, primarily affecting the scalp. While its exact cause remains unclear, autoimmune factors are thought to play a significant role. Management typically involves a combination of topical and systemic treatments, including corticosteroids and immunomodulators which is not fully preventive or curative. Thus, *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha Dosha* i.e., *Tridosha* and *Rakta Dushya* are the causative factors of *Indralupta*. **Materials and Method:** Cup, Cupping pump, cotton ball or Swab, antiseptic solution, sterile lancets or scalpel, gloves. The patient was scheduled for wet cupping therapy, with a seven-day interval between each of the three sessions. Significant hair growth was observed after just one session. *Raktmokshan*, particularly *Prachchanna* (blood-letting, primarily scraping) is beneficial for removing vitiated *Rakta* if it is located in a specific area of the body, such as hair follicles. **Result :** After undergoing Wet Cupping and internal *Rasayan* drug for duration of one month, two patches of hair loss affected by alopecia areata were completely removed. **Conclusion:** This case report investigates the effectiveness of *Raktmokshan*, a traditional Ayurvedic therapy involving wet cupping, and *Rasayan chikitsa* in the management of alopecia areata (*Indralupt*). The case presents a patient with alopecia areata who underwent *Raktmokshan* therapy and observed outcomes over a defined period.

### INTRODUCTION

Alopecia Areata (AA) is a prevalent type of non-scarring hair loss affecting both the scalp and sometimes the body. It is marked by hair loss without evident inflammatory symptoms and ranks among the most frequent forms of alopecia comprising approximately a quarter of all alopecia cases.<sup>[1]</sup> Alopecia areata typically appears as clearly defined patches of hair loss, often noticed suddenly, which may spread in a circular manner. These patches can be solitary or multiple, with smaller areas sometimes merging to form larger ones. While the scalp is the most commonly affected area, AA can occur anywhere

on the body <sup>[2]</sup> The exact pathophysiology of the disease is currently unknown. However, evidence suggests that AA is caused by an autoimmune reaction to the hair follicles due to both genetic and environmental factors.<sup>[3]</sup> In contemporary medical science availability of intervention is intralesional corticosteroids, topical corticosteroids, minoxidil, anthralin, topical immunotherapy, prostaglandin analogs, topical retinoids, bexarotene, capsaicin, sulfasalazine, photochemotherapy, excimer laser, and fractional photothermolysis laser, systemic corticosteroids, methotrexate, cyclosporine, azathioprine which is not fully preventive or curative.

On the basis of clinical presentation alopecia Areata can be correlated with the *Indralupt* of *Ayurveda*. According to Acharya Sushruta, *Indralupta*, or alopecia, occurs as a result of an imbalance of *Pitta* and *Vata doshas*, leading to hair loss from the scalp. This imbalance is further compounded by vitiated *Rakta* and *Kapha*, which obstruct the hair follicle's

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openings, hindering the growth of new hair. Thus, *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha Dosha* i.e. *Tridosha* and *Rakta Dushya* are the causative factors of *Indralupta*.<sup>[4]</sup>

*Raktamokshana* serves as a primary treatment for disorders rooted in the *Pitta* (metabolic system) and *Rakta* (blood components). *Raktamokshana*, a therapeutic procedure, involves either vein puncture (*Siravedha*) or scarification (*Pracchana*). Modifications are made for *Siravedha* in individuals with delicate constitutions, including three main methods: *Shringa Avacharan* (horn wet cupping), *Alabu Avacharan* (gourd wet fire cupping), and *Jalauka Avacharan* (leech therapy). Therefore, Ayurvedic wet cupping therapy encompasses *Shringa Avacharan*, *Alabu Avacharan*.<sup>[5]</sup>

Wet Cupping involves creating a vacuum at various points on the body, coupled with incisions, to extract *Dushit Rakt* located just beneath the skin's surface.

## CASE REPORT

### Case Description

On 9th October 2023, a 45 years old female patient, married, came to the OPD of Panchkarma department of Sanjivani Ayurveda Hospital jodhpur. The patient had complained of patchy hair loss from scalp for 1 month. The patient was relatively healthy before 1 month. After this, the patient came to Sanjivni Ayurveda Hospital for further treatment. No family history is observed.

### Past history

The patient denied any recent illness. She reported no history of thyroid disorders, hypertension,

diabetes mellitus, nutritional deficiencies, or other autoimmune conditions. Family history was negative for alopecia areata or any other autoimmune diseases.

### Clinical findings

B.P.- 110/76 mm of Hg , Pulse -78/min. , Temperature - Afebrile.

*Prakruti* – *Vata-Pitta*

*Dosha* – *Vata, Pitta, Kapha*

*Dushya* – *Rasa, Rakta, Asthi Dhatu*

*Srotas*- *Rasvaha* and *Raktvaha Srotodushti*

*Koshta*- *Krura*

### On Examination

There were two patchy hair loss over right parietal region of the scalp and occipital region of head. Upon examination, we observed well-defined, round patches of non-scarring hair loss on the patient's scalp. The surrounding hair appeared healthy without any signs of inflammation, redness, or scaling. Additionally, there were no abnormalities noted on examination of the nails or skin.

**Blood Investigation:** BT, CT of the patient were within normal range limit and no abnormal findings were defined.

### Diagnosis

Based on clinical presentation the patient was diagnosed with alopecia areata (*Indralupt*).

### MANAGEMENT

The patient was scheduled for wet cupping therapy, with a seven-day interval between each of the three sessions. The procedure involves following steps:

Assigning particular regions of hair loss for cupping therapy and sterilizing the area



Multiple pricking with a lancet needle



A cup of suitable size is placed on the patches of hair loss



Suck the blood inside the cup by cupping pump for 3 to 5 minutes



The last step is removal of the cup and cleaning with sterilised cotton ball

**Shaman Aushadhi** (Oral Medication) – for one month

1. *Amalaki Rasayan* – 5gm BD (empty stomach)
2. *Triphla Churn* – 5gm OD (before sleep)

### RESULT

Significant hair growth was observed after just one session in (fig-2). After completing the three session of wet cupping we observed that scalp is fully covered with hairs as showm (fig-3 and fig-4).



**Fig-1 (Before treatment Patch-1)**



**Fig-2 (After 1<sup>st</sup> sitting Patch 2)**



**Fig-3 (After treatment Patch-1)**



**Fig-4 (After treatment Patch-2)**

## DISCUSSION

Acharya Sushruta tells to do *Raktamokshana* in *Indralupta*. It helps to eliminate the *Srotasavrodh* and vitiated *Rakta Dhatu*.<sup>[6]</sup>

*Raktamokshana*, particularly *Prachchana* (blood-letting, primarily scraping) is beneficial for removing vitiated *Rakta*, if it is located in a specific area of the body, such as hair follicle's and *Siravedhana* (blood letting through vein-puncture) is preferable when patches of hair loss is present in whole body.<sup>[7]</sup>

Acharya Sushruta outlines a treatment procedure known as *Prachchana*, which is classified as a form of *Shastrakruta Rakta-Mokshana*. This method involves creating several pricks, known as *Shastrapada*, on the affected area using sharp instruments like needles or scalpel. This results in the oozing of blood from the localized area. Consequently, the vitiated *Doshas* are expelled, leading to *Doshasamyata* (balance of bodily humors), there by curing the disease.<sup>[8]</sup>

Cupping therapy aims to boost blood circulation and eliminate toxins and waste from the body.<sup>[9]</sup> Studies have demonstrated that cupping dilates the capillaries on the skin's surface and enhances blood flow in the skin.<sup>[10][11]</sup> This process is believed to improve the quality of the remaining blood<sup>[12]</sup> and increase the concentration of red blood cells.<sup>[13]</sup> The application of cupping causes the dilation of blood vessels in the treated area through the action of certain vasodilators like adenosine, noradrenaline, and histamine. As a result, blood circulation to the

affected area is enhanced, facilitating the removal of trapped toxins from the tissues and leading to an overall improvement in the patient's condition.<sup>[14]</sup>

### Mode of action of *Shaman Aushadhi* :

**1. *Amalaki Rasayana*:** Acharya Charak also highlights various medicinal properties of *Amalaki*, labeling it as *Ayushya* (promoting longevity), *Deepaniya* (appetizing), *Pachniya* (digestive), and particularly noting its effectiveness in nourishing hair (*Keshya*) and eyes (*Chakshushya*).<sup>[15]</sup>

In terms of its effects on the *Doshas*(bodily humors), *Amalaki* demonstrates a remarkable ability to balance all three *Doshas* – *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*. Its *Rasa* (sour taste) mitigates *Vata*, while its effect *Madhur Vipaka* (sweet post-digestive) alleviates *Pitta*. Additionally, its *Kashaya Rasa* (astringent taste) and *Ruksha Guna* (dry quality) help pacify *Kapha*.<sup>[16]</sup>

*Amalaki* is highly valued as a *Rasayana*, or rejuvenative herb, in *Ayurveda*. *Rasayanas* aim to enhance overall health by enriching the quality of the body's nutritional fluids (*Rasa*), improving digestion and metabolism (*Agni*), and enhancing the efficiency of microcirculatory channels in the body (*Srotas*).<sup>[15]</sup> Therefore, *Amalaki Rasayana* is beneficial breaking the *Samprapti* of *Indralupt*.

**2. *Triphala Churna*:** Both Ayurveda and Complimentary science consider prime role of the gut in health and disease initiation. *Triphala* stands

as a vital formula facilitating optimal digestion, absorption, elimination, and rejuvenation.<sup>[17]</sup> *Triphla* has *Medohar*, *Keshya*, *Bhedan* and *Rasayan* properties.

## CONCLUSION

The present case, clinically diagnosed as alopecia areata, was successfully treated with wet cupping and *Rsayana Chikitsa* for duration of one month. After each session, there was a significant improvement in hair growth. After a total of three sessions, the patient's hair has completely regrown.

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### \*Address for correspondence

**Dr. Pooja Kalal**  
PG Scholar  
Department of Panchkarma,  
PGIA, DSRRAU, Jodhpur,  
Rajasthan, India.

Email:

[kalalpooja0709@gmail.com](mailto:kalalpooja0709@gmail.com)

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