



Case Study

AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC ECZEMA

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ABSTRACT

Skin disorders are one of the major health issues in the present era. It is a multifaceted condition that includes the emotional and social impact on individuals, as it affects the psychological status of a person due to its appearance, severe itching, and disturbance to the daily routine. The prevalence of eczema is more common in rural areas than in urban ones. Eczema is an inflammatory reaction of the skin, characterized by variable itching and soreness, crusting, dryness, erythema, excoriation, exudation, fissuring, hyperpigmentation, lichenification, oozing, scaling, and vesiculation. No satisfactory treatment is available in contemporary medical practice except antihistamines and topical steroids. As it is a common chronic skin condition, it can lead to recurrent infections and poor quality of life if left untreated. The clinical features can be correlated to *Vicharchika* in Ayurveda, as it is characterized by *Kandu*, *Srava*, *Pidaka*, and *Shyava Varna*. It has been described under *Kshudra Kushthas* and is a *Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara*, involving three *Doshas* with *Kapha* predominance. A 36-year-old female patient presented with clinical features of diffuse hyperpigmented skin lesions on both lower limbs, associated with severe itching and a burning sensation for the past six years. The case was diagnosed as *Vicharchika*. The patient was treated following the principles of *Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara (Kustha)*, i.e., *Sroto Shodhana* (purification of channels) and *Dosha Shamana* (pacification of doshas) *Chikitsa*, resulting in significant improvement in clinical symptoms.

INTRODUCTION

The worldwide prevalence of eczema ranges from 15% to 20%, with 60% of cases appearing within the first year of life, the majority within the first 5 years, and the remaining cases manifesting by the age of 30.^[1] Eczema can be classified into two broad categories: exogenous and endogenous, depending on whether the causative factors are external or internal. In acute eczema, symptoms include erythema, edema, vesiculation, oozing, and crusting. In the subacute phase, erythematous hyperpigmented plaques with scaling and crusting are observed. In the chronic phase, lichenification occurs, which involves a combination of skin thickening, hyperpigmentation, and prominent skin markings.

Most subacute and chronic cases of eczema are perpetuated by the 'itch-scratch-itch' cycle.^[2]

Vicharchika is classified as one of the *Kshudra Kushta* (minor skin diseases).^[3] According to modern science, the skin symptoms include *Kandu* (itching), *Pidika* (papules), *Shyava Varna* (dark brown discoloration), and *Bahusrava* (excessive oozing), which are similar to the symptoms of eczema.^[4] *Vicharchika* is divided into four types based on clinical features, as described by various Acharyas:

- Charaka: *Sravi Vicharchika* (oozing type)^[5]
- Sushruta: *Shushka Vicharchika* (dry type)^[6]
- Bhela: *Jeerna Vicharchika* (chronic type)^[7]
- Kashyapa: *Agantuja Vicharchika* (externally caused type)^[8]

Vicharchika is considered a *Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara*, a disorder caused by an imbalance in the blood, and is associated with all three *Doshas*, with *Kapha* being predominant. The treatment approach includes *Sroto Shodhana* (channel and blood purification) and

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Dosha Shamana (pacification of *Doshas*), specifically targeting *Pitta-Kapha Shamana*. This helps in reducing *Shotha* (inflammation) and *Srava* (oozing).

Case report

A 36-year-old female presented with a history of diffuse hyperpigmented skin lesions on both lower limbs, associated with severe itching and a burning sensation for the past six years. The patient also reported a history of chronic constipation. Her clinical signs and symptoms included:

- **Kandu (itching sensation)**
- **Shyava Varna (blackish-brown discoloration)**
- **Bahusrava (excessive exudation)**

The patient had previously sought treatment from a general physician but experienced no significant relief. Due to the persistence of her symptoms, she sought further management at our facility.

Comorbidities: No history of Diabetes Mellitus, hypertension, hypothyroidism or other major medical and surgical history.

Family History: No significant history

Table 1: General Examination

General Examination	
Built	Moderate
Nourishment	
Pallor	
Icterus	Absent
Cyanosis	
Lymphadenopathy	

O/E (On Examination)	
GC -Fair	
Pulse -78/min	
BP -130/90 mm/Hg	
Spo2 -95	
RR -20	

Table 2: Astasthana pareeksh

<i>Nadi</i>	<i>Kaphaja</i>
<i>Mutra</i>	<i>Prakrutha</i> (5-6times/day, 1 time at night)
<i>Mala</i>	<i>Prakrutha</i> (once per day)
<i>Shabda</i>	<i>Prakrita</i>
<i>Jihwa</i>	<i>Lipta</i>
<i>Sparsha</i>	<i>Rooksha</i>
<i>Drik</i>	<i>Prakruta</i>
<i>Akarati</i>	<i>Madhyam</i>

Table 3: Systemic Examination

Central nervous system	Conscious, oriented to time, place, person
Respiratory system	B/L Symmetrical chest, no added sound.
Cardio vascular examination	S1 and S2 heard, no murmur.
Gastro intestinal system	Soft Abdomen, no tenderness and organomegaly was found.

Table 4: Integumentary System

Type of Lesions	Vesicle and scale
Symmetry	Asymmetrical
Distribution	lower limb
Colour	Greyish black
Shape	Irregular
Discharge	Present
Surface	Rough

Table 5: Gradation of Clinical features of Vicharchika^[9]

Clinical features	Gradation	Grade
<i>Kandu</i> (Itching)	➤ No itching ➤ Itching present rarely ➤ Itching disturbing patient's attention ➤ Severe itching disturbing patients sleep	0 1 2 3
<i>Srava</i> (Discharge)	➤ No <i>Srava</i> ➤ Occasional ➤ <i>Srava</i> after itching ➤ Mild <i>Srava</i> after itching ➤ Profuse <i>Srava</i> making clothes wet	0 1 2 3 4
<i>Pidaka</i> (Papules)	➤ Absent ➤ 1-2 <i>Pidaka</i> in one affected part ➤ 3-4 <i>Pidaka</i> in one affected part ➤ More than 4 <i>Pidaka</i> in one affected part	0 1 2 3
<i>Shyavata/Vaivarnyata</i> (Discoloration)	➤ Normal skin colour ➤ Brownish red discoloration ➤ Blackish red discoloration ➤ Blackish discoloration	0 1 2 3
<i>Rookshata</i> (Dryness)	➤ No dryness ➤ Dryness with rough skin ➤ Dryness with scaling ➤ Dryness with cracking	0 1 2 3
<i>Daha</i> (Burning Sensation)	➤ Absence of burning sensation in affected part ➤ Rarely burning sensation in affected part ➤ Continues burning sensation in affected part ➤ Disturbing patients sleep	0 1 2 3

Diagnosis

- *Sravi Vicharchika* (Wet eczema)
- *Shyava Varna* (Blackish brown discoloration)
- *Kandu* (Itching sensation)
- *Bahusrava* (Excessive exudation)

Table 6: MATERIALS AND METHODS

S.No	Clinical Features	Score on 0 th Day (BT)	Score on 28 th Day (AT)
1.	<i>Kandu</i> (Itching)	3	0
2.	<i>Shyavata/Vaivarnyata</i> (Discoloration)	3	1
3.	<i>Rookshata</i> (Dryness)	2	0
4.	<i>Daha</i> (Burning Sensation)	2	0



Figure 1: Before treatment



Figure 2: After treatment

Table 7: Assessment

Medication	Dose & Route	Mode of Action in <i>Vicharchika</i> (Eczema)	Scientific Reference
<i>Vyadi Haran Rasayana</i> 250 mg + <i>Shuddha Gandhak</i> 250 mg + <i>Mukta Shukti Pishti</i> 250 mg + <i>Triphala Churna</i> 2 gm + <i>Sutshekhhar Ras</i> 125 mg	BD, Oral with water	<i>Vyadi Haran Rasayana</i>: Balances <i>Tridoshas</i> and has <i>Rasayana</i> (rejuvenative) properties. <i>Shuddha Gandhak</i>: Antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory, useful in skin diseases like eczema. <i>Mukta Shukti Pishti</i>: Works as a natural antacid and soothes skin inflammation. <i>Triphala</i>: Detoxifies, supports healthy digestion, and purifies <i>Rakta</i> (blood). <i>Sutshekhhar Ras</i> : Balances <i>Pitta dosha</i> , helps in managing burning sensations and	<i>Gandhak Rasayana</i> in treating skin diseases and anti-inflammatory effects: Tripathi, K.D. (Essentials of Medical Pharmacology).

		inflammation.	
<i>Panchatikta Ghrit</i> 10 ml	BD, Oral with water	<i>Panchatikta Ghrita</i> is a combination of five bitter herbs, which help in blood purification (<i>Rakta Shodhana</i>) and pacify aggravated <i>Pitta</i> and <i>Kapha</i> doshas, which are primarily involved in eczema. It also supports skin healing and reduces inflammation.	Anti-inflammatory and wound healing properties of <i>Panchatikta Ghrita</i> (Singh, et al. Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine).
<i>Khadirarishta</i> 20 ml	BD, with equal amount of water	<i>Khadirarishta</i> is a potent herbal preparation that acts as a blood purifier and detoxifier, specifically effective in chronic skin conditions. It works on <i>Kapha</i> and <i>Pitta doshas</i> , reducing itching (<i>Kandu</i>) and dark pigmentation (<i>Shyava Varna</i>).	Anti-oxidative and blood purification effects of <i>Khadirarishta</i> (Research Journal of Pharmacognosy and Phytochemistry).
<i>Kaishor Guggulu</i> 1 tab	BD, Oral with water	<i>Kaishor Guggulu</i> is used for detoxification, reducing inflammation and pacifying <i>Pitta</i> and <i>Kapha</i> dosha. It helps in clearing skin lesions and reducing hyperpigmentation.	Anti-inflammatory effect of <i>Kaishor Guggulu</i> (Journal of Ayurveda and Holistic Medicine).
<i>Mahasudarshan Kwath</i> 10 ml	BD, Oral with water	<i>Mahasudarshan Kwath</i> is effective in detoxifying the system, purifying the blood, and reducing fever and inflammation. It helps in breaking the chronicity of <i>Vicharchika</i> by cleansing <i>Rakta</i> and balancing <i>Pitta</i> and <i>Kapha doshas</i> .	Blood purification and anti-inflammatory effects of <i>Mahasudarshan Kwath</i> (Sharma et al., International Journal of Ayurveda Research).
<i>Tarunikusmakar Churna</i> 3 gm	HS, Oral with luke warm water	Acts as a mild laxative, improving bowel movements, and treating chronic constipation, which is often seen in patients with <i>Vicharchika</i> . It supports detoxification and aids in balancing <i>doshas</i> .	Laxative and detoxification properties of <i>Tarunikusmakar Churna</i> (Ayurveda Medicine Journal).
777 Oil (Local Application)	L/A, External Use	777 Oil is effective in managing skin disorders like eczema. It reduces itching, burning sensations, and promotes healing of skin lesions. Anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and skin protective properties are attributed to this oil.	Clinical evaluation of 777 Oil in eczema treatment (A clinical study published in Journal of Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery).

Results

After 28 days of treatment, the patient showed significant improvement in her clinical symptoms. The following changes were observed:

1. *Kandu* (Itching)

- Before Treatment (BT): The patient reported severe itching, which disturbed her daily activities and sleep, with a score of 3.
- After Treatment (AT): By the 28 day, the itching was completely resolved, with a score of 0.

2. *Shyavata/Vaivarnyata* (Discoloration)

- Before Treatment (BT): The patient exhibited blackish-brown discoloration of the skin, with a score of 3.
- After Treatment (AT): After 28 days of treatment, the discoloration had improved significantly, with a score of 1.

3. *Rookshata* (Dryness)

- Before Treatment (BT): The patient complained of dryness and roughness of the skin, with a score of 2.
- After Treatment (AT): The dryness had completely resolved after the treatment, with a score of 0.

4. *Daha* (Burning Sensation)

- Before Treatment (BT): The patient experienced moderate burning sensations, with a score of 2.
- After Treatment (AT): By the 28 day, the burning sensation had completely subsided, with a score of 0.

Overall, the patient experienced a remarkable reduction in all the clinical symptoms of *Vicharchika* (eczema), including itching, discoloration, dryness, and burning sensations. The treatment was effective in

providing significant relief from her long-standing symptoms, and there was no recurrence of her complaints during the observation period.

These results highlight the effectiveness of the Ayurvedic treatment regimen involving internal medications like *Vyadi Haran Rasayana*, *Panchatikta Ghrita*, *Khadirarishta*, and *Kaishor Guggulu*, along with external application of 777 oil, in the management of *Vicharchika* (eczema).

DISCUSSION

The management of *Vicharchika* (eczema) through Ayurveda, as demonstrated in this case, shows promising results in the reduction of symptoms like itching, discoloration, dryness, and burning sensations. Eczema, known as *Vicharchika* in Ayurveda, is considered a *Kshudra Kushtha* (minor skin disorder) and is classified as *Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara* (a disorder due to vitiated blood). The case presented highlights the chronicity and persistence of skin conditions like eczema, which significantly affect the patient's quality of life. Despite receiving conventional treatments, the patient found no relief, emphasizing the limitations of modern approaches such as antihistamines and corticosteroids, which primarily provide symptomatic relief and have potential side effects.

Ayurvedic Understanding of *Vicharchika*

According to Ayurveda, *Vicharchika* is primarily associated with the vitiation of Kapha, followed by Pitta and Vata doshas. The clinical features like *Kandu* (itching), *Shyava Varna* (discoloration), *Bahusrava* (oozing), and *Rookshata* (dryness) are characteristic of *Kapha-Pitta* vitiation. The *Rakta Dhatu* (blood tissue) is also heavily involved, with *Kapha dosha* dominating the manifestation.

Ayurveda offers a holistic approach to managing such conditions through:

- *Sroto Shodhana* (purification of channels and blood)
- *Dosha Shamana* (pacification of the vitiated doshas)

Treatment Efficacy

The treatment protocol adopted for the patient aligns with the Ayurvedic principles of addressing the root cause rather than just the symptoms. Key components of the treatment included:

1. *Vyadi Haran Rasayana + Shuddha Gandhak + Mukta Shukti Pishti + Triphala Churna + Sutshekhar Ras*: This combination provided systemic benefits by balancing all three doshas. *Vyadi Haran Rasayana*, known for its *Rasayana* properties, supports tissue regeneration and immune modulation. *Shuddha Gandhak* has antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties, addressing infection and inflammation.

Triphala purified the blood and supported digestion, which is crucial in maintaining skin health.

2. ***Panchatikta Ghrit***: This herbal ghee is significant in treating chronic skin disorders due to its *Rakta Shodhana* (blood-purifying) and *Pitta-Kapha* pacifying properties. It helped reduce inflammation and improved skin health by addressing the vitiated *Rakta Dhatu*.
3. ***Khadirarishta***: Known for its potent detoxification properties, it effectively treated *Kapha-Pitta*-related disorders. Its role in blood purification and reducing *Shyava Varna* (discoloration) was evident in the improvement of skin color and reduction of lesions.
4. ***Kaishor Guggulu***: This herbal formulation acted as a detoxifier, reduced inflammation, and played a key role in healing skin lesions. It addressed the *Pitta-Kapha doshas* and supported the reduction of itching and burning sensations.
5. **777 Oil**: The local application of 777 oil, known for its anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and healing properties, helped in the external management of itching, dryness, and burning. It provided relief from the visible symptoms, thereby speeding up skin healing.
6. ***Mahasudarshan Kwath* and *Tarunikusmakar Churna***: These two formulations worked as systemic detoxifiers and supported healthy bowel movements. The correction of digestion and bowel health is crucial in skin disease management as per Ayurveda, due to the direct relation of the digestive system to skin health through *Pitta* and *Rakta*.

Clinical Outcomes

The patient's symptoms, which were persistent for over six years, showed significant improvement within 28 days of Ayurvedic treatment. The notable reduction in itching (from a score of 3 to 0), discoloration, dryness, and burning sensation underscores the efficacy of the Ayurvedic interventions. Additionally, no adverse effects were observed during the treatment period, which is a significant advantage over the prolonged use of corticosteroids and antihistamines in conventional treatment.

Mechanism of Action

The mechanism of action of the Ayurvedic formulations includes:

- ***Dosha pacification***: Targeting the vitiated *Kapha* and *Pitta doshas*, the treatments balanced the internal system.
- ***Detoxification***: Herbs like *Triphala*, *Panchatikta Ghrit*, and *Khadirarishta* helped in the removal of toxins from the body, reducing the *Ama* (toxins)

that are believed to block the channels and cause skin disorders in Ayurveda.

- **Blood purification:** The emphasis on *Rakta Shodhana* (blood purification) through these interventions played a pivotal role in the resolution of hyperpigmented lesions and inflammation.
- **Healing and rejuvenation:** The *Rasayana* (rejuvenating) properties of *Vyadi Haran Rasayana* and the tissue-regenerating properties of 777 Oil contributed to the restoration of skin health.

CONCLUSION

This case study highlights the effective management of chronic eczema through Ayurvedic principles, offering a holistic alternative to conventional treatment methods. The treatment regimen helped in reducing the patient's long-standing symptoms, thereby improving her quality of life without the need for corticosteroids or other allopathic interventions. Ayurvedic management of *Vicharchika* can provide long-term relief and prevent recurrence, focusing on both internal and external healing. Further clinical studies could help validate these treatments and introduce integrative approaches for better eczema management.

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