



Aspect of Jalaukavcharna in Various Skin Disorders

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Review Article

Volume 8 Issue 1

Received Date: December 07, 2023

Published Date: January 17, 2024

DOI: 10.23880/jonam-16000436

Abstract

Skin is a vital organ of communication with external world and has an eternal relationship with manas (i.e., psyche/mind). Therefore, a skin disease produces anxiety, depression and other psychological problems and affect the quality of life. Most of the skin disease treatment take long time to show their effects and has many side-effects. So, people are looking for new ways to improve their health and they are turning to natural remedies and ayurvedic treatments rather than pharmaceutical drugs. Ayurveda advises Shodhana and Shamana Chikitsa for management of any health problems. Vamana, Virechana, Basti, Nasya and Raktmokshana included under Panchashodhana mentioned in classics. Raktamokshana is a procedure indicated in conditions where vitiation of Rakta is present. Rakta and pitta have Ashrayashrayi Sambandha, so Raktamokshana is also beneficial in Pittaja disorders. Most of the skin conditions are considered due to vitiation of Rakta and Pitta. Among Raktamokshana procedure Jalaukavcharna is said to be most beneficial in Pitta predominance conditions.

Keywords: Shodhana; Raktamokshana; Jalaukavcharna

Introduction

“Your skin is a really great indicator of what’s going on inside your body”

Skin is the front line of defense mechanism of the body and contains many epidermal and immune elements that comprises the skin-associated lymphoid tissue (SALT), as mentioned in Ayurveda ‘Twaka Samvarane’ means one which protect and covers the whole body [1]. Now a days, Skin conditions are increasing dramatically worldwide and are associated with psychological, social and financial burdens. Atopic dermatitis, Eczema, Psoriasis, Alopecia.

Abscesses are common acute and chronic conditions, which are increasing in prevalence due to unhealthy lifestyle and dietary habits. Treatment failure rate is very high in management of skin conditions. In spite of advancements in

science and technology, the emergence of Ayurvedic treatment for managing skin disorders are becoming essential due to less adverse effect of Ayurvedic treatment. The treatment approach of Ayurveda is founded on two basic principles, namely Shodhana Chikitsa (Therapy of Elimination) and Shamana Chikitsa (pacification). The therapeutic approach of Shodhana Chikitsa involves the implementation of a set of five purificatory procedures, commonly referred to as Panchashodhana. Raktamokshana (bloodletting) is one among the Panchashodhana i.e., Vamana, Virechana, Basti, Shirovirechana and Raktmokshana. It is a para-surgical measure indicated in various disease where vitiation of Rakta is present. Rakta takes important role in spreading disease from one part to other part of the body by carrying the toxins or vitiated doshas (bio-humors). Because of vitiation of Rakta, the Shodhana of Rakta is to be carried out. Raktamokshana by vein puncture (Siravyadha) is considered to be the supreme therapy as it drains out the vitiated Rakta and cures

the disease [2]. But not every person is fit for Siravyadha. The utilization of Jalauka (leeches) for Raktamokshana is widely regarded as the most efficacious and distinctive approach, as it entails the elimination of vitiated Doshas from the body without the use of any incisive instruments. Jalaukavcharna is safest of all the Raktamokshana methods and can be used in children, aged and frightened patients [3].

Classification of Raktamokshan

Shastrakruta	Ashtrakruta / Anushastra
Siravyadhana	Shringa
Prachhana	Alabu
	Jalauka
	Ghati Yantra

Table 1: Classification of Raktamokshana via Leeches.

Raktamokshana via leeches is classified as an Ashastra modality. It can be applied even to Parama Sukumara as it is safe less complicated and easy to perform compared to other techniques of Raktamokshana [4].

Leech (*Hirudo Medicinalis*)

A leech is a worm like creature; it has used for a long time and in different ways for medicinal purposes. Leech therapy is one of the most beneficial and delicate treatments. It is very cheap and short procedure and can be done without obstructing patient's daily routine.

Phylum	Annelida
Class	Hirudinea
Order	H. limnabdella
Family	Hirudinae
Genus	Hirudinaria
Species	H. medicinalis

Table 2: Taxonomical Classification of Leech.

Types of Jalauka

Savisha	Nirvisha
Krishna	Kapila
Karbura	Pingala
Algarda	Sankumukhi
Indrayudha	Mushika
Samudarika	Pudarikamukhi
Gochandana	Savarika

Table 3: Jalauka According to Savisha & Nirvisha [3].

Indications of Jalaukavcharna

- Vatarakta, Visarapa, Visha, Venous disease like Acute phlebitis & Varicose veins, Arterial disease, Acute gout attack, Osteoarthritis, Infections, Otitis media, Haemorrhoids, etc.
- Skin disorders like Acne vulgaris, Eczema, Psoriasis, Herpes, Dermatitis, Pemphigus vulgaris, Lichen planus, Impetigo, Vitiligo etc.

Contraindication of Jalaukavcharna

Sarvangasotha, Udara Roga, Bleeding disorder, Blood coagulation disorders, Anemia, Hypotonia etc.

Procedure of Leech Application

Purvakarma

Collection of leech

- Leech can be caught with piece of wet leather or cotton from ponds, tanks, streaming water.
- Leeches should be collected from where there are lotuses.
- Acharaya Dalhana has mentioned the best time for collection of leeches are autumn [5].

Preservation of leech

- After collecting the leeches, they should be kept in earthen pot.
- Fresh water from lake or river should be filled into that pot.
- Water should be changed on every 3rd day and fresh feeding should be dropped inside the pot.
- Pot should be changed on every 7th day.

Preparation of leech

- Leech should be taken and pasted with mustard seed and turmeric and then washed with fresh water
- After Shodhana the leech should be applied to the affected part.

Preparation of patient

- Leech should be applied after massage and sudation.
- On the day of leech application, affected part should be free from ointment etc.
- Area to be applied should be rubbed with cotton gauge pieces or Rukshana Dravyas like dried cow dung to remove superficial dead skin.
- Clean up with lukewarm water and give local sudation to just increase blood circulation at that part, it will also helpful for loosening the skin layers.

Pradhan Karma

Application of leech

- Leech should be held with wet cloth or cotton; it will catch the skin and will stick at that place.
- If leech does not stick/bite the desired area, then a drop of milk, blood, ghee, honey applied to the affected part. Even after doing this if leech does not stick to the part, then small incision is made. After above said efforts, if leech does not stick and bite at the desired spot, the leech should be discarded and another fresh leech should be applied.
- After application of leech their body should be covered with a piece of thin wet cloth or cotton and cold water should be sprinkled to provide cooling effect.

Observation of leech

- When leech starts sucking the blood it assumes the shape of horseshoe (Ashvakhuravatta).
- When the sensation of itching and pain occurs at the site of application, it indicates that, leech has started to suck the fresh blood, and then the leech should be removed.
- If leech does not detach and is sticking to the affected part by their fondness for the smell of blood or due to their greediness; they should be removed by sprinkling the rock salt over the mouth area.

Paschat Karma

Care of leech

- After detaching the leech, vomiting of leech should be induced by applying oil and rock salt.
- Leech should be held by tail end with thumb and the forefinger of the left hand and both the surface of body should be gently rubbed with other hand from tail towards mouth to make them vomit the full quantity of sucked blood.
- The vomiting of leech should be done until the appearance of Samyak Vamana Lakshana (leech move vigorously in quest of food if placed in water).

Care of patient

- After detaching the leech, affected part should be cleaned with cotton, and dressing should be done.
- Application of honey or turmeric should be done to the wound.

Mode of Action

According to Modern

- Leech applied on skin, it sucks the superficial level might be from capillaries or extra- cellular so it may be more impure than other body channels, Jalauka can easily suck impure blood due to superficial distribution of veins [6].
- This action may be due to effect of saliva of leech which containing enzymes like Hirudin, Calin, Eglin, Hyaluronidase etc.

Enzymes	Mode of action
Hirudin	Acts as Anticoagulant, Diuretics and Antibiotic action.
Calin	Prevents blood coagulation.
Eglin	Acts as Antithrombin, Antitrypsin and Antichymotrypsins.
Destabilase	Blocks the aggregation of human platelet.
Hyaluronidase	Act as spreading factors and ensures the other active substances which are active at bitten area can be spread.
Antistasin	Acts as Antithrombin.

Table 4: Action of Leeches Based on Enzymes Present in their Saliva.

- Leech application has counter irritant effect on the lesion, which creates new cellular division, which takes place removing dead cell layer and result in reduction of local swelling and lichenification.

According to Ayurveda

Vitiated Rakta obstructs the path of doshas due to this doshas also gets vitiated. These vitiated doshas are the main cause of various disease. After Jalaukavacharna path is

cleared and doshas came in normalcy which helps to treat the disease.

Probable Mode of Action of Jalaukavacharna in Skin Disorder

- According to Ayurveda skin conditions are considered due to Pitta and Rakta. Jalaukavacharna is useful where local pitta and Rakta Dushti, Kleda formation and Srotorodha was present. Jalauka application removes

the Dushita Rakta (affected blood) and Strotasavrodha (obstruction in circulatory channels), and then Rasa, Rakta Dhatu circulation normalises.

- Vitiated Pitta gets removed by Jalaukavcharna, as Pitta and Rakta have Ashrayashrayi Sambandha (Rakta is seat of Pitta). As Jalaukavcharna is Sheeta in nature hence pacify the Ushana and Tikshana Guna of Pitta.

Discussion

Jalaukavacharana Karma provides statistically high significance in the symptoms of skin problems like Kandu, Pidika, Raktima, and Daha. Leech saliva is reported to have many therapeutic contents like Hirudin, Eglin, Hyaluronidase, etc. Skin conditions are due to Pitta and Rakta Dushti. In comparisons to other Raktamokshana methods Jalaukavcharna is more beneficial in skin conditions. As Jalauka reside in water so is Sheeta in nature and Madhura in Rasa. Due to these properties helps to pacify Ushana and Teekshna Guna of Pitta and helpful in Pitta dominance conditions [7]. Also due to removal of Rakta which is Ashraya Sthana of Pitta, these symptoms were relieved. Though the action is localised, but it affects whole body by releasing many factors into blood.

Conclusion

Due to unhealthy lifestyle and dietary habits the prevalence of skin conditions is increasing drastically worldwide. In Panchkarma Chikitsa, the vitiated doshas are purified whereas Raktamokshana is a mean to let out the morbid Rakta along with vitiated doshas where Rakta dhatu is predominant. There is huge susceptibility of Rakta towards impurity therefore at times Rakta is considered as fourth dosha. Dushita Rakta is let out to protect the health

or to cure the disease. Since Pitta is dependent on Rakta, therefore Raktamokshana decrease the quantum of enhanced Pitta, henceforth Doshas and Pittaja vyadhi are to relieved or cured by the therapy. Out of all Raktamokshana method Jalaukavcharna is more beneficial in Pitta predominant conditions due to its Sheeta Guna and Madhura Rasa.

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