

Chronic geriatric eczema: a case successfully treated with Ayurvedic management

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Abstract:

In geriatric age, epidermis becomes thinner and loses its ability to retain water and overall barrier functions of skin are decreased. All of these changes may contribute to many skin conditions, including eczema. Eczema is defined as a medical condition in which patches of skin become rough and inflamed with blisters which cause itching and bleeding. Prevalence of eczema in geriatric age is found 21.7%. In contemporary science, included treatment have many harmful side-effects with high rate of recurrence. In Ayurveda, eczema can be considered as *vicharchika* under *kshudrakushtha*. Here, a case of geriatric eczema, successfully treated with internal and external application (*Arka Haridra* gel) of Ayurvedic natural remedies is recorded.

Key words: *Arka Haridra* Gel, Ayurveda, *KshudraKushtha*, Skin disorder, *Vicharchika*

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Introduction:

Skin ageing is a continuous process that affects the function of the skin and its appearance, and increases the possibility of developing a skin condition. Asteatotic eczema an inflammatory dermatosis is a type of eczema associated with very dry skin and occurs most commonly in people over the age of 60^[1]. It runs a chronic course and has a tendency of exacerbations. *Vicharchika*, according to *Ayurveda* is *Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara* having involvement of three *Dosha* with dominance of *Kapha* ^[2] in classics, it is included under the heading of *kshudra kushtha* ^[3]. The cardinal symptoms includes *Pidaka* (Pustules), *Srava* (Discharge), *Kandu* (Itching), *Raji* (Scratches), *Ruja* (Pain), *Vaivarnya* (Discoloration of skin).^[4] *Vicharchika* can be co-related with eczema from allopathic stand point which is a form of dermatitis, or inflammation of the upper layers of the skin. The term eczema is broadly applied to a range of persistent or recurring skin rashes. Long-standing eczema is often dry and is characterized by thickened, scaling skin with hyper pigmentation and visible criss-cross markings (lichenification).^[5] In maximum of cases, patients of *Vicharchika* (Eczema), who do not get cure from the Allopathy Medicine, come to *Ayurveda* treatment with a great hope for curing their disease. Naturally by the time, they approach to *Ayurvedic* physician for the help, disease had already attained the chronic state, thus

making the job further difficult. Many natural remedies are described in *Ayurveda* classics for such conditions, which should be evaluated or validated for safe and effective treatment of the disease.

Case Report

A 70 year old, non-diabetic male by profession farmer visited at RS & BK department IPGT & RA Hospital, Jamnagar with complaint of rashes with intense itching all over body with redness over back of neck, both hands and edema on hands associated with burning sensation, for last eight years and aggravated for last six months. There were dry lesions with scaling found since 4 months. There was oozing of bloody fluid on itching from eczematous lesion. He had taken modern medications since four years. But, patient was not responding to modern medicines and got the condition worsen and he is consulted to our hospital. Patient reported history of tea, smoking bidi (6-7 bidi/day) and alcohol addiction. He had no any history of cardiac diseases, diabetic mellitus, tuberculosis, venereal diseases, bronchial asthma, anemia and any other major illness. Routine blood investigation for complete blood count (CBC), blood sugar level were normal except increased white blood corpuscles (WBC) (Table:1) Based on clinical presentation, examination and laboratory findings, this case was diagnosed as *Vicharchika* (chronic eczema) and admitted for *Ayurveda* management in RS & BK male ward.

Table 1: Investigations at baseline

Investigations	Investigations
TLC	14,200/cu mm
DLC	
Neutrophils	73%
Lymphocytes	16%
Eosinophils	09%
Monocytes	02%
Hb%	13.5gm %
ESR(Westergreen)	08 mm /hour
Platelet	354 mil/cu mm
FBS	89 mg/dl
PPBS	121 mg/dl
S. Cholesterol	137 mg/dl

In first consultation patient had rashes with intense itching ,scaling, dryness all over body with redness over back of neck ,both hands

and edema on hands associated with burning sensation.[Figure:1] Prescribed treatment was as following: [Table-2]

Table 2: Prescribed treatment

INTERNAL MEDICATIONS	DOSE	DURATION
<i>Khadira choorna</i>	2g BID (orally) with Luke warm water	6 month
<i>Guduchi choorna</i>	2g BID (orally) with Luke warm water	6 month
EXTERNAL APPLICATION		
<i>Arka Haridra</i> gel (modified dosage form from <i>Arka Haridra Tail</i>)	Q.S (Two times/day)	1 month

Result and Discussion

After starting of these treatment symptoms like scaling, dryness, redness, burning, edema was decreased in fifteen days [figure: 2]. Itching was decreased in twenty days. In one month, complete relief was found in all symptoms. [Figure: 3] After one month (on discharge) external application was stopped and internal medicines continued for 6 months. With follow up for a period of 6 months, the patient had shown no signs of recurrence.

According to sharangadhara samhita, *Arka Haridra Tail* is mentioned with the indications of *vicharchika* and *pama*.^[6] *Arka Haridra Gel* was prepared from its oil form with addition of Aerosol as therapeutically better and convenient dosage form. *Sarshapa Taila* (Mustard oil) was use for the preparation of *Arka Haridra Taila* as a *Sneha dravya*. *Sarshapa Taila* is good lipophilic medium for penetration.^[7] It has the

properties like *Vrana Shodhana* (wound cleaning) and *Vrana Dahanashaka* (relief in burning pain) that helped in on burning sensation relief. *Haridra*^[8] (*curcuma longa* Linn.) and *Arka* (*calotropisgigantea* Linn)^[9] can be considered a great potential therapeutic agent for a variety of inflammatory conditions so, edema was relieved within 7 days and enhanced the healing. In classics, *Arka* (*calotropisgigantea* Linn),^[10] *khadira*^[11] (*acacia catechu*. Willd.) and *Guduchi*^[12] (*Tinosporacordifolia* Willd.) are described with *kushthahara* and *kanduhara* properties. So, *vicharchika* (chronic eczema) with edema in geriatric age can be treated with proper ayurveda management.

Conclusion

Ayurvedic treatment is having great potential to treat chronic geriatric disorders like eczema. These protocol should be evaluated in more number of patients for its scientific validation.



Figure: 1 on admission patient with chronic eczema



Figure: 2 After 15 days of treatment



Figure: 3. After 1 month of treatment

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