

IMPORTANCE OF SKIN AS DIAGNOSTIC TOOL IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT:

Skin is the largest organ of the body both in terms of volume and weight. It has protective interface, sensitive interface, and also maintains the balance of our body. It has metabolic functions too. According to Ayurveda, in Trividha Parikshan it includes – Darshana, Sparshna, and Prashna. Out of these three first two Parikshan are done with the help of skin only. Even first appearance of patient is seen on skin by darshana and with the help of touch we can feel the sparsha of the patient.

According to Ayurvedic concepts, when the Dermis and Epidermis layer of the skin get affected, then it loose its smoothness (mardavta), Snigdhatva (unctuous), Bhrajisnuta and these Mardavta, Ushntav, Khartva all can be examined through skin only. This type of Twacha is seen in Kushta, Shudraroga and in Vatarakta. We can use skin as diagnostic tool in various types of diseases and skin diseases also.

Keywords : Skin, Twachavikara, Trividha pariksha.

INTRODUCTION :

Skin is the largest organ of the body and it covers external surface of the body, it holds significant importance in maintaining normal human physiological conditions. It has protective inference as it protects body in various ways from heat, chemical, various micro-organisms and also abrasions. It has sensitive inference also maintains thermoregulation of body. It has metabolic functions also. It is about 16% of weight of body. And has normal pH 5.5 slightly acidic in nature.

The word *Twacha* is used for skin in Ayurveda. And it has origin due to combination of *shukra* and *shonita* in intrauterine life. It is just like cream on surface of milk after boiling.¹

According to *Ayurveda* it is said that all *Dravyas* are *Panchabhautik*² in nature, so skin also *Panchabhautik* in nature. As,

1. *Prithvi* – skin and hairs on skin.
2. *Aapa* - *Twachagat sweda and kleda*.
3. *Teja* - *Twachagat ushma*.
4. *Vyau* – *Sprsha*.

5. *Aakash* – *Romkupa*.

But predominantly it contains *Prithvi* and *vyaumahabhuta*.

According to Acharya Charaka *Twacha* has 6 layers but according to Sushruta¹ and Vagbhata it has 7 layers. The seven layers are, 1. *Avabhasini* 2. *Lohita* 3. *Shweta* 4. *Tamra* 5. *Vedini* 6. *Rohini* 7. *Mansadhara*.

Twacha is also called as *Sparshanendriya* in Ayurveda so, *vata* is predominantly found in skin. It is seat of all *gyanendriyas* and is responsible for *Sparsha gyan* or touch Sensation. *Twacha* is included in *bahya roga marga*. The conceptual aspect of skin is need to be understood because skin disorder is the outer exhibition of some kind of internal pathology. With the help of skin we will be able to diagnose various types of diseases and skin diseases also.

Aim : To study importance of skin as a diagnostic tool in Ayurveda.

Objectives: To consider skin as a parameter in diagnosis of different disease.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

In *Ayurveda Trividha*, *Asthavidha pariksha* are given for assessment and examination of patient .

TRIVIDHA PARIKSHA:

It contains *Darshana*, *Sparshan* and *prashna pariksha* are given .Out of these three, *Darshana* and *Sparshanapariksha* is done with the help of skin only.

e.g. 1) In *Vyanga*, it is described as

नीरुजं तनुकं श्यावं मुखे व्यंगं तमादिशेत ॥ (मा.नि.)

That means on Skin, specially on face it contains Black and painless spot, that we can diagnose it as *Vyanga*.

2) In *Nilika*, the same *lakshanas* are given but the *lakshanas* are predominantly seen on other parts of body except face .So we can diagnose it as *Nilika*.

3) In *Tilkalaka*, it is described as,

कृष्णानि तिलमात्राणि नीरुजानि समानि च ॥ (मा.नि.)

That means, they are painless and black in colour and found all over surface of body .So we can diagnose it as *Tilkalaka*.

4) In *Mukhadushika* it is described as,

शाल्मलीकण्टकप्रख्याः कफमारुतरक्तजाः ।

जायन्ते पिडकाः यूनां ज्ञेयास्ता मुखदुषिका ॥(मा.नि.)

That means, the *pitikas* which are seen on skin specially on facial region they are like *shalmalikantak* .and by observing these *pitikas* we can diagnose it as a *Mukhadushika*.

These are the examples of *Darshana parikshan* of *twacha*, how skin is helpful for diagnose the disease type .

Also by *Sparshana Pariksha* we can diagnose the skin diseases.

e.g. In *Masurika*,

दाहज्वररुजावन्ततामा स्फोटोः सपीतकाः ।

गात्रेषु वदने चान्तार्विज्ञेयास्ता मसुरिकाः ॥ (सू.नि.)

That means by *Sparsha* we can feel the *Daha*, *Jwara* on body and also see the red color *pitika* on body that we can diagnose the *Masurika*.

2. In *krumiroga* it is described as,

ज्वरो विवर्णता शूलं हृद्रोगः सदनं भ्रमः ।

भक्तद्वेषो अतिसारश्च संजातकृमीलक्षणम् ॥(मा. नि.)

That means here *Jwara* and *Vivarnata* these two *lakshans* are assessed with the help of skin .

IN modern science, we can examine the fever and pulse if patient with the help of skin only, as it carries sensation and pulsation .

ASTHAVIDHA PARIKSHANA:

ज्वरो विवर्णता शूलं हृद्रोगः सदनं भ्रमः ।

भक्तद्वेषो अतिसारश्च संजातकृमीलक्षणम् ॥(मा. नि.)

In *Asthavidha Pariksha* for assessment of disease *Nadipariksha* and *sparsha pariksha* are given, And these two *parikshan* are assessed with the help of Skin only.

CHARAK SAMHITA :

According to *Charak Samhita* in *Indriyasthan* there are four normal complexion of skin that are,³

1. *krushna*

2. *Shyama*

3. *Shyamvadat*

4. *Avadat*

And also the *vikrut varna* are also given,⁴

1. *Nil*

2. *Shava*

3. *Tamra*

4. *Harita*

5. Shukla.

And these *vikrut varnas* are found in various diseases, that we can identify on skin.

In *parimarshaniya indriya adhaya* there are *aristha lakshanas* are given that are assessed with the help of *sparsha* on skin,⁵

e.g. If the organs like *udara, parshva, greeva, talu, osha, lalata*, are felt too much hard, stiffened and having perspiration then these are the *lakshanas ofaristha purusha*, that means his death is near.

In *Indriyanika Aadhya*, it is said that if a person is near to die, then that person feels cold (sheeta) touch of hot (ushna) substances, also soft touch of uneven surface and viceversa.⁶

Rasavaha Strotas :⁷

In *Rasavaha Strotas dushtilakshnas jwara* and *Panduta* are two *lakshanas* are given which can be assessed with the help of skin. By *Sparsha pariksha Jwar* is felt and by *Darshan Pariksha Panduta* can be seen on skin. In this way with the help of skin we can identify the *Rasavahastrotodush*t.

Raktavaha Strotas :⁸

In *Raktavaha Strotas, kustha, visarpa, pidaka, nilika, vyanga, tilkalaka, shwitra, kotha* these *lakshans* are given and these *lakshans* are observed on skin. So with the help of observing these *lakshans* on skin we can identify the *Raktavaha Strotasdushti*.

Samyaksnehapana lakshanas :⁹

In *samyaksnigdha lakshans, twaksnigdha lakshan* is given. and with the help *Darshan* and *Sparsha Pariksha* of skin decide the *samyaksnigdha* of skin. So, skin helps us in indentifying the *Samyaksnigdha lakshans*.

Asthansangraha nidan sthan:

In *asthansangraha Nidan sthan* the following *lakshans* are given which are seen on skin and with the help of observing *lakshans* on skin we can diagnose the *Kushta purvarupas*,

Pricking pain, discoloration, burning all over body, oedema, release of heat from skin, non healing of even smaller wound of skin, raised patchy surface of

skin, hardness or supers smoothness of skin, anesthesia roughness, thickness, eruption of rashes or patches. These *lakshans* are of *Kushta purvarupa* which are diagnosed with the help of skin.

In modern Science :

In modern science also skin is considered as a parameter to diagnosis of different type of diseases. As, In pellagra 3D symptoms are given 1. Dermatitis 2. Diarrhoea 3. Dementia out of three Dermatitis is assessed on skin. Also in Kwashiorkor depigmentation of skin is found due to Raktakshyaya.

In protein energy malnutrition brown black scales are found on skin.

In some cases skin shows signs of an internal disease before the disease advances and become more serious. e.g. A new rash or unusual rash on skin that does not respond to treatment is accompanied by fever, joint pain, muscle aches or other symptoms could indicate an internal problem or infection.

Dermatomyositis is an inflammatory muscle disease with notable skin changes.

Noticable darkening of skin, sun exposed area, joints and old scars could be the sign of adrenal diseases such as Addison's diseases.

DISCUSSION:

Our skin helps to protect our internal organs from outside world along with regulating our body's temperature. Skin is our body's protector. With the help of all above references we are able to understand how skin is important to be studied. The health of nutritional fluid, blood and tissue is get reflected on skin. So if skin is not healthy then it must be the internal or sometimes external cause. Healthy skin produces vitamin D when exposed to sun, and vitamin D is important for many body functions. Therefore the study of normal structure of skin is very necessary.

CONCLUSION:

Physical appearance is much more important in day to day life. Outer looks is the first impression. So the healthy skin is much important for everyone. With the help of all above reference we will be able to conclude that there are various types of diseases

which can be diagnosed with the help of skin . In skin diseases definitely skin is get affected but in internal diseases also skin is get affected . so with the help of various symptoms seen on skin we will able to find the exact type of disease. So skin is very important diagnostic tool in diagnosis of various types of diseases and skin diseases also .

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