

SKIN CARE: AN AYURVEDIC REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Skin is the largest organ of the integumentary system. Skin was appreciated primarily as passive barrier interface between the body and environment and provide the first line of defense against invading pathogens and mechanical injury. Skin is dynamic ecosystem that is inhabited by microbiota which are fundamental to skin physiology and immunity. Skin microbiota that live in complete harmony with the immune sentinels and contribute to the epithelial barrier reinforcement. any condition like low immunity, deficiency of vitamins and minerals, poor hygiene, & stress causes alteration in symbiotic relationship of microbiota which results different type of skin disorders. Skin diseases contributed app. 1.79% to the total global burden of disease. In Ayurvedic classics acharya has mentioned different herbs and procedure to maintain healthy skin. They also describe many drugs for preventive and curative purpose of skin diseases, like- varnya mahakshaya, jeevaniya mahakshaya, kusthghan mahakshaya etc and procedures like- udvartana, ubtan, taila abhyanga, lepa and panchakarma also plays important role to exfoliate and rejuvenate the skin. Daily regimens like snana, nasya etc protects from diseases and provides a joyful sense to life.

Keywords- *Nasya, udvartana, ubtan, taila abhyanga, lepa, snana, varnya mahaksahaya, jeevaniya mahaksahaya, kusthghan mahakashaya.*

INTRODUCTION

Tvak (Skin) is just like a reflection of the mirror and manifests different kinds of internal anomaly or disease. According to Ayurveda healthy skin is a result of overall health condition of individuals. Ayurveda describes seven different layers of the skin- Avabhasini, Lohita, Shweta, Tamra, Vedini, Rohini and Mamsadhara, each with its own structure and function.

The skin as a whole can perform its overall functions effectively when all layers are healthy and balanced. According to Ayurveda, a number of factors determine skin health and youthfulness, and these include proper moisture balance (*Kapha* in balance), effective functioning of the metabolic mechanisms that coordinate all the various chemical and hormonal reactions of the skin (*Pitta* in balance) and efficient circulation of blood and nutrients to the different layers of the skin (*Vata* in balance). Due to any external factors such as climate, diet and lifestyle habits or environmental pollution an

imbalance in *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* manifest various skin problems. Skin is the largest organ of the body made up of mainly three layers - Epidermis, Dermis and Subcutaneous layer. Skin was appreciated primarily as passive barrier interface between the body and environment and provide the first line of defense against invading pathogens and mechanical injury. Skin is dynamic ecosystem that is inhabited by microbiota which are fundamental to skin physiology and immunity. Skin microbiota that live in complete harmony with the immune sentinels and contribute to the epithelial barrier reinforcement. any condition like amount of exposure versus occlusion of body sites, the degree of detergent use, the application of lotions or cosmetic products, occupation, low immunity, deficiency of vitamins and minerals, poor hygiene & stress causes dramatic alteration in symbiotic relationship of microbiota which results different type of skin disorders. Thus, the micro-biome will be influenced by the structure and composition of the epidermis as well as individual behaviours that dictate the total nature of this environment. The skin's location at the interface with the outside world

therefore makes is most subject to environmental influences that will affect the microbiota. The skin barrier is most frequently thought of in terms of the outermost layer of the epidermis. The skin barrier consists of several layers below the epidermis that profoundly affect function and also harbour microbes. Aqueous and lipid layer exists above the epidermis, also contributing to the ecology of the surface. Combinedly all layers of the skin must prevent infection and the entry of harmful substances while controlling the loss of water and nutrients. At the forefront of this process to maintain homeostasis is the highly keratinized epidermis, the result of a specialized differentiation process of keratinocytes, the main cell type in the epidermal barrier.

Keratinocytes are the first active participant in the skin immune response. Eccrine sweat glands constitutively express several antimicrobial peptides. Thus, the density of eccrine sweat glands impacts microbial colonization of the skin. The breakdown of sebum generates free fatty acids, which work to control microbial colonization. Several herbs have been mentioned in Ayurveda which are being used to obtain healthy skin and glowing complexion since time immemorial.

Ayurvedic herbs have the purpose of purifying the blood and eliminating vitiated doshas from the body as they are primarily accountable for skin disorders and other illnesses.

In *Ayurveda*, several herbs have been discussed that can be used to achieve good skin and glowing tint.

Specific measurements are mentioned in ancient *Ayurvedic* texts to enhance distinct aspects of beauty and disease circumstances in relation to skin, they are outlined in brief.

Charaka Samhita-

Acharya Charaka in *Sutrsthana* described ten drugs as *Varnya* (complexion promoting)- viz. Chandana (*Santalum album*), *Punnaga* (*Calophyllum inophyllum*), *Padmaka* (*Prunus cerasoides*), *Useer* (*Vetiveria zizanioides*), *Madhuka* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), *Manjistha* (*Rubia cordifolia*), *Sariva* (*Hamidesmus indicus*), *Paysya* (*Ipomoea digitata*), *Sita* (white variety of *Cynodon dactylon*), *Lata* (Black variety of *C. dactylon*).

Ten drugs as curative of dermatosis (*kusthghana*) viz. *khadir* (*Acacia catechu*), *Haritiki* (*Terminellia chebula*), *Amla* (*Emblica officinalis*), *Haridra* (*Curcuma longa*), *Bhallatak* (*Semicarpus anacardium*), *Saptarni* (*Alstonia scholaris*), *Amaltas* (*Cassia bifistula*), *kanera* (*Nerium indicum*), *Vidanga* (*Emblia ribes*), *chameli* (*Jasminum officinale*). In context of skin disorders *Charakahas* described 18 type of *kustha* which included *vipadika* (rhagdes), *dadru* (ringworm), *pama* (scabies) etc in *Chikitsa* as well as *Nidan sthan*[1].

Sushruta Samhita-

Many of the skin care therapy procedures are documented in the *kustha roga chikitsa*- such as *Raktmokshana*, *Snehana*, *Vamana* and *Virechana* and also mentioned multiple drugs *Lepa* used in skin diseases which are as follows-

Dadru (Ring worm)- *Laksha* (*Rosa centifolia*), *Kutha* (*Saussurea lappa*), *Sarsap* (*Brassica campestris*), *Haldi* (*Curcuma longa*), *Sunthi* (*Zingiber officinale*), *Pippal* (*Ficus religiosa*)

Arumsika (Eczema of face and scalp)- *Haldi* (*Curcuma longa*), *Patola patra* (*Trichosanthes dioica* leaves), paste of *Mulethi* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), *Nilotpala* (*Nymphaea nouchali*), *Erand* (*Ricinus communis*) and *Bhringaraj* (*Eclipta alba*).

Vyanga (black spot), *Nilika* (Naevus) - *Bala* (*Sida cordifolia*), *Atibala* (*Abutilon indicum*), *Yastimadhu* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), *Haldi* (*Curcuma longa*), *Arkpuspi* (*Holostemma rheedie*), *Aguru* (*Aquilaria agallocha*), *Kaliyaka* (*Colchicium fenestratum*).

Yauvana Pidika (pimples/acne)- *Vacha* (*Acorus calamus*), *Lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa*), *Sendha* (Rock-salt) and *Sarso* (*Brassica campestris*) or paste of *Dhanyaka* (*Coriandrum sativum*), *Vacha*, *Lodhra* and *Kuth* (*Saussurea lappa*) *lepa*[2].

Astang Hridayam -

Three types of *Mukhlepa* (formulation applied on face) are described for removal of *dosha*, removal of toxins and complexion promoting (*varnyakara*). Mode of application of paste over face, duration and precaution were also elaborately mentioned. Furthermore, application of paste varies according to the season.

Hemant (Dewy season)-Paste of seed of *Ber* (*Ziziphus jujuba*), *Vasaka* root (*Adhatoda vasica*), *Savara Lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa* or *paniculata*), *Sarson* (*Brassica campestris*) were applied.

Shisir (Winter)-*Kateri* root (*Solanum surattense*), *Blacktil* (*Sesamum indicum*), Bark of *Daruhaldi* (*Berberis aristata*), *Barly* (*Hordeum vulgare*) without husk.

Basant (Spring)-Paste of root of *Dabh* (*Imperata cylindrica*), *Chandan* (*Santalum album*), *Khas* (*Vetiveria zizanioidis*), *Shiris* (*Albizia lebeck*), *Saunf* (*Foeniculum vulgare*), *Chawal* (*Oriza sativa*).

Grisma (Summer)- *Kumud* (*Nymphaea nouchali*), *Utpal* (*Nymphaea stellata*), *Khas* (*Vetiveria zizanioidis*), *Durva* (*Cynodon dactylon*), *Yastimadhu* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), *Chandan* (*Santalum album*).

Varsa (Rainy season)- *Kaliyaka* (*Coscinium fenestratum*), *Til* (*Sesamum indicum*), *khas* (*Vetiveria zizanioidis*), *Jatamansi* (*Nordostachys Jatamansi*), *Tagar* (*Valeriana wallichii*), *Padmak* (*Nelumbo nucifera*).

Sarad (Autumn)- *Talis* (*Abies webbiana*), *Etkat* (*Sesbania cannabina*), *Pundarik* (*Nelumbo nucifera*), *Mulethi* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), *Khas* (*Vetiveria zizanioidis*), *Tagar* (*Vetiveria wallichii*) and *Agru* (*Aquilaria agallocha*). *Vagbhata* mentioned the benefits of *mukkhalepa* which signifies that the persons who are habitual to application of paste of drug over face, the vision become keen, the face never dull and glows like lotus flower[3].

Yogaratnakar -

Complexion promoting- *Masur* (*Lense culinaris*) triturated with milk and applied with ghee for enhancing complexion. *Kumkumadi tailam* also prescribed for the promoting complexion [4].

Saragadhar Samhita -

There are three kinds of *lepa* viz. *Dosaghna* (pacify the polluted humor), *Visaghna* (pacify the poisonous substance) and *Varnya* (cosmetic application for complexion).

Complexion promoting-*Rakta chandana* (*Pterocarpus santalinus*), *Manjistha* (*Rubia cordifolia*), *Lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa*), *Kustha*

(*Saussurea lappa*), *Priyangu* (*Callicarpa macrophylla*) and *Masura* (*Lense culinaris*) have complexion promoting properties.

In *Ayurvedic* classics *Acharya* has mentioned different procedures to maintain healthy skin like- *Udvaratana*, *Ubtan*, *Taila abhyanga*, *Lepa* and *Panchakarma* which plays important role to exfoliate and rejuvenate the skin. Daily regimens like *Snana*, *Nasya* etc protects from diseases and provides a joyful sense to life[5].

CONCLUSION

In present era skin diseases are globally big burden. The world has been looking for healthy- and good-looking skin since the inception of humankind. It is natural desire of mankind to have a healthy and glamour's skin. The present review deals with the medicinal plants of Ayurveda which are very well accounted for treating most of the skin related disorders. For the present review, it could be concluded that the ayurvedic herbs are potentially active medicinal plants make skin healthy, prevent from skin diseases and improving complexion. Ayurvedic different procedure medicinal plants preparation like *lepa* are helpful preventive and curative purpose of many skin problems.

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