

A REVIEW OF PSORIASIS W.S.R. TO EKKUSHTHA

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ABSTRACT :

Skin is a vital as well as a complex organ of the body which usually is underappreciated in case of physical and mental health, unless a problem or an ailment originates in it. The word "Psoriasis" is derived from Greek word (Psora – Itchy & Iasis – condition). Psoriasis is a non-infectious chronic inflammatory skin disease with unknown etiology and relapsing in nature. It is characterized by well defined dry erythematous patches and covered with adherent silvery white scales. It commonly affects extensor surfaces of elbows, knees, scalp, nails & sacral region. According to Ayurveda, the Samprapti of psoriasis can be described as vitiated Vata and Kapha Dosha in association with Ama dosha, which adversely affect Jala Mahabhoot of the affected skin region. Vitiating Dosha dry the water content of skin and promote abnormal rapid proliferation of skin tissues, resulting in its appearance as whitish and scaly & thin skin tissues. Vitiating Kapha Dosha and accumulated Mala cause itching in the skin and the Pitta/rakta vitiated by Vata-Kapha and Mala alters the normal healing process. Although Ek-kustha is considered as a disease of Bahya Rogmarga, but its initiation is from Koshtha, hence diet also plays a prominent role in early pathogenesis of EkKushtha. In Charaka Samhita, the Ek-Kustha symptoms are quite similar to psoriasis.

KEYWORDS: Psoriasis, Ek-Kushta, Ayurveda, Ama.

INTRODUCTION

Skin is the vital sense organ of the human body. It is a vital as well as a complex organ of the body which usually is underappreciated in case of physical and mental health, unless a problem or an ailment originates in it. It is the most important barrier of our outer body against many microorganisms. It also helps in body temperature regulation, maintenance of immunity, excretion of wastes in the form of sweat and sebum and also helps in the vitamin D synthesis in the presence of sunlight. Psoriasis is a common skin condition that speeds up the life cycle of skin cells. It causes cells to build up rapidly on the surface of the skin. The extra skin cells form scales and red patches that are itchy and sometimes painful. Psoriasis is a chronic skin disease that often comes and goes. It has an equal incidence in males and females. The disease has a polygenic trait with more than one gene involved. When one parent has psoriasis, 8% of offspring develop psoriasis, and

when both parents have psoriasis, 41% develop psoriasis.¹

Psoriasis is a non-infectious chronic inflammatory skin disease with unknown aetiology and relapsing in nature. It is characterized by well-defined dry erythematous patches and covered with adherent silvery white scales. It mostly & commonly affects extensor surfaces of elbows, knees, scalp, nails & sacral region. It affects 1-2 % of World population. In Ayurveda texts, a compromised digestive system leads to an increased Vata Kapha and also increase of Pitta Dosha in Ras and Rakta Dhatu, which leads to manifestation of Ek-Kustha. In Charaka Samhita the Ek-Kustha symptoms are very similar to psoriasis.

"Aswedanam Mahavastu yanmatsyashaklopamam Tadedkushtham"(ch.chi.-7/21)

- *Aswedanam* means- absence of sweating,
- *Mahavastu* means- extensive localization and

- *Yanmatsya Shakalopamum* means – resembles the scales of fish.

As per ancient Ayurveda text, the Samprapti of psoriasis can be described as vitiated *Vata and Kapha Doshas* which adversely affect the *Jala Mahabhoot* of the affected skin region, resulting in its appearance as whitish colour and scaly & thin skin tissues. These vitiated *Doshas* dries the water content of skin and promote abnormal rapid proliferation of skin tissues. Vitiated *Kapha Dosh*a and accumulated *Malas* cause itching in the skin and the blood vitiated by *Vata Kapha and Malas* alters the normal healing process and hence these vitiated *Doshas* permeate further and become deeply rooted in tissues. *Ek-Kustha* is one of the *Kshudra Kustha Roga* which is caused by both dietary imbalance and *Ama Dusti* which leads to *Raktadusthi*.²

MATERIAL AND METHODS –

- Material related to this topic have been collected from various Ayurveda classical texts as *Charaka samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Ashtanghrudiyam* available commentaries on those texts.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES –

- To review the concept of Psoriasis w.s.r. to *Ekkushtha* according to modern aspects as well as Ayurveda texts.

DISEASE REVIEW :

Psoriasis is an inflammatory skin disorder. Although it is non-contagious, the disease is quite complex. Erythematous plaques with silvery scales appear on skin layers, which basically characterise the disease. This excessive increase of cell division in the basal layer of the skin, results in increased proliferation on skin layers.

Pathogenesis :

Pathogenesis of psoriasis is extremely complex and fascinating . There is involvement of auto inflammation, that is to say, a state of sterile inflammation, not mediated by circulating autoantibodies and autoreactive T cells [3, 4]. The clinical development of early lesions in psoriasis would be linked to auto inflammation, represented by burst of neutrophils and cytokines related to the

interleukin-1 (IL-1) family, such as IL-1 α , IL-1 β , and IL-36, capable to initiate the disease . Environmental factors (e.g., drugs, stress, smoking, trauma, microorganisms) trigger the mechanism . Keratinocytes are also activated, thus becoming in turn immune system cells, and release a number of chemokines further recruiting neutrophils and amplifying the inflammatory network. Indeed, from a histopathological point of view, during the early stages of the disease as well as in its recurrent pustular flares, an infiltrate of cells of the innate immunity predominates in skin lesions, while cells from adaptive immunity like T lymphocytes are rare.

Symptoms :

The symptoms of psoriasis may vary from person to person. Some of the common symptoms of psoriasis are the following:

- Raised, red patches of skin topped with loose, silvery scales, usually on the knees or elbows
- Thick, red patches known as plaques, and dry, silvery scales appearing on the scalp, face, elbows, knees, palms, and soles of the feet.
- Dry, cracked skin that may bleed
- Joint swelling, tenderness, and pain
- Thickened, pitted or ridged nails

Causes of Psoriasis According To Ayurveda:

Acharya *Charak* has described the involvement of *vata and kapha* in *ekkushta* or psoriasis. Accumulation of toxins or *ama* could also lead to this condition.

- *Viruddha Aahar* (Opposite diet or contradictory foods) and *Mithya Ahara* (Improper Diet)
- Excessive intake of yogurt, seafoods, salty foods, black gram and sour foods, spicy foods, fermented foods, maida (fine flour), and bakery products, junk foods and fast foods, refrigerated and cold foods may contribute to psoriasis.
- *Mithya Vihara* (Improper Lifestyle)

- An irregular lifestyle disrupts the digestive process and creates imbalance in the *doshas*.
- *Adrista Hetu* (Unknown Cause)
- Excessive Physical and Mental stress
- Leading a stressful life or too much consumption of alcohol and tobacco can also trigger psoriasis.

Ayurvedic Treatment for Psoriasis :

Ayurvedic treatment of psoriasis includes counseling, lifestyle management, diet management and *Samsodhan* and *Samsanam* treatment. In the case of scalp psoriasis, *sirodhar* with proper oils is also a very effective treatment. Treatment may also include stress management, oral Ayurvedic medicines, immunomodulators for immunity, topical treatments, regular follow up appointments and yoga & meditation to relieve mental stress. The blend of natural herbs and elements, which are extremely beneficial for the health and skin. The *Panchkarma therapy in Ayurveda* is strong enough to cure psoriasis effectively. The therapy includes detoxification of the whole body system and removal of all harmful toxins from body fluids. Thus the main aim is to purify the blood system and restore the digestive system in order to prevent the disease.

Ayurvedic management (*Virechana* as *Shodhana therapy* and *Sanshamana Aushadha*) seems very effective in case of *Ekkushtha* or Psoriasis.

The Chikitsa mode of action of the treatment is described below:-

- 1- *Deepana*- Enhances appetite and pacifies vitiated *Vata Dosha*.
- 2- *Snehapana* ,*abhyanga*, *swedana* Expels vitiated *Dosha* from *Shakha* to *Kostha* and also pacifies the *Vata Dosha*.
- 3- *Virechana* To expel increased *Pitta* & *Kapha Dosha* out of the body.
- 4- *Sansarjana Krama* -Improve digestion and increases appetite
- 5- *Sanshamana Aushadh* -To subside remaining *Doshas* after *Shodhan*.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of above discussion *ayurveda* has described detailed list of causative factors of *ekkushta* . So study of this causative factor will help scientific society to control this disease. As we are very well aware and known that in modern scientific world, cause of Psoriasis. Modern science also reveals that lifestyle factors (sedentary life) and genetic factors are primarily causes of Psoriasis . Under the present circumstances *ayurveda* approach for etiopathogenesis and treatment would be of great use. It also answers all those doubts raised about the contradictions and confusions about the disease. Therefore, early diagnosis and timely intervention with proper management is highly essential to prevent this disease. *Ayurveda* says *chikitsa* (Treatment) is *Nidaan Parivarjna* (removal of cause).

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