

CASE STUDY

Role of Ayurveda in The Management of Psoriasis (*Kitibha*) -Case Report

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ABSTRACT

This case highlights the effective management of chronic plaque psoriasis in a 16-year-old female using Ayurvedic principles. The patient presented with severe itching, redness, scaling, and systemic inflammation, confirmed by a moderate-to-severe PASI score. Treatment involved Virechana Karma (therapeutic purgation), Samsarjana Karma (post-detox dietary regimen), oral medication, and Nidana Parivarjana (elimination of causative factors). Significant clinical improvements were observed, including reduced symptoms and a lower PASI score, reflecting enhanced overall health. This case supports the potential of Ayurvedic therapies, aligned with *Kitibha* (a comparable Ayurvedic condition), as a holistic and effective approach to psoriasis management.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Case Report, *Kitibha-Kustha*, PASI, Psoriasis, Virechan, Samsarjana Karma.

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INTRODUCTION

Psoriasis is a chronic autoimmune dermatological condition characterized by well-defined, erythematous, dry, silvery-white or micaceous scaly papules and plaques, commonly appearing on the trunk, limbs, and scalp.[1] It results from an accelerated skin cell turnover cycle—3 to 5 days instead of the normal 28 days—driven by immune-mediated hyperproliferation of keratinocytes due to lymphocytic activity.[2] The exact cause remains unknown. Psoriasis affects approximately 2% of the global population and 1.5% of Indians, with equal prevalence in both sexes and typical onset between 15 and 30 years of age [3]. In Ayurveda, it is correlated with *Kitibha* under *Kshudra Kushtha*, a type of skin disease described in classical texts. Ayurveda identifies *Apathya Ahara-Vihara* (unwholesome dietary and lifestyle habits), *Viruddha Ahara* (incompatible food combinations), and *Manasika Nidana* (psychological stress) as key causative factors that vitiate *Doshas* and *Dhatus*, leading to *Kitibha*. [4] The condition is understood as a *Vata-Kapha* predominant *Tridoshaja Vyadhi*, [5] with symptoms like *Kandu* (itching), *Kina* (scaling), *Khara Sparsha* (rough texture), and *Shyava Aruna Mandala* (erythematous plaques), *Rukshata* or *Parusha* (coarseness), *Daha* (burning sensation), *Vruttan Vruddhimanti* (elevated round patches), *Ghana* (Thick), *Sravi* (oozing), also exhibiting relapsing and remitting patterns similar to modern psoriasis [6,7]. Conventional treatments, including topical corticosteroids, systemic immunosuppressants like methotrexate, and phototherapy, can offer symptomatic relief but often lead to adverse effects such as hepatotoxicity, pancytopenia, and increased malignancy risk [8]. This study explores Ayurvedic management through *Virechana Karma* (therapeutic purgation), a *Shodhana* therapy aimed at detoxifying the body by cleansing the *Srotas* (channels), thereby reducing inflammation and aiding in long-term management of *Kitibha Kustha* [9].

CASE REPORT

A 16-year-old female presented to the Kaumarabhritya OPD at the Institute for Ayurved Studies & Research, Kurukshetra, with complaints of generalized red, scaly, itchy patches and dryness for the past

three years. Despite multiple consultations with modern medicine practitioners, she found no satisfactory relief. Clinically, she had well-defined, elevated plaques with sharp margins (3–10 mm), primarily on the scalp, trunk, abdomen, upper limbs, thighs, and knees, with initial lesions starting at the scapular region. Auspitz Sign and Candle Grease Sign were positive. The presentation correlated with *Kitibha Kustha*, a *Vata-Kapha* predominant *Kshudra Kustha* in Ayurveda. Routine blood and biochemical tests were within normal limits. The diagnosis was confirmed through classical signs and PASI scoring, which helped assess lesion severity and monitor progress.

Therapeutic Intervention:

Table 1: Detailed Schedule of Initial Therapeutic Procedures (Purva Karma)

Stage	Day	Medicine	Treatment schedule			
			Dose	Mode of administration	Duration of Treatment	
Purva Karma (Initial Procedure)	1-5 Days	<i>Chitrakadi Vati</i>	250mg.		After meal with Luke warm water	5 Days
	6-10 Days	<i>Pancha Tikta Ghrit-Pana</i>	6 th day	15ml	Morning empty stomach with warm water	7 Days
			7 th day	45ml		
			8 th day	80ml		
			9 th day	110ml		
10 th day			130ml			
11 th day			160ml			
12 th day	220ml					
13-15 Days	<i>Abhyanga</i>	<i>Tila Tail</i>		External application followed by <i>Nadi Swedana</i>	3 days	

Table 2: Pradhan Karma (Main Procedure) Treatment Protocol

Stage	Day	Medicine	Treatment schedule		
			Dose	Mode of administration	Duration of Treatment
Pardhan Karma (Main Procedure)	1 day	<i>Trivrit Avaleha</i>	30gm	In the morning with warm water	1 Day

Symptoms of Samyaka Virechana, which include the cessation of purgation on its own, the passage of stool containing mucus in the final one or two motions, and a sensation of lightness in the body, 12 *Vegas* were counted. Table no. 3 and 4.

OUTCOMES:

The Ayurvedic treatment showed highly significant results. By the end of the three-month treatment period, there was a noticeable reduction in itching, dryness, roughness, circular erythema, and exfoliation compared to the baseline. (Table no. 5) The patient was able to resume daily activities without any discomfort, and all signs and symptoms disappeared from the hands and other parts of the body. However, discoloration in the body persists. During the one-month follow-up period, there was no recurrence of signs or symptoms. Additionally, no side effects or complications were observed either during the treatment or the follow-up phase.

Table 3: Sansarjana Karma (Post-procedure Dietary Regimen)

	Day	<i>Annakala</i>	Diet
	Sansrajana Karma (post procedure)	1	Morning
Evening			<i>Peya</i>
2	Morning	<i>Peya</i>	
	Evening	<i>Vilepi</i>	
3	Morning	<i>Vilepi</i>	
	Evening	<i>Akrit Yusha</i>	
4	Morning	<i>Akrit Yusha</i>	
	Evening	<i>Krit Yusha</i>	
5	Morning	<i>Krit Yusha</i>	
	Evening	<i>Samanya Bhojana</i>	

Table 4: Shamana Aushadhi Prescribed for 21 Days

Shamana Aushadhi for 21 Days	Medication	Dose	Administration
	<i>Panch Tiktaghrit Gugglu</i>	250mg	After a meal twice a day with lukewarm water
	<i>Gandhak Vati</i>	250mg	After a meal twice a day with water
	<i>Bhritmanjistha Kwath</i>	20ml	Before a meal, twice a day with water
	<i>Rasamanikya</i>	20mg	After a meal twice a day with honey

Table 5: Assessment of Clinical Parameters Before and After Treatment (PASI Score Evaluation)

Parameter	Before	After
Head - Area	0%	0%
Head - Erythema (Redness)	0	0
Head - Induration (Thickness)	0	0
Head - Desquamation (Scaling)	0	0
Arms - Area	70–89%	10–29%
Arms - Erythema	2	0
Arms - Induration	2	0
Arms - Desquamation	2	0
Trunk - Area	50–69%	10–29%
Trunk - Erythema	3	0
Trunk - Induration	3	0
Trunk - Desquamation	1	0
Legs - Area	70–89%	<10%
Legs - Erythema	3	0
Legs - Induration	3	0
Legs - Desquamation	2	0
PASI Score	37.5	0.0

DISCUSSION

In Ayurveda, Psoriasis is classified under *Kustha*, specifically *Kitibha Kustha*, affecting *Sapta Dhatus*, notably *Twak*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, and *Lasika*. According to *Acharya Hemadri*, prior procedures like *Deepana-Pachana* (digestion of *Ama* and mobilization of *Doshas*), *Snehana* (oleation), and *Swedana* (sudation) prepare the body by moving *Doshas* from peripheral tissues to the gastrointestinal tract for elimination. By loosening, liquefying, and removing compact *Doshas*, *Virechana Dravyas*—which have qualities like *Ushna* (hot), *Tikshna* (sharp), *Sukshma* (subtle), *Vyavayi* (pervasive), and *Vikasi* (expansive)—act systemically and address the pathophysiology at the cellular level. By reducing *Kleda* and *Meda* and acting as an anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and immunological modulator, *Panchtikta ghrit guggul* with *Tikta Rasa*, *Laghu*, and *Ruksha Guna* promotes the healing of psoriasis [10,11]. *Rasamanikya* and *Gandhak Rasayana* have demonstrated effectiveness in cleansing the blood (*Rakta Shodhak*), and their antimicrobial and *Kushthaghna* (anti-skin illness) qualities make them very useful in treating the infectious and inflammatory symptoms of *Kushtha Rog* (skin ailments).

Mahamanjisthadi Kwath, as described by *Acharya Sharangdhar*, was integral in treating *Kustha* disorders. This formulation, renowned for its ability to purify the blood, balance *Doshas*, and alleviate the symptoms of skin diseases, played a significant role in reducing the inflammation, scaling, and other symptoms associated with psoriasis. The significant reduction in symptoms and normalization of the PASI score highlight the efficacy of Ayurvedic treatment in managing chronic psoriasis [12].



Figure 1: Before Treatment

Figure 2: After Treatment

CONCLUSION

This case highlights the effectiveness of Ayurvedic treatments in managing chronic psoriasis, with significant clinical improvements and no recurrence during follow-up. The holistic approach, including detoxification and dosha balancing, proved to be a safe and effective alternative for long-term management of psoriasis, supporting Ayurveda's role in treating *Kitibha* (psoriasis).

Informed Consent

The patient's parents gave their informed written agreement for this case to be documented and published.

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