



## Case Study

### MANAGEMENT OF *VICHARCHIKA* (LICHEN SIMPLEX CHRONICUS) BY *SHAMANA CHIKITSA*: A CASE STUDY

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#### ABSTRACT

In Ayurveda, most of the skin diseases are included under *Kushtha*. It can be classified into two groups which are *Mahakushtha* and *Kshudrakushtha*. *Vicharchika* is one among the *Kshudrakushtha*. According to classical texts, it can be characterised by *Kandu* (itching sensation), *Shyava* (blackish brown discolouration), *Pidaka* (eruptions), *Bahusrava* (excessive exudation), *Raji* (marked lining/lichenification), *Atiruja* (excessive pain) and *Rukshata* (dryness). *Vicharchika* can be correlated with Lichen Simplex Chronicus (LSC) based on its clinical presentation. LSC is a highly pruritic, circumscribed plaque or plaques of lichenified skin due to chronic scratching or rubbing. *Vicharchika* can be treated with *Nidan parivarjana* (Avoidance of etiological factors), *Shodhana chikitsa* (Purification therapy) and *Shamana chikitsa* (Palliative therapy). The present case study deals with a 45 years old male patient having complaints of severe itching in the palm of both hands associated with marked lining, dryness and thickened skin at the affected site for 5-6 months. This case is diagnosed as *Vicharchika* (Lichen Simplex Chronicus). For treatment *Shamana chikitsa* was administered for 1 month which showed good result.

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, *Kushtha*, *Vicharchika*, Lichen Simplex Chronicus, *Shamana chikitsa*.

#### INTRODUCTION

The skin is the largest organ of the body, with a total area of about 20 square feet.<sup>[1]</sup> It guards the underlying muscles, bones, ligaments and internal organs. It interfaces with the environment, so it plays an important immunity role in protecting the body against pathogens and excessive water loss. Its other functions are insulation, temperature regulation, sensation, synthesis of vitamin D, and the protection of vitamin B folates.<sup>[2]</sup> Skin diseases are increasing day by day in our society due to environmental pollution and adoption of ill lifestyle. Skin diseases not only affect the patient physically but it also affect mentally. In Ayurveda, most of the skin diseases are discussed under *Kushtha*. According to Acharya Sushruta, *Kushtha* occurs in *Tamra* and *Vedini* layers of *Tvak*. It is a *Raktavaha srotadushti janya vikara*. It occurs due to vitiation of *Vayu*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*, *Tvak* (skin or *Rasa dhatu*), *Rakta* (blood), *Mamsa* (muscle tissue) and *Ambu* (lymph). These taken together constitute the seven fold pathogenic substance (*Saptakodravya samgraha*) of *Kushtha*.<sup>[3]</sup>

*Kushtha* are eighteen in numbers. Among them seven are *Mahakushtha* and eleven are *Kshudra kushtha*. *Vicharchika* is one among the *Kshudrakushtha*. There is predominance of *Kapha* (as per Acharya Caraka)<sup>[4]</sup> or *Pitta* (as per Acharya

Sushruta)<sup>[5]</sup> or *Vata-pitta* (as per Acharya Madhavakara).<sup>[6]</sup> According to Acharya Caraka, it is characterised by *Kandu* (itching sensation), *Shyava* (blackish brown discolouration), *Pidaka* (eruptions), *Bahusrava* (excessive exudation).<sup>[7]</sup> On the other hand according to Acharya Sushruta, it is characterised by *Raji* (marked lining/lichenification), *Atikandu* (excessive itching), *Atiruja* (excessive pain) and *Rukshata* (dryness).<sup>[8]</sup>

*Vicharchika* can be correlated with Lichen Simplex Chronicus (LSC) based on its clinical presentation. LSC also known as neurodermatitis. It is a highly pruritic, circumscribed plaque or plaques of lichenified skin due to chronic scratching or rubbing.<sup>[9]</sup> The initiation and perpetuation of the lesions is due to the development of an 'itch-scratch' cycle. Emotional factors have an exacerbating effect.<sup>[10]</sup> It has been estimated to occur in approximately 12% of the population. The highest prevalence is typically from middle to late adulthood and often peaks at 30 to 50 years of age, likely due to the significant increase in stress at this point in one's life. The disorder is more prevalent in females than in males at a ratio of 2:1.<sup>[11]</sup> The areas most commonly involved are those that are conveniently reached. These sites are nape of the neck, ankles, legs,

forearms, wrists, and genitalia (scrotum or mons pubis). The treatment consists of use of potent topical steroids alone or in combination with keratolytic agents under occlusion except in cases with genital involvement. Anxiolytics and sedating antihistamines are helpful. PUVA, UVB therapy and sometimes immunosuppressants may help some patients.<sup>[10]</sup>

*Vicharchika* can be treated with *Nidan parivarjana* (Avoidance of etiological factors), *Shodhana chikitsa* (Purification therapy) and *Shamana chikitsa* (Palliative therapy). According to Acharya Sushruta, *Chardana* (Emesis therapy) should be administered once in every fortnight; *Sramsana* (Purgation) once in every month; *Raktavisravana* (Bloodletting) should be done mildly twice in a year and *Nasya* (Nasal medication) once in every three days.<sup>[12]</sup> The patients suffering from *Kushtha* dominated by *Vayu* should first be administered ghee internally. The patient suffering from *Kushtha* dominated by *Kapha* should first administered emetic therapy. The patient suffering from *Kushtha* dominated by *Pitta* should first administered bloodletting and purgation therapies.<sup>[13]</sup> For present study *Shamana chikitsa* has selected for the management of *Vicharchika*.

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To evaluate the effect of *Shamana chikitsa* in the management of *Vicharchika* (Lichen Simplex Chronicus).

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Place of study:** OPD of Dept. of Kayachikitsa, Institute of Post Graduate Ayurvedic Education and Research at S.V.S.P., Kolkata, West Bengal, India.

**Type of study:** Simple random single case study.

#### CASE REPORT

##### Basic information

Patient's name- XYZ

OPD Registration no.- AYUR/RG2000003273

Date of first visit - 30.01.2020

Age- 45 years

Sex- Male

Religion- Islam

Occupation- Rickshaw driver

Marital status- Married

**Chief complaints with duration-** Severe itching in the palm of both hands associated with marked lining, dryness and thickened skin at the affected site for 5-6 months.

**History of present illness:** At first patient developed itching along with dryness in both palms. Itching was gradually increased. There was formation of lichenified lesions due to continuous scratching.

**History of past illness:** No history of diabetes mellitus, hypertension or any other disease present.

##### Personal history

Sleep- Normal

Appetite- Normal

Bowel- Regular, clear

Bladder- Normal

Addiction- Nil

Diet- Mixed (veg. and non veg. both)

**Family history:** His father has suffered from diabetes mellitus.

##### General examination

Pallor- Absent

Jaundice- Absent

Cyanosis- Absent

Clubbing- Absent

Oedema- Absent

Pulse rate- 86 beats/min

Blood pressure- 130/90 mm of Hg

Respiratory rate- 22 times/min

Temperature- Afebrile, 98.6° F

##### Systemic examination

Cardiovascular system- S<sub>1</sub>, S<sub>2</sub> audible, no added sound present.

Respiratory system- Normal vesicular breath sound, no any added sound.

P/A- Soft, non tender, no signs of organomegaly present.

**Local examination:** Lichenified lesions along with marked lining and dryness in the palm of both hands. There was blackish brown discoloration and presence of reddish spots at the affected site.

**Investigations:** CBC, FBS, PPBS and LFT were within normal limits.

**Diagnosis:** *Vicharchika* (Lichen Simplex Chronicus).

##### Treatment plan

Duration of treatment- 1 month

Follow up- Every 2 weeks

**Table 1: List of prescribed medicines**

S.no.	Medicine	Dosage	Anupana	Route of administration	Duration
1.	<i>Mahamanjsthadi kwath</i>	20ml BDAC	With equal amount of water	Oral	1 month
2.	<i>Arogyavardhinivati</i>	250mg BDPC	Luke warm water	Oral	1 month
3.	<i>Panchatikta ghritha guggulu</i>	500mg BDPC	Luke warm water	Oral	1 month
4.	<i>Gandhaka rasayana</i>	250mg BDPC	Luke warm water	Oral	1 month

5.	Tankan powder + Mahamarichadi taila	q.s. twice daily		Local application	1 month
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### Assessment criteria

**Table 2: Showing Arbitrary scoring pattern**

S.no.	Signs & symptoms	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe
1.	Kandu (itching sensation)	0	1	2	3
2.	Shyava (blackish brown discolouration)	0	1	2	3
3.	Raji (marked lining/lichenification)	0	1	2	3
4.	Rukshata (dryness)	0	1	2	3

**Results:** Effects of above mentioned treatment are shown in (Table 3) and (Fig.-1, 2 and 3).

**Table 3: Showing Arbitrary score before and after treatment**

S.no.	Signs & symptoms	Before treatment	After 2 weeks of treatment	After 4 weeks of treatment
1.	Kandu (itching sensation)	3	2	0
2.	Shyava (blackish brown discolouration)	2	1	0
3.	Raji (marked lining/lichenification)	3	2	1
4.	Rukshata (dryness)	3	2	1

### Photographs



**Fig-1: Before treatment**



**Fig-2: After 2 weeks of treatment**



**Fig-3: After 4 weeks of treatment**

### DISCUSSION

In the present study *Shamana chikitsa* was administered for the management of *Vicharchika*. *Shamana chikitsa* is an Ayurvedic form of palliative care. It helps to reduce or eliminate the symptoms of a disease by treating its root. It causes pacification of aggravated *Doshas* without expelling them from the body. Here different Ayurvedic medicines are used for the management of *Vicharchika* which are discussed below.

**Mahamanjisthadi kwath:** It is indicated in all types of *Kushtha*. It helps in the pacification of aggravated *Kapha* and *Pitta*. It acts as *Rakta shodhaka* (blood purifier). It has antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial activities.

**Arogya vardhinivati:** It is also indicated in all types of *Kushtha*. It is digestive stimulant, appetiser, anti-inflammatory, anti-pruritic and liver tonic. It has *Bhedana* and *Mala Shuddhikara* activity.

**Panchatikta ghrita guggulu:** It is used for the treatment of *Kushtha*. It helps in the pacification of

*Tridosha*. It has anti-pruritic, anti-inflammatory, analgesic, anti-ulcerogenic and carminative properties.

**Gandhaka rasayana:** It is also used for the treatment of *Kushtha*. It is *Tridosha shamaka*. It acts as anti-microbial, anti-pruritic and anti-inflammatory agent. It is a very good blood purifier.

**Tankan powder:** It helps in the pacification of aggravated *Kapha* and *Vata*. It has anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial activities.

**Mahamarichadi taila:** It is *Vata-kapha shamaka*. It has *Rakta shodhaka* and *Kandunasak* properties. It also reduces dryness and scaling. So, it is very useful in skin diseases.

**Pathya-apathya (Do's and Don'ts):** One should follow proper *Pathya-apathya* during treatment. This makes the treatment very effective. For present study, patient was advised to follow different *Pathya-Apathya* which are as follows. (Table 4)



**Table 4: List of Pathya-apathya.<sup>[14]</sup>**

<b>Pathya Ahara</b>	<b>Pathya Vihara</b>
<i>Laghu ahara</i> (light food), <i>Tikta shaka</i> (leafy vegetables having bitter taste), <i>Nimbapatra</i> , <i>Patolashaka</i> , <i>Puranadhanya</i> (old cereals), <i>Yava</i> (barley), <i>Godhuma</i> (wheat), <i>Shali</i> rice, <i>Mudga</i> (green gram), <i>Adhaki</i> (pigeon pea), <i>Masura</i> (red lentil), <i>Puranaghrita</i> , <i>Madhu</i> (honey), <i>Lasuna</i> (garlic), <i>Tila taila</i> (sesame oil), <i>Sarsapa taila</i> (mustard oil), <i>Jangalamamsa</i> (meat of animal inhabiting arid land) etc.	<i>Laghu vyayama</i> (light exercise), <i>Siddharthakasnana</i> , <i>Abhyanga</i> (massage), <i>Lepa</i> etc.
<b>Apathya Ahara</b>	<b>Apathya Vihara</b>
<i>Guru ahara</i> (heavy food), <i>Viruddha ahara</i> (incompatible food), <i>Vidahi ahara</i> (food that causes burning sensation), <i>Vishtambhi ahara</i> (food that causes constipation), excessive intake of <i>Amla</i> (sour) and <i>Lavana</i> (salty) food, <i>Nava anna</i> (new grain), <i>Dugdha</i> (milk), <i>Dadhi</i> (curd), <i>Urad</i> (black gram), <i>Tila</i> (sesame), <i>Mulaka</i> (radish), <i>Madya</i> (alcohol), <i>Matsya</i> (fish), <i>Guda</i> (jaggery), <i>Anupamamsa</i> (meat of marshy animal) etc.	<i>Diva swapna</i> (day sleep), <i>Malamutradi vega dharana</i> , stress, <i>Ativyayama</i> (excessive exercise) etc.

**CONCLUSION**

*Vicharchika* is one of the common skin diseases. It can be cured by proper treatment. In this case study, patient got relief by administration of above said *Shamana ausadhis*. There were no side effects noticed during treatment. Hence, we can conclude that *Shamana chikitsa* is very effective in the management of *Vicharchika* (Lichen Simplex Chronicus).

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