



Case Report

Title of Article: Blood-Letting: Competent and Imperative Approach for Alleviation of Scalp Psoriasis

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ABSTRACT

Scalp Psoriasis is a condition that can extend to a person's forehead, neck, and ears. Hair loss can occur if a person scratches or irritates the affected patches of skin. Scratching can also result in bleeding and infection.

In this case, a 22-year-old Male patient had been experiencing symptoms of itching over the scalp, dandruff, patches, and scaling on rubbing. Blood-letting which is a purificatory method also known as *panchakarma* was used to treat the patient over the course of 18 days, which included 5 sessions. The major goal of this study is to eliminate patches. The procedure used in this study was Leech Therapy, which is very beneficial in skin disorders. It works by removing the impure blood, also needling was performed which clears obstruction from capillaries and improves blood flow to the affected area. The results were astonishing just after the 1st session, and there is an overall improvement in the symptoms of the patient. Up till now, no effective cure for psoriasis has been found, hence there is a need to develop new treatment modalities for psoriasis, like Blood-letting therapy. Keeping these fundamentals in mind the current study was conducted which could be helpful to treat Scalp Psoriasis.

Keywords: Scalp Psoriasis, *Raktamokshana*, Blood-letting, *Ek-Kushtha*, *Viddha Karma*.

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda Classics, all types of skin disorders are described under one umbrella term, '*Kushtha*'. *Ek-Kushtha* has been mentioned under the heading *Kshudra Kushtha*. Acharya has described that all *Kushtha*'s have

Tridosha involvement (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*), but, the type of *Kushtha* depends on the predominance of particular *doshas*^[1] In Ayurveda, Scalp Psoriasis is co-related to *Kitibha Kushtha* / *Ek-Kushtha*. The main clinical features of *Ek Kushtha* are *asweda* (absence of sweating),

mahavastu (lesions extended to a huge area), *shaklopama* (skin scales resembling the scales of fish.)^[2]

Psoriasis is an autoimmune disease in which the life cycle of skin cells is sped up. This causes cells to build up on the surface of the skin. These cells form silvery-coloured scales and red or purple patches that may be itchy or painful. The scales may cover large areas of your body or be just small spots. Based on current evidence derived from hospital-based studies, mostly from North India, the prevalence of Psoriasis in adults varies from 0.44-2.8% with a much lower prevalence in children and slightly predominantly in males^[3] The Literature shows that there is a significant risk of Psoriatic arthritis (7-48%) in patients with plaque-type psoriasis. Hence, it is recommended to evaluate for its presence by detailed history taking and clinical examination, and if necessary, by approximate radiological investigation. In Allopathic treatment there is the use of steroids like methotrexate and corticosteroids, which have serious side effects and also weaken the immune system, thus, Ayurvedic Treatment seems to be beneficial.

Ayurvedic Treatment is broadly divided into 2 – Purificatory Treatment and Pacifying Treatment. Purificatory Treatment which is also known as *Panchakarma* includes 5 different procedures for different types of disorders, of which *Raktamokshana* / Blood-letting is mostly used in Skin disorders which works by removing impure blood from the body.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Place of Study: Muktai Ayurveda Panchakarma Clinic, Nagpur

Method: Single Case Study

Case Report

Name Of Patient: XYZ

Age / Sex: 22 years / Male

Present Complaints: Itching over the scalp, scaling on rubbing, dandruff, patches all over the scalp.

History Of Presenting Illness: The patient was normal 5 years ago. Since then, the patient has been suffering from dandruff and itching over the scalp. For this, the patient took allopathic treatment but did not get complete relief. Then he came to Muktai Ayurveda Panchakarma Clinic for further management.

Past History: No H/O DM, HTN, BA, Thyroid.

Family History: Mother: H/O DM and HTN since 13 years, Father: NA

Personal History: Occupation: Student, No H/O Smoking, Alcohol, or any other addiction.

Examination: Within normal ranges.

Local Examination: Numerous small patches were seen over the parietal lobe, and a big patch was seen on the occipital lobe.

Ashtavidha Parikshan: Within normal ranges.

Treatment: In Ayurveda Classics, Blood-letting is explained as a general line of treatment for skin diseases.^[4] The treatment described here is very precise. They have mentioned different types of methods for Blood-letting based on the types of patches and severity of diseases.^[5] The patient was treated with 'Blood-letting Therapy' also known as '*Raktamokshana*' and Needling as a supportive treatment. The method of Blood-letting adopted was 'Leech Therapy' i.e., '*Jalauka Avacharana*'

Treatment Schedule:

Day	Session	Treatment	
		Leech Therapy	Needling
1 st	Session - 1	Leech was applied on the biggest patch on the occipital lobe.	Needling was done over the parietal lobe over the affected area.
6 th	Session - 2	-----	Needling was done all over the scalp on the affected area.
11 th	Session - 3	Leech was applied on the parietal lobe of the patient.	Needling was done all over the scalp.
14 th	Session - 4	-----	Needling was done all over the scalp.
18 th	Session - 5	-----	Needling was done all over the scalp on affected areas.

RESULTS

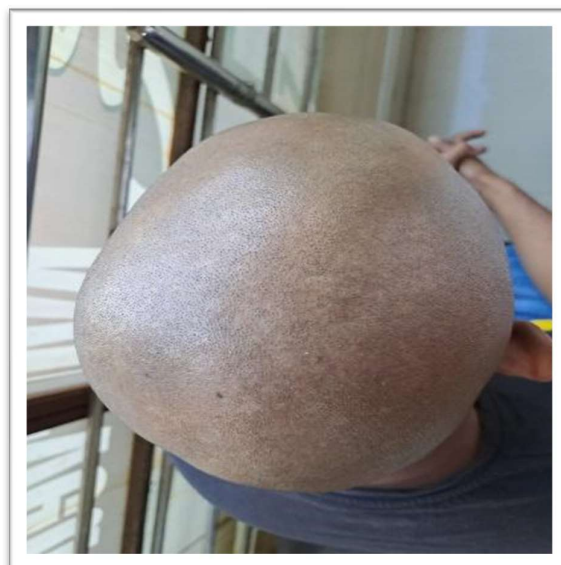
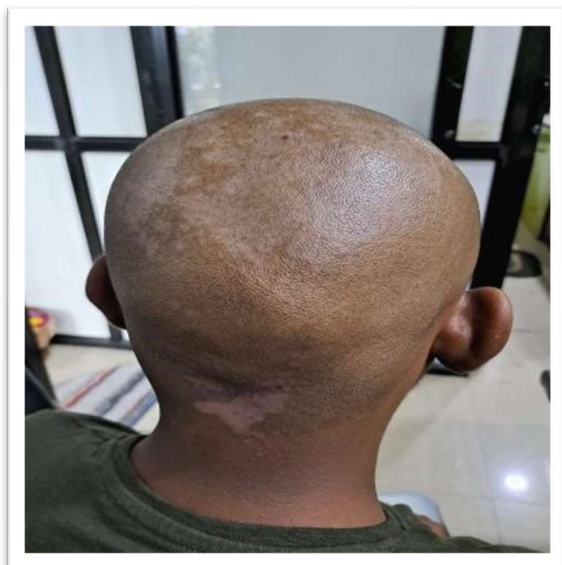
Symptoms	Before T/t	After T/t
Itching over scalp	+++	+
Scaling on rubbing	+++	-----
Dandruff	+++	-----
Patches all over the head	+++	-----

(+ indicates severity of symptoms)

Before:



After:



DISCUSSION:

Scalp Psoriasis is co-related to *Ek-Kushtha* in Ayurvedic Classics, whose symptoms are explained as, excessive sweating or no sweating at all, huge patches/lesions, scaling.^[4] Psoriasis is a non-infectious, chronic papulosquamous, T-Cell mediated inflammatory skin disorder. It usually follows a relapsing and remitting course.^[6] Psoriasis is an auto-immune disease that causes patches of red-coloured, scaly, and itchy skin and can affect any part of the body. When it affects the scalp then it is called Scalp Psoriasis. It is almost similar to Psoriasis but is challenging to treat.^[7]

Blood-letting (*Raktamokshana*) is the procedure of removal of impure blood from the body. Blood-letting when performed with Leech can remove impure blood from a range of an area equivalent to that of the palm of a person.^[8] Leeches which are medicinally useful are found to secrete saliva containing about 60 different proteins. These proteins help to keep the blood in liquid form and increase blood flow in the affected area. Some of these proteins are Anti-coagulants like Hirudin, platelet aggregation inhibitors like Apyrase, and Collagenase, and anti-bacterial like theromyzin. It also secretes Vasodilators and Proteinase inhibitors. It is also thought that the saliva contains anaesthetics, as the leech bites are generally not painful.^[9] Needling or *Viddha Karma* is the simplest method of bloodletting also known as venepuncture. Its main action is to clear the obstruction and improve the blood flow to the affected area.

Do's: Regular application of oil on the scalp, maintaining local hygiene, avoiding humid climate, avoiding activities that cause excessive sweating.

Don'ts: Excessive use of shampoos and other cosmetics, unhygienic conditions, sleeping in the daytime.

Limitations: Since this disease includes genetic factors in its etiology there is a high risk of remission or reoccurrence. There are various other factors or causes which are responsible for the remission like seasonal changes, stress, etc. Hence regular follow-up is needed for evaluation of the reoccurrence of the disease. So, the patient must follow do's and don'ts to avoid remission of the disease.

CONCLUSION:

Ayurvedic management; specifically *Raktamokshana* / Blood-letting which is one of the methods of Panchakarma; showed significant improvement in all the cardinal symptoms as well as lesions of the patient. The results were fast and promising just after the 1st session of the treatment. Blood-letting removed the impure blood out of the body whereas needling helped in increasing the blood flow to those parts. Though treating Scalp Psoriasis is a challenging task but great results were found in this case study through panchakarma-only treatment. Thus, the above treatment provides relief in symptoms of disease and is a safe and effective treatment.

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