

CASE STUDY

An ayurvedic approach to the management of *darunaka* with *sheetapitta*: a case study

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ABSTRACT

Dandruff and Urticaria are few of the most common worries in adulthood. Dandruff, the visible desquamation of scalp, is the mildest manifestation of seborrheic dermatitis. Chronic urticaria has a significant impact on quality-of-life due to the constant sensation of itching, regular recurrence, and unknown etiology. Dandruff can be considered as Darunaka in Ayurvedic parlance possessing resemblance in their clinical manifestations. Similarly, Urticaria can be correlated with *Sheetapitta*. Urticaria and Dandruff, both conditions do not have any satisfactory cure in contemporary system of medicine, relapses being the main cause for inclining towards Ayurvedic system of medicine. *Ayurveda* can provide a virtuous effect in dandruff with the help of *Panchakarma* procedures, daily regimen, and many *Aushadha Yoga*. A 25 years old patient approached with complaints of *Shirah Kandu* (Itching over scalp), *Keshabhoomi Rukshata* (dryness of scalp), *Twak Sphutana* (~Cracks in the skin), and *Kesha Chyuti* (~Hair fall). He also had itchy rashes over his trunk region. In present case, classical *Shodhana* (Major purification therapy) was planned followed by *Shamana* (~Pacification) drugs. The improvement provided by the *Shodhana* therapy was assessed based on sign and symptoms before and after the treatment. The therapies were found effective in controlling sign and symptoms of *Darunaka* and *Sheetapitta*.

Keywords : Dandruff, *Darunaka*, *Samshodhana*, *Sheetapitta*, Urticaria



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Introduction:

Hair is associated with youthfulness and beauty in women and virility and masculinity in men; so, it is no surprise that hair loss can make any men and women feel self-conscious. Pollution, unhygienic conditions, and many more factors can cause hair problem. Studies show a prevalence of dandruff of up to 50%.^[1] Dandruff

is an irritative disease of the scalp in which shedding of dead tissue from the scalp with itching sensation is the cardinal feature. 'Urticaria' is a disease characterized by itchy red rashes on skin almost all over the body. An estimated 15% to 23% of adults have experienced at least 1 episode of acute urticaria at some time in their lives, and the prevalence of chronic urticaria in adults is estimated at 0.5% to 5%.^[2] However the disease is not a life threatening disorder, the distress caused by Urticaria seriously affects the quality of life.

Darunaka is a *Vatakapha Dosha* (regulatory functional factors of the body) Predominant Disease, which manifests as *Kandu*, *Keshachyuti*, *Rukshta*, and *Twak Sphutana*,^[3] which can be correlated with Dandruff. In present case, patient suffering from Dandruff and urticaria after having been under allopathy treatment for same complaint for more than 6 years, but without persistent relief and continuous reoccurrence of symptoms was treated with classical *Vamana Karma* (~Therapeutic emesis) followed by *Virechana Karma* (~Therapeutic purgation). *Shamana Chikitsa* was followed thereafter for one month.

CASE REPORT

A 25 years male patient, diagnosed with seborrheic dermatitis and Urticaria in Allopathy, approached with chief complaints of dryness in scalp, dandruff, and excessive hair fall. He also had associated complaints of rashes over anterior and posterior trunk region with

excessive itching and sweating for more than 6 years that would exacerbate with seasonal transition. Patient was diagnosed based on signs and symptoms as a case of *Darunaka* along with *Sheetapitta*. Patient belonged to *Jangala Pradesha*, was a married graduate from Lower middle class. The *Sharirika Prakriti* (~Body constitution) of the patient was *Vatakaphaja* and *Manasika Prakriti* (~Mental constitution) was *Rajasika*. He had *Madhyama Samhanana* (Moderate Body Compactness), *Madhyama Pramana* (Moderate anthropometry), *Madhyama Koshtha* (~Moderate Bowel habits), *Madhyama Vyayama Shakti* (~moderate physical strength) with *Madhyama Satva* (~moderate psychological strength). He had *Madhyama Abhyavaharana Shakti* (moderate power of ingestion), *Madhyama Jarana Shakti* (moderate power of digestion) with *Vyamishra Satmya* (~Habitual of 2-5 tastes) and habit of drinking alcohol occasionally.

Predominant *Dosha* in *Darunaka* is *Vata* in association with *Kapha* and *Sheetapitta* is *Pitta* in association with *Vatakaphaja*.^[4] *Ayurveda* focuses on eradication of *Dosha* and purification of body by means of *Panchakarma*^[5]. Since *Vata* and *Kapha* were vitiated along with *Pitta*, Classical *Shodhana* was planned, (Classical *Vamana* followed by Classical *Virechana* [Table1,2]) *Shamana Chikitsa* was followed for one month thereafter to achieve better therapeutic efficacy in this case [Table 3]. The patient was followed up for six months with no medications given in follow up period.

Table I. Method of drug administration for *Vamana Karma* and *Virechana Karma*

S.N.	Days	Treatment	Drug used Dose	Anupana	Duration
1.	1-3	<i>Dipana- Pachana</i> (digestion and metabolism enhancing)	<i>Triphala Churna</i> - 2gm <i>Vidanga</i> - 1 gm <i>Shankha Bhasma</i> - 250 mg	<i>Ushnodaka</i> (Lukewarm water)	3 Days
2.	4-8	<i>Vamanartha</i> <i>Snehapana</i> (Internal oleation for <i>Vamana</i>)	<i>Panchatikta Ghrita</i> Doses are placed at Table 2	<i>Ushnodaka</i>	5 Days

3.	9	<i>Sarvanga Abhyanga</i> (Therapeutic whole-body massage) <i>Bashpa Svedana</i> (~Steam sudation)	<i>Dashmoola Taila</i> (Oil) <i>Dashmoola Kwatha</i> (Decoction) Once a day	-	1(Gap day) + 1(<i>Vamana</i> day)
4.	10	<i>Vamana karma</i>	<i>Madanphala</i> - 3gm <i>Vacha</i> -1gm <i>Saindhava</i> -1gm <i>Yashtimadhu Phanta</i> <i>Lavanodaka</i>	Honey	1
5.	11-17	<i>Samsarjana Krama</i> (post dietetic regimen)	<i>Peyadi Krama</i>		7 Days
6.	18	Normal Diet on 8 th day of <i>Vamana Karma</i>			
7.	19-21	<i>Virechnartha Snehapana</i> (Internal oleation of <i>Virechana</i>)	<i>Panchatikta Ghrita</i> Doses are placed at Table 2	<i>Ushnodaka</i>	3 days
8.	22-24	<i>Sarvanga Abhyanga</i> <i>Bashpa Swedana</i>	<i>Dashmoola Taila</i> <i>Dashmoola Kwatha</i>	Once a day	- 3 (Gap Days) +1 (<i>Virechana</i> Day)
9.	25	<i>Virechana Karma</i>	<i>Ichhabhedi Rasa</i> (3 tablets)	-	- 1
10.	26-30	<i>Samsarjana Krama</i>	<i>Peyadi Krama</i> (thin gruel of rice etc.)		5 Days

Table II. Details of *Snehapana* for *Vamana Karma* and *Virechana Karma*

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<i>Sneha Matra</i> (Dose)	50 ml	75 ml	100 ml	125 ml	150 ml
<i>Sneha Sevana Kala</i> (Administration time)	6.15 am	6.20 am	6.30 am	6.15 am	6.30 am
<i>Kshudha Pravrutti Kala</i> (~Time of appetite)	12.15 pm	12.30 pm	2 pm	3.15 pm	3.30 pm
<i>Mala Pravrutti</i> (~Bowel frequency)	1 time	1 time	2 times	2 times	2 times
<i>Virechnartha Sneha</i>					
<i>Sneha Matra</i>	50 ml	75 ml	100 ml		
<i>Sneha Sevana Kala</i>	6 am	6.10 am	6.30 am		
<i>Kshudha Pravrutti Kala</i>	12.30 pm	2 pm	3.15 pm		
<i>Mala Pravrutti</i>	1time	1time	2 times		

Table III. Shamana Aushadha

S. No.	Aushadha	Dose	Frequency
1	<i>Avipattikara Choorna</i> 3 gm <i>Pittantaka Yoga</i> <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i>	3gm 500 mg 250 mg	Twice daily
2	<i>Aarogyavardhini Vati</i>	2 Vati	Twice daily
3	<i>Panchatikta Ghrita Guggulu</i>	2 Guggulu	Twice daily
4	<i>Manjishthadi Choorna</i>	3 gm	Twice daily
5	<i>Mahamarichyaadi oil</i>	Daily once for local application	

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: The efficacy of the procedures on *Darunaka* was assessed before treatment and after treatment based on criteria [Table 4].

Table IV. Gradation scale

Symptoms of <i>Darunaka</i>	Grade			
1. <i>Kandu</i> (Itching)				
Absent	0			
Occasionally	1			
Frequently	2			
Constantly	3			
2. <i>Kesha Bhumi Rukshata</i> (Roughness of scalp)				
Absent	0			
Negligible	1			
Without discomfort on scalp	2			
With discomfort on scalp	3			
3. <i>Keshachyuti</i> (Hair fall)				
Absent	0			
Occasionally	1			
Moderate loss	2			
Maximum loss	3			
4. <i>Twak Sphutana</i> (Scaling of the scalp skin)				
Absent	0			
Visible inside the hair	1			
Visible over the hair	2			
Spread over the shoulder	3			
Symptoms of <i>Sheetpitta</i>				
Symptom	Grade 0	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
<i>Varati Dansh Sansthana Shotha</i> (Swelling as if bitten by the wasp)	Absent	In specific area	Present on some parts of body	Present all over body

<i>Kandu</i> (Itching)	Absent	Occasionally	Disturbing the sleep	Disturbing the sleep and normal activity
<i>Toda</i> (Pricking sensation)	Absent	Occasionally	Disturbing the sleep	Disturbing the sleep and normal activity
<i>Vidaha</i> (Burning sensation)	Absent	Occasionally	Disturbing the sleep	Disturbing the sleep and normal activity
Duration of wheals	Absent	<1 Hour	1-12 Hours	>12 Hours
Frequency of appearance	Absent	Once a week	2-3 times a week	Daily
Frequency of use of antihistamines	Absent	Once a week	2-3 times a week	Daily

OBSERVATION AND RESULTS

Vega (Urges) during *Vamana* were 8, and during *Virechana* were 20. After complete *Shodhana*, variations in results were found on each symptom associated with *Darunaka* and *Sheetapitta*. Patient got relief in sign and symptoms with gradual improvement. Effects of treatment on patient of *Darunaka* and *Sheetapitta* are presented in Figure1-4. Assessment on each considering symptom of *Darunaka* and *Sheetapitta* have been presented in Table 5. These are the observations before and after *Shodhana Karma*. Patient did not report any incidence of relapse of symptoms in six months of follow up. This was for the first time in last six years that patient could appreciate complete relief from his symptoms.



Figure 1: Scalp before *Shodhana*



Figure 2: Scalp after *Shodhana*



Figure 3: Trunk before *Shodhana*



Figure 4: Trunk after *Shodhana*

Table V. Effects on symptoms

Assessment criteria for Darunaka	Score before treatment	Score after treatment
<i>Kandu</i>	3	0
<i>Keshachyuti</i>	3	1
<i>Kesha Bhoomi Rukshata</i>	2	0
<i>Twak Sphutana</i>	2	0
Assessment criteria for <i>Sheetapitta</i>		
<i>Varati Dansh Sansthana Shotha</i>	2	0
<i>Kandu</i> (Itching)	3	0
<i>Toda</i>	3	0
<i>Vidaha</i>	3	0
Duration of wheals	2	0
Frequency of appearance	2	0
Frequency of use of antihistamines	2	0

DISCUSSION:

Owing to the *Vata Kaphaja* involvement in *Darunaka* and association of *Kapha*, *Pitta* and *Vata* in *Sheetapitta*, Vitiating of *Tridosha* (three regulatory functional factors of the body) can be considered in present case. *Vamana* is indicated in *Kapha* disorders as well the conditions where *Kapha* along with *Pitta* or *Vata* is vitiated. Similarly, *Virechana* is indicated in *Pitta* vitiation either alone or in association with *Kapha*.^[6] Moreover, *Pidika* (eruptions), *Kotha* (wheal like skin eruptions) and *Kandu*, are mentioned as *Bahudosha Avastha* (~State of *Dosha* vitiation in large quantity) in classics.^[7] *Urdhwa* (~Upward), *Adhah* (~Downward) *Shodhana* has been advised considering the *Bala* (Physical endurance) of patient and *Vyadhi* (Disease). Since the disease was chronic (more than 6 years) and patient was of medium age, complete *Shodhana* was planned. Dandruff may be a consequence of improper nutritional supply to the scalp resulting in cracking of scalp, dryness, and Hair fall. Its treatment should aim at clearing off the obstruction to ensure proper nutritional supply to the scalp. The same can be achieved through *Shodhana Karma*. Vitiating of *Kapha Dosha* is responsible for *Kandu*, and elimination of this vitiated *Dosha* through *Vamana* might have relieved the itching over scalp and trunk region. *Virechana Karma* does elimination of vitiated *Pitta* and *Vatanulomana* (proper functioning

of *Vayu*), and thus might have relieved the redness over trunk region, itching, *Kesha Bhoomi Rukshata* and *Twak Sphutana*, providing overall relief in sign and symptoms of *Darunaka* and *Sheetapitta*. Apart from the *Srotoshuddhi*, *Shodhana* does *Manahprasada* (Mental cheerfulness), and Psychogenic factors, as anxiety, stress are said to play an important role in producing *Urticaria*. Relieving these factors might also be a contributing factor to the subsidence of symptoms. *Raktavaha Srotodushti* cannot be denied in cases of *Pidika* and *Raktamandala* (Reddish circular patches on skin) as in present case^[8]. Though *Samshodhana* does *Dhatu Sthirata* i.e. it makes *Dhatu* capable of proper functioning. But after *Shodhana*, *Shamana* drugs, mainly *Pitta-Vata Shamaka* and *Raktashodhaka* (~Blood purificatory) were advised for better therapeutic effects and to avoid remissions.

CONCLUSION:

The treatment protocol in present case was based on Ayurvedic principles and Classical *Samshodhana* provided considerable relief in *Darunaka* and *Sheetapitta*. *Shamana* drugs should be administered thereafter for better therapeutic effects. The recovery in present case was promising and worth documenting.

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सारांश:

युवावस्था में होने वाले रोगों में दारुणक और शीतपित्त होना साधारण बात हैं। दारुणक शिर के बालों में दिखाई देने वाला डैंड्रफ तथा सेबोरहाइक डर्मेटाइटिस का सबसे हल्का लक्षण है। निरंतर खुजली होना, पुनः पुनः तथा अज्ञात कारणों से उत्पत्ति के कारण जीर्ण शीतपित्त का जीवन की गुणवत्ता पर अत्यधिक प्रभाव पड़ता है। आयुर्वेदिक निदानात्मक लक्षणों के आधार पर डैंड्रफ को दारुणक माना जा सकता है। और, शीतपित्त के साथ अर्टिकेरिया का संबंध हो सकता है। अर्टिकेरिया और डैंड्रफ, दोनों ही अवस्थाओं में आधुनिक चिकित्सा में कोई संतोषजनक इलाज नहीं है। आयुर्वेद, पंचकर्म प्रक्रियाओं, दैनिक आहार, एवं योग के माध्यम से इन व्याधियों में अपना योगदान प्रदान कर सकता है। एक 25 वर्षीय रोगी को शिर में कंड़ू, केशभूमि रुक्षता, त्वक् स्फुटन और केश च्युति अर्थात् बालों का गिरना आदि लक्षण थे। साथ ही वक्ष प्रदेश पर खुजली व चकत्ते भी थे। इसमें रोगी को शोधन व शमन चिकित्सा दी गई। चिकित्सा उपचार से पहले और बाद में संकेत और लक्षणों के आधार पर शोधन चिकित्सा द्वारा प्रदान किए गए सुधार का मूल्यांकन किया गया था। यह चिकित्सा दारुणक और शीतपित्त के लक्षण और लक्षणों को नियंत्रित करने में प्रभावी पायी गई।