

Psoriasis Causes and Management – Ayurveda Perspective

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Abstract

Psoriasis is a one of the major skin disorder which affects 2-4 % of global population. According to recent statistical data one among the two adult Indians suffers from this disease. **Methods** –Psoriasis is a long lasting auto immune disease of skin which is characterized by patches of abnormal skin. These skin patches are typically red, itchy, and scaly. Ayurveda doesn't specifically describe this condition Rather it is closely compared to condition call 'Sidhmakushta causes of which can be linked to the disturbance of either two of the three doshas viz vat-kalpa psoriasis in Ayurveda perspective, can be regarded as a result of the abnormal functioning of Vyana&SamanaVayu, Ranjaka&PachakPitta and kledakkapha, including loss of their functional integrity & co-ordination. **Result** – Psoriasis is due to non-specific lifestyle and genetic factor. According to Ayurveda all diseases are caused by Doshas only. Thus, treatment involves balancing of these. Principal focus is on maintaining good health & Adopting healthy life style through Dincharya, Rutucharya and Nidanparivarjan. Treatment option involves internal cleansing (Antahparimarjan) through Panchkarma therapies & external therapies (Bahirparmarjan). **Conclusion** – In short, this presentation deals with understanding psoriasis through an Ayurveda perspective – i.e. in terms of Nidana (etiology), Lakshana (sign & Symptoms), Upshaya (therapeutic dignosis) and Samprapti (pathogenesis), for planning the correct treatment.

Key Words -Psoriasis, Sidhma-kushta, Dosha, Dushya, Agni, and Rasavaha, Raktava, Mansava, Udakavah and MedhovahaStrotas.

Introduction

Skin is soft outer tissue covering of our body which composed of two primary layers Epidermis & Dermis. Skin carries functions like protection from pathogen, sensation such as heat cold, touch, pain & pressure thermoregulation, storage of water, synthesis of fat psoriasis is skin disorder which hampers the function of skin. Now day psoriasis is most common disorder. The prevalence of psoriasis in India is 2-4% of total population psoriasis result from structural and functional defect of skin.

Most common cause of psoriasis is auto-immune & genetic condition. Treatment of psoriasis is quite difficult due to many side-effect and long life therapy. So it is need of this era to look for safe & effective management for psoriasis is Ayurveda; But before that we have to understood the Psoriasis in terms of Ayurveda principle.

The Review is carried out to understand psoriasis according to principle of Ayurveda presentation of psoriasis is review critically by searching etiology, pathogenesis& symptoms from various research data bases. Pathogenesis of psoriasis are studied in terms of imbalance of Dosha, Dushya, Srotas etc. and an effort to obtain slandered possible Samprapti of psoriasis.

Material& Methods

Skin is soft outer tissue which covers all body of human being. It is composed of two primary layers. Epidermis & Dermis. Epidermis which provides water proofing & serve as barrier to infection. Dermis which serve as location for the Appendages of skin.

This study is carried by various literature search and critical review of obtained facts. Pathogenesis of psoriasis is obtained by searching various medical research databases like

Embase, Pubmed, Ayucare and various national and international research databases. The term entered for search is skin, its anatomy and physiology, Psoriasis pathogenesis and clinical presentation of Psoriasis etc. Manual search made going through referral list of reviewed article to identify the relevant additional study. To understand pathogenesis various Ayurveda text is used.

Observation and Discussion

Skin is soft outer tissue covering of our body & composed of two primary layers:

- Epidermis which provides waterproofing and serves as a barrier to infection.
- Dermis which serves as a location for the appendages of skin.

Skin performs the following functions:

1. Protection: an anatomical barrier from pathogens and damage between the internal and external environment in bodily defense. (See Skin absorption.) Langerhans cells in the skin are part of the adaptive immune system.
2. Sensation: contains a variety of nerve endings that jump to heat and cold, touch, pressure, vibration, and tissue injury (see somatosensory system and haptic perception).
3. Thermoregulation: Eccrine (sweat) glands and dilated blood vessels (increased superficial perfusion) aid heat loss, while constricted vessels greatly reduce cutaneous blood flow and conserve heat. Erector pile muscles in mammals adjust the angle of hair shafts to change the degree of insulation provided by hair or fur.
4. Control of evaporation: the skin provides a relatively dry and semi-impermeable barrier to reduce fluid loss.
5. Storage and synthesis: acts as a storage center for lipids and water
6. Absorption through the skin: Oxygen, nitrogen and carbon dioxide can diffuse into the epidermis in small amounts; some animals use their skin as their sole respiration organ (in humans, the cells comprising the outermost 0.25–0.40 mm of the skin are "almost exclusively supplied by external oxygen", although the "contribution to total respiration is negligible")^[17] Some medications are absorbed through the skin.
7. Water resistance: The skin acts as a water resistant barrier so essential nutrients aren't washed out of the body. The nutrients and oils that help hydrate the skin are covered by the most outer skin layer, the epidermis. This is helped in part by the sebaceous glands that release sebum, an oily liquid. Water itself will not cause the elimination of oils on the skin, because the oils residing in our dermis flow and would be affected by water without the epidermis.

Sortras involve in psoriasis is Annavaah, Udaakvah, Rasvah, RaktraVah, Mansavah, and Swedavah. There is a defect in a function of agni (fire principal) which play major role in a pathogenesis of psoriasis. Defect in a function of Agni (fire principal) & srotas dushti hampers the function of skin which ultimately converts into skin disorder called as psoriasis.

Causes (Etiology) of Psoriasis

Following are the Common causes of psoriasis

1. Autoimmunity
2. Hereditary
3. Abnormality in the mechanism in which skin grows and replaces itself.

4. Environmental factors such as sunlight exposure, trauma, climatic changes and seasonal changes.
5. Infection and Psychological stress
6. Genetic factor
7. Excessive Alcohol consumption
8. Excessive Cigarette smoking
9. Obesity
10. Skin dryness

So far AyurvedicNidana is concerned the etiological factors related Kapha-VataPrakopa,Agnimandya,Raktapradoshakanidan will be responsible for genesis of Psoriasis.

Clinical Presentation (sign & symptoms) of Psoriasis

Psoriasis results from failure of skin function.The symptoms of psoriasis are very nonspecific. However common presentation of psoriasis along with its Ayurvedic perspective are Tabulated below.

1. Raised, red patches of skin in topped with loose, silvery scales usually on knees and elbow.
2. Thick red patches known as plaques and dry, silvery scales appearing on the scalp, face, eyebrows, knees, palm and soles of feet.
3. Dry and cracked skin which may be bloody.
4. Swelling, pain and tenderness of joint.
5. Thickened, pitted and ridged nails
6. Scaly erythematous patches of skin which is painful & itchy
7. Pinpoint bleeding when scale is removed is called as Auspitz's sign.
8. Psoriatic skin lesion induced by trauma to skin is called as Koebner sign.
9. Many patients develop zero- negative inflammatory arthritis which is characterized by multiple involvements of joints and pitting of nails.
10. Symptoms often worse in winter season & with certain Medication like NSAIDS

Ayurvedic view of Psoriasis

Hetu(Causes):-

1. According toayurveda there is a involvement of vitiated Vata and Kapha Dosha (two of the basic humors which maintain our body equilibrium.
2. In psoriasis there is an another etiological factor that is vitiated Rakta Dhatu (impure blood)
3. Accumulation of low potency poison (Dushi – vishesh) is the basic pathological changes.
4. Obstruction of lymphatic drainage.
5. Irregular food habit, consumption of food stuffs that cannot be eaten together (eg. Dairy products and fish) are the basic etiological factors for pathogenesis.
6. Day time sleep
7. Vegdharan (Urages).
8. Alcohol consumption.
9. Tobacco chewing.
10. Stress (chinta).

These are the important etiological factor which plays important role in pathogenesis and develop psoriasis.

Ayurvedic treatment of Psoriasis:-

In Ayurvedic textbook there are two types of treatment explained

1. **Shamana (pallative)** - Detoxification of body.
2. **Shodhana (Radical)** - Elimination of toxins from body.

The treatment schedule comprising of various treatment aspects of Ayurveda which includes internal (Abhyantar) and external(Bahya) Medication purely of plant origin.

Panchkarma is best line of treatment for a psoriasis in Ayurveda which includes following

1. **Snehan(Oleing)**

Consumption of medicated ghee (eg.Panchtiktaghruta) according to dosha involve in a psoriasis and prakruti for 5-7 days.

2. **Steaming and other heating procedure (Swedana).**

Oils are never use. It is useful in removal of blockage of subtlechannels (Strotas) In psoriasis there is a blockage of various strotas due to excess accumulation of dosha.

3. **Medicated powder massage(Udvartan)**

It has Dosha burning properties and absorbing excess dosha which is performed by using herbal decoction and powder of suitable herbs. This is useful in removing the blockage of strotas.

4. **Local application of medicated drugs(Lepa)**

External application of medicated drugs like chitrakadi and kushtadi which gives quick relief in a psoriasis by removing impurity in blood

5. **Vamana (Medicated Emesis)**

In psoriasis there is excess accumulation of dosha, impurity in bloods, blockage of lymphatic drainage along with various substle channels (Strotas). Vamana is a cleansing method of upper elementary canal and best line of therapy for removing Kapahadosha. Madanaphala(RandiaSpinosa) is a drug of choice for vamana due to its best effectiveness and less side-effect. In psoriasis this procedure can be done after each 15 days.

6. **Virechana(Medicated Purgation)**

It is a also cleansing method for lower alimentary canal which removes blockage in lower alimentary canal. It is a best line of treatment for pitta dosha (fire principle) in our body. Trivrutta (operculinaturpethum) is a drug of choice for verchana due to its best effect and mild purgative action.

7. **Basti(Medicated Enema)**

IT is desined to clean lower elimentary canal and most effective in ayurvedic treatment which cleans suitable channels (strotas) spread all over the body. This is a very effective therapy in removing coating of fire principle caused by KaphaDosha. Special ingredient is added to it making it a lekhanabasti which can cause scrapping of KaphaDosha .

8. **Nasya (Medicated Nasal drop)**

NasyawihVacha(Accoruscalamus) and other herbs specified for psoriasis are very effective.

9. **Raktamokshan(Bloodletting)**

In psoriasis there is a huge dushti of raktadhatu(impurity of blood). To remove these dushtiraktamokshana is best line of treatment for it. Raktmokshana is done by puncture wih needle and applying leech over lesion which removes impurity in blood.

10. Yoga (Meditation)

Stress is a very important etiological factor in psoriasis and to remove this stress meditation is best line of treatment.

11. Diet (Aahar)

Strict diet regime has to be followed during the entire treatment period. A vegetarian diet is mostly preferable. Old rice, green gram and cucumber are beneficial. Diet supplemented with fish oil rich Eicosapentaenoic acid (E.P.A.) & Docosahexaenoic acid (D.H.A.). Avoid consumption of caffeine (coffee, Black Tea, and Dark Chocolate), Alcohol and red meat. Yogurt, black gram, chillies and salted things should be avoided. Avoid strictly dairy products, various sweet dishes and refrigerated (chilled foods).

12. Vihar (Body function)

Avoid excess stress, day time sleep and vegdharana (urges).

Conclusion

Although the disease Psoriasis is not described in classical Ayurvedic texts. Based on its clinical presentation its samprati (pathogenesis) can be understood as follows ; **Nidana** – Santarpanotha, **Dosha** – Kapha , vata , **Dushya**-Rasa, Meda, Mamsa, Rakta, , **Samuththana**-Amasaya Adhithana – sarvaSareera, Srotodushti-sanga, Rogamarga: Abhyantara(kostha), **Srotodusti**: Sanga, **Agni Mandya**: Ama, JatharagniMandyaJanita, Ama Rasa-RaktaDhatvadniJaita. During the treatment of Psoriasis this pathogenetic factors has to be targeted with special attention to strength of Body, Mind, and Dosha.

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