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Ayurveda Aspects on Vitiligo and its Management through Classical Approaches of Ayurveda

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Abstract:

Two types of Kushta are described in Ayurveda classics, Mahakushta and Kshudrakushta. Further Mahakushta is subdivided into 7 and Kshudrakushta into 11 types. Shwitra is disease manifested through skin can be co-related with Vitiligo (leukoderma), is a pigmentation disorder with complex causes and as per modern aspect. Imbalance of Vata and Bhrajaka pitta resides in skin mainly leads skin disease including vitiligo which possess symptom of Twak vaivarnyata. Switra also described as Shwetakushta and categorizes as Kushta rogas, which mainly involves vitiation of Doshas along with disturbance of Rakta, Mamsa and Medhas Dhatu. Ayurveda described several ways to treat vitiligo including utilization of Shodhana karma and herbal medicines. Various types of Lepa, Ghrita, Avaleha, Tail, Asava-Arista and Vati are mentioned in Ayurveda texts to treat Shwitra. Present article described Ayurveda perspectives on vitiligo and its management through ancient approaches.

Keywords: Vitiligo, Shwitra, Rakta, Mamsa, Lepa, Ghrita

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INTRODUCTION:

Two types of *Kushta* are described in Ayurveda classics, *Mahakushta* and *Kshudrakushta*. Further *Mahakushta* is subdivided into 7 and *Kshudrakushta* into 11 types[1] and total 18 types of *Kushthas* described in *Chikitsasthana*. [2]

Vitiligo is disease of skin which described as *Shwitra* in Ayurveda and involves improper distribution of melanin beneath the skin surface. Hereditary, environmental factor, medicines, drug abuse, side effects of radiation or chemotherapy, etc., are major causes of skin diseases. *Viruddhahara*, *Chardivegadharana*, *Atibhojana*, *Atyamla*, intake of *Lavana*, *Madhura* and *Katu Rasa Ahara*, *Matsyabhakshana* and *Papakarma*, etc. are major causes of vitiligo [3,5].

Ayurveda described three types of *Switra* as described in **Figure 1**, *Daruna* is condition in which *Doshas* vitiates *Rakta dhatu* and red color patches will appear on skin. *Aruna* is another type of *Switra* in which *Doshas* vitiates *Mamsa dhatu* and coppery color patches occurs on skin while *Kilasa* is condition of *Switra* in which *Medho dhatu* get vitiates with *Doshas* and white color patches occurs on skin. [6]

Ayurveda advocates various therapeutic options for treating *Switra* like; *Shodana*

chikitsa (*Vamana*, *Virechana* and *Rakta mokshana*), *Shamana Chikitsa* (oral and external medications) and strict dietary restrictions along with lifestyle modifications and *Yoga* [7].

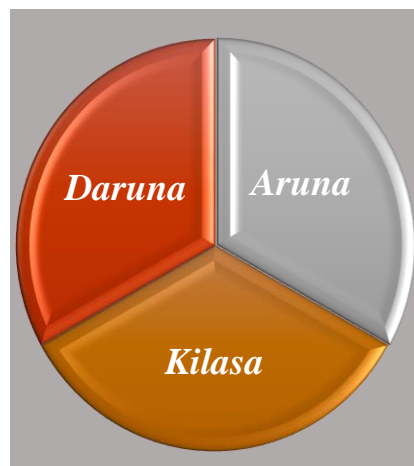


Figure 1: Various types of *Shwitra*

Modern science described vitiligo as condition of de-pigmentation of skin which not only causes physical distress but also leads psychological distress and social isolation. The disease involves gradual loss of pigment (melanin) from the dermal layers and appearance of white patches. Area of hands, neck, back and wrists are mainly affected by such types of condition. White or pale colored patch small in size mainly appears on skin and enlarges in due course of time. Small areas of body such as lips, face, scalp, legs, palms, soles and fingers, etc. also get affected [8]. Ayurveda described

involvement of three *Doshas*; *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha doshas* in vitiligo as follows:

- *Vataja shwitra* posses *Ruksha* and red-black color patches.
- *Pittaja shwitra* possess coppery or lotus-like color along with symptoms of *Daha* and loss of hair.
- *Kaphaja shwitra* possess hard and white color patches with symptom of itching.

As mentioned above disturbance of *Rakta*, *Mansa* and *Meda Dhatus* mainly associated with vitiation of *Vaata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha Dosh* in vitiligo. [9,10]

Samprapti:

The process with the vitiation of *Doshas*, due to specific *Nidana* and which lead to the full-fledged manifestation of the disease after the *Dosha- Dushya Sammurchana* is called *Samprapti*. Its very essential and useful for the physician to understand the specific features of a disease, with a special reference to *Dosha*, *Agni* etc.[11]

Etiological factors affect *Doshas*; *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* which aggravates in skin, *Rakta* and *Mamsa*. Involvement of *Rasa* and *Raktha* leads major symptoms of vitiligo. As per severity of disease it is believed that *Vataja Shwitra* is difficult to cure

while *Pittaja Shwitra* is more difficult to treat and *Kaphaja Shwitra* is considered impossible to treat. [12]

Chikitsa:[13,14,15,16]

Shodhana karma suggested as purification measure to eliminate morbid *Dosha* along with herbal medications. Oil massage and local application of herbal *Lepa* provides symptomatic relief. *Kwatha of Malayu, Asana, Priyangu, Satapuspa and Ambhasa* advocated for curing disease pathogenesis. *Ankollakadi, Avalgujadi, Bakucyadi, Balyadi, Bhallatakadi, Bhringarajadi, Gandhakadi, GunjaGunjaphaladi, Manasiladi, Marichadi, Pathyadi Lepa, Putikadi Lepa, Patrakadi Lepa, Triphaladi Lepa* and *Talakadi Lepa*, etc. advised for therapeutic action in vitiligo. Similarly compounds formulations such as *Bakuchi prayoga, Bhadrodumbarikadi yoga, Bakuchi bija yoga, Kakodumbarika kasaya, Dhatriyadi kwata* and *Khadiradi Kashayam*, etc. prescribed for relieving disease manifestation.

Churna for Vitiligo:

- *Bakucyadya Curna*,
- *Khadira saradi Curna*
- *Pancanimba Curna*.

Herbalized Ghee for Vitiligo:

- *Jatyadi Ghrita*

- Mahamarkara Ghrita
- Mahaneela Ghrita
- Neelaka Ghrita
- Somaraji Ghrita

Herbalized oil (Taila):

- Aragwadhayadya Tail
- Chitrakadya Tail
- Jyotishmati Tail
- Kusta Kalanala Tail
- Laghu maricadya Tail
- Manasiladya Tail
- Visha Tail

Vati for Vitiligo:

- Swayambhu Guggulu
- Brhat Swayambhuva Guggulu
- Triphala Gutika

Rasousadha for Vitiligo:

- Galitakustari Rasa
- Khageswara Rasa
- Kustebhakesari Rasa
- Medani Sara Rasa
- Tarakeswara Rasa
- Vijayeswara Rasa

Pathya (wholesome diet and habits) for Vitiligo:[17]

- Vrata-pooja-patha-dana
- Puranashali
- Godhuma and Mudga
- Patola and Kadirodaka, etc.

Apathya (unwholesome food and habits) for Vitiligo:[18]

- Viruddhahara and Guru ahara
- Vidahihara
- Vishtambhahara
- Kanda-Moola
- Amla-katu-lavanarasa
- Kritaghnata

Snana: Siddharthakasnana, Triphala Siddhajala, Dhavadigomutrpariṣeka etc.

DISCUSSION:

Shwitra is skin disease can be correlated with vitiligo as per the theory of modern science. It is a depigmenting skin disorder that causes regions of skin to lose colour. Vitiating of *Doshas*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa* and *Medhas Dhatu*s mainly involves in disease pathogenesis. Improper distribution of melanin beneath the skin surface produces patches over the skin. *Viruddhahara*, *Atibhojana*, *Atyamla*, *Chardivegadharana*, intake of *Lavana*, *Madhura* and *Katu Rasa Ahara* and *Papakarma*, etc. are considered as triggering factors of disease. It affects persons of various ages, ethnic groups, and skin types, accounting for around 0.5 percent to 1% of the global population. *Tridoshas* vitiating occurs in connection with *Twakchagat Pitta Dosha* and *Rasa-Rakta-mamasa -Udaka*

Dhatu due to *Atisevan* of *Asamyak Aahar Vihar*. *Shwitra-Kushtha*, or Vitiligo, is the outcome of extensive vitiation at the *Rasa* and *Rakta* levels. *Vata Pradhan Shwitra* is difficult to treat, *Pitta Pradhan Shwitra* is much more difficult to treat, and *Kapha Pradhan Shwitra* is incurable. Lesions on the palm, sole, genitalia, and lips are also incurable. However, lesions caused by burns that are non-matted, recently formed, thin, and have black hair are treatable. Ayurveda described several ways to treat vitiligo including *Shodhana* and *Shamhana* therapies. *Virechana* is the greatest *Shodhana Karma* according to *Dosha-Dushya* for relieving *Aam*. *Virechan* with *Psoralea Corylifolia (Bakuchi)* and *Euphorbia Neriifolia* herbal decoction (*Snuhi*). *Bakuchyadi Churna*, *Khadirasaradi Churna*, etc. can be utilised for *Shamana* therapy. Throughout the days of treatment patient should follow *Pathyakar Aahar-Vihaar* and Yoga practices.

CONCLUSION:

Ayurveda described different approach for the treatment of Vitiligo including purification measures i.e., *Shodhan Chikitsa* is utmost essential alongwith *Kusthahar* medicines. Ayurveda described several

internal medicines as well as topical drugs for relieving symptoms of vitiligo. Various types of *Lepa*, *Ghrita*, *Avaleha*, *Tail*, *Asava-Arista* and *Vati* are mentioned in Ayurveda to treat vitiligo (*Shwitra*) this treatment ultimately reduce the comorbidity among the patient living with the condition like Vitiligo.

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