

Prachhan Karma with Lepa and Shirodhara – An Effective Treatment of Indralupta – A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Hairs play an important role in personality and always remained the center of attraction. Beautiful hairs are considered as parameter of beauty, people are very conscious about hair, and they are always in search of good remedy for maintaining their hairs. *Indralupta* (Alopecia Areata) is acquired skin ailment that can affect all the hair bearing skin including scalp, beard which is characterized by localized areas of non-scarring hair loss which can be compared with Alopecia Areata. Hair loss is one of the most common problem people faces, the cause of being today's lifestyle. The prevalence rate of Alopecia Areata is 0.7% in India.^[1] Modern medication (steroids and minoxidil) has adverse effects such as drowsiness, dizziness, vomiting and continuous intake of steroid leads to diabetes, hypertension, and osteoporosis. Many curative and preventive steps are mentioned in *Ayurveda* by *Acharya Sushruta* such as *Nasya* (instillation of medicine by nostrils), *Rasayana* (path of essence), *Murdha taila*, *Siravedha* (bloodletting by puncturing), *Prachhan*, *Lepa* (pack), and *Shiroabhyanga*. *Snehan* (oil Massage), *Swedan* (sweating), *Shaman*, and *Shodhana chikitsa* told by *Sushruta* for *Indralupta*. Among these, *Prachhan karma* helps to stimulate the hair follicles. *Prachhan karma* (bloodletting by puncturing), followed by *Lepa* (pack) and *Shirodhara* (medicated liquid flow over head) with medicine having *Keshya*, *Balya*, and rejuvenating property gives good results in *Indralupta*. Due to limitation and side effects of minoxidil and steroids some safe and effectual medication from other medical science are expected. Here is a case of *Indralupta* (Alopecia Areata) successfully treated with *Prachhan karma* followed by *Lepa* and *Shirodhara* with Ayurvedic Medicine.

Keywords: Alopecia areata, Indralupta, Khalitya, Prachhan Karma, Rasayana, Shirodhara

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INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, gradually, hair fall is termed as *Indralupta-Khalitya*. *Acharya Sushruta*, *Chakradutta*, *Sharangdhara*, *Bhavamishra*, and *Vangsen* have mentioned *Indralupta-Khalitya* in *Kshudraroga* (minor diseases). In *Charak Samhita*, the disease also has been described under *Urdhvajatrugat rog*.^[2] *Acharya Vagbhata* also described it in *shirogat roga* under caption of *Urdhvajatrugat rog* and further divided into nine *Kapalgat rog*.^[3] According to *Acharya Sushruta* in *nidan sthana vidagdha pitta* along with *vata* reaches *romkupa* and causes hair fall, and then, *kapha* along with *rakta* obstructs the *romkupa* which leads to stoppage of regeneration of hair and this condition is known as *Indralupta*, *Khalitya*, or *Ruhy*.^[4]

According to *Ashtanghruday*, there is gradual loss of hair.^[5] In *Charak Samhita*, *Tejas* (Illumination) combining with *vata* reaches the *Shir kapal* (Head Cranium) and causes hair fall.^[2] According to modern science, *Indralupta – Khalitya* correlate with *Alopecia Areata*.

It is autoimmune disease. This means immune system attacks a part of body. The cells in immune system surround and attack hair follicles. This attack on hair follicle causes attached hair to fall out. Hair loss in specific limited area is called *Alopecia Areata*, and hair loss from whole scalp called as *alopecia totalis*. According to survey, up to 40% of men and 25% of women in India are sufferers of hair fall. Stress, eating habit, vitamin D deficiency, lack of proteins, lifestyle, heredity, weight loss, in women pregnancy, thyroid, menopause, these are some causes of hair fall. Many types of oil, shampoo, and soaps for promoting hair growth make the condition worse. In *Ayurveda*, treatment of hair fall is also given. Topical treatment named as *Prachhan karma* plays an important role with *shodhana* and *shamana*. *Shirobasti*, *Nasya*, *Shiroabhyanga*, *Lepa*, *Siravedha*, and *Rasayana* are some

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of them.^[4] *Acharya Sushruta* considered *raktamokshan* as one of the five *shodhana* procedures, *Prachhan karma* is a one type of *raktamokshan* (bloodletting therapy), in which *koorcha shastra* is used to make multiple pricks that are made on affected area to ooze out vitiated blood and achieve *doshasamyatha* (dosha balance). By this procedure, the blood oozes out from the diseased area. Thus, the vitiated *doshas* are expelled out. After this, *Lepa* and *Shirodhara* with medicine with *Keshya* property by alternate days give good results in *Indralupta*. Here is a case of male patient suffering from *Indralupta* was successfully treated with *Prachhan karma* followed by *Lepa* and *Shirodhara*.

CASE STUDY

A 33-year-old unmarried male presented with Chief Complaints – patchy hair loss on scalp with itching on scalp, hair fall especially in central and temporal part of scalp since 1 year.

Other Complaints

Dandruff associated with itching over affected area since 1 year.

Detailed history of patient was taken. There was no history of patchy hair loss on skin, scalp and Body part. There was no personal history of any major disease like B.P, Diabetes endocrinal or Psychiatric disorder, trauma, surgery and prolonged medication.

History of Present Illness

One and half year back patient develops a patchy hair loss. The patient had taken other treatment (minoxidil, steroids) for this but did not satisfy. Hence, he prefers Ayurvedic treatment. Diagnostic tests – Routine hematological, biochemical, and urine tests were done. All tests are found normal and within limits. Percentage of hemoglobin is 13 g %. The patient was clinically diagnosed as Indralupta (Alopecia Areata).

Scalp Examination

The scalp was examined there was patchy hair loss, scaling was observed due to dryness and itching.

No lesions are seen and there was no any abnormality seen.

Examination'

Examination of patient done with modern and Ayurvedic parameters [Table 1] as well as affected area of scalp is examined [Table 2].

- Blood pressure – 130/80 mmHg
- Pulse – 70/min
- Weight – 60 kg
- Respiratory rate – 19/min
- P/A – Soft
- Scalp – Dry, scales, asymmetric patch, and slightly reddish skin.



Figure 1: Before treatment



Figure 2: After treatment

Roga Pareeksha

- *Nidana*
 - *Aharaja* – Intake of oily, Lavana, sweet food, and dairy products
 - *Viharaja* – Exposure to Heat
 - *Manasika* – *Chinta* (work load)
- *Poorvaroopa* – Itching and hair fall
- *Roopa* – Patchy hair loss
- *Upashaya* – *Ushnasupachya Ahara*.
- *Anupashaya* – *Katu, Kshara, Lavana*,
- *Prakruti* – Vata-pittaja
- *Vikruti* – Tridoshaj.

Samprati

Due to pittakar ahar, abhishyandi and excess madhur ras seven pitta associated with vata gets lodged in romkupa. Further, they associated with kapha and rakta. The romkup was obstructed and reduces hair growth which leads or converted into Indralupta.^[6]

- Dosh-Tridosh
- Dushya-Rasa, Rakta, Asthi
- Agni-Mandagi
- Strotas-Rasavaha, Raktavaha, Asthivaha.

TREATMENT GIVEN

Prachan Karma

Poorva Karma (Pre-treatment)

Collection of materials includes blood lancet 18 mm, pair of gloves, sterile cotton balls, betadine solution, and *Panchavalka Kashaya*. Vitals were checked and found to be stable. Hb%, HBsAg, RBS, CT, and BT were checked and found to be in normal limit.

Pradhana Karma (Main treatment)

In the presence of bright light, the patient was made to sit on a chair in comfortable position. The patchy area should be cleaned with betadine solution. *Prachan* was done with a blood lancet starting from one end of the boundary of affected area in an equally spaced manner. It was allowed to bleed for 10 min. After observing the bleeding intensity, blood was wiped by sterile cotton balls.

Paschat Karma (Post-treatment)

After wiping the blood, wash the area with *Panchavalka Kashaya*.

Precaution

Observe for excess bleeding.

Amalki churna (Phyllanthus emblica), *Methi Seed churna (Trigonella foenum graecum)* as *Lepa* was done after 4 sittings of *Prachan Karma*. *Lepa* and *Shirodhara* did alternate days.

Shodhana karma – *Snehan* is done with *Ashwagandhadi tail* followed by *mrudu nadi sweda*. After *swedan Prachhan karma* is done with help of needle of syringe (by pricking on affected scalp area). It stimulates the hair follicle.

- Shaman Karma
- Sonitamritam Kashayam 10 ml BDAC with warm water
- Tankan bhasma is taken with lemon juice application on scalp before hair wash.
- Yashtimadhu with triphala churna with honey after breakfast
- Narsimha rasayana 1tsp daily before

Diet for Patient

- Avoid excess salt in diet
- Avoid virudha Ahar such as milk with fruit and milk with fish
- Eggs, soya bean, beans, fish, spinach, potato, flaxseeds, and dry fruits should be evolved in diet
- These are good source of protein and biotin which are responsible for hair growth.

Lifestyle

- Enough sleep for at least 6–8 h
- Oil massage on scalp in circular motion twice in week
- Adequate water intake as it expels toxins from body
- Regular exercise and meditation to keep stress level in control
- Practice Yoga – Vajrasana, Sarvangasana, Bhujangasana, Kapalbhati, Anulom-Viloma, Pranayam effective in blood circulation in scalp region, strengthening hair roots and reducing hair fall.

Table 1: General examination of patient

General Examination	Ashtvidha Pariksha
Pulse – 70/min	Nadi – 70/min
Blood Pressure – 130/80 mm hg	Mal – Sama
Weight – 60kg	Mutra – Samyaka
Height – 5.7”	Jivha – Sama
Respiratory rate – 19/min	Shabda – Spast
Tongue – Normal	Sparsha – Mrudu
Temperature – Normal	Druk –
	Akruti – Madhyama

Table 2: Scalp examination

Site	Scalp (central, Temporal)
Pattern	Asymmetrical patch
Skin color	Slight Red with dandruff
Discharge	Absent

OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS

Following observations are seen during treatment given to patient

RESULTS

Following results are seen before [Figure 1] and after [Figure 2] the treatment.

DISCUSSION

The disorders occurring due to intemperance in Kshar (Alkali), Lavana (salt), and Virudha Ahar (Incompatible diet) described the occurrence of hair loss due to this. Virudha ahar (Incompatible diet) such as continuous intake of salt and milk in the diet results into Indralupta.^[2,7,10] Thus, the person habituated to excess Lavana (salt) intake and taking virudha ahar (Incompatible diet) in daily life are prone to have Indralupta. Other factors such as anger, shock, fright, and mental stress also increase probability of Indralupta.^[8,9] Due to these all reasons Pitta (Bile) and vata get aggravated makes, the scalp dry and hair follicles get shrieked. The kapha (Phlegm) and rakta (Blood) also disturbed and obstruct the pores of the scalp, so new hair growth is reduced, causing Indralupta.^[4,6]

Snehan (Lubrication) with Ashwagandha (*Withania Somnifera*) tail nourishes the scalp and ability to mitigate the effects of stress on body and eventually control hair loss. Mrudu nadi sweda (Sweating Treatment) is helps to open the pores on scalp.^[4] Prachhan karma (Blood Liberation) helps to stimulate the hair follicles.^[11] Sonitamritam Kashayam has property of blood purification. It is mild laxative, hence good for all pitta disorders. After Prachhan karma Lepa of *Amalki churna* (*Phyllanthus emblica*), *Methi Seed churna* (*Trigonella foenum graecum*) soothes scalp inflammation provides relief from dandruff and strengthens hairs. *Shirodhara* with *Brahmi tail* (*Bacopa monnieri*) strengthen hair and promote hair growth. *Yashtimadhu* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) soothe an irritated scalp and reduce dandruff. It also reduces scalp infections and stimulates hair growth. *Triphala* is potent tonic works wonder for hair by stimulating the roots and follicles in scalp and promoting hair growth. *Narsimha Rasayana* acts as a body nourisher, improves complexion of skin, and prevents degenerative changes. It is also a unique hair nourisher with ingredient *Bhringraj* (*Eclipta prostrata*), which is mainly used for hair growth. Thus, all treatment and diet would have contributed

Sr. No	Medicine	Dose	Pharmacological Actions
1	Sonitamritam Kashayam	10 ml empty stomach BD	Blood detoxification, mild laxative
2	Amalki churna+Methi seeds churna	Local application	Anti-inflammatory, Kashya
3	Yashtimadhu+Triphala Churna+Honey	1tsp after breakfast	Antioxident, Hair tonic, antibacterial, mild laxative
4	Narsimha Rasayana	1tsp	Antiaging, improving immune function
5	Brahmi tail	Local application	Enhancing memory, promote hair growth

Day	Observation and Results
1–4 days	Amapachan with Avipattikar churna
5 th –10 th day (alternate day 4 setting)	Prachan karma
11 th –15 th day (alternate day)	Lepa (Amalki+methi seeds churna) and Shirodhara
16 th day	Sleep well, Stressed reduces
18 th –28 th day (alternate days)	Lepa (Amalki+methi seeds churna) and Shirodhara
30 th day	Reduced Dandruff
32 th –42 th day (alternate days)	Lepa (Amalki+methi seeds churna) and Shirodhara
44 th day	Thin greyish hairs with brownish tinch appeared over some part of the affected patch
46 th –56 th days (alternate days)	Lepa (Amalki+methi seeds churna) and Shirodhara
60 th day	Small thin greyish hairs grown on the patch

for break the pathogenesis of disease and helps to regrowth of hair at the affected site, by pacifying the tridoshas (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha).

CONCLUSION

From this case study, we can conclude that Snehan, Swedan, and Prachhan karma followed by lepa with Shirodhara and internal medicine of Raktashodhak and Tridoshghna dravya helps in treatment of Indralupta (Alopecia Areata).

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