

EFFECT OF SIRAVEDHA IN VICHARCHIKA (ECZEMA)

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ABSTRACT

Vicharchika is one of the *Kshudra kusta* which is most commonly seen in society and having similar clinical picture like eczema. It is a skin problem mentioned in Ayurvedic literature with *Kapha* and *Pitta dosha* predominance and *rakta* as a main *Dushya*. So in classical text of Ayurveda, Acharyas emphasize the *Shodhana* therapy as the line of treatment at various places. Among these various *Shodhana* therapy, *Raktamokshan* is indicated specially because *Rakta* is mainly involved as *Dushya* in *Samprapti Ghataka*. *Siravedha* is one of the type of *Raktamokshana* by *Shastravacharana* especially used for *Sarvangagata Rakta Dushti Janya Vikara*. *Siravedha* at a particular locations for a particular disease is an essential part of this therapy. As *Acharya Susruta* has described specific sites of *Siravedha* for various diseases in *Sharira- sthana*. (Su.Sha.8/17). According to *Sushruta* in *vicharchika* the site for *siravedhan* is two finger above the *kshipra marma*. Keeping this view in mind, though much work has been done on *raktamokshana* in this disease, but *siravedhan* at the particular sites for a particular disease as mentioned in *samhitas* is not yet done successfully. So in this present clinical study *Siravedha* procedure at exact site were done to evaluate the effect of therapy.

KEYWORDS: Eczema, *Kshudra Kusta*, *Vicharchika*, *Raktamokshan*, *Siravedha*.

INTRODUCTION

According to Ayurvedic classical literature the all skin diseases were considered under one of the broad heading of “*Kusta*”, which are further divided into *Maha kusta* and *Kshudra kusta*.^[1] And in all kinds of skin diseases where *Rakta dushti* is considered as a chief causative factor, *Raktamokshana* can be used as an ideal treatment.^[2]

Vicharchika is one of the *Kshudra kusta* which is most commonly seen in general practice. Though the disease “*Vicharchika*” is not a life threatening, patient becomes worried because of its appearance. Severe itching disturbs their routine.

Charaka, the ancient medical authority says *Vicharchika* as a condition which is characterized by skin eruption with dark discoloration, itching and profuse discharge.^[3] Authors like *Vagbhatta*, *Madhavakara* and *Bhava Mishra* are in agreement with him whereas *Sushruta*, the Father of Surgery has mentioned the symptoms as dryness of the skin with intense itching and marked linings.^[4,5] Similarly difference of opinion exists between

the other texts like *Kashyapa*, *Harita*, and *Bhela* etc. All the authors are in conclusion with the fact that itching and eruption are cardinal symptoms and they are always present in this pathological condition.

A similar clinical presentation in modern dermatology is seen in Eczema. It is defined as a non-contagious inflammation of the skin characterized by erythema, scaling, oedema, vesiculation and oozing. Regarding the treatment, P. N. Behl in his book “The Practice of Dermatology is in a view that some palliative and conservative treatment need to be done. It is also said that, no specific medicaments can cure Eczema; few drugs are available only for symptomatic relief.^[6] Hence, the modern dermatologists apply systemic and local application of Corticosteroids to control the Eczema which has its own side effects.

Whereas *Ayurveda* campaign *Shodhana* with special procedures like *Raktamokshana* as a successful and safer remedy for the chronic derma problems. In this advanced era of modern medicine, this procedure of “*Raktamokshana*” is relatively simple to carry out with very less complications and thus can be effective to deal

with such types of skin diseases. So as *Siravedha Karma* is considered as the ideal method to expel out the vitiated blood safely, quickly, and effectively. It is routinely practised in the past but when it is done at particular site according to disease then it definitely gives better results than routine common sites. As in *Vicharchika* it is said by Aacharya Sushruta to do *siravedha* at two finger above the *kshipra marma*.^[7]

Thus there is a need for a scientific exploration in this regard to make use of this knowledge for the benefit of humanity. It is with this conscience, though much work has been done on *raktamokshana* in this disease, but *siravedhan* at the exact sites for a particular disease as mentioned in *samhitas* is not much practised successfully. That's why this work was selected.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Clinically to evaluate the effect of *Siravedha* at particular site in the management of *Vicharchika*.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Also following material and methods were adopted for clinical study in *Vicharchika*.

Selection of Patients

For the present study the patients having the symptoms of *Vicharchika* were randomly selected from O.P.D. & I.P.D. sections of N.I.A. Jaipur.

Inclusion criteria

1. The patients showing classical signs & symptoms of *Vicharchika* between the age group of 20-60 years in either sex were included in this study.
2. The patients having Hb level >12gm% in male and >11gm% in females.

Exclusion criteria

1. The patients suffering from severe systemic diseases and those subjected to taking any other medication regularly.

Kandu (Itching)

Score	Grade
0	No itching
1	Often mild type of itching (1 -2 times in a day)
2	Moderate itching along with mild itching episode (1 - 2 times in a day).
3	Moderate itching along with moderate itching episode (3 – 4 times in a day).
4	Severe itching episode more than 5 times a day even night and blood spot came out.

Daha (Burning sensation)

0	No burning sensation even after rubbing
1	Mild type of burning sensation, sometime and not disturbing normal activity.
2	After mild type of burning sensation
3	Severe burning sensation disturbing normal activity

2. Patients contraindicated for *siravedha* as mentioned in *samhithas*.

Criteria for Diagnosis

- The patients were diagnosed on the basis of as classical signs and symptoms of *Vicharchika* described in *Ayurvedic* classics.
- A specific Performa was prepared and the patients of the present study were examined in details as per Performa. Haematological investigations like Hb, CBC, ESR, BT, CT, PT, & HIV, HbsAg were carried out before treatment to rule out the other associated pathology.
- The patients were taken for study after taking written consent.
- Total 30 patients of *Vicharchika* (eczema) were registered for the present study.

Siravedhana karma

1. In this trial 2 seating of *Siravedhana karma* was carried out on every 15 days. Amount of Blood letting was decided by measuring 1 *Anjali* fulfilled by water in every patient.
2. Internal snehapana of *ghrita* was given for 3 days prior to each seating of *siravedha karma*.

Criteria for assessment

All the patients were examined weekly during the treatment. Assessment was done on the basis of relief in the sign and symptoms of the disease *Vicharchika*. For this purpose, cardinal signs and symptoms were given scores according to their severity before and after the treatment.

Scoring criteria

For this purpose the assessment rating scale was developed with the help of Dr. J. Manohar and Dr. Sunil kumar Yadav. Some of them are mentioned below.

Srava (Discharge)

0	No discharge
1	Moisture on the skin lesion
2	Weeping from the skin lesion
3	Weeping from the skin lesion followed by crusting

Rukshata (Dryness/Roughness)

0	No dryness (Snigdha)
1	Dryness with rough skin (Ruksha)
2	Dryness with scaling (Khara)
3	Dryness with cracking (Parusha)

Pidika (Eruption)

0	No eruption in the lesion
1	Scanty eruption in few lesion
2	Scanty eruption in at least half of the lesion
3	All the lesions full of eruption

Vaivarnya (De-pigmentation)

0	Nearly normal skin color
1	Brownish red discoloration
2	Blackish red discoloration
3	Blackish discoloration

Raji (Thickening Of Skin)

0	No thickening of the skin
1	Thickening of the skin but no criss-cross marking
2	Thickening of skin with criss-cross marking
3	Severe lichenification

Criteria for Overall Effect of Therapy

The total effect of the therapy was assessed considering following criteria.

- **Cured:** 100% relief in the sign and symptoms with plain skin surface and significant changes in color of the affected skin lesion toward normal were considered as cured.
- **Complete remission:** More than 75% relief in the sign and symptoms were recorded as complete remission with marked improvement in pigmentation and thickening of the skin.
- **Marked Improvement:** 51 – 75% relief in sign and symptoms were considered as marked improved with moderate improvement in pigmentation and thickening of the skin.
- **Improvement:** Patients showing improvement in between 26 – 50% in sign and symptoms with slight improvement of pigmentation and thickening of the skin was taken as improvement.
- **Unchanged:** Below 25% relief in sign and symptoms was considered as unchanged.

Statistical Analysis

The information gathered on the basis of classical symptomatology was subjected to statistical analysis in term of mean (X), standard deviation (SD) and standard error (SE). Wilcoxon matched pair test was carried out at $P < 0.10$, $P < 0.05$, $P < 0.01$, $P < 0.001$ significance level. The obtained results were interpreted as –

Insignificant - $P > 0.05$
 Significant - $P < 0.05$
 Highly significant - $P < 0.01$, $P < 0.001$

RESULTS

- All the Results Calculated by using Software: InStatGraphPad 3.
- For Nonparametric Data Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed ranks test is used and results Calculated.

Effect of Therapy on

- i. *Kandu* score: The mean Score before treatment was 1.8333 which lowered down to 1.333 after treatment, with $SD \pm 0.6823$ giving a relief of 27.27% which was statistically highly significant.
- ii. *Pidika* score: The mean score before treatment was 1.033 which lowered down to 0.700 after treatment, with $SD \pm 0.05467$ giving a relief of 32.23% which was statistically highly significant.
- iii. *Srava* score: The mean score before treatment was 1.00 which lowered down to 0.800 after treatment, with $SD \pm 0.4068$ giving a relief of 20% which was statistically quiet significant.
- iv. *Vaivarnata* score: The mean Score before treatment was 1.967 which lowered down to 1.800 after treatment, with $SD \pm 0.3790$ giving a relief of 8.475% which was statistically not significant.

- v. *Raktima* score: The mean Score before treatment was 1.233 which lowered down to 1.000 after treatment, with $SD\pm 0.4302$ giving a relief of 18.897% which was statistically quiet significant.
- vi. *Daha* score: The mean Score before treatment was 1.067 which lowered down to 0.8000 after treatment, with $SD\pm 0.5833$ giving a relief of 24.995% which was statistically quiet significant.
- vii. *Rukshata* score: The mean Score before treatment was 0.9000 which lowered down to 0.7333 after treatment, with $SD\pm 0.3790$ giving a relief of 18.522% which was statistically not significant.
- viii. *Raji* score: The mean Score before treatment was 0.7000 which lowered down to 0.5000 after treatment, with $SD\pm 0.4068$ giving a relief of 28.571% which was statistically highly significant.
- ix. *Ruja* score: The mean Score before treatment was 0.6333 which lowered down to 0.2333 after treatment, with $SD\pm 0.4983$ giving a relief of 63.161% which was statistically significant.

Total Effect of *Siravedha* therapy

Table 1: Results of therapy.

Result	No.of patients	%
Cured	0	0%
Marked improvement	2	6.66%
Improvement	12	40%
Unchanged	16	53.33%

Over all effect of this therapy shows that 53.33% patients were remained mild to unchanged in their symptomatology where 6.66% and 40% patients were got marked improvement and improvement respectively. No any patient was completely cured.

DISCUSSION ON OBSERVATIONS

Vicharchika is a *Kapha-Pitta* dominant *Tridoshaja Vyadhi*. Further all types of *Kushtha* have been included as *Rakta pradoshaja Vyadhi*, in which *Virechana* and *Raktamokshana* are stated to be the best treatment modalities. Taking this point into consideration, this study was planned to evaluate the effect of *Siravedhana* at the exact site of *Siravedha* i.e. 2 fingers above *Kshipra marma* (i.e. at first branch of dorsal venous arch) in the management of *Vicharchika*. For this study classical procedure of *Siravedhana* were selected as *Shodhana karma*. In this study research work was carried out in only one group of 30 patients.

In the present study, total 30 patients of *Vicharchika* were registered who completed the course of the treatment i.e. 2 seating of *siravedhana*.

In present study majority of the patients belonged to age group 41-50 years i.e. 40%. This age of individuals are prone to psychological stress and other exposure, (occupational, environmental, and unwholesome food were more) which are etiological factors for eczema.

The 36% of patients were having *Chinta*. Emotional conflicts are among main etiological factor for skin manifestation. Eczema may become more aggressive in this state. *Viruddha Ahara* (incompatible diet), (milk + Khichadi, fast food, curd, non-vegetarian diet) and sleep during day time which leads to vitiation of *Kapha* and *Rakta*. These vitiated *Doshas* reach to *Dushya* like *Twaka*, etc., and results into *Sthana Sanshraya Avastha* and then produces symptoms of *Vicharchika*.

The sex wise distribution of the patients reveals that 73.33% of the patients were male while others were female. But it can't be said that the role of sex is there in the manifestation of *Kushtha* or eczema.

Addiction of Coffee/Tea was found in the most of the patients (i.e. 66.66%). Tobacco chewing & smoking habits were found in 20% patients. Actually there is a general trend of having Tea, Pan, Masala, and Cigarette & Soda in this area. These addictions may have also a role in supporting for the aggravation of the disease *Vicharchika*.

Pradhana Vedana (Cardinal Symptoms)

In the present study *Vaivarnyata* was observed in maximum (86.66%) no. of patients. Symptoms like *Kandu*, and *Daha*, were observed in 80% of the patients. *Pidika* and *Rukshata*, were observed in 73.33%, and 70% of patients respectively. *Raji* and *Srava* were observed in 40% and 26.66% of patients. *Raktima* and *Ruja* were observed in 23.33% of the patients. *Kandu*, and *Vaivarnyata* is the cardinal symptom of *Vicharchika* which was observed in most of the patients.

Type of Disease:- Maximum no. of patients (73.33%) were having dry type of *Vicharchika*. Dry type of *Vicharchika* is prevailing more in this area. Hence patients having this type of *Vicharchika* were found maximum.

Onset: Maximum no. of patients (50%) had gradual onset. Disease started either with the complain of *Kandu* (Itching) or *Vaivarnya* (discoloration) at one site of the body. This may be because of negligence of the disease in the initial stages.

Chronicity: Maximum no. of patients (60%) were suffering from the disease for more than 1 year while 26.66% patients were suffering for more than 3 years.

Present Status: 70% patients were having *Kapha* dominant (Steady) lesion which indicates its chronicity whereas 30% of patients were having *Vata* dominance (Spreading) which suggests its progressive stage. *Visruti* and number of lesion may indicate the state of eczema and intensity of irritation.

Examination of Lesion

- **Varna (Lesion):** 50% patients were having *Vata* dominance in color of lesion (*Shyava/Krishna*) while 36.66% of patients were having *Kapha* dominance (*Shaitya*) in color of lesion, 13.33% of patients were having *Pitta* dominance (*Rakta*) in color of lesion. Erythema has been observed in initial stage of eczema, in later stage it may get different type of color.
- **Sparsha:** 63.33% patients were having *Vata* dominance (*Ruksha, Khara, Parusha*), 23.33% patients were having *Pitta* dominance (*Klinna*) and 13.33% of patients were having *Kapha* dominance (*Sotha, Bahalata*) in *Sparsha*. *Sotha* indicates inflammatory condition of eczema, *Bahalata* reflects its deep seated lesion, and *Praklinna* indicates profuse discharge or wet eczema, while different stage of dryness (*Khara* etc.) indicates its chronicity.
- **Vedana (Pain):** 66.66% patients were having *Kapha* dominance (*Kandu*), 23.33% patients were having *Pitta* dominance (*Daha*) and 10% patients were

having *Vata* dominance (*Supti, Shula*). Itching is cardinal symptom of eczema; it may also produce burning after severe itching, in photo dermatitis. Pain is rarely reported symptom may be observed in later condition.

- **Srava (Discharge):** 62.50% patients were having *Vata* dominant (*Tanu and Alpa*) discharge. 12.50% patients were having *Pitta* dominant (*Raktabha, Puyabha, Prabhuta*) discharge while *Kapha* dominant (*Picchila, Shweta, Prabhuta*) discharge was found in 25% of patient. Discharge may produce in any stage after itching but purulent *Srava* is indication of infective eczema.

Amount of Blood letting

During 2 seating in 30 patients treatment, maximum 46.66% patients have been noted for 30-40 ml of bloodletting during each seating of *Siravedhana*. 30% patients have been noted bloodletting amount 41-50 ml during each seating. 16.66% patients had been noted bloodletting amount 51-60 ml during each seating Only 6.66% Patient had been noted bloodletting in quantity of 61-70 ml.

Average Quantity of Bloodletting

The amount of blood removed from one sitting was decided by measuring of one *Anjali Pramana*. Average Quantity of Bloodletting for *Siravedhana* was 43.3 ml.

Effect of Therapy

Table 2: Showing effect of Therapy in Subjective Parameters.

Variable	Mean		Mean diff.	% Relief	S.D. ±	S.E. ±	P	S
	B.T.	A.T.						
<i>Kandu</i>	1.833	1.333	0.500	27.27%	0.6823	0.1246	0.0005	HS
<i>Pidika</i>	1.033	0.700	0.333	32.23%	0.5467	0.09981	0.0039	HS
<i>Srava</i>	1.00	0.800	0.200	20%	0.4068	0.07428	0.0313	S
<i>Vaivarnata</i>	1.967	1.800	0.1667	8.475%	0.3790	0.06920	0.0625	NS
<i>Raktima</i>	1.233	1.000	0.233	18.897%	0.4302	0.07854	0.0156	S
<i>Daha</i>	1.067	0.8000	0.2667	24.995%	0.5833	0.1065	0.0313	S
<i>Rukshata</i>	0.9000	0.7333	0.1667	18.522%	0.3790	0.06920	0.0625	NS
<i>Raji</i>	0.700	0.500	0.200	28.571%	0.4068	0.07428	0.0313	S
<i>Ruja</i>	0.3000	0.1333	0.1667	55.566%	0.3790	0.06920	0.0625	NS

By *Siravedhana* in Sign and symptoms like *Kandu, Pidika* were improved by 27.27%, and 32.23% respectively, which were statistically highly significant.(P<0.001).

In the signs and symptoms like *Daha, Raktima, Srava, Raji* were improved by 24.99%, 18.89%, 20%, 28.57% which were statistically significant.(P< 0.05).

In remaining symptoms like *Vaivarnyata, Rukshata, Ruja* percentage wise improvement was observed as 8.47%, 18.52%, 55.56% respectively which was statistically insignificant. (P<0.05)

- **Kandu:** It was relieved by 27.27% after 2 seating of *Siravedha* therapy. *Kandu* is caused by vitiated *Kapha* (Ch. Su. 20/18), *Pitta* (Ch. Su. 20/15) and

Vata (Sh.Sa. Pu. Kh. 7/114). So, here *Tridosha* vitiation is responsible for it. Relief in *Kandu* was observed may be due to removal of vitiated morbid *Dosha* (toxins) from local region.

- **Pidika:** 32.23% relief was observed in *Pidika*. Due to *Siravedha* local blood flow may be increased and it leads to cure minute obstruction in blood flow.
- **Srava:** It was relieved by 20% in 2 seating of *siravedha*. Here *Ushna* and *Tikshna* Guna of vitiated *Pitta* are responsible for *Srava*. *Siravedhana* corrects the vitiation of *Pitta* better in comparative to other types of *Raktamokshana*, hence reduces the *Srava* on the local lesions level.
- **Raktima;** It was relieved up to 18.89%. *Raktima* is caused by vitiated *Pitta*. *Siravedha* purifies vitiated

Rakta dhatu which ultimately leads to cure vitiated *Pitta dosha*.

- **Daha:** Here 24.99% relief was observed. Hence *Siravedha* therapy showed better result in the reduction of *Daha* complain. *Siravedha* removes local inflammation mediators thus relive burning sensation of the lesion.
- **Raji:** Here 28.57% relief was observed in Raji (lichenification). Thus, further it can be said that *Siravedha* provided better relief in *Raji*, due to better removal of impure and congested blood.

Over All Effect of Therapy

No any patient was completely cured where 6.66% and 40% patients were got marked improvement and improvement respectively. Remaining 53.33% patient were remained mild to unchanged in their symptomatology.

- *Siravedhana* done on individual site of *Siravyadha* for *Vicharchika* with proper method will definitely provide better result than general sites of *siravedha*.
- *Siravedhana* is *Sarvanga Shodhana* procedure so without doing proper *Poorvakarma* it dose not work for removal of disease.
- *Vicharchika* is chronic disease and recurrent by time, so only *Shodhana* therapy may not give better relief.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion is the determination established by investigating in various ways and deducting by means of various reasons (Ch. Vi. 8). On the basis of the present study, following conclusions can be drawn.

1. *Siravyadha* is effective therapeutic tool in many health hazards if judiciously administered.
2. The efficacy of *Siravyadha* is appreciated by ancient *Aacharyas* and present day modern medical science also.
3. The sites of *Siravyadha* told by *Aacharya Sushruta* are scientific and practically justified.
4. Almost all the *Siras* told by *Aacharya Sushruta* for *Vyadhana* purpose can be adopted in clinical practice.
5. *Vicharchika* is the type of *Kustha* which can be correlated with eczema & its types as described in modern medicine.
6. *Siravedha* gives more better results, when done at particular site mentioned in *Sushruta samhita*.
7. Relapsing nature of *Vicharchika* is most common, which suggest that, long term intensive therapy is necessary for eradication of the disease.
8. *Siravedhana karma* provides better relief in the symptoms of *Vicharchika* like *Pidika* and *Daha* which were Highly significant ($p < 0.001$)
9. *Pidika* and *Daha* are *Pittaja Vyadhi* with involvement of *Rakta Dosha*. Due to removal of *Rakta* which is *Asraya Sthana* of *Pitta* these symptoms were relieved in better way by *Siravedha*.

Siravedhana done on individual site of *Siravyadha* in particular diseases with proper *purvakarma* provides better results. It is a *Sarvang Shodhana* procedure and *Poorvakarma* is required before *Siravedhana karma*.

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