



MANAGEMENT OF AUTOIMMUNE ECZEMA W.R.T. VICHARCHIKA-A CRITICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Immunity is the defensive mechanism of the body to fight and destroy any disease causing organisms or attributes. An auto immune disease is a condition wherein the cells of the body fail to recognize the body makeup due to severe metabolic disturbances and thus begin to attack themselves resulting in a diseased state. Currently, almost 80 such diseases have been named so far and pose a challenge for medical science Eczema as an auto immune disease is a catarrhal inflammation of the skin especially epidermis and dermis, clinically manifested as acute, sub acute and chronic. Ayurved explains all skin diseases under the aegis of 'Kushtha', 'Visarpa' and 'Kshudra Kushtha' wherein predominance of *doshas* causes variations in symptomatology. Of

these, *Kshudra Kushtha* has been divided into eleven types one of them being *Vicharchika*. Here *Raktadhatu* and *Raktavaha srotas* are involved resulting manifestations of *Twakdushti* eg. *Srava* (exudation/oozing), *Shyavta* (blackish discolouration), *Kandu* (pruritis/itching) and *Pidaka* (vesicle/papule) This paper critically reviews the management of autoimmune eczema wrt *Vicharchika* and recommends a line of treatment based on the predominance of *doshas* which includes *Shodhana* procedures such as *Vaman*, *Virechana* etc.

KEYWORDS: Auto immune diseases, Eczema, Immunity, Kushtha, Vicharchika.

INTRODUCTION

Immunity is the defensive mechanism of the body to fight and destroy any disease causing organisms or attributes. A good immunity is maintained by the various cells of the body. Auto immunity is a form of deregulation of the immune system in which the immune response is directed against normal cells or tissues. This leads to the formation of 'auto antibodies'.^[1]

An auto immune disease is a condition wherein the cells of the body fail to recognize the body makeup due to severe metabolic disturbances and thus begin to attack themselves resulting in a diseased state.^[2] Currently, almost 80 such diseases have been named so far and pose a challenge for medical science. Ironically such diseases frequently occur as combinations and are interlinked.

Eczema as an auto immune disease. It is a catarrhal inflammation of the skin especially epidermis and dermis, clinically manifested as acute, sub acute and chronic. Similarly, on the basis of causative factors it is also categorized as exogenous and endogenous.

- a. Exogenous: The various types of occupational or environmental toxins, radiation toxicity, phototoxicity etc are the extrinsic factors contributing to exogenous eczema
- b. Endogenous: The various types of endogenous eczema can be attributed to various types of dermatitis and auto eczematization due to metabolic disturbances.^[3]

CLINICAL FEATURES^[4]

Clinically, eczema manifests as erythema, edema, papules, vesicles, pruritis, scaling and lichenification, However, it can be grossly categorized as

- Acute Eczema: Erythema, vesicles, oozing, edema are the classical symptoms
- Sub acute Eczema: Diffuse Erythema, Scab formation on vesicles, scaling and edema are noted.
- Chronic: Moderate Erythema, scaling and lichenification, hypo pigmentation and hyper pigmentation.

TRADITIONAL ANALOGUE OF ECZEMA

Ayurved, the traditional system of medicine explains all skin diseases under the aegis of 'Kushtha', 'Visarpa' and 'Kshudra Kushtha'. All Kushtha Rogas are Tridoshajanya but

predominance of doshas causes variations in symptomatology. Of these, Kshudra Kushtha has been divided into 11 types, one of them being Vicharchika.^[5] Sushrutacharya has stated it to be Pittapradhan^[6] whereas Vagbhatacharya and Charakacharya state it to be Kaphapradhan.^[7] The most common manifestations are Srava (exudation/oozing), Shyavta (blackish discolouration), Kandu (pruritis/itching) and Pidaka (vesicle/papule)

Nidan of Vicharchika^[8]

Viruddhahar (incompatible food) and Dushivisha (cumulative toxin) have been cited by the Acharyas as the Hetu (aetiological factor) of Vicharchika.

a. Viruddhahar

Viruddhahar is a combination of Dravyas that cause Utklesh of the Doshas but are not expelled out of the body. This causes vitiation of the Agni, Dhatus and Srotas as well. All 18 types of Viruddhahar as stated by Charakacharya result in such vitiation in a manner specific to the Ahitahar or improper food consumed. This Ahitahar is also a Hetu of Dushivisha, another aetiological factor of Vicharchika^[9]

b. Dushivisha

The term Dushivisha implies a Visha (toxin) found as a result of incomplete or improper expulsion of a poison or its detoxification that further vitiates the Doshas. The Visha may be of Sthavara, Jaangam, Kritrim origin. This Heena (low potency) Visha tends to undergo Sanchaya (accumulation) within the body and acquires an Avaran of Kapha, thus preventing immediate Vyadhi Nirmiti.^[10]

Later as and when an exposure to aggravating etiological factors like Dushit Desha, Kaala, Anna, Diva Swap, Ajeerna etc. occurs a further vitiation of Doshas takes place. This leads to Dosha-Dushya Sammurchana and Poorva rupa (prodromal signs) Awastha of the Vyadhi is observed. Consequently, Lakshan or Rupa (symptoms) are noted depending on the Dhātu or Srotas involved.^[11]

In the case of Vicharchika, Raktadhatu and Raktavaha srotas are involved resulting in manifestations of Twakdushti.

MANAGEMENT

The management depends on the amount of aggravated Dosha and Rogibala and thus the treatment may be divided into Shodhana and Shamana (pacification).

SHODHANA

It is indicated in cases where Prabhoota Doshas are involved. If Dosha prakopa is less then only Shamana Chikitsa is enough. However, if the patient is of Heena Bala, it is advisable to adopt Shamana Chikitsa even in Prabhoota Dosha condition.

According to the predominance of Doshas, Shodhana procedures such as Vamana, Virechana, Raktamokshana etc. should be adopted. These procedures can be carried out as follows-

- **Vamana:** Mustadi Choornam^[12](Siddharthaka snana yogam)
- **Virechanam:** Trivruttadi Kashayam^[13] (Trivrut, Triphala and Danti), Mustadi Choornam^[12] and Avipatkar Choornam.^[14]
- **Basti:** Aasthapana-Daarvyadi Yogam^[15]
- **Nasyam:** Saindhavadi Nasyam^[16]
- **Raktamokshanam:** Jalaukavacharan and prachhan.^[17]

The patients suffering from Kushtha (skin diseases) have to subsequently undergo Nasya Karma once in every 3 days, Vamana once in every 15 days, virechana once every month and Raktamokshan every 6 months.^[18]

Lepanam

When vitiated doshas take aashraya in twak then Lepana is indicated with

- Siddharthaka /Mustadi choornam^[12] for blackish discolouration may also be used.

SHAMANA

Post Shodhan, in order to subside the residual Doshas, Shaman Chikitsa is indicated. It is also found to be useful in patients who are contraindicated for Shodhan Chikitsa. The list of medicines that are indicated in Vicharchika are-

Kashayam Yogas

- Manjishthadi Kashayam^[19] as it is indicated in Kaphaja Kushtha with Kandu and Srava.
- Tiktakam Kashayam^[20] is indicated in Vata Paittik condition with symptoms of Vedana, Pidaka and Shyavata.
- Guduchyadi Kashayam^[21] in vesicle formation with burning sensation.

Gutika Yogas

Visha Vilwadi gutika^[22], Vilwadi gutika^[23], Dooshivishari gutika^[24] with Madhu in all conditions especially with fever and infection

- Mukkamukkadukaadi gutika^[25] can be used if infection and fever is present.
- Kaisora guggulu^[26] with hot water for Kaphaja condition, Manjishthadi kashayam^[19] for Pittaja condition and with milk for Vataja condition.
- Amruta guggulu^[27], Panchanimbadi gutika^[28], Triphala guggulu^[29], etc. can also be used with Khadira Kashayam.^[30]

Choorna Yogas

- Itching can be controlled by Haridra khandam^[31], Vyoshadi vatakam^[32] or Thaaleesadi choornam^[33] can be used.
- Burning sensation :Guduchi satwam^[34] with milk, Guggulu panchapalam choornam^[35]
- Kapha Pitta condition Guggulu Panchapalam Choornam^[35] and Triphala Choornam^[36]
- Itching and Oozing: Brihath panchanimbadi choornam^[37] with Kashayas of Khadira^[30]

Arishta and Asava Yogas

- Pippalyasavam^[38] can be used in all conditions,
- Amrutharishtam^[39]+Punarnnavasavam^[40] if infection is present.
- Abhayarishtam^[41], Khadirarishtam^[42], Dasamoolarishtam^[43], in Pittaja condition
- Madhookasavam^[44] can be used in Kaphapittaja condition

Lehya Yogas

- In Kaphaja condition Manibhadra gulam^[45], Dasamoola Hareethaki^[46] and Dasamula lehyam^[47]
- In Pithaja condition Danthee harithaki^[48] and madhusnuhi rasayana^[49]
- In Tridosha condition-Gandhaka Rasayana^[50] can be used for 41 days followed by strict pathya.

Pathya^[52]

Rakthasali, Sastika, and Priyangu, Yusha (Soup made by pulses mudga and harenuka), mamsarasa of Ena, sikhi, Svavit Lava, Tititri, prasata, Yusha and Rasa should be prepared Saindhava, tanduliyaka (*amaranthus spinosus*), Jivanti (*Lepatadenia reticulate*),

Varthaka (Solanum melongena), Sunisannaka(marselia minuta) etc. Amalaki (Embllica officinalis), Dadima (Punica granatum) as amla dravyas.

Apathya^[53]

- Navadhanya (freshly harvested grains), Kulatha (Dolichos biflorus), Tila (gingelly), Souvira, Phanitham(a kind of Jaggery), Sura (alcoholic drink), Foods and drugs which are Tikshna, Ushna Vidahi, particularly tikshna Dravyas
- Ajeerna, Adhyasana, divaswapna, Vyavaya(Sexual intercourse), Krodha, athapa (Sun rays)
- Tailam, tamboolam, lavana, guda, amla, sarsapa, narikela, takra, Kshara dravyas, mamsa dravyas, sura, dadhi, shaka, athya-atapa, panasa, athya-adhwana, dhooma, Vyapath chintha etc

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