

Review Of Vicharchika And Its Management Through Ayurveda

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Abstract

Vicharchika, classified as a KshudraKushta in Ayurveda, is a chronic skin disorder characterized by itching, discharge, eruptions, and dark discoloration. Its clinical presentation closely parallels eczema (atopic dermatitis) in modern dermatology. Contemporary management relies mainly on topical corticosteroids and immunosuppressants, which offer symptomatic relief but carry risks of adverse effects and recurrence. Ayurveda advocates Shodhana (purification) and Shamana (palliative) therapies to eliminate vitiated Doshas and restore systemic balance. This review highlights the similarities in presentation, differences in management approaches, and the potential benefits of integrating Ayurvedic principles with modern dermatological care.

Keywords: Vicharchika, Kshudra Kushta, Ayurveda

INTRODUCTION

Skin is one of the five special sense organs. It has many other important functions; it protects the internal organs from deleterious environmental influences like temperature, infectious organisms, chemicals & mechanical injuries etc. Majority of the skin disease are not fatal, but create comparatively greater stress and strain to the patient. Skin diseases are more painful & irritant, some of them are contagious. Skin diseases are haunting mankind since ages past. The disease produces both Psychological and Physical discomfort due to the blemished skin.

Literary Survey of Kustha and Vicharchika is given in Table 1 :

Literature	Ref. of Kustha	Ref. of Vicharchika
Veda	Rigveda (1/32/2) Atharva veda (7/74) Brahmana literature	
Purana	Agni Purana (120/3) Garuda Purana (175-176, 194-198)	
Smriti	Manu Smriti	
Literature	Ref. of Kustha	Ref. of Vicharchika
Samhitas	Charaka Ni. 5, Ci.7	Charaka Chi. 7 Su. 13/10-11, 26/42-43
	Sushruta Ni. 5, Ni. 13	Sushruta Ni. 5, Ni. 13
	Harita 3rd Sthana 39th Chapter Kustha Chikitsa	Harita 3rd Sthana 39th Chapter
	Kashyapa Ci. Kusthachikitsa (Page 116)	Kashyapa Ci. Kusthachikitsa (Page 116)
Samgraha	Ashtanga Samgraha (A.S.) Ni. 14	A.S. Ni. 14/9-10, 19
	Ashtanga Hrdaya (A.H.) Ni. 14	A.H. Ni. 14
	Madhava Nidana Chapter 49	Madhava Nidana Chapter 49

Other texts of Samgraha Kala like Chakradatta, Gadanigraha, Sharangdhara, Bhava Prakasha, Yogaratnakara, Bhaishajya Ratnavali have also described Vicharchika with its definition & description.

Etymology of Vicharchika:

Vachaspatyama

When 'charca' Dhatu is prefixed with 'Vee' & suffixed by 'Navul', the word Vicharchika of feminine gender is formed which is a type of SvalpaKustha. (Vac 6th part)

Shabda Kalpadrum

Vicharchika belongs to feminine gender & is formed from 'CarcaTarjane' Dhatu by adding 'Navul' to it & is a type of disease. (Sa. Ka. 4th part)

Nirukti of Vicharchika

Shabdakalpadrum describes two main features founded in Vicharchika i.e. cracking of the skin mainly occurs in the skin of hands & legs 'Visheshena care-ayatepadasyaTvakvidaryate Anaya itiVicharchika' which means the disease which coats/covers the skin in particular manner & causes cracking of skin of hands & feet mainly.

Definition

According to **Acharya Charaka** Vicharchika is defined as 'SaKanduPidika Shyava Bahu Srava Vicharchika'. (Ch.chi. 7/26) means the skin disease where eruptions over the skin appear with dark pigmentation, itching with profuse discharge from the lesion.

Vicharchika according to **AcharyaSushruta** is 'RajyoAtikanduAtiruja Sa Ruksha Bhavanti GatreshuVicharchikayam'. (Su.Ni. 5/13) accordingly condition in which skin is dry with severe itching & marked linings present is Vicharchika. Furthermore he added that if the same condition appears at the feet with pain, then it is known as 'Vipadika'. **Acharya Madhava, Vagbhata & Bhavamishra** have described almost same definition as **Acharya Charaka**. **Acharya Kashyapa** describes Vicharchika as blackish brown eruption with intense itching & pain. While **Acharya Harita** has considered multiple pin head sized eruptions with ulceration & itching in Vicharchika. **Acharya Bhel** narrates Vicharchika as a dark red coloured deep-rooted lesion with moisture or oozing.

Nidana Panchaka of Vicharchika

Nidana

Though, there is no specific description about etiological factors of the disease Vicharchika but being a variety of Kshudra Kustha, the etiological factors of the Kustha is accepted as the etiological factors of the Vicharchika.

Etiological factors of Kustha & hence of Vicharchika as mentioned in different Ayurvedic texts may be classified into following groups.

- Aaharaja Hetu
- Viharaja Hetu
- Bijadoshaja Hetu

PURVARUPA (PRODROMAL STAGE):

Purvarupa is the prodromal stage of the disease. This is the fourth Kriyakala according to Sushrutacharya in which Sthanasmashraya of vitiated Doshas takes place. There is no specific mention of Purvarupa of Vicharchika. But Purvarupa of Kustha as a whole are given in many Samhitas which are applicable to Vicharchika.

RUPA (SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS)

Almost similar signs & symptoms of Vicharchika have been described by different Acharyas. But some Lakshanas are different like **Acharya Charaka & Vagbhata** have defined Strava as symptom, whereas **Acharya Sushruta** defined Ruksha as a symptom. It suggests that Vicharchika can be of both the types i.e. Dry & Wet.

SAMPRAPTI (PATHOGENESIS)

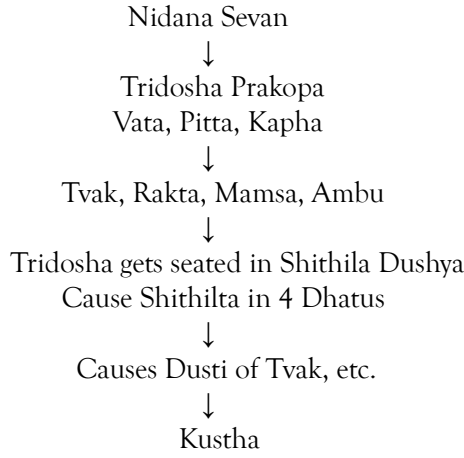
Samprapti shows the complete process of occurrence of disease. Chakrapani has described it to be the process by which Doshas after getting provoked produce the disease. Acharyas have described the samprapti for Kustha in general, is taken as for Vicharchika also.

वातदयस्त्रयोदुष्टास्त्वग्रक्तमांसाम्बुच।

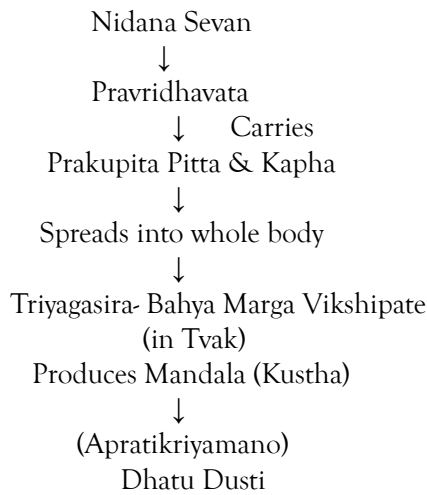
दुष्यन्तिसकुष्ठानाम्सप्तकोद्रव्यसंग्रहः ॥ (च०चि०७/९)

Vicharchika a type of Kustha, is having involvement of seven factors namely three Doshas, and four Dushyas i.e. Tvak, Rakta, Mansha and Lasika.

त्रयोदोषाः युगपत्प्रकोपमापद्यते.....
.....कुष्ठमभिनिर्वर्तयति॥(च.नि. ५/६)



According to Charaka Samhita (chi. 7) due to various Nidana Sevana, Tridosha gets vitiated simultaneously & produces shaithilya in the Tvak, Mamsa, Rakta & Ambu. Then Tridosha gets seated in Shithila Dhātu & vitiating them with Lakshanotpatti of KusthaRoga. (Sushruta Ni. 5/3)



According to Acharya Sushruta, Nidana Sevan causes vitiation of Vata, which carry vitiated Pitta & Kapha to the Tiryakagami Sira at the level of Bahyaroga marga i.e. Tvak, Rakta, Mamsa & Ambu. Here, these vitiated Dosha gets seated. If these Doshas are not treated properly, they may penetrate the deeper Dhatus of body.

पाप्मभिः कर्मभिः सद्यप्राक्तनैश्चेरितामलाः ।

शिराः प्रपद्यतिर्यग्गास्त्वग्लसीकासृगामिषम्॥

दुष्यन्तिश्शुक्लीकृत्यनिश्चरन्तस्ततोबहिः ।

त्वचः कुर्वन्तिवैवर्ण्यदुष्टाकुष्ठामुशन्ति तत्॥ (अ. ह. नि. १४/२-३)

Vyadhighatakas of Vicharchika are as follows:

Doshas	:	Tridoshas
Dusyas	:	Tvak, Rakta, Mamsa, Lasika
Srotas	:	Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Ambuvaha
Agni	:	Jatharagnimandya Dhatvagnimandya
Srotodusti	:	Sanga and Vimargagamana
Udbhavasthana	:	Amashaya
Sanchara Sthana	:	Tvaka
Rogamarga	:	Bahya
Swabhava	:	Chirkari

SADHYA – ASHADHYA

If Vicharchika is having dominance of single Dosha or VataKaphajthan it is Sadhya but when it is either Vata Pittajor Kapha Pittaj than it is Krichha Sadhya. Moreover, if there is dominance of all the tridosha & patient is having certain complains like Trishna, Balahani, Agnimandya, then it is Asadhya stage of Vicharchika.

CHIKITSA – SUTRA

Ayurveda focuses on treating the root cause of the disease by removing the vitiated Doshas and restoring the balance between Doshas and Dhatus. The term Chikitsa means ‘Ruk Pratikriya’ i.e. to counteract the causative factors of a disease. Acharya Sushruta says ‘measures calculated to the removal of the causative factors of disease is Chikitsa.’ In general, it is an accepted fact that the skin diseases are time consuming as far as the treatment is concerned i.e. not easily cured, long standing & requires patience in treatment.

The main principles of treatment include:

Shodhana Chikitsa – Purification therapies like Virechana (purgation) and Raktamokshana (bloodletting) to eliminate the accumulated toxins.

Shamana Chikitsa – Palliative therapies including herbal formulations, medicated oils, and dietary regulation to reduce symptoms and support healing.

Rasayana Chikitsa – Rejuvenation therapy to strengthen the immune system, improve skin health, and prevent recurrence.

This holistic approach not only controls the symptoms but also works towards long-term health and prevention of relapses.

Generally, there are 2 types of treatment i.e.

Shodhana Chikitsa & Shamana Chikitsa

Besides the classical references the treatment of Kustha can broadly be classified into three main methods of management viz.

Antha parimarjana - Vamana, Virechana, Rakta moskshana

Bahi parimarjana - Lepa, Parisheka, Avachurnana, etc

Shastra pranidhana - Lekhana, Vyadhana, Shiramokshana

CONCLUSION

Vicharchika (eczema) is a chronic skin disorder that affects both physical comfort and quality of life. While modern medicine offers temporary relief, Ayurveda provides a comprehensive, root-cause-oriented approach through detoxification, symptom management, and rejuvenation. By following proper Ayurvedic principles, including lifestyle modifications and Rasayana therapy, long-term relief and improved skin health can be achieved.

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