ABSTRACT

Virechana is a procedure in which orally administered drug acts on morbid Doshas, especially Pitta, expelling them out through the Guda Marga (rectal route). Psoriasis is a non-infectious, chronic inflammatory disease of the skin, characterized by well-defined erythematous plaques with silvery scale, and having a chronic fluctuating course. In Ayurveda, almost all the skin diseases have been described under the heading ‘Kushtha’. Psoriasis can be considered as one type of Kushtha and may resemble Ekakushtha, Kitibha or Mandala Kushtha depending upon the presentation. Kushtha is a Tridoshaja Vyadhi, wherein Virechana is described as one of the treatment modality.

In this clinical study, 25 patients diagnosed with psoriasis were taken and were subjected to Virechana Karma by giving Hridya Virechana Leha. Prior to that, Deepana and Pachana were done as per necessity, followed by Snehapan with Moorchhita Tila Taila. The outcome showed statistically highly significant results in the two aspects that were assessed- PASI score and 5 D Itch scale.

KEYWORDS

Kushtha, psoriasis, Virechana, PASI score, 5 D Itch scale
INTRODUCTION

Virechana is a procedure in which the morbid Doshas are eliminated through Adhobhaga, where Acharya Chakrapani while commenting on Adhobhaga clarifies it as the Guda (anal route)\(^1\). Psoriasis is a chronic inflammatory skin disorder clinically characterized by erythematous, sharply demarcated papules and rounded plaques, covered by silvery micaceous scale\(^2\). It is one of the most common dermatological conditions, affecting around 2% of the world population\(^3\). Studies have shown the disease hampers the quality of life of the patients in a varying degree, both physically and psychologically.

In Ayurveda, almost all the skin diseases have been described under Kushtha. Psoriasis is considered as one type of Kushtha and may resemble Ekakushta, Kitibha, or Mandala Kushtha depending upon the presentation. Kushtha is a Tridoshaja Vikara\(^4\), and for it, Shodhana in the form of Virechana has been presented as a treatment modality in Ayurveda Texts. Also the way Virechana (Shodhana) should be done in those patients has been described (i.e., it should do Dosha Nirharana in mild to moderate degree only and it should be done in repeated fashion)\(^5\). In Sahasrayoga, Hridya Virechana Leha is presented as one of the Vairechanika Yoga\(^6\). It is one of the preparations of Trivrit, and Trivrit is considered as best Sukha Virechana Dravya\(^7\) as well as best drug for Rechana\(^8\).

So, with this background, the study was taken to evaluate the efficacy of Virechana Karma using Hridya Virechana Leha in the management of psoriasis.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Ethical Committee Approval No. 03_A009_67189

Source of data:

Patients diagnosed with psoriasis were randomly selected for the study from IPD/OPD of S.D.M. Ayurveda Hospital, Udupi. The total number of patients enrolled for the study was 25.

Method of collection of data:

The study was an open-label clinical study to evaluate the efficacy of Virechana Karma with designated drug (Hridya Virechana Leha) in the patients of psoriasis. A detailed proforma was prepared pertaining to history, signs, symptoms, and examination as mentioned in Ayurveda as well as allied science. Patients with signs and symptoms of psoriasis, having age between 16 to 70 years, and who were fit for Virechana were selected.

Intervention:

Poorva Karma:
• **Deepana, Pachana** with **Shunthi Qwatha** (20ml tid) until **Agnideepthi** and **Aamapachana** attained

• **Abhyantara Snehana** with **Moorchhita Tila Taila** (with **Ushna Jala** as Anupana) until **Samyak Snigdha Lakshana** appeared (Snehapana for 3-7 days)

• **Karanja Qwatha Pariseka Swedana** (for 4 days, including the morning of the Virechana day)

**Pradhana Karma:**

**Hridya Virechana Leha** was administered at around 9:30 am, in the dose fixed priorly after considering the **Roga Bala, Rogi Bala, Koshtha, Agni** etc. Instructions were given to the patients to follow on the day of Virechana.

**Pashchhata Karma:**

**Samsarjana Krama** depending on the **Shuddhi Lakshana** (3-7 days), and **Parihara Vishaya** (restrictions to be observed) were explained to the patient.

Assessment was done using PASI score (Psoriasis Area and Severity Index, which takes into account- erythema, thickness, and scaling), and 5D Itch scale (that takes account of itching). Calculations of those parameters were done before treatment, after treatment, and after follow-up. Routine haematological investigations were carried out to avoid complications and which included Hb%, TC, DC, ESR, and blood sugar.

**RESULTS**

A total of 25 patients, who were registered for the study, were subjected to **Virechana Karma** and there were no drop-outs.

In the study, highest portion of the patients (i.e. 40%) attained **Samyak Snigdha Lakshana** on 4th day followed by 32% of patients on 3rd day, 16% on 5th day, 8% on 6th day and 4% on 7th day of Snehapana. Similarly, 88% of patients exhibited **Samyak Yoga Lakshana** of Virechana, while 12% exhibited more of **Ayoga Lakshana** of Virechana.

The effect was evaluated using PASI score and 5D Itch scale, and the results were found as follows:

**Effect on PASI Score:**

The effect is shown below in Table 1 and Table 2.

### Table 1 Result after Virechana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BT Mean</th>
<th>AT Mean</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>%Change</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>18.364</td>
<td>14.208</td>
<td>4.156</td>
<td>22.63%</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>.490</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8.478</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2 Result after follow-up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BT Mean</th>
<th>AT Mean</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>%Change</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>18.364</td>
<td>9.504</td>
<td>8.86</td>
<td>48.31%</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>.637</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13.905</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Effect on 5D Itch Scale:
The effect is shown below in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3 Result after Virechana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>BT Mean</th>
<th>AT Mean</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>%Change</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>12.48</td>
<td>10.32</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>17.30%</td>
<td>.68799</td>
<td>.13760</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15.698</td>
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</table>

Table 4 Result after follow-up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>BT Mean</th>
<th>AF Mean</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>%Change</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>12.480</td>
<td>7.88</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>36.86%</td>
<td>.91287</td>
<td>.18257</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25.195</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results showed that the changes seen after Virechana as well as after follow-up, both were statistically highly significant in both the parameters, i.e. PASI score and 5D Itch scale.

DISCUSSION

Virechana is a procedure in which orally administered drug acts on vitiated Pitta, Samsrishta Kapha, and also on vitiated Vata. The reason for the last being that in Sannipataja condition, Virechana has been advised by Acharya Bhela, and in Vata Vyadhi, Mridu Virechana has been described as treatment modality by Acharya Charaka. So, it may be inferred that Virechana acts on all the three morbid Doshas.

Kushtha is a Tridoshaja Vyadhi, along with the involvement of Twak, Rakta, Mamsa, and Ambu. Virechana Karma does have its effect on the three Doshas, as well as significant effect on the Rakta Dhatu. Hence, the procedure is expected to have its effect on the disease Kushtha.

In the present study, Virechana was performed after Deepana, Pachana, and then Snehapana; Virechana drug being Hridya Virechana Leha. The Leha contains Trivrit as a main ingredient and Trivrit is considered as best Sukha Virechana Dravya as well as best Rechana Dravya.

Probable Mode of Action of Virechana Drug:

Virechana drugs have properties like Ushna, Tikshna, Sukshma, Vyavayi, Vikashee. They have predominance of Prithvi and Jala Mahabhuta along with Prabhava Adhobhaga Doshaharatwa. Virechana Aushadhi by virtue of their Ushna, Tikshna, Sukshma, Vyavai and Vikashee Guna, and by their Swa Virya (Swo Prabhava), reach to Hridaya and spread through Dhamani to all the macro and micro channels of the body. Acharya Chakrapani here clarifies that it is not the Aushadhi in its physical form itself that traverses through the Dhamani in the body; rather it is the Virya of Aushadhi that gets spreaded to the body through the Dhamani.
Then, *Ushna Guna* causes liquefaction of *Dosha Samuha* in the body; *Tikshna Guna* causes disintegration (*Vichchhinnata*) of the *Dosha*. Those disintegrated (*Vichchhinnata*) *Dosha* by virtue of the *Anu Pravana Bhava* (property to traverse through microchannels) move smoothly to *Amashaya* of *Sneha Bhavita* patient, without getting adhered en route, in a similar manner as honey moves smoothly in a properly anointed mud pot. Then being the *Virechana Aushadha Dravya* predominant of *Prithvi* and *Apa Mahabhuta* along with it having *Adho Bhagahara Prabhava*, it causes the the *Dosha* that were brought to *Amashaya*, to get expelled out through the *Guda Marga*.

It is assumed that *Virechana Dravya* are mild irritant to the intestinal mucosa, and thus, cause inflammation to the layer. Due to this, the permeability of the membrane changes and those substances are facilitated to come out, which would not come out under normal condition, thereby helping the morbid matters to come out and get expelled from the gut mucosa.

Also, liver performs many vital metabolic and homeostatic functions like excretory functions, defensive and detoxification functions. Psoriasis is an immune-mediated disease, and it may be exacerbated by external factors like infection, stress and medications. So, derangement in the functions of liver may also add up for skin conditions like psoriasis. And, *Virechana* has a significant role in bringing liver to its normalcy and to help perform its functions properly. Because liver (*Yakrit*) is a *Pittasthana*, and *Virechana* has profound effect on *Pittasthana*. So this way also, *Virechana* is seen to have a role to play in improvement of skin conditions like psoriasis.

**CONCLUSION**

So, in this study, the results obtained after *Virechana* with *Hridya Virechana Leha* in the disease psoriasis were statistically highly significant. The results dealt with the changes in the signs and symptoms of psoriasis viz. erythema, thickness and scaling (given by PASI score) and itching (given by Itch scale).
REFERENCES