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A Case Report of Alopecia areata - An Ayurvedic Outlook

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ABSTRACT

Introduction- This is a case report of 21 year old female who complained of patchy hair loss in scalp since 6 months. The subject was not a known case of Diabetes mellitus or hypertension or any other systemic disease. On the basis of symptoms and detailed clinical examination she was diagnosed as having Alopecia areata, based on *Doshadushya* and symptoms it was compared with *Indrapulta* and treated, the results are observed and documented.

Materials and methods- The subject who approached *Shalaky Tantra* OPD of Government Ayurveda medical college, Bangalore with symptoms of patchy hair loss in scalp since 6 months was systemically reviewed and *raktashodhaka*, *tridoshashamaka* and *rasayana* line of treatment is adopted.

Results- The subject showed marked improvement as depicted in the photographs taken at different levels of treatment.

Discussion- *Indralupta* is a *kshudraroga* affecting scalp and involving pitta, *vata dusti*, later *kapha* and *rakta* blocking the *romakupa*. *Acharyas* have contributed to the cosmetology by giving utmost importance in treating such disease condition by holistic approach and even local treatment modalities. An attempt is made to bring about satisfactory results by adopting such measures in this case study.

KEYWORDS

Indralupta, Alopecia areata, Alopecia, Baldness, Rasayana, Cosmetology



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INTRODUCTION

Alopecia areata is one among autoimmune condition which results in non scarring hair loss. It may occur in any age typically presenting with hair loss on scalp which are sharply demarcated round patches.¹It may affect any hair-bearing areas most likely scalp, eyebrow, eyelash, beard, moustache and can manifest in many different patterns. Even though it is a benign condition and most patients are asymptomatic, it may cause psychosocial as well as emotional distress and of cosmetological importance. Estimated prevalence of Alopecia areata is one in one thousand people with approximately 2% lifetime risk.²It accounts for 0.7 % of new dermatology cases in India.³

Alopecia areata is a chronic disease characterised by well demarcated patches of hair loss often noticed suddenly may progress circumferentially. It may present as single or multiple patches, typically smooth with normal skin, rarely exclamatory marks are seen at the border of the patches. Diagnosed by typical clinical features. In contemporary science it is treated with topical corticosteroids and immune therapy, still the prognosis is unpredictable.

Based on the clinical manifestation it can be compared with *Indralupta* explained in

Ayurveda classics. *Indralupta* is a disease in which *pitta* present in hair follicles associated with *vata* causes hair fall, there after *shleshma* along with *shonita* blocks the *romakupa* resulting in non growth of hairs in the particular area.⁴

All the measures which can pacify the involved *doshas* and bring about re growth of hairs are mentioned in the classics which includes *shodana* as well as *shamana*. In particular *raktashodhana*, *tridoshashamana* and *rasayana*.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the pathophysiology of Alopecia areata in the perspective of *Indralupta* explained in Ayurveda classics.
2. To find a better Ayurvedic approach in Alopecia areata.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Case report: Basic information of the patient

Age: 21 years

Gender: Female

Religion: Hindu

Occupation: Student

Socioeconomic status: Middle class

Chief complaints: Patchy hair loss in scalp since 6 months

History of present illness: The subject was not a known case of Diabetes mellitus or



hypertension or any other systemic disease gradually started developing patchy hair loss in scalp since 6 months, there is no association of any inflammatory signs and symptoms for which she consulted a skin care speciality hospital and underwent steroidal therapy and could not find any relief, so for further management she consulted *Shalaky Tantra* OPD of Government Ayurveda Medical college, Bangalore.

History of past illness:

The subject is not a known case of Diabetes mellitus, Hypertension or any other systemic illness.

Personal history:

Aharaja: diet predominantly of *katu* and *kashaya rasa*, *rooksha ahara*.

Viharaja- day sleep for 1 to 2 hours regularly.

Treatment history:

1. Triamcinolone acetonide - 2.5ml intradermal injection, three doses.
2. Fluocinolone acetonide cream for topical application.

Examination:

1. *Asta sthana pareeksha*

Nadi: *prakruta*, 78/min

Table 2 Treatment adopted

Sl. No	PROCEDURE	MEDICINE USED	DOSE	DURATION
01	<i>Deepana and paachana</i>	<i>Chitrakadi vati</i>	2-2-2 before food	For 3 days (3-10-2019 to 5-10-2019)
02	<i>Sadhyo virechana</i>	<i>Nimbamrutadi Eranda Taila</i>	30 ml	On 6-10-2019

Mutra: *prakruta*, 4 to 5 times/day, once at night

Mala: *prakruta*, regular, once a day

Jihwa: *alipata*

Shabda: *prakruta*

Sparsha: *prakruta*, patchy hair loss in scalp

Druk: *prakruta*

Akruti: *pittavatala*

2. Vitals were normal.
3. Respiratory system, Cardiovascular system and Gastro intestinal system Central nervous system and Musculoskeletal system has shown no abnormality.
4. Local examination: Disease specific Local examination of scalp is explained in Table No. 1

Investigations: Nil

Table 1 Examination of scalp

PARAMETERS	FINDINGS
Site of hair loss	Scalp, frontal area
Number of patches	one
Size of the patch	9 cm length, 8 cm width
Skin on the patch	No scar, no signs of inflammation
Other parts of the scalp	Normal

Diagnosis: *Indralupta*

Treatment adopted: Treatment adopted is explained in Table No. 2



03	<i>Shamanaushadhi</i>	<i>Manjistadi kashaya</i>	15ml-0-15ml with equal quantity of warm water	10-10-2019 to 31-10-2019
04	<i>Jalaukavacharana</i>	<i>Jalauka</i>	3 sittings	10-10-2019 - 1 st sitting 17-10-2019 - 2 nd sitting 24-10-2019 - 3 rd sitting
05	External application	<i>Malatyadi taila</i>	Quantity sufficient	25-10-2019 to 20-12-2019
06	External application	<i>Gunja lepa</i>	Quantity sufficient 3 sittings	1-11-2019 to 7-11-2019 14-11-2019 to 21-11-2019 28-11-2019 to 5-12-2019
07	<i>Rasayana</i>	<i>Ashwagandha churna</i>	1tsp with milk-HS	25-10-2019 to 22-11-2019

RESULTS

Marked improvement was observed during the course of treatment and follow up period. The same is depicted in Figure No. 1, Figure No. 2, Figure No. 3, Figure No. 4, Figure No. 5 and Figure No. 6

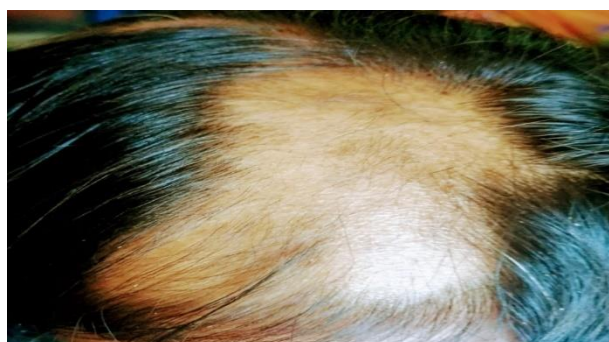


Figure 1 Before treatment



Figure 2 After 1st Sitting of Jalaukavacharana



Figure 3 After 2nd Sitting of Jalaukavacharana



Figure 4 After 3rd Sitting of Jalaukavacharana



Figure 5 During first follow up



Figure 6 During second follow up

DISCUSSION

In Ayurveda understanding the *samprapti* and *samprapti vighatana* are the two major factors for the application of proper line of



management. By considering the signs and symptoms Alopecia areata is compared with *Indralupta*.

Indralupta is a condition in which *pitta* present in hair follicles associated with *vata* causes hair fall, there after *kapha* along with *rakta* blocks the romakupa, as a result of which there will be non growth of hairs in the particular area. Therefore *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha Dosha* and *Rakta Dushya* are the main culprits involved in the manifestation *Indralupta*.

Siravyadha, *pracchanna*, *lepa*, *sthanika abhyanga* and *rasayana* are the different treatment modalities explained in the context of *Indralupta*.⁵ Therefore main attention was given to pacify *vata*, *pitta*, *kapha*, and *raktha*. An attempt is made to treat the condition from its root cause. Rationality behind choosing the treatment and medicines is explained below.

1. *Sadhyo virechana* - in order to purify *dushita pitta* as well as *kapha* in the body.

2. *Manjistadi kashaya*- it is indicated in the diseases caused due to *pitta*, *kapha dusti*, like *mandala kushta*, *Dadru*, *Visarpa*, *Visphota*.⁶ It also purifies *rakta* hence used as *shamanaushadhi*.

3. *Jalaukavacharana*- *raktamokshana* (*siravyadha* and *pracchanna*) is indicated in *Indralupta*, since the patient is *sukumara* and other conditions are also favouring *jalaukavacharana*, it is employed here for

shodhana of *rakta* which has blocked the *romakupa*.

4. *Gunja lepa*- *Gunja* having *ushna*, *teekshna* and *keshya* property, helps in stimulating the follicles and regeneration of hair, *muhur muhur gunja lepa* is indicated after *pracchanna* in *Indralupta*.

5. *Malathyadi taila* - *Malathyadi taila* having the ingredients which are *pittahara*, *kaphahara* and *raktha prasadaka* in nature and it is said as *Indraluptapaham param* (Best in curing *Indralupta*)⁷

6. *Ashwagandha churna*- since *kesha* is considered as *Upadhatu* as well of *Mala* of *Asthi dhatu*, *Asthi pustikara chikista* has to be adopted in *Indralupta*. *Ashwagandha* is a best *rasayana*, helps in nourishing *asthi*, *majja* thus the hairs.

CONCLUSION

In contemporary science the disease is treated with systemic and topical steroids, the results of which are not satisfactory. At most importance is given for cosmetology in Ayurvedic classics by proper understanding of the disease and holistic approach. *Indralupta* being a cosmetic crisis for the community rather being a painful disease. *Susrutha* and *vagbhata* has explained in detail about the disease and its management.



An attempt is made in this case to bring about good results by adopting all the necessary measures. The subject was successfully treated and satisfactory results are observed. The treatment protocol should be clinically evaluated on large sample size for further research and establishment.



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