

## EFFECT OF DASAPUSHPAKERA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF VICHARCHIKA (ECZEMA)

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To study the effect of Dasapushpakera in the management of Vicharchika. Environmental pollution, mental stress and modern life styles leads to accumulation of toxins in the body and exert their effect in the form of various chronic disorders like Vicharchika which can be compared to Eczema. The chronicity is due to intake of Virudhahara (incompatible food regimen) and Dooshi visha (latent or denatured poisons). So medicines using for its cure should contain antitoxic and anti inflammatory properties. Dasapushpa kera is mentioned in Malayalam visha chikitsa texts like Kriya kourmudi, Visha vaidya jyosnika and Prayoga samuchaya in the context of Mandali Visha vrana .

**Methods:** Sixty patients participated in the RCT study and thirty patients each with signs and symptoms of Vicharchika was assigned into 2 groups namely study and control group. Before starting treatment, Virechana with Avipatti choorna mixed with honey was given for both groups. Then Nimbanilavakadi kashaya was given twice daily for 4 weeks for both groups. Washing with Triphala kashaya was also advised twice daily for both of them. Dasapushpa kera is advised for external application for 4 weeks for the study group. The patients were reviewed on 15<sup>th</sup> day and 30<sup>th</sup> day. Follow up was done on 15<sup>th</sup> day and 30<sup>th</sup> day. The results were analyzed statistically.

**Results & Conclusion:** Study group showed more relief in Itching, Oozing, Skin eruption and discoloration. No recurrence was seen in the follow up period. This treatment regime is significantly effective than the control group (p < .001),

**Keywords:** Vicharchika, Eczema, Dasapushpa, Nimbanilavakadi kashaya

### INTRODUCTION

Skin is an emblem of health, beauty, confidence and social well being. Nowadays most of the skin diseases are due to modern life styles. Disorders in diet, sleep, urges and anxiety all contribute invariably to its origin and chronicity. Modern medicines are providing only symptomatic relief to most of them and their long term use may cause adverse effects.

Kerala have some unique distribution of plants and many medicinal preparations were outlined based on them. *Dasapushpa*, a group of ten plants was one among them. It is familiar to Keralites as a group of flowers to wear on hair during *Thiruvathira* in the month of *Dhanu* (Dec-Jan).

Malayalam chikitsa books like Prayoga Samuchayam<sup>1</sup>, Chikitsa Manjari<sup>2</sup>, Kriyakourmudi<sup>3</sup>, Arogyakalpadrumam<sup>4</sup> etc. have references and formulations of this valuable group. It is narrated mainly in Vishavrana, Visarpa, Apasmara, Matsyavisha chapters. It is also believed that Dasapushpa improves brain function.

*Vicharchika* is one among the eighteen skin diseases mentioned in Ayurveda. Its symptoms are similar to Eczema. Although treatment for it is available the recurrence of the disease is increasing. Patients opting Ayurvedic treatment for *Vicharchika* is increasing day by day. *Dasapushpa* is easily available and a cost effective medicine in Kerala. Moreover it is described in various preparations for ulcers in Viper bite and Visarpa.

The overall management of the skin disease in Ayurveda consists of *Sodhana*, *Samana* and *Lepana*. In chronic skin diseases *Sodhana* procedures include purgation or emetic therapy, *Samana* with *Kustahara* and *Vishahara* preparations and *Lepana* with *Vranahara*, *Vishahara* and *Varnya* drugs will be effective. *Vishahara* preparation are a modified version which is estimated to be more effective in chronic skin diseases have included in this study.

A poison whether animal, vegetable or artificial which have not been fully eliminated from the system and partially inherent therein, which have become enfeebled due to the action of anti poisonous

remedies upon them or which have become dried by fire, wind and the sun or which are naturally devoid of their specific properties are designated as *Dooshivisha*

In Ayurveda, improper, incompatible and unacceptable food is considered as *Virudhahara*. Ahara is given prime place in this life science. But if improperly taken will cause derangement of *Doshas* which in turn affects *Dhathus*. In short all drugs and diet which dislodge the various *doshas* but do not expel them out of the body can be regarded as unwholesome.

*Vicarchika* is characterized by symptoms viz *kandu*, *syava*, *pidaka* and *srava*. *Kandu* or itching is due to involvement of *Kapha dosha*. *Pidaka* or skin eruption is due to vitiated *Pitta* accumulated in *twak* and *rakta*. *Pidaka* causes pain and in *Vicarchika*, generally small circumscribed easily palpable lesions are found. *Srava* means discharge. Vitiated *kapha* and *pitta* are responsible for *srava*. *Susrutacarya* have told *rukshata* in *vicarchika* which is due to *vata* predominance. So *vata* predominance shows dry lesions (dry eczema) and *pitta* and *kapha dosha* shows wet lesions (wet eczema). *Syava* or blackish discoloration is due to vitiated *vata*. *Daha* or burning sensation due to *pitta* and *vedana*

Most of the drugs in *Dasapushpa* have anti inflammatory, wound healing, anti toxic and anti oxidant property. Most of the anti poisonous property is mainly due to *prabhava*. Moreover the predominance of *tikta rasa* in *Dasapushpa* group alleviates toxins. Out of this ten plants *Bhadra*, *Bhringaraja*, *Sahadevi* and *Sakralatha* have anti inflammatory property. *Bhadra*, *Bhringaraja*, *Sahadevi*, *Vipareeta lajjalu* and *Vishnukranta* have antibacterial properties. *Bhringaraja*, *Musali*, *Durva*, *Sahadevi*, *Sasasruthi* and *Vipareeta lajjalu* are useful in skin disease, cuts and wounds. *Durva* and *Lakshmana* reduces burning sensation. *Sakralatha* is a rubefacient. *Bhringaraja*, *Sakralatha*, *Vipareeta lajjalu*, *Vishnukranta* are anti oxidants. *Musali* reduces pruritis. *Sahadevi* have *prabhava* in *jwara*. *Bhringaraja* is a *rasayana* plant. All plants are anti toxic.

*Nimbanilavakadi kashaya*<sup>5</sup> is having antitoxic property found to be

effective in Vicharchika in a previous study conducted at Agadatantra Department, Government Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram.

From the pilot study conducted by the authors the preparation of Dasapushpa kera in Coconut oil as base was found to be more effective in skin disorders than *tila taila* preparation as *taila* preparation increased oozing and skin eruption which worsened the condition.

The objective of the study was to find the effect of *Dasapushpa kera* in the management of *Vicharchika* (eczema)

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out in O.P and I.P Department of Agadatantra, Government Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram with the approval of Institutional Ethical Committee.

### Research setting

After the initial assessment and selection, the patients were randomly divided into two groups namely study and control group each consisting of 30 patients. All the selected patients were subjected to *Virecana* with *Avipatti Churnam* (10-25gms) mixed with honey before treatment.

The study group was provided with *Dasapushpakera* and *Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya* while the control group is provided with *kashaya* only. After *virechana* from the next day itself for both groups *Nimbanilavakadi kashaya* was given in a dosage of 48ml twice daily, early morning at 6 am in empty stomach and in evening at 6.00 pm before food for four weeks. *Kshalana* or washing with *Triphala kashaya* was advised for both groups twice daily. In the study group, *Dasapushpa kera* was given for external application after drying with cotton, twice daily for four weeks. Graded responses in both groups were analyzed on 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> day. After medicinal intervention, follow up was done for both groups on 15<sup>th</sup> day and 30<sup>th</sup> day.

*Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya* drugs was given in coarse powdered form and advised to prepare *kashaya*. *Triphala Kashaya* was available from the Pharmacy of Govt. Ayurveda college Hospital, Poojapura. *Dasapushpa kera* was prepared and given to the study group patients.

In the present study the statistical hypothesis was tested with the help of Mann whitney U and Wilcoxon Signed ranked test. Laboratory findings were analyzed using paired t' test.

### Preparation of medicines

#### Dasapushpa Kera

*Dasapushpa* is a group of ten plants told in Malayalam visha chikitsa book *Visha vaidya jynosika* in *Mandali Visha soph*a and *vra*na *chikitsa*. The term *Dasapushpa* is very much familiar to Keralites and those who practise toxicology in Kerala. It is also known as *Pamktiprasoona*. The following are *Dasapushpas* with their botanical and vernacular names

- *Poovankurunthila (Sahadevi)* *Vernonia cineria*
- *Muyal chevi (Sasasruthi)* *Emilia sonchifolia*
- *Vishnukranta (Vishnukranta)* *Evolvulus alsinoides*
- *Durva (Durva)* *Cynodon dactylon*
- *Kayyonni (Bhringaraja)* *Eclipta alba*
- *Uzhinja (Sakralatha)* *Cardiospermum helicacabum*
- *Thirutali (Lakshmana)* *Ipomea sepiaria*
- *Nilappana (Musali)* *Curculigo orchoides*
- *Mukkuti (Vipareetalajalu)* *Biophytum sensitivum*
- *Cheroola (Bhadra)* *Aerva lanata*

For preparing one litre of *Dasapushpa kera* one litre of coconut oil, 4 litres of *Swarasa* (expressed juice) of whole part of *Dasapushpa*, 125 gm *Dasapushpakalka* (paste) are taken and boiled in fire until *Kharapaka* (hard boiled) is attained. The preparation was done at SNA oushadhasala, Thrissur, Kerala

#### Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya

This formulation is described in Ayurveda pharmacopoeia, Govt. Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram. The ingredients are *Nimba [Azadirachta indica]*, *Nilavaka (Cassia senna)*, *Aswagandha (Withania somnifera)*, *Aragwadha (Cassia fistula)*, *Khadira (Acacia catechu)*, *Daruharidra (Coscinium fenestratum)*. The drugs were given in the coarse powder form. 48 gms of the same are boiled in 768 ml of water and reduced to 96 ml which was given in divided doses at 6 am and 6 pm. The preparation was done at Ayurveda college pharmacy, Thiruvananthapuram.

## RESULTS

The overall effectiveness of the treatment on itching was 70% in the study group and only 41.6% in the control group. The effectiveness of oozing was 23.3% in the study group and 6.7% in the control group. The skin eruptions showed 36.7% effectiveness in the study group whereas it was only 6.7% in the control group. The symptom of blackish discoloration showed 100% moderate or mild change while the control group showed 86.7% had only mild changes. The overall relief of study group was 79.8% and in the control group it was 58.6%. It was a significant observation .

(p <.001) (table 1),

Table 1: Effectiveness of the treatment on symptoms

Symptoms	Good relief		Moderate relief		Mild relief		No relief	
	Study group	Control group	Study group	Control group	Study group	Control group	Study group	Control group
Itching	13.3	8.3	56.7	33.3	30	66.7	0	20
Oozing	0	0	23.3	6.7	73.3	70	3.3	23.3
Skin eruptions	6.7	0	30	6.7	60	86.7	3.3	6.7
Blackish discoloration	0	0	6.7	0	93.3	86.7	0	13.3

## DISCUSSION

The study showed better relief to patients with symptoms of *Vicharchika*.

**Itching** – Both groups showed reduction in the symptom itching but quicker relief was attained in the study group. This is due to *Tikta rasa*, *kapha samaka karma* and anti poisonous effect of *Dasapushpa*. Administration of *Nimbanilavakadi kashaya* only was not effectively controlling severe itching which leads to more skin changes.

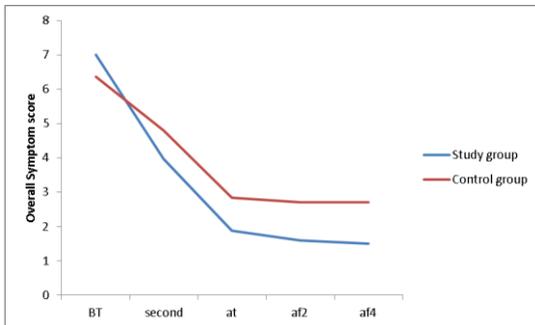
**Skin eruption** – Both groups showed good result in controlling *pidaka* due to *pittaharatwa* of *tikta rasa*. Due to *vranahara* property of *Dasapushpa* it was effective in controlling formation of *pidakas*.

*Nimbanilavakadi kashaya* was having drugs which have *raktaprasadana* property but local application with *Dasapushpa* gave quicker relief.

**Oozing** – The study group showed better result than control group. Some patients showed *alpa srava* having *vata* predominance, some showed *raktabha*, *puyabha* and *prabhuta* having *pitta* predominance and some showed *pichila* and *prabhuta* having *kapha* predominance *srava*. Due to *rooksha guna*, *vranaharata*, antibacterial property and effectiveness in cuts and wounds the external application of *dasapushpakera* was highly effective in controlling *srava* and infection.

Discoloration –Both groups showed good result in reducing discoloration. Drugs in *Nimbanilavakadi kashaya* were having *varnya* property and *Sakralatha* in *Dasapushpa* was having rubefacient property. So local application of *Dasapushpakera* was effective in reducing discoloration.

Eventhough both groups showed significant reduction in itching, oozing, skin eruption and blackish discoloration , the effect in study group is statistically significant with  $p < 0.001$ .

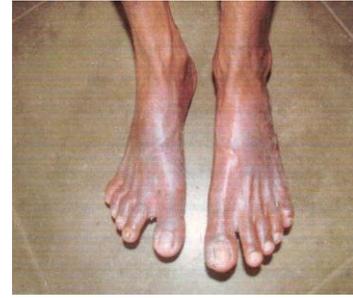


**Fig.1: The percentage relief in study group and Control group**

(BT- before treatment, Second- 2<sup>nd</sup> week, at – After treatment, af2 – Follow up 2 nd week, af4- follow up 4 th week)



**VICHARCHIKA BEFORE TREATMENT**



**AFTER TREATMENT**

## CONCLUSION

Vicharchika is one of the common dermatological complaints met in clinical practice. From this study it is very clear that *Dasapushpa kera* is effective for external application in Vicharchika in controlling Itching, oozing, skin eruption and blackish discoloration.

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