



Psoriasis: A Comparative Literary Review - Modern and Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT-

Many treatment modalities in modern medical science focus on controlling the symptoms of the diseases & preventing further damage as there is no specific cure. Ayurveda is a holistic science and gives importance to cure & healing. In this world of globalisation Ayurveda should also move towards making itself globalised. For this, common terms for diseases are to be researched & specified which can be used globally.

The prevalence of skin diseases in the general population in different geographic regions of India varies from 7.9% to 60%, which is a big number¹. Psoriasis is a chronic, non-communicable illness that affects sufferers' quality of life significantly and is unpleasant, disfiguring, and crippling. It is an autoimmune disease,

which has no complete cure in modern medicine. Some modern medicines decrease the severity but there are more recurrences.

In this article we have tried to develop an Ayurveda view to look towards this disease. A literary review is the first step in any disease research. So a comparative literature study is done to find the correlation between psoriasis and different skin diseases mentioned in Ayurveda. Similarities were found between Psoriasis and *Sidhma*, *Dadru*, *Ekakushta*, *Kitibha*, *Charmadala*, and *Vipadika*. From this we can say Psoriasis is very similar to above *Kushtha* types and can be considered while selecting treatment in Ayurveda.

Key words-

Skin Diseases, Psoriasis, *Kushtha*, *Sidhma*, *Dadru*, *Ekakushta*, *Kitibha*, *Charmadala*, and *Vipadika*.

Introduction-

The human skin is the outer covering of the body. In humans, it is the largest organ of the integumentary system. The skin has multiple layers of ectodermal tissue and guards the underlying muscles, bones, ligaments and internal organs. A particular abnormal condition, a disorder of a structure or function that affects part or all of the skin is called a skin disease. Psoriasis is one of the commonest skin disorders, in which, patients experience physical, emotional & socio-economic embarrassment in the society. It affects 2 to 4 % of the Indian population in general as calculated from a study.

Psoriasis is a skin condition in which skin cells reproduce too quickly. It can start at any age, but most often develops between 11 and 45 years old. Our body produces new cells in our lowest skin level and these skin cells gradually move up through the layers of skin until they reach the outermost level. Then they die and flake off. This whole life cycle normally takes around 21 to 28 days. In psoriasis this process is speeded up so it only takes two to six days. As a result, cells build up rapidly on the surface of the skin, causing red, flaky, crusty patches covered with silvery scales which shed easily. It can

occur on any part of the body although it is most commonly found on the elbows, knees, lower back and the scalp. It can also cause itching and burning. The condition is not contagious and most people are affected only in small patches of their body. The severity of psoriasis varies greatly just a minor irritation to a major impact on quality of life. Psoriasis is a chronic disease that can return at any time. It has time with no symptoms or very mild symptoms followed by times where the symptoms are severe. There is no cure for psoriasis but there is a range of treatments that can help improve the symptoms.

Though Ayurveda has described many skin diseases, it is necessary to compare psoriasis on fundamental level to understand the recent data and ancient description. So a better look would be gained in treating the patients of psoriasis.

MATERIALS AND METHODS-

Design-

Comparative Literature Review

Review of Previous Work Done³⁻

There has been a lot of research on Psoriasis in Ayurveda. Many of them compared it to *Ekakushtha* having 21 articles or *Kitibha* having 41 articles and *Sidhma* in Ayush research portal and Dhara online with most of peer-reviewed Ayurveda journals

listed in them. Comparison to other *Kushtha* types like *Dadru*, *Charmadala* and *Vipadika*

was very negligible.

Literature Review-

Description of *Sidhma* in Classics-

<i>Charak Ni.</i>	<i>Charak Chi.</i>	<i>Sushrut Ni.</i>	<i>A.H. Ni.</i>
<i>Parusha, Aruna, Shukla, Rakta Visir nabahi</i>	<i>Shweta, Tamra</i>	<i>Shweta</i>	
<i>Thanu, Anthah snigdha, Bahuni alpavedana, Alpa daha, Alpa puya, Alpa lasika, Laghu samutthani, Alpa bheda, Alpa krimi</i>	<i>Tanu</i>	<i>Tanu</i>	<i>Tanu</i>
<i>Alabu pushpa sankasha</i>	<i>Alabu pushpavarna, Bhuyasorasi, Rajah Ghrishtam Vimunchati</i>	<i>Prayasha urdhvakaya, Kandu</i>	<i>Doughhikpushpavat, Urdhvakaya, Ghrishtam Rajahkiret</i>

Description of *Dadru* in Classics-

<i>Sushrut Ni.</i>	<i>Charak Ni.</i>	<i>A.H. Ni.</i>
<i>Athaspushpa varna, Tamra, Visarpini, Pidaka</i>	<i>Raga, Pidaka, Kandu</i>	<i>Dirghaprathanadurvavat, Kandu, Utsanna mandala, Anusangini</i>

Description of *Ekakushtha* in Classics-

<i>Charak Ni.</i>	<i>Sushrut Ni.</i>	<i>A.H. Ni.</i>
<i>Asweda, Mahavatsu, Matsyashakalopamam</i>	<i>Body becomes Krishna and Aruna</i>	<i>Asveda, Mahastravi, Matsyashakala sannibha</i>

Description of *Kitibha* in Classics-

<i>Charak Ni.</i>	<i>Sushrut Ni.</i>	<i>A.H. Ni.</i>
<i>Shyava, Kinakharasparsha, Parusha</i>	<i>Krishna, Snigdha, Stravi, Vrutta, Ghana, Ugrakandu</i>	<i>Asita, kinakharasparsha, Ruksha, Parusha, Kandu</i>

Description of *Charmadala* in Classics-

<i>Charak Ni.</i>	<i>Sushrut Ni.</i>	<i>A.H. Ni.</i>
<i>Rakta, Kandu, Sphota, Dalana, Samsparshasaha</i>	<i>Kandu, Vyatha, Osha, Chosha in Pani and Pada</i>	<i>Rakta, Kandu, Sphota, Toda, dalana, Asparshasaha, Osha, Daha</i>

Description of *Vipadika* in Classics-

<i>Charak Ni.</i>	<i>Sushrut Ni.</i>	<i>A.H. Ni.</i>
<i>Kandu, Daha, Ruja, Occurs in Pada</i>	<i>Tivra vedana, Pani Pada Darana</i>	<i>Mandakandu, Tivraarati, Panipada sphutana, Sarvangapidaka</i>

Similarities Between Psoriasis with *Kushtha* considering general symptoms-

Psoriasis	<i>Sidhmam</i>	<i>Dadru</i>	<i>Ekakushtha</i>	<i>Kitibham</i>	<i>Charmadala</i>	<i>Vipadika</i>
Patchy rash purple/pink/red with grey or silver scales	+	+	-	+	+	-
Dry cracked skin	+	-	+	+	-	+
Itching	-	+	-	+	+	+
Burning	+	-	-	-	+	+

Similarities Between Psoriasis with *Kushtha* considering PASI Scale-

Psoriasis	<i>Sidhmam</i>	<i>Dadru</i>	<i>Ekakushtha</i>	<i>Kitibham</i>	<i>Charmadala</i>	<i>Vipadika</i>
Patchy rash purple/pink/red with grey or silver scales	+	+	-	+	+	-
Dry cracked skin	+	-	+	+	-	+
Itching	-	+	-	+	+	+
Burning	+	-	-	-	+	+

Similarities Between different types of Psoriasis with types of *Kushtha*-

A. Psoriasis vulgaris and *Sidhmam*- comparison

Features	Psoriasis vulgaris	<i>Sidhmam</i>
Colour of lesion	Erythematous	<i>Shweta, tamra</i> and as like <i>Daugdikpushpa A.H.Ni.</i> 14/21
Scales	White silvery scales	<i>Ghristam rajah kirete</i> A.H.Ni. 14/21
Induration	Abnormal hardening is seen only in chronic plaque psoriasis & geographical psoriasis	<i>Thanu A.H.Ni. 14/21</i>
Nature	Candle grease sign	<i>Bahirruksham</i> and <i>antarsnigdam A.H.Ni. 14/21</i>
Site of lesion	Extensor part of both UL & LL	<i>Prayena urdhwakayam A.H.</i>
Prognosis	Begin in childhood and adolescence tends to poorer prognosis	Included in <i>Mahakushtha</i> <i>Ch.Chi.</i>

B. Guttate Psoriasis and Dadru- comparison

Features	Guttate Psoriasis	Dadru
Colour	Erythematous, Squamous Papules	<i>Raga pidaka M. N. 49/19,</i> colour like <i>Atasikusumam</i> <i>A.H.</i>
Shape of Lesion	Papules with 2-32 mm to 1 cm, round or slightly oval in shape	<i>Utsanna mandalatva A.H.Ni.</i> <i>14/24</i>
Scaling	Single waxy scales sometimes absent or little	No scaling
Nature <i>A.H.Ni. 14/24</i>	Triggered by Streptococcal infection	<i>Anusangini</i>
Itching	Very prominent	<i>Kandu A.H.Ni. 14/21</i>

C. Flexural Psoriasis and Eka kushtham- comparison



Features	Flexural Psoriasis	Eka kushtha
Colour and Shape of Lesion	Firm red, smooth plaque	<i>Krishna arunvarnam</i> <i>Su.Ni5/10</i>
Scaling	Scaling is little or absent	<i>Matsyashakala sannibham,</i> <i>Cha. Chi. 7/12</i>
Site of Lesion	Natural skin folds, axilla, groin, sub mammary region etc	Occupies large area <i>Cha.Chi.</i> <i>7/21</i>

D. Erythrodermic Psoriasis and Charmadala kushtham- comparison

Features	Erythrodermic Psoriasis	Charmadala kushtha
Colour	Erythematous	<i>Arunam M.N. 49/20 A.H.Ni.</i> <i>14/28</i>

Shape of Lesion	White scales	Not present
Nature of Lesion	Erosion and pustules	<i>Sphotam, Dalanam</i>
Site of Lesion	Whole body surface	Not mentioned specifically

E. Pustular Psoriasis and Kitibham- comparison

Features	Pustular Psoriasis	<i>Kitibham</i>
Colour	Erythematous	<i>Arunam Ka.S.</i>
Shape of Lesion	Erythema which is scaly at ridge	No scales, <i>stravam</i> present <i>Ka.S., Su. Ni. 5/14</i>
Nature of Lesion	Small pustules after some days or weeks desquamation of skin take place along with scarring	<i>Ruksham, kinakhara sparsham Cha. Chi.</i>
Site of Lesion	Itching present	<i>Ugrakandu Su. Ni. 5/14</i>

Difference Between Psoriasis and all types of Kushtha-

All the symptoms which were not considered in similarities are all differences which are very minor in consideration.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION-

Any science whether Modern or *Ayurveda* has its own philosophy. Modern medical science is basically based on experiments and observations. *Ayurveda* is medical science said to exist even before Modern medical science some 5000 years ago. Now is the time we try to merge the two for better solutions in medicine keeping pace

with the time. Any disease is a particular abnormal condition of human body where the structure or function is affected. This definition remains same in both the sciences.

Psoriasis is the name given to condition in skin disease having a group of symptoms. There are more than 3,000 identified varieties of skin disease that can cause symptoms ranging from simple burning and itch, to severe emotional and social effects, to physical disfigurement or death. In *Ayurveda*, skin diseases are explained under *Kushtha* and many other skin diseases also coming under *Kushtha* like *Svitra* or *Visarpa* but described under

different topic. We have selected to discuss the different types of skin diseases under *Kushtha* as its main symptom match with the deformities seen in Psoriasis.

We have identified many similarities in Psoriasis and *Sidhma* with 6 points, *Dadru* with 4, *Ekakushta* with 3, *Kitibha* with 5, *Charmadala* with 4, and *Vipadika* with 6 points. And we were able to find similarities in Psoriasis vulgaris and *Sidhmam*, Guttate Psoriasis and *Dadru*, Flexural Psoriasis and *Eka kushtham*, Erythrodermic Psoriasis and *Charmadala kushtham*, Pustular Psoriasis and *Kitibham*.

Result of the comparison-

	Psoriasis points matched
<i>Sidhmam, Vipadika</i>	6
<i>Dadru, Charmadala</i>	4
<i>Kitibham</i>	5
<i>Ekakushtha</i>	3

It show *Sidhama* and *Vipadika* has a maximum similarities to psoriasis followed by *Dadru* and *Charmadala* and *Kitibha* and *Ekakushtha* have least similarities.

As we have seen earlier, symptoms are important in defining a disease. As skin diseases are best diagnosed clinical, best

diagnosis would be considered on experience of the clinician providing these comparisons as an initial step in its way.

Though the two sciences are different, the human body on which it is applied remains the same. So whatever changes or pathology occurs in the body will remain same even if two people or two sciences name it differently.

CONCLUSION-

As a general disease, Psoriasis can be compared to *Sidhmam*, *Vipadika*, *Dadru*, *Charmadala*, *Kitibham* and *Ekakushtha* in descending order. And the different types of Psoriasis can be compared as Psoriasis vulgaris with *Sidhmam*, Guttate Psoriasis with *Dadru*, Flexural Psoriasis with *Eka kushtham*, Erythrodermic Psoriasis with *Charmadala kushtham*, Pustular Psoriasis with *Kitibham*. Psoriasis is a set of symptoms of different Ayurveda skin diseases which should be handled as per its presentations. It must have named in one disease due to its particular pathology.

Further Scope-

1. Comparison of Psoriasis with other skin diseases than *Kushtha*.
2. Comparison of Psoriasis with other *Doshaj* and *Dhatugat Avastha* of *Kushtha*.

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