

Alopecia areata: Ayurvedic treatment in a tertiary care setup

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Abstract

Alopecia areata is a chronic disease characterized by excessive and patchy loss of hair from the scalp of a person. Although a lot of treatment options are available in the allopathy, the presence of various side effects and recurrence of hair loss after stopping the treatment reduces the effectiveness and hence prevents complete cure and increases the patient morbidity. Ayurvedic treatment options provide a better alternative for the management of alopecia areata due to lesser side effects and reduced relapse cases. This case enlightens how a patient of alopecia was effectively managed using ayurvedic medicines.

Keywords: Autoimmune disorder; Adityapaka; Hair loss; Alopecia; Aditya paki guduchi taila

1. Introduction

In Ayurveda Alopecia areata can be correlated with Intraductal which is an autoimmune disease characterized by hair loss mainly on scalp without any clinical inflammatory signs. Prevalence of alopecia areata was estimated at 0. 1-0. 2%. Males are more commonly affected in comparison to children and women, but the disease is known to cause more emotional problems in women and children due to social and cosmetic causes. There are many effective treatment modalities in Ayurveda for the management of autoimmune diseases like intraductal. Sodhana (internal and external cleansing method) and shaman (internal medications) procedures are prescribed for management of intraductal. Female patients suffering from Alopecia areata are successfully treated with sodhana therapy along with nidanaparivarjana.

2. Case history

A 30 yrs. old married male came to kayaktivist pod with history of patchy hair loss on scalp, the hair loss was severe and with itching over the affected area since 1year. There was no personal history of autoimmune disorders like Atopic dermatitis, psoriasis, vitiligo, Rheumatoid arthritis. No history of any psychological disorder, endocrine disorder such as Diabetes mellitus, thyroiditis, Hair plucking habit, history of scalp surgery, or prolonged medicinal treatment before patchy hair loss. There was no history of exaggerating or relieve factors, no bad obstetric history or menstrual disorder.

On examination patchy hair loss measuring about 3x5 cm and 3x4 p. m. on left temporal region and occipital region respectively. There was dryness over the patches, with few white and grey hairs along with greyish spots. There was excessive dandruff formation on the scalp associated with scaling, general examination findings of the patient were normal without any significant abnormality. Local examination revealed absence of scarring or cauterization on the scalp and without any localized tumor or hair abnormality. The patient had earlier taken various treatment for hair loss since last three years without any result. Patient was thoroughly investigated and all the hematological and biochemical tests were found to be normal. Patient was then treated with ayurvedic methods and significant improvement in hair

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loss was noticed. Patient was advised panchakarma for Shoshana karma. But patient was unwilling to take panchakarma due to time factor. so, he has been advised to take samara therapy.

The patient was prescribed Siro abhyanga with Adityapaki guduchi taila 10 ml of Adityapaki guduchi taila was applied on the affected part of scalp twice a day during morning and evening. patient was followed up after 15 days and showed no improvement on first visit. But after Siro abhyanga with Adityapaki guduchi taila patient had sound sleep and relaxed mind. On second visit (after 15th day), no improvement was observed on the patches but dandruff was decreased. On third visit (after a month), no improvement was observed on patches. Preliminary brownish and some whitish thin hair appeared in some part of bald patches, On Forth visit (45th day), small brownish black hairs were seen growing, finally blackish hairs started to grow on fifth visit (60th day). Both the patches were completely filled up with hairs after two months of treatment. Adityapaki guduchi taila was continued. The hairs on the patches gradually grew longer after three months, they had grown sufficient as that of neighboring area. Patient was followed every two months for a period of one year. No recurrence of alopecia was observed during this period.

Table 1 General observations of the patient

General examinations		Doshisha parish		Aashaadha parish	
Pulse	69/min	Sharia prakriti	Vata pitaya	Nadi	Pitaya
Blood pressure	126/78mmHg	Manas prakriti	tame	Mala	Same
Height	135 cm	virtue	Tridacna	Mutra	samaya
weight	55kg	sara	mead	Jiwa	same
Respiratory rate	18/min	Simhanada	Madhyama	Shabda	
Temperature	normal	sattva	Avara	Sparsha	
Tongue	pallor	Satya	Avara	Druk	

Table 2 Hematological and Bio-chemical Parameters of the patient

Hematological Parameters	Before treatment	Bio-chemical parameters	Before treatment
TLC	7, 400/chum	FBS	121g/dim
Neutrophils	66%	Cholesterol	149mg/dl
Lymphocytes	30%	Triglyceride	72mg/dl
Eosinophils	02%	HDL Cholesterol	46mg/dl
Monocytes	02%	Blood Urea	24mg/dl
Basophils	-	Creatinine	1. 2mg/dl
Hemoglobin	13. 2gms%	S. G. P. T.	12iu/l
p. c. v.	29. 6%	S. G. O. T.	24iu/l
E. S. R.	42mm/hr.	Total protein	8. 5gm/dl
Total RBC Count	4. 73ml/Cumm	Albumin	4. 01gm/dl
Platelet Count	332x10/up	Globulin	4. 5gm/dl
MCV	62. 4	Alkaline phosphatase	58iu/l
MCH	23. 1	calcium	10. 6 mg/dl

Table 3 Follow up

Days	Observations a day's results
1 st day	Investigations done and medicine started
15 th day	Dandruff reduced
30 th day	Few brownish and white hair growth seen
45 th day	Small brownish black hair grown
60 days	Black mature hair growth seen
1 year	Patches covered with hair
After 1 year	hair grown up to 5cm on the patch of occipital and 4 to 6 cm on frontal region

Table 4 Adityapaki guduchi taila content and their properties

No	Ingredients	Latin name	Parts used	Ratio	form	
1	Vata	Ficus benghlensis	Arial roots	1/8 part	kalka	
2	Jatamansi	Nardastachys jatamansi	Tuber	1/8 part	Kalka	
3	Guduchi	Tinospora cordifolia	Panchanga	1 part	Swarasa	
4	Tila taila	Sesamum indicum	Sneha	1 part	Taila	

3. Discussion

Acharya Charaka mentions that Tejas by involving vatadi Dosha when reaches the scalp, it happens Indralupta According to Acharya Sushruta, pitta and vata by involving the roots of hair (Romakoopa) causes Hairfall, thereafter shlesma along with Sonita obstructs the channel of Romakoopa leading to the stoppage of the regeneration of hair and this condition is known as Indralupta, Khalitya or Ruhya. Thus vata, pitta and kapha Dosha and Rakta Dushya are the main causative factors of Indralupta.

Charaka in Vimanasthana, while describing the disorders occurring due to over indulgence in Kshara, Lavena and Viruddha ahara like, simultaneous intake of Lavena (salt) with milk in the diet includes Indralupta, as observed In the people of Saurashtra and Bahlika. Thus, it can be said that a person habituated to excessive Lavena or Kshara intake and taking Viruddha achara in routine is prone to have Indralupta. Mithya ahara and vihar, manasik like mental stress, fright, anger, shock, etc. may collectively increase the pitta and vat dosha. The ushna and tikshana properties of pitta get augmented whereas the vata suffers an aggravation In Ruksha, khara and chala properties. Here an aggravated pitta (Bhrajaka pitta) supported by the viated dehsma burns the keshabhoom whereas an increased vata gives rise to more frequent and comparatively prolonged shira sankocha by its Ruksha and khara guna. The snigdhatva and the pichchilatva of the normal kapha dosha is prevalent throughout the pores of the skin so as to keep it soft and moist. By the argumentation of the ushna, tikshna, ruksha and khara properties of pitta and vata doshas respectively, the Sneha and pichchilatva of the kapha dosha are dried up with in the pores of the skin of the scalp. so there is obstructing the growth of new hairs, causing Indralupta.

Siroabhyanga is one of the best choices in Indralupta, a traditional Ayurvedic treatment for hair growth and preventing Khalitya. Siroabhyanga greatly improves the blood circulation, thus increasing the health of hair and also scalp. Adityapakiguduchi Taila has mainly snigdha, Madhura, Mrudu properties. Having sheet virya and vata pittaghna, kesya, Rasayana, Balya karma by which the effect of Taila on Indralupta is considerable. Siroabyanga is mentioned as kesya karma. This procedure stimulates the hair roots and increases the blood circulation of scalp. This procedure shows the considerable effect on Indralupta.

4. Conclusion

This study reveals that Siroabhyanga is an effective treatment for management of Indralupta. It also proves that Adityapaki Guduchi Taila is effective for use as Siroabhyanga along with local application for scalp and hairs. Adityapaki guduchi taila is effective for use as siroabhyanga along with local application for scalp and hair. This taila gives snehana effect by virtue of snidha, Madhura, Mrudu, vyavayi, vikasi, sheeta and tikshna properties of taila. Having kesya, vatapittaghna, Rasayana, Balya karma acts on pitta and vata dosha. Hence use Aditya paki taila as siroabyanga on Indralupta is very good Ayurvedic shamana therapy. The benefits of siroabhyanga are self-practicable, easy procedure, economic and effective. It improves arterial, venous and lymphatic flow and in this way nourishes the skin and local tissues. Siroabyanga also de-stressing the whole body which is the most important causative factor for Alopecia. It improves blood circulation in previously congested muscles, helping oxygenate the brain, stimulating lymphatic drainage and inducing sleep.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of ethical approval

Institutional ethical committee clearance not necessary.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from the individual participant in the study.

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