

## Ayurvedic Management of Atopic Dermatitis (*Vicharchika*) A Review

**Author:**

**Dr. Naveed-Us-Saher Khan**

M.D. Kayachikitsa, Assistant Professor, Department of Kayachikitsa, Ishan Ayurvedic Medical College and Research Centre, Greater Noida



**Abstract:** All the skin diseases are included under *Kushtarog*, that are further classified into two divisions namely *Mahakushta* and *Kshudrakushta*. *Vicharchika* is described under *Kshudrakushta*. In modern science dermatology, the clinical presentation of Eczema is analogous to *Vicharchika*. In atopic dermatitis dry itchy skin is observed alongside areas of erythema. Acute phase of eczema includes vesicular and oozing whereas in chronic phase hyper-pigmented and thickened scratch marks are seen. In modern science there's no cure for Eczema. Only symptomatic treatment is given which include steroids. These steroids have serious side effects and may produce drug abuse. Ayurveda always believes in balancing *doshas*. Also, in atopic eczema recurrence is extremely common. Ayurveda treats the basic cause by balancing *Doshas* and *Dhatus*. This thus helps to prevent recurrence and manage the disease.

**Keywords:** *Kushtarog*, Eczema, *Vicharchika*

**Introduction:**

The skin is a protective coat and also encounters a high number of antigens at the interface between the body and the surrounding.

Skin diseases occur everywhere in the world at different levels. Skin diseases affect all the age groups but are more prevalent among children and in low socio economic groups of society as there is very poor hygienic conditions. Also it is seen that skin infections are more common in extreme climate region. Most of the skin diseases transmit through contact.

Atopic dermatitis (AD) is a chronic inflammatory disease of the skin that can be co related with *Vicharchika* in *Ayurveda*. As mentioned earlier Atopic dermatitis is very common and is also seen in children more. Atopic dermatitis makes your skin red and itchy. It is also long lasting i.e. chronic. In AD dry eczematous patches are seen with

erythematous rash. Cardinal features of AD include erythematous eczematous skin lesions, papules which go along side an intense pruritus and skin hyper reactivity.

If we talk about modern science, there is no treatment for Atopic Dermatitis .Also as seen prolonged use of steroids causes bad effects on the skin. Also, Radiation therapy is not that successful including U.V. lights etc. A long drug therapy is given that helps to subside the symptoms but as the medicine is stopped the recurrence is seen. Hence, modern science fails to give a proper solution for AD.

## **Dermatitis**

In Eczema or dermatitis, inflammatory response of the skin is seen that is the result of delayed type Hypersensitivity mediated by T lymphocytes within the skin. The clinical lesions could also be acute or chronic. The term eczema is broadly applied to a variety of persistent or recurring skin rashes. Redness, skin oedema, itching and dryness, blistering, cracking, oozing or bleeding is seen. Temporary skin discoloration is seen with healed lesions. Scarring is rare. Itch is the hallmark of the disease affecting the skin areas of arms, back of knees, wrists, face, and neck. The itchiness is the most important feature that can worsen disease making oedema become more severe and appearance of a tense blister. These kinds of people develop “itch scratches” cycle.

## **Classification:**

Dermatitis is classified as:

1. Allergic Contact Dermatitis
2. Irritant Contact Dermatitis
3. Atopic Dermatitis
4. Hand Eczema
5. Neuro Dermatitis
6. Nummular Dermatitis
7. Seborrheic Dermatitis
8. Stasis Dermatitis

## **Pathological View:**

The stages include:

**Acute form:** Shows, spongiosis with formation of vesicles, acanthosis, variable infiltration of the epidermis by lymphocyte, with dense superficial lymphocytic dermal infiltration with histiocytes.

**Subacute form:** Spongiosis diminished, increasing acanthosis, with formation of a parakeratotic stratum corneum, moderate dermal lymphocytic infiltrate with histiocytes and reduce epidermal infiltrate.

**Chronic form:** There's acanthosis with areas of parakeratosis, marked acanthosis, elongation and broadening of the rete ridges, mild chronic dermal lymphocytic-histiocytic infiltrate and absence of epidermal infiltrate e.g. lichenification.

## **Pathogenesis**

Eczema has many causes, but the pathogenesis follows some common pathways. One hallmark is that the activated keratinocyte. It metabolizes rapidly and this is often related to increased proliferation of basal cells and secretion of varied cytokines. The epidermis contains large amounts of interleukin 1 (IL-1). this is often released whenever the epidermis is broken (e.g. by trauma, chemical irritation, and a kind IV cell-mediated immune reaction; IL-8 acts as a chemotactic factor for neutrophils. it's not surprising that neutrophil infiltration (exocytosis) of the epidermis is characteristic of most eczemas.  $\gamma$ -Interferon stimulates lymphocytes to perpetuate the perivascular lymphocytic infiltrate commonly observed in eczemas of all kinds. Hyperproliferation causes the epidermis to thicken (acanthosis) and to scale. Cytokines cause oedema, blistering and weeping, and particularly itching.

## **Sign and Symptoms**

AD can develop on any area of your skin at any age.

Common symptoms during each stage of life are as follows:

### **Infants**

- As we rub the itchy skin it causes rash. In babies, the rash develops on the cheeks that are dry, raw, and scaly.

### **Children**

- A rash that often begins in the elbows or knees. Other common places for the rash to appear are the neck, wrists, ankles, and between the buttocks and legs.
- Itchy, scaly patches where the rash appeared.

### **Adults**

- Extremely dry skin
- Skin that is easily irritated
- Hand eczema
- Eye problems (eczema on eyelids, cataracts)
- Raw, bleeding skin or oozing
- Deep lines in the palms
- Skin infections

## **Cause**

The explanation for eczema is unknown but is presumed to be a mixture of genetic and environmental factors:

## Environmental

The hygiene hypothesis postulates that the explanation for asthma, eczema, and other allergic diseases is a strangely clean environment. It's supported by epidemiologic studies for asthma. The hypothesis states that exposure to bacteria and other system modulators are important during development, and missing out on this exposure increases risk for asthma and allergy. While it's been suggested that eczema may sometimes be an allergy to the excrement from house dust mites, with up to five of individuals showing antibodies to the mites, the general role this plays awaits further corroboration.

## Genetic

A number of genes are related to eczema, one among which is filaggrin. Genome wide studies found three new genetic variants related to eczema: OVOL1, ACTL9 and IL4KIF3A. Eczema occurs about 3 times more frequently in individuals with disorder and about twice more frequently in relatives of these with disorder, potentially indicating a genetic link between the two conditions.

## Triggers of atopic dermatitis

- Stress
- Allergies
- Sweating
- Certain soaps, cleaners or detergents
- Long, hot baths or showers
- Rapid changes in temperature
- Low humidity
- Wool or man-made fabrics or clothing
- Dust or sand
- Cigarette smoke
- Certain foods, such as eggs, milk, fish, soy or wheat
- Bacterial skin infection or colonization

## Vicharchika Review

In the Ayurveda Eczema is taken into account to be a kind of *Kushtha*, which may be a disease of the skin. *Virruddha Ahar* causes *Agnimandya* of patients. *Agnimandya* results in incomplete digestion and fermentation This results in produce Amotpatti leading *Tridoshdushfi* and *Kled* formation, thanks to *Ashrya- ashrayisambandh* results in *Mansa dusti*, *Twakdusti*, *Lasikadusti* and *Raktadusti* and causes *Vicharchika*.

## Classification

The Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita classify skin diseases into two categories: The Mahakushtha (Major) and Kshudrakushta (Minor).

According to classical texts, *Vicharchika* has cardinal symptoms i.e. *Kandu* (Excessive itching), *Pidika* (Vesicle/Boil/Pustule), *Shyavata* (Discoloration), *Bahu-srava*, (Profuse oozing), *Lasikasrava*, *Raji* (Marked lining/ Lichenification), *Ruja* (Pain), *Rukshata* (Excessive dryness). *Vicharchika* is *Kapha pradhana tridoshaja vyadhi* and *Rasa (Twak)*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa* and *Kleda (Ambu)* are *Dushya* of it. the most causative factor for all the *Roga* is *Agnimandhya*.

## Purva Roop (Prodromal Symptoms):

- As enumerated within the Charaka Samhita, the prodromal symptoms include.  
Loss of touch
- Excessive or no perspiration
- Deranged complexion
- Appearance of rashes
- Itching piercing pain
- Exhaustion and excessive pain in wounds.

## Roop (Symptoms):

The Sushruta Samhita defines *Vicharchika* as excessive pain and itching, the Charak Samhita describes *Vicharchika* during a slightly different way It consists of pimples which are itchy, blackish, and with excessive discharge.

- *Kandu*-It may be a condition of severe itching and is most distressful symptom.
- *Pidika*-In Charak it's been explained that, when the vitiated Pitta gets accumulated in Twacha and Rakta creates inflammation and redness then it's referred to as *Pidika*.
- *Srava*- Acharya Charak described *Bahusrava* meaning profuse discharge.
- *Shyava*- this is often characteristic feature of the lesions of
- *Vicharchika*.
- *Raji*- Sushruta has described this symptom. *Raji* means linings. *Raji* is caused by vitiated *Vata*.
- *Rukshata*- It indicates the dryness within the lesion.
- *Ruja*- *Ruja* means *Vedna* i.e. pain to the patient thanks to chronic nature of the disease.

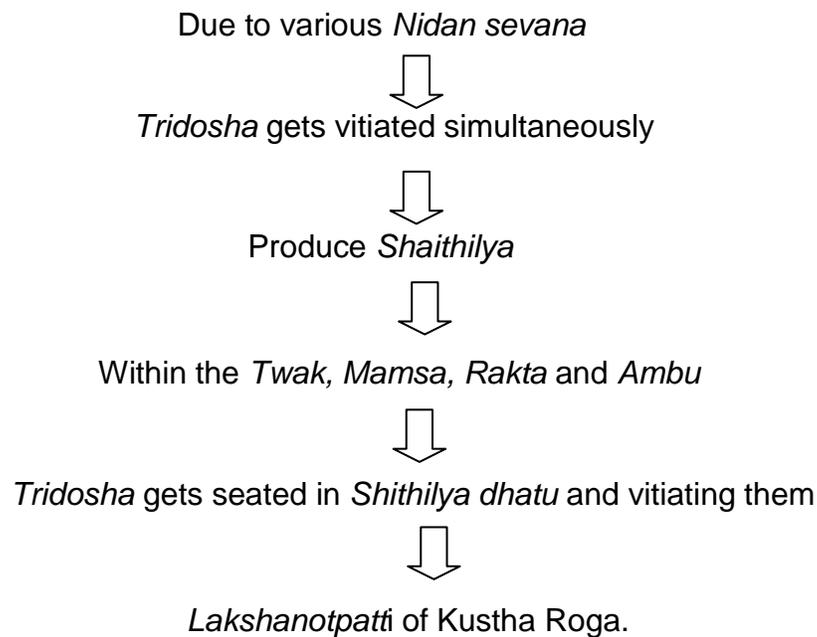
## Nidaan

- In compatible foods and drinks

- Watery and fatty food
- Uncooked food and overeating
- Fish, salty and sour foods, black gram
- Suppress the urges of vomiting
- Heavy workout
- Improper method of administering Panchakarma
- Over indulgence in sexual activity
- Exposure to heat immediately after taking food

**Samprapti:**

Acharya's have described the *Samprapti* for *Kustha* that is generally taken for *Vicharchika* (Charak samhita)



The pathogenesis involved within the manifestation of *Kushtha Roga* generally and *Vicharchika* especially is vitiation of *Tridosha* predominantly of *Kapha Dosha*.

**Line of treatment:**

As always involves quite one *Dosha*, the *Chikitsa* are going to be supported the presence of particular symptoms. The foremost aggravated symptom should be treated first. The Ayurveda classics advocate several line of conservative treatment for *Kushta* disease specially *Vicharchika*. Also the disease which doesn't answer the varied medical treatment is definitely of blood vitiated disorders as per Ayurvedic

understanding. Among the *Shodhana* karmas (purificatory treatments), bloodletting is taken into account because the best treatment for skin diseases.

The Charak Samhita offers detailed treatment for every *Dosha* although none specifically For *Vicharchika*. In cases of *Vata* predominant *Kushtha*, ghee is prescribed. For *Pitta* predominant *Kushtha virechena* (purgation) followed by *Rakta mokshna* (bloodletting), and for *Kapha* predominant *Kushtha*, *Vamana* (therapeutic vomiting) is utilized.

Acharya Sushrut suggests *Doshanusari* (according to *Doshas*) bloodletting Therapy. Acharya Sushruta categorized *Vicharchika* (dry eczema) as *Pitta pradhan Kshudra kushtha*. Two sorts of treatment are advised for *Kushtha*, *Shodhan* and *Shamana* Therapy. For *Pita Pradhana*, within the *Kshudra kushtha*, *Jalaukavacharana* (bloodletting by leech) is that the Ideal treatment.

### **Raktamokshan**

Acharya Sushruta says *Rakta mokshana* the foremost effective therapy in half the body ailments. A study on the utilization of *Rakta mokshna*, specifically utilizing *Jalauka* (leeches), indicated a dramatic improvement of the symptoms of *Vicharchika*. Bloodletting by making use of leeches has found to be very is effective in reliving the signs and symptoms of Eczema. Thus leech therapy proved to be an efficient, time saving, affordable and acceptable treatment in skin diseases, especially in Eczema, Consistent with Acharya Sushruta, if an individual regularly undergoes bloodletting, he can develop resistance against all kinds of skin diseases. Blood-letting is one among the traditional and important para-surgical procedures described in Ayurveda for treatment of varied diseases. Various methods are employed for blood-letting like *Shringa* (horn), *Jalauka* (leech), *Alabu* (gourd), *Prachhana* (scarification) and *Siravyadha* (vein puncture). Among them, leech therapy (blood-letting using leech) has gained greater attention globally, due to its medicinal values it possesses. Being a disease caused thanks to vitiated blood, an equivalent blood-letting therapy using leeches is often advocated just in case of Eczema also. The Acharya Sushruta emphasized the *Guna* of *Shringa* as *Madhura* (Sweet), *Snigdha* (Oily) and *Ushna* (Hot) which made it *Vataghana* in nature.

### **Virechan karma**

Virechana (systemic purification by giving purgative drug) is best for the skin diseases where *Pitta* and *Rakta* are mainly involved. Consistent with Charak procedure of *Virechan* should be done by the utilization of *safed nishoth*, *Danti root*, *Triphala*. The role of *Virechan karma* or purgation as a treatment for *Vicharchika* has also shown to be highly valuable for this condition. The utilization of *Koshtha shudhi* decreased the recurrence of the disease.

## Rasayana therapy

Rasayana improves tissue nutrition. If an individual is fairly healthy, he or she will do Rasayana therapy after undertaking cleansing. Consistent with a recent clinical study by Mandip and H.M Chandola, Patient was given Rasayana after eight days course of bowel cleanse with Aragvadha, then given Shirishadi decoction orally and *Snuhyadi lepa* externally for treatment of eczema.

## Lepas

Lepas are topical treatment commonly wont to address symptoms on the *Vicharchika*. Common herbs utilized in *Lepa* for *Vicharchika* include *Haritaki* and *vidanga*. Commonly used for the treatment of *Vicharchika* are *Guduchi*, Tumeric, and Amla, Shatavari, Nimba is that the herb described as *Kushthghna* by Bhavaprakash and its medicated oil is one among the simplest healing and disinfectant agents for skin diseases.

## Vaman

It is the primary of the five principle therapies in Pancha karma. *Vamana* is taken into account to be the effective treatment for both *Pitta* and *Kapha* excess. Acharya Charak says that if *Kustha* affected the upper a part of the body, the patient should be subjected to the procedure of *Vaman* by the utilization of Madanphal, Mulathi, Parora leaf mixed with the juice of Neem.

## Shaman chikitsa.

*Pathya churna*- Haritaki boiled in cow urine with Haridra paste should be taken to destroy ezema.

*Vishtailam*- *Karanj*, *Haridra*, *Daruharidra*, *Arka*, *Taggar*, *Karveer*, *Vaca*, *Kustha*, *Aphota*, *Raktachandan*, *Jati*, *Saptparna*, *Manjistha*, *Saindhav* each 20gm and *Vatsnabh* 40gm with these oil 640ml is cooked alongside four time cow urine it's very effective in *Vicharchika*.

*Durvadhtailam*: Oil is cooked with four time juice of *Durva*, it destroy *Vicharchika*.

*Chakradatt*: *Ekvinshatiguglu*, *Panchnimb churn*, *Adgajadilepa*, *Pakvasasharplepa*, *Pakkvagrihdhumadi lepa*.

*Bhishjyaratnawali*: *Argwadhadikwath*, *Udaybhaskar ras*, *Rasmanikaya*, *Amritankur loha*, *Marichadi tail*, *Vicharchkari tail*.

## Single Herbs

### Haridra

Healing property, skin care

Turmeric oil obtained as a by-product from curcumin manufacture was subjected to antibacterial study and located effective against *Bacillus cereus*, *Bacillus coagulans*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*.

### **Nimba**

Clinical studies with the dried Neem leaf extract indicated its effectiveness to cure eczema and scabies. Lotion derived from Neem leaf, when locally applied, can cure these dermatological diseases within 3–4 days in acute stage or a fortnight in chronic case.

### **Amalki**

Various layers present in skin could also be damaged thanks to UV radiation from sun is understood as photo-aging which may be a complex organic process. Amla reduce this problem thanks to its radical assuaging nature. It improves skin elasticity by taken of dried Amla powder mixed with water.

### **Pathya-Apathya:**

Rice varieties alongside the *Sastika* sort of it, the meats of the animals and birds, various preparations of the cooked Yava- a tolerant the *Kustha* should be practicing consuming these always. The meat of the animals of the country side, the marshy area and therefore the aquatic area, sugarcane, sesame, ghee, wine, curds and milk, the habit of the sleeping by day, taking sour fruits, indulgence in sex, various preparation of flour-all of those excessively aggravate *Kapha*, *Pitta* also as *Rakta*. Susruta addressed “patient with skin disease should avoid the utilization of meat, fat, milk, curd, oil, eatables prepared from corn flour, sours, incompatible foods and overeating, uncooked foods or that which cause indigestion, foods which cause burning sensation during digestion and which increase moisture inside the tissue”.

### **Conclusion:**

In the contemporary view of *Vicharchika* it are often included as eczema. Long period of treatment in sort of suppressive and symptomatic (topical and systemic) are necessary in both therapies. In Ayurved *kustha* and *Kshudra Kustha* are broad concept with pointed principle of management. All aspect of treatment also describe in *vicharchika* eg. *Pathya* and *Apathya* (diet). Various drugs for systemic and native purpose in many sort of drugs preparation eg tablets, Lepas, Rasayan preparation, oil, kwath (decotion) etc. and special modalities for bio purification (Panchkarma) as also described. It means Ayurvedic management are going to be an efficient and acceptable treatment in skin diseases, especially in Eczema.

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