



IJAPC

Volume 11 Issue 2,
2019

www.ijapc.com

2350-0204

GREENTREE GROUP PUBLISHERS



Understanding Various Aspects of Pathology of Skin diseases through Ayurvedic Viewpoint

Neelesh Patil^{1*} and Ashwini Patil²

¹⁻²D.Y. Patil Ayurved College & Research Centre, Pimpri, Pune, India

ABSTRACT

WHO classifies skin and cutaneous diseases under ICD-10 chapter XII L00-L99. This classification underscores one of the fundamental principles of *kushtha* mentioned in Ayurveda i.e. innumerability. Under these conditions, comprehensive knowledge of the pathological process (*samprapti*) is important to achieve success in treatment. This in turn requires comprehensive knowledge of various factors contributing to *samprapti* i.e pathogenesis. Irrespective of innumerability of *kushtha*, certain factors remains constant called as *Saptadosha dooshya samgraha* including – *tri-doshas*, *twak*, *rakta*, *maamsa* and *lasika*. This article aims at understanding the subtle nature of these seven factors along with their inter-relations, interactions and their respective role in causing skin diseases.

KEYWORDS

Skin disease, Kushtha, Samprapti, Pathogenesis



Greentree Group Publishers

Received 29/06/19 Accepted 26/07/19 Published 10/09/19



INTRODUCTION

WHO classifies skin and cutaneous diseases under ICD-10 Chapter XII L00-L99.

This classification actually implies one thing and that is – innumerability of skin diseases which is quoted by Acharya Charaka in *Kushtha nidan*¹. But to avoid *atiprasang*, he limited these types under 7 headings keeping in mind the innumerability of skin diseases. Another reference to think about is where Charaka uses plural forms for the names of various *kushthas* rather than singular form. The thing to understand from this is, *kapal* or *mandal* or *udumbar* are not single *kushthas* but actually represent many other skin conditions under single head. Now a very fundamental question arises – why innumerability of these ailments?

This question highlights the importance not only of *samprapti* but also *hetus*. This hints us to the *siddhant* laid down by Acharya Charak in *Prameh Nidan – Vikar Vighatkar Bhava*². Permutations and combinations of these *bhava* namely *hetus-doshas-dooshyas* (which in fact indicates *Samprapti*) leads to broad spectrum of this stress provoking and at the same time socially stigmatic condition.

Analyzing *samprapti* is nothing but answering the questions – *what-when-why-*

where-how. And this actually makes *samprapti* the most complex aspect among others mentioned in *Nidan Panchak*. What makes it even harder is the need of contemplation with various references which are scattered all over classical texts. Even for *Kushtha*, we may find references in *sootrasthanas* like *Trishothiya*, *Yajjah Purusheeya*, *Santarpaneeya* etc, in *vimansthana* in *strotovimana*, even some references from *Sharirsthana* of Sushruta like *Siravarnvibhakti*, *Dhamanivyakaran* etc.

Basics of *Kushtha* Samprapti

1. First thing to consider here is the *Adhyayakrama* by Acharyas. Charaka describes *Kushtha* after *Prameh Nidan* indicating some of the common factors in *samprapti* like *Shaithilya*, *Kleda*, *Santarpanajanyatwa* etc.

2. Also while describing *prakutpatti* i.e. the very first occurrence of diseases where *kushtha* is said to be caused by eating libations in *yadnya*³. It highlights the *Santarpanajanyatwa* as well as *paap karma* in causing *twacha vikar*.

3. *Kushtha* again is classified as *Santrpanjanya vyadhi* by Charaka.

4. A very interesting *sootra* on *Bahudosha avastha* also shades light on another aspect of *samprapti* negating *alpa dosha* or *madhyam dosha avastha*⁴. This reference gains a practical importance when Acharya



Sushrut advice frequent *shodhan karmas* in *kushtha*.

This *santarpanajanyatwa* and *bahudosha avastha* of *twakvikar* can be beautifully understood from *sootra* stated in *Ch.su. 28/4*⁵.

This is a physiological condition i.e. during normal digestion, when *doshas* starts to accumulate, our body eliminates them through two processes – first, by excreting them out of body and secondly, counterbalancing them by antagonistic *gunas*. When this physiology of internal maintenance is hampered *bahudoshaavastha* and *santarpanjanya vyadhis* succeed.

5. Another well known factor of *twachavikar* is its mention in *Raktajvyadhi*.

6. Simultaneously, it is classified as *Sahajvyadh* by Acharya Vagbhata which underlines *beejdoshajsamprapti*⁶.

7. And lastly not to forget that it is a *Mahagada*.

These are some un-ignorable fundamentals which need to be addressed before understanding actual *samprapti*.

Dosha Vichara

Kushtas are reckoned to be Tri – *doshaj* by *Bruhatrayee*. Though there happens to be some differences in other texts like *Harita* who settles on an opinion of *pitta*

dominance in *kushtha*. Actually speaking, it can't be denied also if we go through various references. Acharya sushruta while directing *karmas* of *Pittavahi Siras*, mentioned – *bhrajishnuta*⁷. Even in *Ashtang Sangraha*, *Visphota – masoorika* are enumerated under *pitta vikaras*⁸. And nonetheless, *ashraya-ashrayi bhava* of *Rakta* and *Pitta* also underlines the same. All these factors indicate dominance of *pitta*. Nevertheless, *vata* and *kapha* walk shoulder to shoulder when it comes to *samprapti* of *twakvikar*. Acharya Vagbhata signifies role of *vyanvayu* in causing *Kushtha* in *nidan sthana*⁹. Even an interesting reference quoting relation between *sparshanendriya* and *vata* is given by *Charaka*¹⁰.

An interlinking relation of *twacha-kapha – rasa* is very well known. Going further, *vikrut kapha* is said to be *mala*¹¹, and *maladhikya* is counted among 20 *nanatmaj vikaras of Kapha*¹². This *maladhikya* is also a prominent factor in causing *twakvikaras*. So this easily concludes the involvement of all *doshas* in *kushtha* / *twakvikaras*.

Understanding *Anshanshvikalpana* is of prime importance for an Ayurvedic physician for *Shuddha chikitsa*. Here are some of the thoughts which can aid a physician on this part of *samprapti*.

Vata – ruksha, vishada (sometimes), *yogavahi*



Pitta – Ushna, drava, visra

Kapha – drava, picchila, sthira (acchaguna indirectly)

Vata

Yogvahitwa undeniably plays a role here, helping pitta. Along with this, *roukshya* causes *vaivarnya* and *sthan-vaigunya* in respective dhatus making them susceptible to doshas.

Pitta

While describing various attributes of Prakruti and its relation to gunas in vimansthana, Charak relates ushnaguna of pitta with occurrence of *piplu-vyang-tilakalaka* in pitta prakruti persons¹³ which finds its correlation here also. *Dravaguna* works on *shaithilya* and *kleda* part of *kushtha samprapti*. And lastly *visraguna* acts on *paak*, *strava* and *maladhikya* angle of *samprapti*.

Kapha

Drava guna extend its hands towards dravaguna of pitta increasing *shaithilya* and *kleda*. *Sthira* and *Picchila guna* makes doshas stick to dooshyas for longer duration making it harder for Vaidya to pull them towards *Koshtha* and ultimately out of *sharira*.

One more *guna* which passively help this *samprapti* by its absence, is *Acchaguna*. Charaka says that *Acchaguna* of kapha is important for *prasannavarna*, *mukh* and

swarain person¹⁴, which when decreased indirectly helps the *samprapti*.

Other than *kushtha* adhikarana, twakdosha may also be present as *Lakshana* or *upadrava* in conditions like – *raktravrutta vata*, *maansavrutta vata* and *vyanavrutta prana*. A thing to remember is, here twakvikar is *lakshan* and not *vyadhi* in itself.

Dooshya vichar

Charaka describes 4 dooshyas in *Kushtha* namely *twacha*, *rakta*, *maansa* and *lasika*. The one factor which Acharya Sushruta adds to these is *Krumi*¹⁵. He mentions *krumi* in *samanya samprapti* itself underscoring the importance of the same.

Twacha

Twak is not just a *dooshya* or *dushtisthana* but *abhivyakti sthana* i.e the part which expresses the undergoing pathology. Charaka calls *kushtha* as *Sparshanaghna* (the one which destroys skin)¹⁶. One thing to understand here is *twak* does not represent *Rasa dhatu* in this aspect. *Twacha* is *ashraya* of *rasa dhatu*. There is another thing to consider and that is *Udbhavasthana*. Acharya Sushruta considers *Vedinitwacha*¹⁷ as *udbhavasthana* while Charaka assigns this to *Chaturthitwacha*. This does not mean that other layers remain unaffected. This particular layer is just the *Udbhavasthana*



after which it indubitably spreads to other layers causing dushti of entire Twacha.

The significance of this dooshya can be easily seen in chikitsa where importance is given to *bahya chikitsa* along with *abhyantar chikitsa*.

Rakta

The role of rakta in *kushtha* vyadhi goes without saying. The type of dushti, *rakta* undergoes in twakvikar is *Vruddhi* which is stated in Ashtang Hrudaya. Sushruta has given karmas of *Raktvahi sira* in *Sharir sthana* which include – *Varna* and *Sparshadnyana* i.e. complexion and touch perception which are highly affected in these conditions¹⁸. Rakta is also a major part of *Samhanana* of one's body¹⁹. This gets affected leading to *shaitilya* of dhatus causing twakvikar. The similarities between *purvaroopas* of kusht and vatarakta are very much apparent. This also gives us idea about rakt.

Maansa

The role of maansa in *kushtha* may sound somewhat secondary or subprime to rakta which actually is not. The relations between these dooshyas can be found, neither in nidansthana nor chikitsasthana but in Sootra and sharirsthanas which are remarkably apparent.

Twacha is *upadhatu* of Maansa. *Raktavahi dhamanya* are mentioned in *moolasthanas* of *maansvah strotas*. There is reference of

Mansadhara twacha and *mansadhara kala* as well. It suggests that maansa is as much a culprit in kusht as there are rakta and twacha.

Role of maansa in this *samprapti* -

1. Maansa is part of *samhanana* which is largely affected in these ailments.
2. Various diseases involving maansa as *doooshya* (eg. *Pandu, kaamala, udar, prameha, alaji, vidradhi*) shows its strong collaboration with rakta. Maansa is also responsible for giving *Shopha swaroop* i.e. swelling nature to various types of skin diseases.
3. Maansa also provides *adhishthana* i.e. a place to occupy.
4. Lastly and more importantly it is a source of *kleda*. Maansa is *Pruthwi - jalapradhana*. In skin diseases, *parthiva tatwa* diminishes and *jalatatwa* accumulates making *maansadhatu - shithila*.

Lasika

Various explanations are given by commentators about nature of lasika. Chakrapani calls it as sticky part of *udaka*. Hemadri describes it as *mala* of *rasa dhatu* residing in twacha. Indu says it to be *sneha* of twacha while Gangadhara consider it as *Udak* itself which gets excreted in wounds. As explained by Charaka, lasika is one of the many forms of *udaka* which is present in each and every part of body. This entity



is quite different from *kapha* and *sweda* which are also present in *twacha* simultaneously. From all the references above, it can be concluded that there are two function of *lasika* in *twacha* – 1. *Dharana* (holding the skin physiologically) and 2. *Snehana* (providing moisture to skin). Though it is a *jaleeya bhava*, *lasika* is a *pitta* *sthana* and not *kapha* *sthana*. This should be kept in mind while considering *samprapti* of *kushta*.

Going further, what actually happen in *lasika* in *twakvikar* is – *Abhishyana* and *Kleda*. This *abhishyand* cause the *shaithilya* in *twacha* and other closely related *dhatu*s, precipitating the pathology. *Lasika* also forms major part of discharge seen in later stages of skin disorders.

These 7 factors are the part and parcel of all *twakvikaras*. But understanding why other *dooshyas* are not mentioned in the pathology is also important.

All these 7 factors are closely related to each other through *mansadhara twacha* and *mansadhara kala*. But *asthi*, *majja* and *shukra* are *gambhira dhatu*s which only get involved in later stages of *dhatugata avasthas*.

About *meda*, if we go through the diseases caused by *dushtha meda* we get an answer to this. Even when *dushtha pitta* affects *meda*, it causes – *granthi*, *vamana*, *sweda*, *trushna* but not *kushtha*, let alone *kapha* and

*vata*²⁰. Behind this is the logic of – *samanguna bhuyisthatwa* i.e. *meda* is closely related with *kapha* *gunas*, so whenever *meda* is affected, diseases which occur are of *granthi swaroop* unlike skin diseases.

The last thing regarding *dooshyas* to understand is the difference between *dooshyas* mentioned in *samanya samprapti* – *twak*, *lasika*, *rakt*, *maansa* and *dhatugat kushtha* i.e. *raktagata kushtha*, *maansagata kushtha* etc. *Vyadhi* is *swatantra* i.e. independent existential entity different from *doshas* and *dooshyas*. *Samanya samprapti* (and its components) gives rise to this independent entity. So, when *dhatugat avastha* occurs, it is actually caused by this ‘independent’ entity and not by these 7 factors mentioned above separately.

Primal Events in pathology of skin diseases

1. Shaithilya pradhan samprapti

Acharya Charaka clearly emphasizes this point in *nidansthana* where he quotes that 7 components of this pathology undergo – *shaithilya*. This is caused by increased *dravatwa*, *kleda*, loss of *samhanan* of *dhatu*s with the help of *ushnaguna* of *pitta*. Such *shithila* *dhatu*s provide easy ground to *doshas* to accumulate.

2. Sthira doshas



This *avastha* is explicitly described by Charaka in *nidansthana* by words – *Santishthamana dosha*²¹ and in *Trishothiya adhyaya* while betelling *ekdeshaj pittaj shophas* i.e. pitta causes *visarpa* and *pidaka* by two different pathologies²². This may also be the reason why Charaka counts *kushtha* as *agrya* (most severe) among all chronic conditions.

3.Mala sanchaya

This aspect is visible is *purvaroop avastha* of these *vyadhis* like signs where pours of body gets lodged with too much excretory products etc²³. As we have already seen in description of *kapha*, impaired digestion leads to *mala sanchay*.

4.Dhatwagni mandya

In such diseases which involve *shakhas*, *dhatwagni* play an important role like it happens here. This results into generation of *asaara and asamhata* dhatus.

5.Strotorodha

Accumulated doshas and malas cause channels of body to get blocked. All these components of pathology result in chronicity. It makes skin disorders harder to treat with longer duration of management. There is a peculiar reference in Charaka quoting that doshas which have spread sideways i.e. in limbs or dhatus, afflict the patient for long time causing misery²⁴. Skin diseases are the perfect example of this, as misery in these ailments is not

limited to physical level but to the psychological level too.



REFERENCES

- 1 Vaidya Yadavaji Trikamaji Acharya, Charaka Samhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda deepika commentary Nidansthana Chapter 5, citation no. 4, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.
- 2 Vaidya Yadavaji Trikamaji Acharya, Charaka Samhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda deepika commentary Nidansthana Chapter 4, citation no. 4, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.
- 3 Vaidya Yadavaji Trikamaji Acharya, Charaka Samhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda deepika commentary Nidansthana Chapter 8, citation no. 11, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.
- 4 Vaidya Yadavaji Trikamaji Acharya, Charaka Samhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda deepika commentary Sootrasthana Chapter 16, citation no. 13, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.
- 5 Vaidya Yadavaji Trikamaji Acharya, Charaka Samhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda deepika commentary Sootrasthana Chapter 28, citation no. 4, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.
- 6 Kaviraj Atrideva Gupta, Ashtang Sangraha with Induteeka, Sootrasthana Chapter 22, citation no. 2, Chowkhamba Krishnadas Academy, Varanasi, 2005.
- 7 Yadavaji Trikamaji Acharya, Sushruta Samhita with Dalhanteeka, Sharir Sthana Chapter 7, citation no. 10, Chaukhamba Oreintalia, Reprint. Varanasi, 1997.
- 8 Kaviraj Atrideva Gupta, Ashtang Sangraha with Induteeka, Sootrasthana Chapter 19, citation no. 20, Chowkhamba Krishnadas Academy, Varanasi, 2005.
- 9 Vaidya Yadavaji Trikamaji Acharya, Ashtang Hruda y with Arunadatta and Hemadriteeka, Nidan Sthana Chapter 16, citation no. 23, Reprint. Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2007.
- 10 Vaidya Yadavaji Trikamaji Acharya, Charaka Samhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda deepika commentary Sootrasthana Chapter 5, citation no. 87, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.
- 11 Vaidya Yadavaji Trikamaji Acharya, Charaka Samhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda



deepikacommentarySootrasthana Chapter 17, citation no. 117, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.

12 Vaidya YadavajiTrikamaji Acharya, CharakaSamhita with ChakrapaniAyurveda deepikacommentarySootrasthana Chapter 20, citation no. 17, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.

13 Vaidya YadavajiTrikamaji Acharya, CharakaSamhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda

deepikacommentaryVimansthana Chapter 8, citation no. 97, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.

14 Vaidya YadavajiTrikamaji Acharya, CharakaSamhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda

deepikacommentaryVimansthana Chapter 8, citation no. 96, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.

15 YadavajiTrikamajiacharya,SushrutaSamhita with Dalhanteeka, NidanSthana Chapter 5, citation no. 6, ChaukhambaOreintalia, Reprint. Varanasi, 1997.

16 Vaidya YadavajiTrikamaji Acharya, CharakaSamhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda deepikacommentaryChikitsasthana

Chapter 7, citation no. 3, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.

18 YadavajiTrikamajiacharya,SushrutaSamhita with Dalhanteeka,SharirSthana Chapter 4, citation no. 4, ChaukhambaOreintalia, Reprint. Varanasi, 1997.

19 YadavajiTrikamajiacharya,SushrutaSamhita with Dalhanteeka,SharirSthanaChapter 7, citation no. 14, ChaukhambaOreintalia, Reprint. Varanasi, 1997.

20 Vaidya YadavajiTrikamaji Acharya, CharakaSamhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda

deepikacommentaryVimansthana Chapter 8, citation no. 116, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.

20KavirajAtrideva Gupta, AshtangSangrahawithInduteeka, SootrasthanaChapter 19, citation no. 20, ChowkhambaKrishnadas Academy, Varanasi, 2005

21 Vaidya YadavajiTrikamaji Acharya, CharakaSamhita with Chakrapani Ayurveda deepikacommentaryNidansthana Chapter 5, citation no. 6, Reprint. Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2011.

22 Vaidya YadavajiTrikamaji Acharya, CharakaSamhita with Chakrapani



Ayurveda

deepikacommentarySootrasthana Chapter
18, citation no. 24, Reprint.
Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan,
Varanasi, 2011.

23 Vaidya YadavajiTrikamaji Acharya,
CharakaSamhita with Chakrapani
Ayurveda deepikacommentaryNidansthana
Chapter 5, citation no. 7, Reprint.
Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan,
Varanasi, 2011.

24 Vaidya YadavajiTrikamaji
Acharya, CharakaSamhita with Chakrapani
Ayurveda deepikacommentaryNidansthana
Chapter 8, citation no. 38, Reprint.
Chaukhambasurabharati Prakashan,
Varanasi, 2011.