



Case Study

INDRALUPTA (ALOPECIA AREATA): A CASE SUCCESSFULLY TREATED WITH JALUKAVCHARANA (LEECH THERAPY)

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ABSTRACT

Hair disorders cause negative impact towards the individual and his/her quality of life. *Indralupta* is a *Kshudrarooga* characterized by loss of hair. It can be correlate with alopecia areata, which is having chief complaint of hair loss on body especially on scalp without any clinical inflammatory signs. *Raktamokshana* is a technical term employed to denote a para-surgical procedure to expel out the vitiated blood from selected areas of the body, by specific methods. Ayurveda classical text propounds practical guidelines for bloodletting and claims it as most effective therapy in half of the body ailments. *Jalaukavacharna Karma* (Leech therapy) is considered as the ideal method to expel out the vitiated blood safely, quickly, and effectively. Here a case of *Indralupta* (alopecia areata) successfully treated with Ayurveda *Raktamokshana* treatment is recorded.

KEYWORDS: *Indralupta*, Alopecia areata, *Jalukavacharana*, *Raktamokshana*, Leech therapy.

INTRODUCTION

Hair disorders cause negative impact towards the individual and his/her quality of life. *Indralupta* is a *Kshudrarooga* characterized by loss of hair.^[1] It can be correlate with alopecia areata, which is having chief complaint of hair loss on body especially on scalp without any clinical inflammatory signs. *Indralupta* (Alopecia) a dermatological disorder is of great concerns to male, female as well as children too which can also cause psychological stress. Tendency of hair fall has been increased since last two decades and hair loss in children comes to approximately 3% of all pediatric cases. Ayurveda is effective and harmless treatment for this disease. Sushruta has mentioned *Indralupta* as *Raktapradhoshajavikara*.^[2] *Pitta* associated with *Vata* gets lodge in *Romakupya* and causes hair fall, later on *Kaphadosha* associated with *Rakta* causes obstruction to the hair roots and restricts the regrowth.^[3] *Raktamokshana* is a technical term employed to denote a para-surgical procedure to expel out the vitiated blood from selected areas of the body, by specific methods.^[7] Acharya Sushruta propounds practical guidelines for bloodletting and claims it as most effective therapy in half of the body ailments.^[4] Among various methods for bloodletting such as *Jalaukavacharana Karma*, *Prachhanna Karma*, and *Siravedhana Karma*,^[5] *Jalaukavacharna Karma* (Leech therapy) is considered as the ideal method to expel out the vitiated blood safely, quickly, and effectively.^[6]

Jalaukavacharana helps in draining the vitiated *Rakta*, in turn plays an important role in *Samprapti-vighatana* of *Indralupta*.

Case History

A 04 year old female child presented in OPD of RARISD, Ahmedabad with OPD no. 2930 for the following complaints.

Chief Complaints

Multiple patchy hair loss since 6 months on scalp.

History of Present Illness

Patient was having the said to be asymptomatic 6 month back. Gradually her mother started noticing hair fall from scalp at the centre of head. After that her mother noticed that the patches of hair loss were increasing. She consulted dermatologist and took medicine for 6 months, including oral medications as well as external applications. There was no improvement in hair growth and she approached our hospital for further treatment.

Investigations

Routine hematological investigation was carried out after treatment to check safety of treatment.

General examination:

Moderately built with no other systemic illness

Systemic Examination

Scalp and Hair

Inspection

Type- Patchy hair loss.

Site- Focal region on scalp

Treatment Protocol

Treatment protocol: *Jaluakavacharana karma*

Total 8 sittings were given with 03 *Jalauka*. Initial four sittings of *Jaluakavacharana* were given with gap of 7 days, followed by four sittings of *Jaluakavacharana* with gap of 15 days.

Method of *Jalaukavacharana*

Purva karma (pre-operative procedure)

Total 03 *Jalauka* (*Nirvish*) was procured from the renowned seller from Ahmedabad. The procedure was done in sitting position.

Pradhana karma (operative procedure)

Jaluka was kept in a vessel of *Haridra* water till they get rid of their exhaustion and after that they were made to stick at the site of the lesion. They were fully covered with fine wet cotton except for their mouth which was left exposed. When its mouth gets suck (to the site) and middle portion gets elevated assuming the shape of a horse shoe it was known it is sucking well. The sucking leeches were held covered by wet cloth. Withdrawal of leeches: When pricking pain or itching was produced at the site of application it was inferred that the leech is now sucking pure blood (after having sucked the vitiated blood) and

then the leech could be removed. If it did not withdraw due to the smell of blood, common salt powder was sprinkled upon its mouth.

Paschata karma (post-operative procedure)

When it had fallen away, its hind portion was held by the left hand in between the thumb and fingers and it was slowly and gently squeezed (beginning from the tail end to) as far upwards as the mouth by the thumb and fingers of the right hand and it was made to vomit till it shows the symptoms of complete emptying. When the leech completely emptied of blood, it was left in a vessel of water while it moved to and fro in search of food. After proper vomiting it was replaced in water as described previously. The wound was simply be anointed by *Haridra* was compressed by gauze (soaked) in the same.^[9]

Advice after treatment

Not to use any oils immediately on the day of procedure. Hair should not be combed. Avoid pollution, exposure to sunlight, spicy and junk food.^[10]

Result

There was appreciable hair growth and on bald area of scalp after treatment, hair started growing.



Before treatment



During procedure



After treatment



After 6 months

DISCUSSION

It was a case of *Indralupta*, in contemporary Alopecia. It is a *Raktajavikara*. Patients have already taken oral and external medication. Keeping all this in consideration *Jalukavacharana* treatment was planned. *Raktamokshana* is the ideal treatment when *Doshas* are vitiated in *Dhatuantargata*. *Jalukavacharana* helps in clearing the obstructed *Romakupas* and vitiated *Rakta* is expelled out. *Jalukavacharana* drains out the vitiated blood from the *Srotas* and helps in *Sampraptivighatana* of *Indralupta*.^[10]

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the *Indralupta* is condition in which modern medicine has limitations; *Jalukavacharana* a type of *Raktamokshana* in Ayurveda system of medicine provide quite relief to the patient.

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