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Case Study

AN AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF *EKAKUSHTHA* (PSORIASIS VULGARIS) THROUGH *VIRECHANA KARMA* (PURGATION THERAPY) AND *SHAMANA CHIKITSA* (PALLIATIVE THERAPY): A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

A 21 years old female patient had complained of silvery scaly skin lesions all over body with reddish discoloration having severe itching, burning sensation since 15 years back that got aggravated during each rainy and cold season. Examination- 1. Severe silvery scaly lesions shaded down on rubbing all over the day, 2. Characterized by sharply demarcated and erythematous papulosquamous lesions (Dry, thin, silvery-white scales), 3. Irregular, discoid and oval in shape. 3. Small areas of bleeding where the involved skin is scratched, 4. Scaly plaques on the scalp, 5. Auspitz Sign-positive, 6. Candle grease sign-Positive, 7. Grattage Test-Positive. **Aims and Objectives:** To prove the role & efficacy of *Virechana* drugs, *Virechana Karma*, *Sansarjana Karma* & *Sanshamana chikitsa*. **Materials and Methods:** 1. *Dadimashtaka Choorna* was given 5gm twice a day with lukewarm water continuously for 3 days as *Aama Dosh Pachanartha*, 2. *Guggulutiktakaghritama* was given 25ml, 50ml, 75ml, 100ml, 125ml, 150ml & 200ml with lukewarm water for next 7 days as *Snehana Karma*, 3. *Bahya Snehana* with *Dashamoola Taila* and *Bahya Sarvaanga Swedana* with *Dashmoola Kwatha* were applied for next 3 days, 4. *Virechana Karma* was done after *Samyaka Snehana* & *Swedana*. 5. *Sansarjana Karma* was done after *Samyaka Virechana* for 7 days. Differential Diagnosis-*Siddham*, *Mandalkushtha* & *Ekakushtha*. Provisional Diagnosis-*Ekakushtha*, Final Diagnosis-*Ekakushtha* (Psoriasis vulgaris). **Results:** Significantly improvements were observed in treatment of *Ekakushtha* (Psoriasis vulgaris). **Discussion:** *Deepana* & *Pachana chikitsa* is responsible for *Aama Dosh Pachanartha*. *Snehana* is responsible for *Srotosamamardawama*. *Swedana* is responsible for *Srotomargavishodhanam*. *Virechana* is responsible for pacifying vitiated *Pittaja* as well as *Kaphaja Dosh* and *Vyadhi*.

KEYWORDS: *Ekakushtha*, Psoriasis vulgaris, *Virechana Karma*, Purgation Therapy, *Shamana Chikitsa*, Palliative Therapy.

INTRODUCTION

Psoriasis is a papulosquamous disorder of the skin, characterized by sharply defined erythematous-squamous lesions. It is chronic and well known for its course of remission and exacerbation. The exact etiology is still unknown.^[1] It tends to run in families and precipitated by climate, Streptococcal infections, psychological stress etc.^[2] This condition is comparable with *Ekakushtha* in Ayurvedic system of medicine.^[3] The unique treatment modality of Ayurveda provides long lasting results and a better life for patients through its three basic principles of treatment i.e., *Shodhana*, *Shamana*^[4] and *Nidana Parivarjana*. *Panchakarma (Shodhana)* therapy is a unique type of treatment for various chronic, auto-

immune etc. A case of *Ekakushtha* (Psoriasis vulgaris) discussed here. Patient successfully treated with *Shodhana (Virechana karma)* & *Shamana Chikitsa*. After course of 6 months treatment, provides significant relief in skin lesion, itching, dryness & PASI score.

The skin is one of the five *Gyanendriya-adhithana* as described in Ayurvedic texts, which is responsible for *Sparshagyanam* or touch sensation;^[6] therefore it plays a great role in physical and mental wellbeing of any individual. The unbroken skin is the nature's dressing over the body. It acts as an effective barrier against the entry of diseases and its damage results in whole host problems. Psoriasis is common,

chronic, disfiguring, inflammatory and proliferative condition of the skin, in which both genetic and environmental influences have a critical role.^[7] The most characteristic lesions consist of red, scaly, sharply demarcated, indurated plaques, present particularly over extensor surfaces and scalp.^[8]

In Ayurvedic classics skin disorders are described under one broad term called *Kushtha Roga*.^[9] The classification of diseases is mainly bifurcated under two headings viz., *Santarpanottha*^[10] (excessive nourishing) and *Apatarpanottha* (nutritional deficiency), the understanding of which is very important to plan the appropriate line of treatment through *Apatarpana Chikitsa* and *Santarpana Chikitsa*, respectively. Diseases such as psoriasis presenting with *Bahudosha Lakshanas* are to be viewed under *Santarpanottha Vikaras*, the management of which is through *Apatarpana Chikitsa*, occupied mainly by *Shodhanas* such as *Vamana Karma* and *Virechana Karma*.^[11] Careful study shows that there is resemblance in symptoms of *Ekakushtha* and psoriasis. *Ekakushtha* can be correlated with erythematous silver scaly papule/plaque and itching which are diagnostic symptoms of psoriasis.

A 21 years old female residing in Bharatpur, Rajasthan was visited Kayachikitsa OPD of Arogyashala, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur presenting with chief complaints as itching and discoloration of skin, erythematous patches of rounded to irregular shape, appearance of silvery scales guarding the patches over her trunk, both hands, both legs, chest region, abdominal region, back region, face, and forehead. Around about 15 years back, she was in healthy state, later she started with itching all over her back, abdomen, chest, head, both hands and both legs. The area affected with itching slowly got discolored and dry. Also, there was appearance of red erythematous patches guarded with scales. The patches were more pronounced over back and abdomen. Simultaneously, she was suffering from constipation, loss of appetite, physical and mental stress and disturbed sleep. She had taken treatment of allopathic medicine for years but didn't get any relief. When she visited OPD, first of all we carried out her all routine blood investigations as Complete Blood Count, Blood Sugar Level, Liver Function Tests, Renal Function Tests and Routine and Microscopic Urine Examination to rule out any possible associated disorder. But finding of these investigations were found within normal limits. There was no significant past history of any type of addiction was found.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To prove the role & efficacy of *Virechana* drugs and *Virechana Karma* after *Aama doshantaka Deepana-Pachana Chikitsa*, *Snehana* and *Swedana Karma* in *Ekakushtha* ((Psoriasis vulgaris).
2. To prove the role and efficacy of *Sanshamana chikitsa* (Oral drug therapy) after *Virechana Karma*.
3. To prove the role of *Sansarjana Karma* after *Virechana Karma*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

1. *Dadimashtaka Choorna* was given 5gm twice a day with lukewarm water continuously for 3 days as *Aama Dosha Pachanartha*.
2. *Guggulutiktakaghritama* was given 25ml, 50ml, 75ml, 100ml, 125ml, 150ml & 200ml with lukewarm water for next 7 days as *Snehana Karma*.
3. *Bahya Snehana* (External Oleation) with *Dashamoola Taila* and *Bahya Sarvaanga Swedana* (External whole body) with *Dashmoola Kwatha* were applied for next 3 days.
4. *Virechana Karma* was done after *Samyaka Snehana* & *Swedana*.
5. *Sansarjana Karma* was done after *Samayaka Virechana* for 7 days.

Treatment Plan: The treatment is carried out in two phases.

I. First Phase: First phase of treatment included *Sanshodhana Karma* (Purificatory procedure) i.e., *Virechana* (Process of purgation). Then strictly followed *Sansarjana Karma* for 7 days.

II. Second Phase: After *Shodhana*, second phase of treatment *Shamana Chikitsa* initiated in the form of oral medication and *Nidana parivarjana*.

As *Ekakushtha* is chronic and relapsing in nature and also there is an involvement of *Tridosha* (predominance of *Kapha*) and *Twaka, Rakta, Mansa, Lasika* and *Kleda*.^[12] Hence, repeated *Shodhana* is required for treatment. *Shodhana* is one of the important treatments of Ayurveda which deals mainly with elimination of aggravated *Doshas* from body and eliminates relapsing rate of disease.

Sodhana Chikitsa- (A) Purva Karma (Early Therapy)

Deepana Pachana Chikitsa: *Dadimastaka Churna*: 5 gms twice a day for next 3 days with lukewarm water.

Aabhayaantara Snehapana (Internal Oleation through Digestion): After 3 days of *Deepana Pachana* process, since 4th days *Snehapana* (Oleation) therapy was carried out with *Guggulutiktaka Ghritam* with lukewarm water for next 7 days varying in amount day wise.

Day wise	1 st day	2 nd day	3 rd day	4 th day	5 th day	6 th day	7 th day
Ghrita Matra	25ml	50ml	75ml	100ml	125ml	150ml	200ml

Sarvanga Abhyanga And Swedana

Sarvanga Abhyanga (Whole body massage with *Dashamoola* oil) on 8th day.

Sarvanga Swedana (Whole body fomentation with *Dashamoola Kwatha*)- on 8th day, For 20-25 minutes or until profuse perspiration occurred.

The patient was advised for complete rest on this day and to eat *Laghu Supachya Aahara* in the evening like *Khichadi, Daliya*.

Pradhana Karma (Main Therapy): Virechana Karma (Purgation Therapy)

On day of Virechana procedure	NBM (till process start)
<i>Abhyanga</i>	<i>Dashmoola Taila</i>
<i>Swedana</i>	<i>Vashpa sweda</i>
<i>Virechanopaga Kwatha</i>	<i>Kutaki churna</i> - 2gm
	<i>Triphala churna</i> - 5gm
	<i>Avipatikara Churna</i> - 10gm
	<i>Aaragvadh Phala majja Churna</i> -1 phala majja
	<i>Munnaka (Draksha)</i> - 50gm
<i>Virechaka Yoga</i>	<i>Trivritaadi Avaleha</i> - 20gm Orally
	<i>Abhayaadi Modaka</i> - 4Tab Orally
	Luke warm water- Orally
	<i>Munnaka (Draksha)</i> - 100gm Orally

No. of *Virechanavega* (acts of purgation)-25 Major & 6 Minor *Vega* (After 30 min. of administration of *Virechaka yoga* orally)

Paschata Karma (Process after Purgation Therapy): Sansarjana Karma

3 *Aaharkaala* (diets) for 7 days (with *Peya, Vilepi, Akrita Yusha, Krita Yusha, Mansarasa* and *Samanyaahara*).

Sansamana Chikitsa

A. Tab. Cutisora	Dose: 2 gm/day (500 mg, 2 tablets twice a day)
B. Tab. Kashore Guggulu	Dose: 2 gm/day (500 mg, 2 tablet twice a day)
C. Amalaki Rasayana	Dose: 6gm/day (3gm twice a day)
D. Brigaraja Churna	Dose: 4gm/day (2gm twice a day)
E. Psoria Oil	Dose: 20ml/day (10ml twice a day) with milk. As a Local application.
Duration: 6 months.	
Aushadha Sewana Kala: Before meal.	
Anupana: Tila Taila/day.	

Diet-Plain diet, avoidance of spicy, oily foods, fermented foods, curd, pickles.

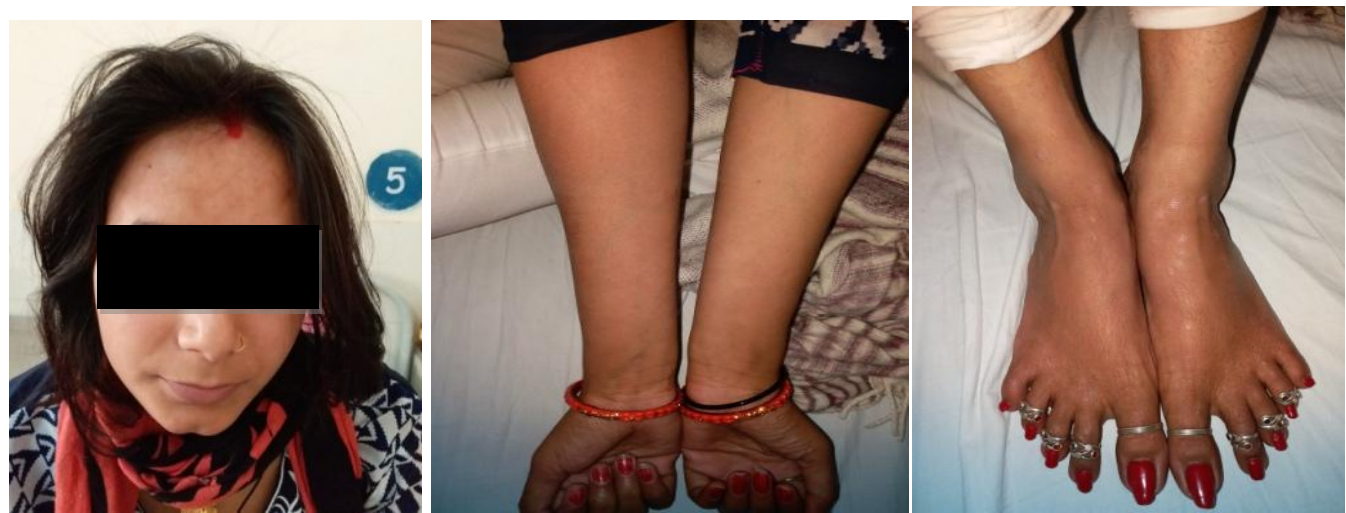
Meditation for mental stress

Results

Before treatment



After Treatment



Effect of samshamana chikitsa

1. Reddish patches lightened.
2. Scaling reduced.
3. Itching at skinny lesions subsided.
4. Burning sensation at skinny lesions subsided.

Subjective Parameters

PASI Score (Psoriasis area & Severity Index): PASI Score was considered as both subjective & objective criteria as it covers both subjective as scaling, indurations and objective parameters as coverage area. For the calculation of score we used Online PASI Calculator Software.

Elements

- A. Body regions as percent of body surface area
- B. Extent of body region affected
- C. Extent of psoriatic changes

A. Body regions as percent of body surface area

Body Regions	Code	% Body surface area
Head	H	10
Trunk	T	20
Upper extremities	U	30
Lower extremities	L	40

B. Extent of body region affected

Different Body regions & their extend indicator were tabulated as follows.

Percentage of body region affected	Extend indicator
0 - 5%	0
5 - 25%	1
25 - 45%	2
45 - 55%	3
55 - 75%	4
75 - 95%	5
95-100%	6

C. Extent of psoriatic changes

Signs	Scoring	Erythema	Indurations	Scaling
No Sign	0	No redness	No induration	No
Minimal	1	Light Pink	Barely palpable	Rare
Mild	2	Pink or Bright Red	Slight Elevation	Poorly defined
Moderate	3	Red	Moderate Elevation	Defined
Severe	4	Dark Red	Marked Ridge	Heavy

PASI = SUM (percent BSA in body region)*(extent Erythema in region)+(extent infiltration in region) +(extent desquamation in region)*(extent of body region affected) = [0.1* (Erythema head)+(infiltration head) + (desquamation head)*(extent of head affected)]+[0.2*(Erythema trunk)+(infiltration trunk)+(desquamation trunk)* (extent of trunk affected)]+[0.3*(Erythema upper extremities)+ (infiltration upper extremities) + (desquamation upper extremities)* (extent of upper extremities affected)]+[0.4* (Erythema lower extremities) +(infiltration lower extremities)+(desquamation lower extremities)* (extent of lower extremities affected)].

Interpretation

Minimum score - 0

Maximum score - 72

Assessment of signs & symptoms were done at pre and post-trial by severity grading scale

Aswedanam (Anhidrosis)	
Scale	Score
Normal	0
Aswedanam present in very few lesions	1
Aswedanam present in few lesions	2
Aswedanam present in all lesions	3
Aswedanam in lesion and uninvolved skin	4
Mahavastu (Lesion)	
No lesions	0
Lesion on partial parts of hand, leg, neck, scalp, back	1
Lesion on most parts of hand, leg, neck, scalp, back	2
Lesion on whole parts of hand, leg, neck, scalp, back	3
Whole body	4
Matsyashakalpa (Scaling)	
No Scaling	0
Mild scaling by rubbing/by itching (scaling from some lesions)	1
Moderate scaling by rubbing/by itching (from all lesions)	2
Severe scaling by rubbing/by itching (from all lesions)	3
Scaling without rubbing/by itching (from all lesions)	4

Criteria for assessment of overall improvement in signs and symptoms**Follow-up**

Signs/Symptoms	Day 0	After 1 month	After 3 months	After 6 months
Aswedanam (Anhydrosis)	0	0	0	0
Mahavastu (Lesion)	4	3	2	0
Matsyashakalopam (Scaling)	4	3	2	0
PASI score	72	45	24	00

Kandu (Itching)	
No itching	0
Mild itching not disturbing normal activity	1
Occasional itching disturbing normal activity	2
Itching present continuously & even disturbing night sleep	3
Itching present continuously & even disturbing day & night sleep both	4
Daha (Burning sensation)	
No Daha	0
Daha in any one area of Udara, Ura, Kukshi/ occasionally for more than half an hour	1
Daha in any 2 area occurs daily for half hour to one hour	2
Daha occurs daily in more than two areas for one hour or more	3
Daha involving most of the areas patient may not sleep at night and does not relieve by any measure.	4
Severe degree of Daha involving the whole body like hands, feet or Sarvanga and does not relieves by any measure.	5

Candle grease sign	
Absent	0
Improvement	1
Present	2

Auspitz sign	
Absent	0
Improvement	1
Present	2

Signs/Symptoms	Day 0	After 1 month	After 3 months	After 6 months
Kandu (Itching)	4	3	2	0
Daha (Burning sensation)	3	2	1	0
Candle grease sign	2	1	1	0
Auspitz sign	2	1	1	0
Grattage Test	2	1	1	0
Improvement in Kandu (Itching), Daha (Burning sensation), Candle grease sign, Auspitz sign, Grattage Test.				100%

DISCUSSION

Probable mode of action of *Virechana Karma*

Sanshodhana therapy has its key strength in preventing relapse of disease. *Acharya Charaka* has specifically mentioned that there is a chance of recurrence of disease when treated with only *Shamana* Therapy (Internal medicine) but when *Sanshodhana* is done there is no chance of recurrence or it is reduced significantly.^[13] As recurrent relapse is the major problem for Psoriasis patients so, the *Virechana Karma* was proved beneficial in preventing relapse. *Virechana* is indicated for *Pitta* predominant disease.^[14] The *Virechana* drugs has the properties like *Ushna*, *Teekshna*, *Sukshma*, *Vyavayi* & *Vikashi*.^[15] Due to their *Vyavayi* and *Vikashi* properties, they get quickly circulated into large and small capillaries of the body and pervade all over the body.^[16] By virtue of their *Ushna* and *Teeksha* qualities the accumulated *Doshas* get liquefied and breakup into small pieces at cellular level.^[17] Because of their *Vikashi Guna* they detach the *Mala* from *Dhatu*. Owing to the presence of *Sukshma Guna* and *Anupravana* properties the *Malas* or *Dosha* float because already body has got *Samyaka Snigdhatata* and pass through smallest capillaries and ultimately reach to *Amashaya*.^[18] Detached *Mala* would not be obstructed even in the smallest capillaries.^[19] Perform *Virechana* in afternoon time i.e., at *Madhyahana* when the levels of *Pitta* are high. As per Ayurvedic point of view, process of *Virechana Karma* precedes *Deepan Pachana* which reduces the *Aamdosha* and increases *Agni*. There after medicated or pure *Ghruta* or Oil is given for the *Snehana*. Though texts clearly contraindicated the use of *Ghruta*, *Ksheera*, *Taila* etc. As *Snehana* in *Kushtha* but they also suggested *Siddha Ghruta* or *Taila* by *Ruksha*, *Ushna* drugs for *Snehpana* purpose which may be helpful in conditions like *Kushtha* where *Kleda* is aggravated. All these drugs having *Rasayana* property may be more beneficial in management of *Kushtha*. *Snehpana* reduces the burning sensation (*Daha*), lubricates the body and thus reduces dryness over the scales. It also reduces the scaling (*Matsyashakalopamam*). Also the external application of *Sneha* reduces dryness and scaling, hence all these procedures reduces *Vatadosha* in the body. *Sarvanga Sveda* removes obstruction in *Srotas* through *Srotoshodhaka* process. By the procedure of *Virechana*, the *Kapha dosha* and *Pitta dosha* gets eliminated from the body and reduces itching. *Deepana-Pachana* which precedes the *Virechana Karma* increase metabolic activity by improving digestive system and helps to digest and excrete the metabolic waste products accumulated in tissue and system. So, *Virechana Karma* ultimately pacifies the basic causative factors (*Doshas* & *Shithila Dhatu*)

which result into early recovery. *Virechana Karma* acts on microcellular level, eliminates the toxins (*Vitiated Doshas*) from body & helps in maintaining normal functioning of body.

Guggulu Tiktaka Ghritam^[20]: It contains *Ghritam*, *Nimba*, *Amrita*, *Vrisha*, *Patola*, *Nidigdihika*, *Patha*, *Vidanga*, *Suradaru*, *Gajopakulya*, *Yavakshara*, *Souvarchalya*, *Nagara*, *Nisa*, *Misi*, *Chavya*, *Kushtha*, *Tejovati*, *Maricha*, *Dipyaka*, *Vatsaka*, *Agni*, *Rohini*, *Arushkara*, *Vacha*, *Kanamula*, *Manjishtha*, *Ativisha*, *Visha*, *Yavani*, *Guggulu*. All these drugs having *Tikta Rasa*, *Kandughna* & *Kusthagna* property.

According to modern research proved that *Vasa* having anti-ulcer property, *Nimba* having antimicrobial, *Amrita* having Immunomodulator, Anti-oxidant, Anti-inflammatory, *Patola* having Anti-inflammatory, Immunomodulator, Hepatoprotective and *Kantakari* having Antihistaminic, Anti-inflammatory and Cytotoxic action so breaks pathology. The patches of Psoriasis are dry & Scaly. The *Guggulu tiktaka ghritam* provides proper moisture to it resulting in slowing of rapid turnover of epithelium. As dryness reduces some sort of soothing analgesic effect is experienced by the patient. Commonly itching experienced by the psoriatic patients is due to excessive dryness of lesions so local application of *Guggulu tiktaka ghritam* shown beneficial results to patients. It has excellent *Vatashamaka* and *Rakta shodhaka* property and also helps in *Vranashodhana*, *Vranaropana*, *Deepana* and enhancing liver function so used in various skin disorders.

Tab.Cutisora^[20]: It contains *Sweta Kutaja*, *Guduchi*, *Neema*, *Vasa*, *Patola*, *Kantakari*, *Chitraka*, *Khadira*, *Haridra* and *Kashore guggulu*. These all drugs are having mostly *Katu*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya rasa* as well as *Laghu*, *Ruksha Guna* and *Rasayana* properties which act on vitiated *Kapha Dosha*. *Ekakushtha* is *Kapha* predominant disease so drug *Tab. Cutisora* works as *Doshapratyanika Chikitsa*. Drug like *Bakuchi* act as *Kushthghna* i.e., *Vyadhipratyanika Chikitsa* and *Rasayana Chikitsa*. Most of the drugs have *Rasayan*, *Tridoshaghna*, *Deepana*, *Pachana* properties while according to modern science Anti inflammatory, Immunomodulator, Anti-helminthes properties so breaks pathogenesis at various level and improve patient.

Amalaki Rasayan^[21]: It is used for rejuvenation, aphrodisiac, immunomodulatory and antioxidant properties. It is beneficial for skin and hair by improving its functions and health. It prevents premature aging and nourishes the skin and hair. It mainly has antioxidant action and Vitamin C content, which fights against free radicals and reduces the

signs of ageing. This action is likely to be responsible for its rejuvenating property. It is a potent immunomodulator, which helps to improve non-specific immunity and prevents common viral and bacterial infections. It is rich in Vitamin C and bioflavonoid that exert potent antioxidant action. It is important to take Vitamin C along with flavonoids especially from the natural source for maximum absorption and usability of Vitamin C.

Brigaraja Churna^[22]: It improves hair growth, prevents hair fall and treats premature graying of hair. It improves complexion and glow of the skin and prevents several skin diseases. It is more beneficial in chronic skin diseases including pruritus (intense itching), chronic wounds, skin ulcers, atopic dermatitis (eczema) etc. *Bhringraja (Eclipta Prostrata)* is helpful in Hair fall, Hair thinning, Premature graying of hair, Scalp itching, Pruritus (intense itching), Chronic Wounds, Non-healing skin ulcers, Atopic dermatitis (especially weeping eczema), Urticaria, Skin blisters and eruptions with *Kapha* or *Vata* dominating symptoms.

Psoria Oil: It contains *Stri Kutaja (Wrightia tintoria)* and Coconut oil. It is used in Psoriasis, Dandruff, Scaling and fungal skin disease. It balances the *Vata* and *Pitta Doshas*.

CONCLUSION

Psoriasis is a heredo-familial disease that is triggered by some local and systemic factors. There is evidence that both hormonal and immunological mechanisms are involved at a cellular level. It is concluded that, Ayurvedic line of management gives satisfactory answer as well equally beneficial for the promotion and preservation of health by removing toxic wastes, by balancing morbid humours and by correction of *Agni* (digestive fire) which gives the healthy and peaceful life to patient. Ayurvedic formulation not only controls the psoriasis but also significantly prevents its relapse. Hence it can be concluded that *Virechana Karma* & Tab. Immosor 2 Tab B.D., *Kashora guggulu* 2 tab B.D., Psoria oil as Local application & Orally in dose of 10 ml B.D., *Bringraja churna* 2gm B.D. *Amalaki Rasayana* 3gm B.D., *Mahamanjithadi Kwatha* 40 ml B.D. as Orally and 200ml mixed in bathing water during Morning are beneficial and safe as compare to allopathic medicine.

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