

Effect of *Raktamokshna* using *Ghati Yantra* (Cupping), *Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya* and *Wilandawennadi Lepa* in *Vicarcika* (Eczema) – A Case Study

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ABSTRACT:

In Ayurveda, *Vicarcika* is described under *Kshudra Kushtha*. *Kandu* (itching), *Shyava Pidaka* (blackish-brown eruptions), *Bahu Srava* (copious exudation), *Rajyo* (cracks), *Ruja* (severe pain) and *Ruksha* (roughness) are the clinical features of *Vicarcika*. It can be correlated with eczema causing dry, itchy skin and rashes of the skin. Charaka describes *Raktamokshna* as one of the therapeutic measures in treatment of *Kushtha Roga*. *Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya* and *Wilandawennadi Lepa* are used to treat patients suffering from *Vicarcika* at Ayurveda teaching hospital, Borella with effective results. So far, no known scientific study has been conducted to evaluate the effect of these treatments. A 68year female with a two-month history of *Vicarcika* (eczema) was treated with this treatment regimen for a period of 24 days. This patient had occasional pain, itching, eruptions, roughness, cracks and copious exudation in both lower limbs. The response to the treatment was recorded and therapeutic effects were evaluated through symptomatic relief. After completion of entire treatment, it was observed that the symptoms such as *Srava* (copious exudation) and *Ruja* (pain) were relieved by 75% and other symptoms were partially relieved. It is concluded that *Rakthamokshna* using *Ghati Yantra* (cupping), *Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya* and *Wilandawennadi Lepa* are beneficial in treatment of *Vicarcika* (eczema)

KEYWORDS: Eczema, *Ghati Yantra*, *Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya*, *Rakthamokshna*, *Vicarcika*, *Wilandawennadi Lepa*

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INTRODUCTION:

Vicarcika is a type of *Kshudra Kushtha*. According to Charaka Samhita and Madhava Nidana,^[1,2] clinical features of *Vicarcika* are *Kandu* (itching), *Shyava Pidaka* (blackish-brown eruptions) and *Bahu Srava* (copious exudation). Sushruta mentions that *Rajyo* (cracks), *Ati Kandu* (excessive itching), *Ruja* (severe pain) and *Ruksha* (roughness) are present in *Vicarcika*.^[3] Charaka describes that *Kapha Dosha* is vitiated in *Vicarcika*^[4] and Sushruta mentions that *Pitta Dosha* is vitiated.^[5]

Vicarcika can be correlated with eczema. Clinical features of eczema are itching, red inflamed skin, dry sensitive skin, rough, leathery or scaly patches in skin, oozing or crusting and occasionally, blisters.^[6]

Charaka describes *Raktamokshna* as one of the therapeutic measures in treatment of *Kushta*,^[7] According to Vangasena Samhita, patients suffering from *Kushta*, who are having profuse impurities in blood, should undergo *Raktamokshna* (bloodletting therapy) after *Snigdha Karma* (oleation therapy).^[8] Sushruta Samhita mentions to conduct *Snehana* and *Swedana* before *Raktamokshana*.^[9] Sirinivasa Acharya mentions that *Ghati Yantravarana*, a small earthen pot can be used for *Raktamokshna*.^[10] Therefore, it was decided to conduct *Raktamokshna* after *Snehana* and *Swedana* using *Ghati Yantra* in this study. *Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya* and *Wilandawennadi Lepa* are used to treat patients suffering from *Kushta Roga* at Ayurveda Teaching Hospital, Borella with effective results. So far, no known scientific study has been conducted evaluate these effects. Hence the present study was undertaken.

CASE STUDY:

A 68-year female with a two-month history of *Vicarcika* (eczema) with complaints of *Kandu* (itching), *Ruja* (pain), *Pidaka* (eruption), *Srava* (copious exudation), *Rukshatha* (roughness) and *Rajyo* (cracks), was selected from Ayurveda teaching hospital, Borella, Sri Lanka and thoroughly examined. Severity of the symptoms before and after treatment was recorded using the specially prepared grading scale given below.

Grading Scale

1. *Kandu* (itching)

Nil	0	No itching
Mild	1	Occasional itching
Moderate	2	Intermittent itching
Severe	3	Often feel itching
Very Severe	4	Always itching

2. *Pidaka* (eruptions)

Nil	0	No eruption
Mild	1	Macule (Non palpable area of altered colour)
Moderate	2	Papule (Palpable elevated small area of skin (<0.5cm))
Severe	3	Nodule (Solid palpable lesion with the skin (> 0.5cm))
Very severe	4	Pustule (a circumscribed, elevated lesion filled with purulent fluid)

3. Colour of *Pidaka* (colour of eruptions)

Nil	0	Normal skin colour
Mild	1	Light brown
Moderate	2	Brownish Red
Severe	3	Blackish Red
Very Severe	4	Black

4. *Srava* (copious exudation)

Nil	0	No discharge
Mild	1	Moisture on the skin lesion; feels only when touch that rea

Moderate	2	Moisture on the skin lesion can be seen
Severe	3	Weeping from the skin after itching
Very Severe	4	Profuse weeping making clothes wet

5. Ruja (pain)

Nil	0	No Pain
Mild	1	Feels pain occasionally
Moderate	2	Feels pain intermittently
Severe	3	Often feels pain
Very Severe	4	Always feeling pain

6. Rukshatha (roughness)

Nil	0	No roughness
Mild	1	Slight roughness
Moderate	2	Mild roughness
Severe	3	Moderate roughness
Very Severe	4	Severe roughness

7. Rajyo (cracks)

Nil	0	No cracks
Mild	1	Cracks can be seen but cannot be felt with fingers
Moderate	2	Cracks can be seen and can be felt with fingers
Severe	3	Crack lines are deeper but within epidermis
Very Severe	4	Cracks spreading up to dermis

Procedure of treatment:

Selected patient was treated for a period of 24 days. Before conducting Raktamokshna, patient was subjected to *Purvakarma* as prescribed in Vangasena Samhita.^[8] Further, *Snehana* was performed using *Ghrutapana* in progressive doses, and *Swedana* in the form of *Parisheka Sweda*.

Day1 to Day6: *Snehana* was carried out by administering ghee in progressive doses. Day7: *Sweda Karma* was performed with *Parisheka Sweda* using hot water. Day8 to

Day10: *Raktamokshna* was carried out using *Ghati Yantra* (cupping). Day11 to Day24: 120ml of *Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya* was administered orally and 50gm of *Wilandawennadi Lepa* was applied externally once a day at 9.30 a.m. Before applying *Wilandawennadi Lepa*, affected areas was cleaned with medicated water. This medicated water was prepared by boiling 60gm of the entire plant of *Leucas biflora* (Sinhala name: *Wilandawenna*) with 1920 ml of water and reducing it to 240ml. Patient was further advised to avoid use of soap or body scrubs.

Method of preparation of Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya

Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya was prepared according to the method practiced at Ayurveda Teaching hospital, Borella, Sri Lanka. 6gm each of entire plants of *Alysicarpus vaginalis* ((Sinhala name: *Aswenna*) and *Aerva lanata* ((Sinhala name: *Polpala*), roots of *Solanum indicum* ((Sinhala name: *Elabatu*), *Solanum xanthocarpum* ((Sinhala name: *Katuwelbatu*), *Tribulus terrestris* ((Sinhala name: *Gokatu*), *Cissampelos pareira* ((Sinhala name: *Diyamitta*), *Picrorhiza kurroa* ((Sinhala name: *Katukarosana*), stems of *Tinospora cordifolia* ((Sinhala name: *Rasakinda*), dried fruits of *Vitis vinifera* ((Sinhala name: *Midi*) and *Phyllanthas emblica* ((Sinhala name: *Nelli*) were cut into small pieces and mixed. 1920ml of water was added to mixture and boiled down to 240ml.

Method of preparation of Wilandawennadi Lepa

Entire fresh plants of *Leucas biflora* (Sinhala name: *Wilandawenna*) were ground into a fine paste. Then 50gm of this paste was mixed with 15ml of coconut oil.

Procedure of Rakthamokshna

Before performing Raktamokshana, Complete blood count, bleeding time, clotting time and Fasting blood sugar level were measured. According to Vangasena Samhita and Sushruta Samhita, *Purvakarma* (*Snehana* and *Swedana*) was carried out.^[8,9] *Snehana* was performed by oral administration of ghee (*Ghrutapana*) in progressive doses for a period of six consequent days till *Samyak Snigdha Lakshana* were present. Then on Seventh day, *Sweda Karma* was performed with hot water, in the form of *Parisheka Sweda Pradhana Karma*, *Rakthamokshna* was performed using *Ghati Yantra* (cupping). *Rakthamokshna* was conducted around 9.00

a.m for three consequent days. The patient was made to lie down on the bed. Then the site of bloodletting was cleaned and 7-10 pricks were given with the help of Number 18 sterile needle which led to pinpoint bleeding. The *Ghati Yantra* was cleaned with surgical spirit and wiped, and it was quickly placed on the bleeding points. It was kept in the same position till the oozing of blood stops and clots. After removing *Ghati Yantra*, the area was cleaned with sterile gauze and *Seethodaka* oil, a Sri Lankan traditional oil was applied to the site. The patient was made to rest and light diet was given. Patient was advised to avoid wetting this area for 24 hour (Figure1).

Table 1: Reduction of symptoms during treatment:

Parameters	BT	AT							
		After <i>Snehapana</i>		After <i>Swedana</i>		After <i>Raktamokshna</i>		After entire treatment	
		Grade	% of Relief	Grade	% of Relief	Grade	% of Relief	Grade	% of Relief
<i>Kandu</i> (itching)	4	4	0%	3	25%	2	50%	2	50%
<i>Pidaka</i> (eruption)	4	4	0%	3	25%	2	50%	2	50%
<i>Srava</i> (copious exudation)	3	3	0%	3	0%	2	33.33%	0	100%
<i>Ruja</i> (pain)	4	3	25%	3	25%	3	25%	1	75%
<i>Rukshatha</i> (roughness)	3	3	0%	2	33.33%	2	33.33%	1	66.67%
<i>Rajyo</i> (cracks)	1	0	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-

Clinical images**1-Pricking the blood letting point****2- Appling Ghatiyantara****3- Ghati Yantra placed on bleeding points****4- Collecting the oozing blood to Ghati Yantra****5-After removing Ghati Yantra****6-Applied the Seethodaka oil****Figure1: Procedure of Rakthamokshna**

Before Treatment



After Treatment



Figure-2: Reduction of symptoms

RESULT:

After *Snehapana*, none of the symptoms showed any reduction but *Rajyo* (cracks) was completely relieved and *Ruja* (pain) was reduced by 25%. After *Sweda Karma*, *Kandu* (itching), *Pidaka* (eruptions) were reduced by 25% and *Rukshatha* (roughness) was reduced by 33.33%. After *Raktamokshna*, *Kandu* (itching), *Pidaka* (eruptions) were reduced by 50% and *Srava* (copious exudation) were reduced by 33.33%. After completion of entire treatment, *Srava* (copious exudation) and *Rajyo* (cracks) were completely relieved, *Ruja* (pain) reduced by 75%, *Rukshatha* (roughness) by 66.67%, *Kandu* (itching) and *Pidaka* (eruptions) were reduced by 50% (Table 1 and Figure2).

DISCUSSION:

According to *Sushruta Samhitha*, vitiation of *Pitta Dosha* [5] is responsible for occurrence of *Vicarcika* and according to *Charaka Samhitha*, *Kapha Dosha* is responsible for occurrence of *Vicarcika*. [4] Authentic *Ayurveda* texts describe *Raktamokshna* as one of the therapeutic measures for treatment of *Kushtha Roga*. [7] Vitiated *Pitta Dosha* in the body can be eliminated through *Raktamokshna*. Hence *Raktamokshna* is effective in treatment of *Vicarcika*.

Ingredients of *Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya* possess *Madhura Rasa*, *Thikta Rasa*, *Kashaya Rasa*, *Ruksha Guna*, *Sheeta Veerya* and *Madhura Vipaka*. Therefore, it pacifies vitiated *Pitta Dosha*. As these ingredients possess *Katu Rasa*, *Tikta Rasa*, *Kashaya Rasa*, *Laghu Guna*, *Theekshna Guna*,

Ruksha Guna, Ushna Veerya and *Katu Vipaka*, this decoction helps to pacify vitiated *Kapha Dosha*.^[11]

Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antiallergic, anthelmintic, immune regulating, antibacterial, and antimicrobial properties of ingredients of *Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya* are scientifically proven.^[12-21] Due to these properties, *Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya* is beneficial in treatment of *Vicarcika*.

Ayurvedic pharmacodynamic properties such as *Rasa, Guna, Veerya* and *Vipaka* of *Leucas biflora* are not found in authentic Ayurvedic texts. But in Matara district, people use this plant to treat dermatitis as a herbal wash and as an external application. Coconut possess *Madhura Rasa, Guru Guna, Snigdha Guna, Sheetha Veerya* and *Madhura Vipaka*.^[11] Due to these properties, Coconut oil is beneficial for pacifying vitiated *Pitta Dosha* and helps to reduce *Vicarchika*.

Research papers on scientifically proven bioactivities of *Leucas biflora* (*Wilandawenna*) are not found. Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antifungal and antimicrobial properties of coconut oil are scientifically proven.^[22] Due to these properties *Wilandawennadi Lepa* is beneficial in treatment of *Vicarchika*.

CONCLUSION:

Based on this single case study, it can be concluded that *Raktamokshna* using *Ghati Yantra* (cupping), oral administration of *Panchamuli Laghu Draksha Kashaya* and external application of *Wilandawennadi Lepa* are beneficial in treatment of *Vicarcika* (eczema).

LIMITATION OF STUDY:

This is a single case study and this research should be carried out with larger sample which will make results

more acceptable

PATIENT CONSENT:

The patient gave the informed consent for reporting of the case study in the journal.

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