

## Effect of *Virechana Karma*, *Rathu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya* and *Hulanthaladi Lepa* in the management of *Vicharchika* (eczema) - A single case study

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### ABSTRACT:

Ayurveda describes *Vicharchika* under *Kshudra Kushta Roga*. Clinical features of *Vicharchika* are *Kandu* (itching), *Srava* (discharge), *Pidaka* (vesicles), *Shyava Varna* (dark brown colour), *Rajyo* (cracks), *Ruja* (severe pain) and *Rukshata* (roughness). *Vicharchika* can be correlated with eczema. Ayurveda prescribes *Virechana Karma* (purgation therapy) as one of the therapeutic measures. Traditional physicians perform *Virechana Karma* with *Aralu Snehekola Kashaya* and prescribe *Rathu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya*, *Hulanthaladi Lepa* in treatment of *Vicharchika* (eczema) with effective results. No known scientific study has been conducted previously in order to evaluate the effect of these treatments. Therefore, the present study was undertaken. A 40 year old female patient suffering from itching, pain, swelling, eruptions, cracks, roughness and blackish brown discoloration in skin was selected. She was first treated with *Virechana Karma* using *Aralu Snehekola Kashaya*. After that, oral administration of *Rathu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya* and external application of *Hulanthaladi Lepa* were performed. Total duration of treatment was 8 days. Partial reductions by 33.3% in *Kandu* (itching), *Ruja* (pain) and *Rukshata* (roughness in the skin) were observed after completion of *Virechana Karma*. After completion of entire treatment, 100% relief was observed in eruptions and pain. Partial relief by 66.7 % was observed in itching, depigmentation, cracks and roughness in the skin. No changes were observed in *Shota* (mild swelling). It was decided that selected treatment regime is beneficial in treatment of *Vicharchika* (eczema).

**KEYWORDS:** *Ageratum conyzoides*, *Aralu Snehekola Kashaya*, Eczema, *Hulanthaladi Lepa*, *Rathu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya*, *Vicharchika*.

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### INTRODUCTION:

*Vicharchika* is a type of *Kshudra Kushta*. According to Charaka and Shustruta Samhita, clinical features of *Vicharchika* are *Kandu* (itching), *Shyava Pidaka* (blackish brown eruptions) and *Bahu Srava* (copious exudation), *Rajyo* (cracks), *Ruja* (severe pain) and *Ruksha* (roughness in the skin).

[1,2] Based on the clinical presentation, *Vicharchika* can be correlated with eczema. Clinical features of eczema are itching, cracking, redness and swelling in the skin, papules, vesicles and exudation. [3] Treatment available in contemporary medical practice for eczema have their own limitations and side effects. Charaka

describes ascribed *Dosha* of *Vicharchika* is vitiated *Kapha Dosha* and Sushruta mentions vitiated *Dosha* is *Pitta Dosha*.<sup>[4,2]</sup> According to Charaka when *Pitta Dosha* is predominant in *Kushta Roga*, *Virechana Karma* should be performed.<sup>[5]</sup> As *Vicharchika* is also a type of *Kushta Roga* with vitiation of *Pitta Dosha*, *Virechana Karma* can be performed. Some traditional physicians of Sri Lanka conduct *Virechana Karma* with *Aralu Snehekola Kashaya* and prescribe *Ratu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya*, *Hulantaladi Lepa* in treatment of *Vicharchika* (eczema) with effective results. So far, no known scientific study has been conducted to evaluate the effects of these treatments. Hence the present study was undertaken to assess the effect of this treatment regime in order to provide proven cost effective treatment for *Vicharchika* (eczema).

#### **CASE STUDY:**

A 40 year old house wife suffering from itching, pain, swelling, eruptions, cracks, roughness and blackish brown discoloration in skin was selected from the Ayurveda hospital, Pallekele, Sri Lanka. Selected patient was thoroughly examined, and severity of the symptoms was recorded using a specially prepared grading scale used in previously published research papers.<sup>[6]</sup> The grading scale of clinical features are given below.

#### **Kandu (Itching)**

- 0 = No Itching
- 1 = Itching is present but not annoying or troublesome
- 2 = Itching is troublesome but does not interfere with daily routine
- 3 = Severe Itching, that is troublesome with minor bleeding

#### **Pidika (Eruption)**

- 0 = No eruptions
- 1 = Macule (Non palpable area of altered colour)
- 2 = Papule (Palpable elevated small area of skin (<0.5cm))
- 3 = Nodule (Solid palpable lesion with the skin (> 0.5cm))

#### **Vaivarnya (Depigmentation)**

- 0 = Normal skin color
- 1 = Brownish red discoloration (*Rakta* or *Aruna Varna*)
- 2 = Blackish red discoloration (*Shyava Varna*)
- 3 = Blackish discoloration (*Krishna Varna*)

#### **Ruja (pain)**

- 0 = No pain
- 1 = Mild pain but do not disturb daily routine work
- 2 = Moderate pain occasionally disturbing daily routine work
- 3 = Continuous severe pain disturbing daily routine work and sleep

#### **Rukshata (dryness)**

- 0 = Normal skin
- 1 = *Ruksha* (Dryness with rough skin)
- 2 = *Khara* (Dryness with scaling)
- 3 = *Parusha* (Dryness with cracking)

#### **Srava (Oozing/discharge)**

- 0 = No discharge
- 1 = Feels moisture on the skin lesion when touched
- 2 = Weeping in the skin after itching
- 3 = Profuse weeping making clothes wet

#### **Rajyo (Cracks)**

- 0 = No cracks in the skin
- 1 = Cracks in the skin cannot be seen but can be felt when touching the skin
- 2 = Cracks in the skin can be seen
- 3 = Bleeding present in cracked areas

**Shota (Swelling)**

0 = No swelling

1 = Very slight swelling with indistinct border

2 = Defined swelling with distinct border

3 = Defined swelling with raised border (&gt;1mm)

**THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION:**

Treatment schedule is tabulated in Table 1. On Day-1, the selected patient was treated with *Virechana Karma* using 240ml of *Aralu Snehekola Kashaya*. According to the practice of traditional physicians of Sri Lanka, *Purva Karma* (*Snehana* and *Swedana*) were not carried out. After *Virechana Karma*, patient was made to follow *Samsarjana Krama* (dietetic and behavioural regimen) as prescribed in Ayurvedic texts after purification therapies as given as in Table 2.

Further, she was advised not to take bath, avoid consuming cold water and foods and avoid exposure to cold breeze and sun. From Day-4 to Day-8, the patient was treated with oral administration of 120ml of *Ratu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya* twice a day before meals and external application of *Hulanthaladi Lepa* once a day at 10.00 a.m. Total duration of the treatment was 8 days and follow up period was 8 days.

**Preparation of of Ratu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya**

20gm each of dried seeds of *Coriandrum sativum* (Family: Apiaceae; Sinhala name: *Koththamalli*), fresh flowers of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* (Family: Malvaceae; Sinhala name: *Pokuru Wadamal*) and fresh entire plant of *Solanum nigrum* (Family: Solanaceae ; Sinhala name: *Kalukammeriya*) were mixed with 1920ml of water and boiled down to 240ml.

**Preparation of Hulanthaladi Lepa:**

50gm of fresh leaves of *Ageratum conyzoides* (Family: Asteraceae; Sinhala name: *Hulanthala*) and 10gm of fresh rhizomes of *Curcuma longa* (Family: Zingiberaceae; Sinhala name: *Kaha*) were ground well with 30ml of water and applied over the affected area.

**Preparation of Aralu Snehekola Kashaya**

*Aralu Snehekola Kashaya* was prepared and administered according to a Sri Lankan Traditional physician. 60gm of leaves of *Cassia senna* (Family: Fabaceae; Sinhala name: *Senehekola*) and 60gm of pericarp *Terminalia chebula* (Family: Combretaceae; Sinhala name: *Aralu*) were boiled with 1920ml of water until reduced to 240 ml.

**Table 1: Treatment Plan**

Day	Treatment
Day1	<i>Virechana Karma</i> using <i>Aralu Snehekola Kashaya</i>
Day1 afternoon to Day3	<i>Samsarjana Krama</i> ( Followed dietetic and behavioural regimens prescribed in Ayurvedic texts after purification therapies)
Day4 to Day8	120ml of <i>Ratu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya</i> twice a day before meals
	External application of <i>Hulanthaladi Lepa</i> once a day at 10.00 a.m.

**Table 2: Samsarjana Krama (Dietic Protocol) after Vamana Karma**

Day	Morning	Lunch	Evening
Day1	None	None	Salted rice gruel ( <i>Lunu Kenda</i> )
Day2	Salted rice gruel ( <i>Lunu Kenda</i> )	Over cooked rice ( <i>Beri Bath</i> ) and <i>Thambum Hodi</i> (spicy soup like <i>Rasam</i> )	Salted rice gruel ( <i>Lunu Kenda</i> )
Day3	Salted rice gruel ( <i>Lunu Kenda</i> )	Rice and Curry	Normal diet

**Table 3: Percentage of reduction of symptoms**

Symptoms	Before treatment	After treatment			
		After <i>Virechana Karma</i>		After completion of entire treatment	
	Grade	Grade	Percentage of relief	Grade	Percentage of relief
<i>Kandu</i> (itching),	Grade 3	Grade 2	33.3%	Grade 1	66.7%
<i>Ruja</i> (pain)	Grade 3	Grade 2	33.3%	Grade 0	100%
<i>Rukshata</i> (roughness in the skin)	Grade 3	Grade 2	33.3%	Grade 1	66.7%
<i>Pidaka</i> (blackish brown eruptions)	Grade 1	Grade 1	0%	Grade 0	100%
<i>Vaivarntata</i> (depigmentation)	Grade 3	Grade 3	0%	Grade 1	66.7%
<i>Rajyo</i> (cracks),	Grade 3	Grade 3	0%	Grade 1	66.7%
<i>Shota</i> (swelling)	Grade 1	Grade 1	0%	Grade 1	0%


**Before Treatment**
**After *Virechana Karma***
**After entire treatment**
**Figure 1: Reduction of Symptoms**



**RESULTS :**

The percentage of reduction of symptoms are tabulated in Table 3. After completion of Virechana Karma (purgation), it was observed that symptoms such as Kandu (itching), Ruja (pain) and Rukshata (roughness in the skin) were partially reduced by 33.3%. On the Day 8, after completion of entire treatment 100% relief was observed in Pidaka (blackish brown eruptions) and Ruja (pain) and partial reduction was observed in Kandu (itching),

Rajyo (cracks), Vaivarntata (depigmentation), and Rukshata(roughness in the skin) by 66.7 % . No changes were observed in Shota (mild swelling)(Figure 1).

**DISCUSSION:**

Virechana Karma is described as one of the therapeutic measures in treatment of Kushta Roga.<sup>[5]</sup> Virechana Karma is one of the Panchakarma which expel vitiated Pitta Dosha from the body through Adhobhaga (Guda Marga / rectum).<sup>[7]</sup> Virechana Karma is beneficial in treatment of Kushta Roga as it eliminates vitiated Dosha accumulated in the body; especially Pitta Dosha.

Ayurvedic pharmacodynamic properties of the ingredients of Aralu Senehekola Kashaya contain Kashaya Rasa, Amla Rasa, Snigdha Guna, Ushna Veerya and Madhura Vipaka. Therefore, it pacifies vitiated Vata Dosha. Aralu Senehekola Kashaya pacifies vitiated Pitta Dosha, as these ingredients possess Madhura Rasa, Tikta Rasa, Kashaya Rasa, Sheeta Guna and Madhura Vipaka. These ingredients contain Kashaya Rasa, Katu Rasa, Kashaya Rasa, Laghu Guna, Ruksha Guna, Ushna Veerya and Katu Vipaka. Therefore, it pacifies vitiated Kapha Dosha. Hence conducting Virechana Karma using Aralu Senehekola Kashaya is effective in treatment of Vicarchika (eczema).<sup>[8]</sup>

Ingredients of Rathu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya possess the properties of Madhura

Rasa, Snigdha Guna, Ushna Veerya and Madhura Vipaka. Therefore, it pacifies vitiated Vata Dosha. These ingredients contain Madhura Rasa, Tikta Rasa, Kashaya Rasa, Sheetha Veerya and Madhura Vipaka. Therefore, Rathu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya pacifies vitiated Pitta Dosha. It also pacifies vitiated Kapha Dosha due to its Ayurveda pharmacodynamic properties such as Tikta Rasa, Katu Rasa, Katu Vipaka and Ushna Veerya.<sup>[9]</sup>

The ingredients of Hulanthaladi Lepa possess Katu, Tikta, Kashaya Rasa and Ushna Veerya. Therefore, it pacifies the vitiated Kapha Dosha. <sup>[10-11]</sup>

Analgesic, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and immunomodulatory, antibacterial activities of ingredients of Aralu Senehekola Kashaya <sup>[12,13,14,15]</sup> Rathu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya<sup>[16,17,18,19]</sup> and Hulanthaladi Lepa are scientifically proven. <sup>[20, 21]</sup> Pain in this patient is reduced due to analgesic action of these ingredients. Inflammation is reduced due to anti-inflammatory action and antioxidant property of these ingredients. Further, antioxidants fight with the free radicals in the body and prevent from damaging the skin cells. Antibacterial effect of these ingredients help to overcome bacterial infections in patient with Vicarchika (eczema). It may inhibit the production of inflammatory cytokines (chemicals that mediate inflammation) due to its immunomodulatory action. Therefore, these drugs are beneficial in management of Vicarchika (eczema).

**CONCLUSION:**

Based on the results, it is concluded that conduction of Virechana Karma using Aralu Senehekola Kashaya followed by internal administration of Rathu Pokuru Wadamal Kashaya and external application of Hulanthaladi Lepa is beneficial in treatment of Vicharchika (eczema). Further, it is

recommended that this research should be performed with a larger number of patients.

**Limitation of study:**

This is a single case study. Therefore, this research should be carried out with a larger sample which will make results more acceptable.

**Patient's consent:**

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

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