

Ayurvedic Management of *Visarpa* (Herpes Zoster) - A Case Report

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ABSTRACT:

Herpes Zoster is a viral disease caused by reactivation of Varicella Zoster Virus when body's immunity is low. It usually manifests as a unilateral vesicular eruption within a dermatome along with unbearable dermatomal pain. In Ayurveda, Herpes Zoster can be correlated with *Visarpa*, where dominance of *Daba* and *Vedana* can be considered due to *Vata* and *Pitta Dosha*. The study involved a 50 Yrs old female who was complaining of grouped vesicles with severe pain and burning sensation in left arm region since 4 days and was diagnosed as *Visarpa* in Outpatient Department (OPD). She sought ayurvedic treatment as an alternative to conventional approach. The patient's progress was monitored over several weeks and pain intensity was assessed. For this case, *Shamana aushadhi and Raktmokshana (Jalaukavacharana)* was planned. This case study explored the role of Ayurveda, a traditional system of medicine, in management of Herpes Zoster.

KEYWORDS: Herpes Zoster, Pain Management, Post Herpetic Neuralgia, *Visarpa*

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INTRODUCTION:

"Herpes zoster" or "Shingles" disease caused by Varicella-zoster virus which affects the particular dermatome. [1]The vesicular eruptions are seen along the course of the nerve which may involve 1 or 2 continuous nerve segments. Hence, lesions are arranged in unilateral

segmental distribution either along the trunk or along extremity proceeding to neuralgic pain [2]. One of the illnesses included in our traditional writings is *Visarpa* which imitates the symptoms of Herpes zoster. *Visarpa* is such skin condition which pay attention towards *Vedana* (pain), *Agnidagdhavat pidika*

(burning sensation and lesions), *Anaunnatsbopha* (Swelling which is not raised) and *Jwara*.^[3] It has the quality of *Vividham Sarpati* or spreading in various ways, and is involved in all three *Doshas*.^[4] Ayurveda employed various therapeutic techniques, such as *Shodhan*, *Shamana*. *Raktamokshana*, is also a type of *Shodhan Karma*. In this case, *Raktamokshan* was done in 5 sittings with the interval of 5 days as recurrence may occur in immune-suppressed patient. Conventional Medical practice uses antiviral drugs and analgesics as common therapies to soften the discomfort to manageable level, however they may not always be completely effective. Prolonged usage of these drugs might have adverse responses such as weight gain, tiredness, dry mouth and constipation. This case of Herpes Zoster is significant to publish as the patient received conventional treatment mentioned in Ayurvedic texts and significant reduction in pain level is observed.

CASE REPORT:

A 50 years old female patient visited Govt. Ayurveda Hospital Nagpur where she was complaining of grouped vesicles with severe pain and burning sensation in left arm along with mild Fever, Redness, and sticky discharge from vesicles since 4 days The visible localized region is distinct from the surrounding skin. The patient did not have any history of Systemic illness.

Pain, Hyperesthesia and Burning Sensation can be measured by following scale mentioned in Table No-1.

Dashavidha Parikshan:

50 -year-old female attending Rognidan OPD of the institute has complaint of grouped vesicles on left arm with redness and severe burning sensation. The patient

experiences persistent, severe pain when putting on or handling clothing. No history of insect bite. The site pathology was locally well defined with no smell and discharge. The patient had no history diabetes mellitus, Hypertension, or other chronic illness. On physical examination, no pallor, icterus, cyanosis, or any other lymphadenopathy were noticed.

Investigations:

Investigations revealed that Haemoglobin (Hb)level was 13.2gm/dl, clotting time was 5minutes 1 second, the bleeding time was 2 minutes 2 seconds, HBsAg was nonreactive. Thus, on the basis of clinical history and examination she was diagnosed as *Visarpa* (Herpes Zoster).

Clinical findings were used to make the diagnosis for the patient. The Zoster Specific Brief Pain Inventory (ZBPI) questionnaire (0-10) served as the basis for the assessment. The Pain Scale is derived from a Brief Pain Inventory. It is unique to herpes zoster. Thus, a more trustworthy evaluation for therapeutic and diagnostic purposes of Herpes Zoster in research studies. This gauges area, duration, and intensity as well as discussed, patient relationships with others around their mental health, the capacity to carry out daily tasks. It rates pain related interference in 7 functional categories like general activity, mood, walking ability, work, relation with others, sleep, enjoyment of life. The ZBPI Scale is mentioned in Table -2.

THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION:

A treatment strategy that took *Rakt Dhatu*, *Tvacha Sthan* and *Vatpitta Dosha* into consideration, was planned. Also, treatment took *Visarpa Vyadhi Updrava* into account. The Ayurvedic description of the medicines and their easy accessibility at our hospital were both considered important factors in

the selection of specific medications. Both *Shodhana* and *Shamana chikitsa* was given.

1. Shodhana Chikitsa

Jalaukavacharana was done and more than 40 ml blood was let down in every sitting. (5 sittings)

2. Shaman Chikitsa: Prescribed *shaman chikitsa* is mentioned in table-3

Table-1: Scale for Measurement:

Grade	Pain	Hyperesthesia	Burning Sensation
3	Severe	Severe	Severe
2	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
1	Mild	Mild	Mild
0	No	No	No

Table -2: Zoster Brief Pain Inventory (ZBPI):

Sr. no.	Criteria (Shingles pain interfered with your-)	Scores
1	General Activity	0-10
2	Mood	0-10
3	Walking Ability	0-10
4	Relation with other	0-10
5	Relation with sleep	0-10
6	Enjoyment of life	0-10
7	Work	0-10

Table-3: Shaman Chikitsa:

Drugs	Dose	Duration	Anupan
Sariva churn Kamdudha Ras Raupya Bhasma Gulvel Satva	10gms 10 tabs 1gm 10gms (Crushed to powder)	Mix all Contents together and Consume 2gms BD after meal.	21 Days Normal Water
Paripathadi Kadha	3table spoons (Two times a day after meal)	15 days	Normal Water
Cap.Palsineuron	1 cap. (Two times a day after meal)	7 days	Normal Water
Shatdhaut Ghrita Gairik Churn	3tsp 2tsp (Mix and apply to affected part twice a day)		
Tab.Nirocil	2 Tabs (after meal)	2 TDS (For 5 days) 2BD (For next 10 Days)	Normal Water

Table-4: Observations:

Follow Up	Days	Pain (Grade)	Hyperesthesia (Grade)	Burning Sensation (Grade)	ZBPI Score
2/3/2024	0 days	3	3	3	8-9 (in each category)
7/3/2024	5days	2	2	2	6 (in each category)
12/3/2024	10 days	1	1	1	5(in each category)
17/3/2024	15 days	1	1	1	3(in each category)
22/3/2024	20 days	0	0	0	1(in each category)



Day 1: Before Treatment



Day 2: First day after starting medications



Day 3: *Jalaukavacharan* (First Sitting)



Day 4: After 3 sittings of *Jalaukavacharan*



Day 21: Fully recovered Lesion

OBSERVATIONS AND RESULT:

After 2 sittings of *Jalaukavacharan* along with internal medicines, patients got gradual relief in symptoms. After 20 days of withdrawal of medicines, there was negligible pain in that area. The patient was called for follow up and results were analyzed on the basis of

assessment criteria which is mentioned in Table-4.

DISCUSSION:

In Ayurveda, *Visarpa* is explained by various *Acharya* apart from *Kushthbroga*. Because of combination of aggravating factors like *Ati*

Ushna Ahar, exposure to sun, etc that vitiate *dushya* viz. *Rakta* (Blood), *Lasika* (Lymph), *Twak* (Skin), *Mamsa* (Muscle tissue) and three *dosha* i.e. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*, to cause *Visarpa* in an individual. These factors are called as *Saptkodrayasangraha*.^[5] The deranged and aggravated *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* *dosha* having recourse to and affecting the *Twak*, *Mamsa* and *Rakta* speedily give rise to sort of shifting, elevated swelling which tends to extend all over the body.^[6] It is important to note decrease in severe burning and pain just after first 10 days of medications. This effect has impressed patient to continue, only with Ayurveda treatment by discontinuing modern treatment, as far as Herpes Zoster is concerned. By considering *vata-pitta dosha* and severity of pain and burning sensation we have given treatment.

Mode of action of Drugs:

Sariva Churna (*Hemidesmus Indicus*) is described in *Charkokta Jwaratisarhar gana* and *Dabaprashamana gana* eventually leads to minimize *Daba*.^[7]

Kamdudha Ras is commonly used in *Pittaj Vyadhi* as it contains *Sudha varg Dravya* which reduces aggravated *Pitta*.^[8]

Raupya Bhasma is *Madhur rasatmak* and *sheet viryatmak* which subsides *daba* and gives *bala* to *sira* and *snayu*.^[9] *Gulvel Satva* (*Tinospora Cordifolia*) uses in treating burning sensation in body and dearrangement of *vata* and *pitta*. It has immunomodulatory action.^[10]

Paripathadi kadha contains *Paripatha* (*Oldenlandia corymbosa*), *Nimba* (*Azadirachta indica*), *Parpata* (*Fumaria parviflora*), *Patala* (*Stereospermum suaveolens*), *Patol* (*Trichosanthes dioica*), *Chandana-Shweta* (*Santalum album*), *Chandana-Rakta* (*Pterocarpus santalinus*), *Vasa* (*Adhatoda vasica*), *Dhanvayasa* (*Fagonia cretica*), *Amalaki* (*Embllica officinalis*), *Rbeebera* (*Pavonia*

odorata), *Katuka* (*Picrorhiza kurroa*), *Musta* (*Cyperus rotundus*), *Aragvadha* (*Cassia fistula*), *Guduchi* (*Tinospora cordifolia*), *Yashti* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), *Kiratatikta* (*Swertia chirata*), *Shatapatrika* (*Rose centifolia*), *Ushira* (*Vetiveria zizanioides*), *Haridra* (*Curcuma longa*), *Draksha* (*Vitis vinifera*), *Dhataki* (*Woodfordia fruticosa*), *Guda* (Jaggery), which are used to treat burning sensation during and after fever. It also subsides prickly heat and in body.

Cap Palsineuron It contains *Mahavatavidhwamsa rasa*, *Sameer pannag ras*, *Sootsbekhar ras*, *Khurasani owa* seed powder (*Hyoscyamus niger*) and *Lajari* whole plant powder (*Mimosa pudica*) to relieve neuralgia (Burning sensation), Trigeminal neuralgia and cervical spondylosis.

Shatdhaut Ghruta and *Gairik churna* due to its *sheeta virya*, it gives soothing effect on skin pacifies *pitta dosha* which also helps in skin disorders with bleeding, secretions, burning sensation.

Tab. Nirocil contains *Tamalaki* (*Phyllanthus niruri*) which helps to protect liver against infections and cure viral infections too. It is *sheet virya* and *tikyta kashay rasa Dravya* which fights against viral infections and subsides the burning sensation.

Along with Shaman chikitsa, *Raktmokshan* (*Jalankavacharan*) gives relief to symptom like *Agnidagdhavat Vedana*, *Pidika*, *Daba*. *Jalanka* helps in removal of *dushit rakta*. Leeches can be applied directly on skin, it sucks blood at superficial layer from veins. Hirudin in salive of Leeches have antihistaminic and anticoagulant properties which make them to suck vitiated blood easily and subsides the pain.

CONCLUSION:

Pathyabar and *shaman aushadhi* help to break the pathogenesis and *Shodhan chikitsa* will reduce the complication tendency. From this study it can be concluded that *Visarpa* (Herpes Zoster) can be successfully treated by ayurvedic medications and with no or minimum adverse reactions.

Limitation of study:

The study may be carried out with this treatment protocol in more patients from its scientific validation.

Consent of patient:

Written informed consent for publication of clinical details was obtained from patient.

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