



# STUDY OF TWACHA AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH DOSHA, DHATU AND MALA - A REVIEW ARTICLE

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## Abstract

Ayurveda appraises *twacha* as a mirror of one's physiology. In Ayurveda the term '*Twacha*' is used for skin. It is the most crucial site of expression as well as manifestation for most diseases. Also, skin have absolute impact on personality of individuals. Hence, the skin reflects the inner health or disorder. The prevalence of skin disease in India is 10 to 20 percent of the total population. Ayurveda is creating waves in the world of natural skin care. According to Ayurveda *dosha*, *dhatu* and *mala* are the base of human body and their stability is considered the health. To understand any disproportion, it is necessary to study the normal structure first. Hence, this article is a sincere attempt to explain Skin from the view of Ayurveda and its association with *dosha*, *dhatu* and *mala*.

**Keywords:** *twacha*, health, *dosha*, *dhatu* and *mala*.

## I Introduction

The word '*Twacha*' is derived from the root word '*Twak Avarne*', which means thin covering ubiquitous on exterior body that envelops overall tissues of the body. *Twacha* is mentioned with different synonyms in ancient *granthas*. Synonyms such as *Sparshana*, *chhavi*, *chhadani*, *asrugdhara* are indicative of *karma* or functions of *twacha*, whereas synonyms like *charma*, *kruti*, *ajin* indicates meaning of word *twacha* that is covering. It is a *matruja avayava* which is studied as a *upadhatu* (secondary tissue) of *mamsa dhatu*.

## II Aims and objectives

To compile and elaborate various Ayurvedic concepts related to *twacha* in ancient texts and to study its relation with *dosha*, *dhatu* and *mala*.

## III Study type

It is a conceptual literary Search.

## IV Material and Method

Ayurvedic texts, mainly *Charak Samhita*, *Sushrut Samhita*, *Ashtang Hridaya*, *Ashtang Sangraha*, *Sharangdhara Samhita*, and their commentaries, Modern physiology textbooks, websites and articles related to the topic were reviewed to collect the literary material. The compiled data was compared and conclusions were drawn at the end of study

## V REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Utpatti of twacha:

According to Sushruta, seven layers of skin are produced from fertilized zygote during digestion for differentiation. When milk is boiled, cream gets deposited on milk at every attempt of boiling. Similarly, seven layers of skin are produced while differentiation of fertilized zygote is in process.<sup>1</sup>

Charak Acharya suggested that *mamsagni* acts on *poshak mamsa* during *tridha parinaman* (three level metabolism) and produces stable *mamsa dhatu*. Meanwhile, production and nutrition of *twacha* takes place as *updhata* (secondary tissue) of *mamsa dhatu*.<sup>2</sup>

Vagbhat Acharya described the formation of *twacha* due to *paripaka* of *rakta dhatu* by *rakta dhatwagni* in the developing fetus. After *paka*, it dries up to form septa *twacha* just like the deposition of cream or *santanika* over the surface of boiled milk.<sup>3</sup>

### Panchabhautik swaroop of twacha

*Twacha* being a *sparshendriya* or organ of touch, is known to be a *vayaviya* (predominant in *vayu mahabhoot*) substance, *kathinya* (sclerosis) and *murtimantatva* (vividity) are due to *parthiva tatva*. *Kanti* (lustre) is because of predominance of *Teja mahabhoot*. *Snigdha* (unctuous), *mrudu* (soft) and *shlakshna* (smooth) properties are due to *Jala tatva*, whereas *romakoop* (hair follicles) and *chhidrasamuha* (pores) are because of *Akash tatva*.<sup>4</sup>

### Layers of twacha

According to Charaka, there are six layers of skin. The first layer is called as *Udakadhara* which is concerned with regulation of water balance. The second layer is named as *Asrik-dhara* as it has rich blood supply. The third layer of *twacha* is the seat of skin diseases such as *sidhma* and *kilasa*. Both these can be compared to leucoderma. The fourth layer is the seat of *kushtha* (leprosy) and *dadru* (ring worm infection). The fifth layer of *twacha* is the site of skin diseases such as *vidradhi* (abcess) and *alaji* (adenitis). The sixth layer of *twacha*, which when incised, leads to giddiness and unconsciousness in a person. This layer is also a seat of Glandular growth called as *Arunshi*.<sup>5</sup>

Sushruta considers seven layers of *twacha*. In sushruta samhita, thickness of skin layer is compared to the thickness of *Vrihi* (rice grain). The first layer – *Avabhasini*, reflects lustre and colour of the skin. It is the seat of skin diseases *sidhma* and *padmakantaka*. Thickness of this layer is 18<sup>th</sup> part of *vrihi*. The second layer – *lohita* gives reddish colour to the skin. Thickness of this layer is 16<sup>th</sup> part of *vrihi*. The third layer – *shweta*, is the seat of skin diseases *chamada*, *ajagallika* and *mashaka*. Thickness of this layer is 12<sup>th</sup> part of *vrihi*. The fourth layer of skin – *tamra*, is a seat of *kilasa kushtha* and its thickness is 8<sup>th</sup> part of *vrihi*. The fifth layer – *vedini*, is the seat of skin diseases *kushtha* and *visarpa* and its thickness is 5<sup>th</sup> part of *vrihi*. The sixth layer – *rohini* is one *vrihi* thick and is a seat for skin diseases *apachi* (adenitis), *arbuda* (malignant tumour) and *shlipad* (filariasis). The seventh layer of *twacha* – *Mamsadhara kala*, is two *vrihi*s thick and is a seat of skin diseases *galagand* (goitre), *Bhagandara* (fistula), *vidradhi* (abcess) and *arsha* (haemorrhoides).<sup>6</sup>

Vagbhat considers six layers of *twacha* – first *udakadhara*, second *asrukdhara*, third – seat of *sidhma* – *kilas*, fourth – seat of all types of *kushtha*, fifth – seat of *alaji* and *vidradhi* and sixth *pranadhara*.<sup>7</sup>

*Sharangdhara* considers seven layers of *twacha* namely, *Avabhasini*, *lohita*, *shweta*, *tamra*, *vedini*, *rohini* and *sthoala*.<sup>8</sup>

According to Bhel, there are six layers of *twacha* – first *udakadhara*, second *asrukdhara*, third – seat of *sidhma* – *kilas*, fourth – seat of *dadru* – *kushtha*, fifth – seat of *alaji* and *vidradhi* and sixth *pranadhara*.

### Functions of twacha

*Avarana* – *twacha* covers and protects entire body.

*Sparshadnyana* – *twacha* is a seat of *Sparshendriya*, hence is a base for tactile sensation.

*Prakashana* – *varna*, *chhaya*, *prabha* these *taijasa tatvas* rest in *twacha*. Hence, these *tatvas* are illuminated by *twacha*.

*Ushmanyantrana* – *twacha* forms basis for temperature regulation.

*Pachana* – *bhrajak pitta* is situated in *twacha*. Hence *shoshana* (absorption), *pravesha* (entry) and *pachana* (digestion) of *lepa*, *abhyanga* applied externally takes place through *twacha*.

*Dharana* – to hold the absolute essential fluids like *udaka*, *rakta* and not letting them flow out of the body is an important function of *twacha*.

*Ropana* – *sandhana* – to recover damaged or traumatized skin by fixing the tear and covering the wound is also the function of *twacha*.

*Mamsadharana* – origin and maintenance of *mamsa* is a function of *twacha*, specially the deepest layer of *twacha* which is known as *mamsadhara*. *Twacha* is also one amongst the roots of *mamsavaha srotas*.

*Malanirharana* – to hold and excrete the *mala* of *loma*, *kasha*, *nakha* and *twak*, which is present in the form of *sneha*, is a function of *twacha*.

### Twacha and Doshas-

*Twacha* and *Vata*-

*Twacha* is a seat of *vata dosha*. Minute branches of *dhamanis* carrying *vata* are spread all over the skin. Sensation of touch is perceived through these innumerable *vata vahini dhamanis* and their branches. Thus, *twacha* is included in *indriyas*. *Sheeta* (cold), *ushna* (hot), and *kathin* (hard) properties are knowledged through *twacha*.

*Twacha* and *Prana Vayu*-

Sensation through skin is perceived with the help of *prana vayu*. *Prana vayu* transfer impulses of touch to *mana* and *buddhi*. This function of *prana vayu* is referred as “*indriyachittadrik*” by Vagbhat.

*Twacha* and *Vyana Vayu*-

Once the impulses of touch are carried to *mana* and *buddhi* by *prana vayu*, *mana* responds against those impulses. These responses are generated as movements brought about with the help of *vyana Vayu*<sup>9</sup>. For example, on account of hot touch, hand is immediately taken away from the hot object. Relying on *vyana vayu* only, ducts of skin undergo spasm in cold seasons and relax in hot seasons.

**Twacha and Udana Vayu-**

*Varna* (complexion) expressed on skin depends upon normal functioning of *udana vayu*<sup>10</sup>. This function of *udana vayu* is carried out through the medium of *vishuddha rakta*. Any obstruction in this function of *udana vayu* causes impairment of *varna*.

**Twacha and Samana Vayu-**

Genesis of *ahara rasa* from *anna* for nourishment of *Sparshanendriya* takes place through *samana vayu*. As a result of weak *samana vayu*, skin becomes dry and rough.

**Twacha and Apana Vayu-**

*Apana vayu* is not directly related to *twacha* but its normal functioning is responsible for sound condition of *twacha*. Along with *mala-mutra visarjana*, *apana vayu* is also responsible for excretion of excess *kleda* from the body. Obstruction in this function of *apana vayu* hinders *sweda* to hold *kleda* which shows distorted result on *twacha*.

**Twacha and Pitta**

*Pitta* maintains determined temperature of *twacha*. *Sweda* and *rakta* also aid *pitta* in this function of *pitta*. *Gaura*, *Krishna*, etc *varna* and *Prabha* of *twacha* are specified on skin by *pitta*. *Pachana* of *abhyang*, *lepa* and *seka* applied on *twacha* takes place through *Pitta*.

**Twacha and kapha-**

*Mardavta* is brought to skin by *drava* and *snigdha* properties of *kapha*.

**Twacha and dhatu-**

**Twacha and Rasa dhatu-**

*Rasa dhatu* nourishes *twacha*. Status of *Rasa dhatu* influences soundness of *Twacha*. Therefore most of the *rasa sarata* characteristics are related to *Twacha*. Also, *Kashyap* have described *rasa sarata* under the name of *Twak sarata*.

**Twacha and Rakta dhatu-**

*Varna* of *Twacha* and functioning of *sparshnendriya* depends on healthy condition of *Rakta dhatu*<sup>11</sup>. *Twacha* of *Rakta sara* individual remains reddish and dazzling.

**Twacha and Mamsa dhatu-**

*Twacha* is a *upadhatu* (secondary tissue) of *Mamsa dhatu*.

**Twacha and Meda dhatu-**

*Sweda*, *mala* of *Meda dhatu* is excreted out of the body through *twacha*.

**Twacha and Asthi dhatu-**

*Nakha*, *roma* and *kesha*, these *malas* of *asthi dhatu* are revealed out through *Twacha*.

**Twacha and Majja dhatu-**

*Arunshika*, a disease caused by the vitiation of *majja dhatu* shelters in *twacha*. Also *twacha-sneha* is included in the *malas* of *Majja*.

**Twacha and Shukra dhatu-**

*Shukra dhatu* is distributed through out the *sharira*. Hence, it is also present in *Twacha*.

**Twacha and Mala-**

*Sweda*, which expels waste product out of body, maintains moisture, temperature and smoothness of *twacha*. *Nakha* and *kesha*, these *dhatu malas* are expressed out through *twacha*. *Majja mala* also contributes in keeping skin smooth and unctuous.

## VI Conclusion

According to the ancient Ayurveda science, *dosha*, *dhatu* and *mala* are the base of human body. Only a stable condition of *dosha*, *dhatu* and *mala* is considered healthy condition of body. Being the largest organ in the body, *twacha* is also influenced by *dosha*, *dhatu* and *mala*. Just as mirror, *twacha* reflects various types of inner abnormal conditions of the body. Functions of all *doshas* and their subtypes, *dhatu*s and *malas* are very well elaborated in *twacha*.

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