



ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SHODANA IN TREATING LICHEN PLANUS, WITH A FOCUS ON *KITIBA KUSTA*

¹Dr Anukeerth M, ²Dr Vaishnavi Mutalik Desai, Dr Rakshith KR, ⁴Dr Ahana Balakrishnan, ⁵Dr Sajitha K

¹Dr Anukeerth M, ²Dr Vaishnavi, ³Dr Rakshith KR, ⁴Dr Ahana Balakrishnan, ⁵Dr Sajitha K

¹PG Scholar, ²PG Scholar, ³Associate Professor, ⁴Assistant professor, ⁵Principal and HOD

¹Department of PG Studies in Swasthavritta,

¹Sri Sri College of Ayurvedic Science and Research, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India 560082.

Abstract: Lichen planus is a long-lasting, inflammatory, autoimmune condition affecting the skin, oral mucosa, genital mucosa, scalp, and nails. While the precise cause of LP is currently unknown, it is noted that the autoantigen XVII collagen (COL17) is linked to its development.

According to Ayurveda, the skin is the body's primary defense. Diseases manifesting in its seven layers are considered *twak roga*, involving *twaka*, *rakta*, *mamsa* and *lasika*.

Ayurveda categorizes nearly all skin ailments as *Kushta Rogadhikara*. The *Brihatrayee* mentions 18 types of *kushtharoga*, including 7 *mahakushta* and 11 *kshudrakushta*. *Kitibha Kusta* falls under *kshudra kushta*, sharing similarities with lichen planus in signs and symptoms.

In *kusta*, "*Bahudosh Nirharana*" (aggressive purgation) is cautioned against as it may further weaken the body by aggravating *Vata* [1]. *Virechana*, a cleansing therapy, is recommended in *Pitta and Rakta* predominant disorders, including various skin conditions. Although *Kitibha* is a *Vata-Kapha* disorder, its primary cause is *Rakta Dhatu and Tridosha* vitiation.

This article aims to assess the effectiveness of *Virechana* in managing lichen planus.

Materials and methods: A 38-year-old patient presented with complaints of skin lesions all over the body for 2 years. *Virechana* is an ideal method for *Pitta and Rakta dushti*.

Result: The subject showed marked improvement in symptoms.

Discussion: *Virechana* was administered to treat the root cause of the disease and the underlying cause with internal medicines for which the patient got significant relief from the symptoms.

Conclusion: High-potency topical corticosteroids, antihistamines, oral retinoids, and immunosuppressants are first-line treatments. However, corticosteroids can have adverse psychological effects, affecting patients' quality of life. Ayurveda suggests addressing the root cause of the disease and reversing the pathology by removing deep-seated toxins. Treatment according to Ayurveda involves toxin removal, metabolism correction, increasing *ojus* production and immune system correction. Additionally, *Shamana Yoga and Bahirparimarjana Chikitsa* are administered after *Shodhana* therapy to provide further relief and aid in eradicating lichen planus.

Keywords: Lichen planus, *Kitiba kusta*, *Pitta and Rakta Dushti*, *Virechana*

I. INTRODUCTION

Lichen planus is a long-lasting, inflammatory, autoimmune condition affecting the skin, oral mucosa, genital mucosa, scalp, and nails. Typically, it manifests as itchy, purplish papules and plaques, often appearing on the wrists, lower back and ankles. Lichen planus is an idiopathic disease. Its pathogenesis is not fully understood, but it appears to represent a T-cell-mediated autoimmune disease.

The prevailing theory is that exposure to an exogenous agent such as a virus, drug, or contact allergen causes alteration of epidermal self-antigens and activation of cytotoxic CD8+ T cells. The altered self-antigens cross-react with normal self-antigens found on basal keratinocytes resulting in T-cell targeting and apoptosis.[3]

Oral lichen planus is correlated with contact allergies to a variety of metals found in dental restorations including mercury, copper, and gold. Removal of the sensitizing metal resulting in clearance of LP lesions has been described. [3]

Many drugs have been associated with LP, but recurrence of lesions following drug rechallenge is rare. More commonly associated drugs include antimalarials, ACEIs, thiazide diuretics, NSAIDs, quinidine, beta-blockers, tumor necrosis factor (TNF)-alpha inhibitors, and gold. [4]

Lichen planus also be triggered by Hepatitis C infection, Flu vaccine, Certain pigments, chemicals and metal, Pain relievers, such as ibuprofen and naproxen, Certain medications for heart disease, high blood pressure or arthritis

Kitiba

In Ayurveda, most skin diseases are categorized under *Kushta Rogadhikara*, highlighting the skin's role as the body's primary defense. Diseases affecting the seven layers of the skin, including *twaka*, *rakta*, *mamsa*, and *lasika*, are considered *Twakaroga*. Ayurvedic classifications such as *Mahakustha*, *Khudrakustha*, and *Khudraroga* are seen as obstinate skin conditions in modern medicine.

“*Kushnati Shareerasya Shonitam Vikrute*” means vitiation of *Rakta Dhatu* leads to *Kushta*. [6] *Twak Vikaras Nidana* are most commonly arising due to *Mithyahara*, *Vihara*, *Manasika* vitiate Tridosha which further leads to the affliction and aggravation of *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa* and *Lasika*. Each *Dosha* vitiation elicit the different *Lakshanas* in the *Twacha*. [7]

The *Brihatrayee* mentions 18 types of *kustharoga*, with 7 classified as *mahakustha* and 11 as *kshudrakustha*. *Kitibha Kusta* falls under *kshudra kusta* and shares signs and symptoms with lichen planus. According to *Charaka Acharya*,

Kitibha Kushta is one of the *Raktapradoshaja Vikara* caused by vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha Dosha* in excess having *Lakshanas* like *Shyava Varna* (blackish brown colour), *Kina Khara Sparsham* (rough on touch), *Parusham* (Dryness), *Ruksha Pidika* (skin eruption) and *Kandu* (itching). [7]

Kitibha Kushta which includes *Shyava*, *Krishna Varna*, *Parushata*, *Khara sparsha*, *Kandu*, *Ghanatwa* and *Srava* can be co-related to lichen planus in clinical features has been classified and explained under *kshudra kushta*.

Samprapthi

Nidanas of Kushta aggravates the Doshas



It causes *Agnimandya* and it produces *Dhatu Shaithilyata*.



Among all *Doshas*, *Kapha Vata Dosha* is aggravated predominantly and causes *Shaithilyata* of *Dushya*



Such as, *Twak* (skin), *Rakta* (blood), *Mamsa* (muscles), *Lasika* (channels).
It gets obstructed in *Lomakupa* (sweat glands), leading to *Sanghatmak Vikruti* (vitiation) in *Swedavaha Srotas* (channels of sweat glands).



This *Prakupita* (vitiated) *Doshas* enter *Rasarakta* *Paribhamana* (systemic circulation), especially *Sanchara* (movement) in *Tiryak Sira* (vein)



Finally, it lodges in *Bahya Roga Marga* (skin) and resulting in *Mandalotpatti* (formation of skin lesions).

SAMPRAPTHI GHATAKA

Dosha: Vata (Vyana vayu), Pitta (Bhrajaka pitta) and Kapha.

Dhatu: Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa.

Upadhatu: Tvacha

Agni: Jataragni, dhatwagni mandya (Rasa, rakta, mamsa)

Srotas: Rasa, rakta, mamsa

Srotas dushti prakara: Sanga

Udbhava sthana: Amashaya, Pakvashaya

Sanchara sthana: Sarvasharira

Adhithana: Twak, rakta, mamsa, lasika

Vyakta sthana: Twak

Srotas: kasa, rakta, mamsa

Srotas dushti prakara: Sanga

Udbhava sthana: Amashaya, Pakvashaya

Sanchara sthana: Sarvasharira

Adhithana: Twak, rakta, mamsa, lasika

Vyakta sthana: Twak

Roga marga: Bahya

Swabhava: Chirakari

Sadhyasadyata: Krichsadhya

Comparison of symptoms of Lichen Planus and Kitibha Kusta

LICHEN PLANUS	KITIBHA KUSTA
Thick and rough patches	<i>Shyava</i> (blackish scaly lesion)
Scaly lesions	<i>Kina, khara sparsha</i> (hard to touch)
Flat top / polygonal papules and plaques	<i>Vritam</i> (round- and coin-shaped lesions)
With angular borders and symmetrically distributed	<i>Ghanam</i> (well-defined borders)
Recurrent, Pruritic, Inflammatory eruption	<i>Vridhimanti</i> (spreading in nature)
	<i>Snigdha</i> (unctuous)
	<i>Prashanti cha punar utpadyante</i> (subsides and relapse).

II. CASE REPORT

Vedana Vrutanta (History of present illness)

A female aged 38 years complaints of flaky reddish black lesions all over the body with itching and peeling off the greyish skin since 3years. She consulted many allopathic physicians but got only temporary relief. Since 1year, he observed spreading of lesions to both the hands and later to abdomen and legs associated with severe itching followed by peeling off greyish skin. Hence for further needful treatment he consulted the OPD of Sri Sri College of ayurvedic science and research, Bangalore

HISTORY OF PAST ILLNESS – No known case of DM and HTN. There is no family history, and there is no relevant history of drug allergies.

PERSONAL HISTORY

Appetite: Good appetite
 Diet: Mixed
 Bowel: Regular-once/day
 Sleep: Disturbed
 Micturition: 6-7 times/day

EXAMINATION GENERAL EXAMINATION

General condition: good
 RS: B/L NVBS
 CVS: S1S2 heard; no added sounds
 CNS: conscious, well-oriented
 P/A: Soft Pulse: 78bpm
 BP: 130/90mmhg
 Moderately built with no other systemic illness

LOCAL EXAMINATION

Lesion: Redish black multiple round coin shaped lesions with well-defined borders. No pus discharge was found Size: 1-2 mm Margin: well, defined.

Table 1. Treatment chart

NAME OF TREATMENT	DRUGS	DAYS
Deepana -Pachana	Panchakola phanta	Day 1 – 3
Snehanapana	Panca tiktaka ghrita	Day 4 – 7
Sarvanga Abhyanga followed by Bashpa Sweda	Nalpamaradi taila	Day 8 – 10
Virechana	Trivruth lehya	Day 11

Shamana oushadhi Table 2. Treatment chart

DRUGS	DOSE	DURATION
Kaishora Guggulu	2 tab two times a day	3 months
Cap.psora	1 tab two times a day	3 months
Manjistadi kashayam	15ml with 30ml of warm water , two times a day	3 months

111. DISCUSSION

As per Ayurveda poor metabolism leads to the production and deposition of *Ama* - an endotoxin. When this *Ama* associates with the immune cells it results in their abnormal behavior. This causes autoimmune diseases. So for proper treatment of any autoimmune disease, this *Ama* needs to be expelled out of the body. *Panchakarma* is the tool for this. Deep cellular level removal of toxins should be planned for the treatment of autoimmune diseases.

In *kusta Bahudosha Nirharana* is contraindicated because it may lead to further weakening of the body due to *Vata Prakopa*.

Virechana is one of the *Shodhana Chikitsa* specially advised in the *Pitta and Rakta pradhana* disorders and is very effective in various skin diseases.

Though *Kitibha* is *Vata-Kapha* dominating skin disorder, it primarily due to vitiation of *Rakta Dhatu and Tridosha*

So, in this article an attempt is made to evaluate the efficacy of *Virechana* in the management of lichen planus

A) ROLE OF SNEHAPANA

In lichen planus, when administering *snehapana* with *Panchatikta ghrita*, the predominant ingredients of the *ghrita* are *Tikta Rasa, Ruksha, and Laghu Guna*.

It acts mainly on *Kleda, Meda, Lasika, Rakta, Pitta and Kapha* which helps in balancing the vitiated *Dosha and Dhatu*.

It subsides the symptoms like *Rukshata, Daha* etc. It has properties like *Deepana, Pachana, Strotoshodhaka, Raktashodhaka, Raktaprasadaka, Kushtaghna, Kandughna and Varnya*. [8]

It also have anti-inflammatory properties, antimicrobial properties, analgesic properties, astringent properties, and anthelmintic properties. [8]

While taking *snehapana* the essential fatty acids, which are required for lipid barrier of skin is increased, and this will correct epidermal fluid loss and making skin susceptible for reaction.

So *Ghrita* plays role by enhancing lipid barrier. *Ghrita* has lipophilic action so it helps in ion transportation to a target organ.

This lipophilic nature of *Ghrita* helps in the entry of drug into cell, and its delivery to mitochondria and nuclear membrane also it helps in restoring the normal texture to skin.

- Pacification of *Kapha Dosha* helps to subside itching, boundaries and thickness of plaque, and adhesion of plaque

Owing to pacification of *Vata Dosha*, roughness, dry scaling as well as blackish brown color patches in *lichen planus* subsides.

So, all these properties that act mainly at cellular level and it improves cell cycle so helps in decreasing keratinization of cell layer

The primary aim with *snehapana* is to make sure that all the cells in the body are saturated with so much fat that its ready to expel everything out at the first chance, and in the process, flushing out toxins as well.

B) ROLE OF SWEDANA

After *snehapana*, the patient was recommended for *Baspa sweda*. *Swedana* aids in detoxification and restoring the equilibrium of *Vata, Pitta, and Kapha* in the body.

Sweat glands are crucial for eliminating toxins, and when stimulated, they can help mobilize toxins from the skin and muscles, aiding in their elimination.

This makes *swedana* an essential preparatory step in *Panchakarma* treatment.

Swedana by its qualities like *Ushna, Tikshna* acts for stimulation in the body. It increases the metabolic rate in the body.

Ushnaguna of *Sweda* dilates the capillaries thus it increases circulation. Increased circulation leads to more elimination of waste products and more absorption of *Sneha* or drugs through the skin.

Also, it stimulates muscles and nerves which promotes its renovation and heat administration by *Swedana* may produce hypoalgesia effect by diverted stimuli.

During swedana, there will be Increase in body temperature



It Stimulates the sweat glands (via hypothermic action of sympathetic nerve)



It Increases the sweat production and



More waste removal occurs



And finally, Swedana corrects swedavaha sroto dushti

❖ **Mode of Action of swedana in lichen planus –**

- **Moisturizes dry skin:** In lichen planus the skin will be skin dry and itchy. Steaming can help to moisturize the skin by increasing blood flow and opening pores, allowing reducing the dry skin.
- **Boosts immunity:** As lichen planus is an autoimmune condition where the immune system mistakenly attacks healthy skin cells, leading to the characteristic skin changes Swedana can help to boost the immune system by increasing blood flow and reducing stress. It can also help to remove toxins from the body and promote relaxation, which can strengthen the immune system.
- **Reduces stress and anxiety:** Stress can trigger lichen planus flare-ups, so managing stress might indirectly support immune function. So, reducing stress can potentially benefit those with lichen planus, as stress is known to trigger or exacerbate various skin conditions, including lichen planus
- **Relieves muscle tension:** Reducing muscle tension can potentially help manage stress, which is known to trigger or exacerbate lichen planus symptoms in some individuals. Techniques like *swedana* helps in muscle relaxation can aid in reducing muscle tension.

C) Role of Abhyanga

Nalpamaradi Taila is opted for *sarvanga abhyanga* in this case trial owing to the unique property of its ingredients to soothe the dry and itchy skin and for toning the skin.

Tailapreparations, by nature, have the capacity to normalize the vitiated *Vata-Kapha* in the skin which is a major aspect for skin conditions presenting with skin exfoliation, dryness, itching, etc.

All the ingredients of the oil have the inherent ability to alleviate Pitta and Kapha Doshas and are hence used as a frontline option for external application in lichen planus. [9]

❖ **Action of abhyanga in lichen planus –**

- **Hydrates the skin:** In lichen planus the skin will be dry and flaky. A body massage can help to hydrate the skin, leaving it feeling soft and supple.
- **Boosts the immune system:** Massaging the body can stimulate the lymphatic system, which helps to remove toxins from the body and boost the immune system.
- **Boosts circulation:** Massaging the body can improve blood flow and promote better circulation.
- **Reduces stress and anxiety -** A body massage can help to reduce stress and anxiety by promoting relaxation and a sense of calm

- Relieves muscle tension and pain

D) Mode of action of Virechana Drugs

Trivritta leha was given as Medicines for the process of *Virechana* (40 gms) Dose is decided by assessing *Bala* of the patient.

- By virtue of the ***Sukshma guna***, Virechana drugs can pass through minute channels of body and reach at cellular level to act at the site of pathogenesis of lichen planus
- Due to ***Vikasi guna***, Virechana drugs are dispersed in the whole body without their digestion and help to loosening of *Dosha-Dushya sanghatana*.
- ***Tikshna guna*** has strong potency to open various channels to flush out toxins by enhancing the opening of various *Srotas*, it softens the *tight Dosha-Dushya sanghatana* and make them ready to flow from open *Srotas*.
- By virtue of ***Ushna guna***, *Dosha-Dushya* gets melt due to its hotness and easily moves towards elementary canal after liquification.
- Due to ***Saratva guna***, collected *Dosha-Dushya* are encouraged to pass out through rectum by its laxative property

E) PROBABLE MODE OF ACTION IN LICHEN PLANUS

Symptoms	Mode of action
<i>Aswedanam</i> (absence of sweating)	<i>Virechana dravya</i> which has <i>Srotoshodhaka</i> property opens the microchannels and improves circulation, resulting in perspiration.
<i>Vritam</i> (large round- and coin-shaped lesions) <i>Snigdham Ghanam</i> (well-defined borders),	It is seen due to the vitiation of <i>Kapha Dosha & Rakta Dhatu</i> , <i>Virechana</i> with <i>Pitta Kaphahara</i> property corrects <i>Rakta Dhatu</i> , thus reducing big lesions.

<p>Shyava, parushya (blackish scaly lesion)</p> <p>kina, khara sparsha (hard)</p>	<p>It's also called hyper keratinization, it is due to vitiation of <i>Tridosha</i>, <i>Virechana</i> acts on all <i>Doshas</i> and controls scaling.</p>
<p>Candle grease sign</p>	<p>It indicates increased <i>Ruksha</i> and <i>Khara Guna</i> in <i>Twak</i>, it is caused by vitiation of <i>Vata Dosha</i>, <i>Virechana</i> corrects it by <i>Vatanulomana</i> and ultimately reducing <i>Rukshata</i>.</p>
<p>Auspitz sign</p>	<p>It is seen mainly due to vitiation <i>Pitta</i> and <i>Rakta Dushya</i>, <i>Virechana</i> removes vitiated <i>Pitta Dosha</i> and <i>Rakta</i>, thus reducing <i>Daha</i>.</p>
<p>Kandu</p>	<p>It indicates the involvement of <i>Kapha</i>, <i>Rasa</i>, and <i>Rakta Dushya</i>, <i>Virechana</i> has <i>Pitta Shodhaka</i> and <i>Rasa Rakta Prasadana</i> property, so it reduces itching</p>

III.RESULT



IV. CONCLUSION

High potency topical corticosteroids, antihistamines, Oral retinoids and immunosuppressants are used in the first-line treatment.

These corticosteroids has adverse psychological effects thus effecting the quality of life of patients.

Ayurveda recommends working on the root cause of the disease and the reversal of pathology. Whatever disease it might be, toxins are always involved in a disease.

Therefore, the best way to treat a disease is to remove the deep-seated toxin

So the line of treatment according to Ayurveda will be as follows:

- **Toxin removal**
- **Metabolism correction**
- **Increase in ojus production**
- **Immune system correction**

In addition, *Shaman Yoga, Bahirparimarjana Chikitsa* (external application) is administered after taking the proper course of *Shodhana*, which then provides additional relief and thus helps in the eradication of lichen planus.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: The authors acknowledge the patient for her cooperation.

PATIENT'S PERSPECTIVE: The patient felt better with the treatment given. There were significant and visible changes noted in her physical aspects. She also strictly adhered to the advised Pathya Ahara Vihara. The patient also acknowledged the improvement in her general well-being after taking the advised internal medications.

INFORMED CONSENT: The authors certify that they have obtained the appropriate patient consent form. In the form, the patient has given her clinical information to be reported in the journal. The patient understands that her name and initials will not be published and due efforts will be made to conceal her identity, but anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND SPONSORSHIP: Nil

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

REFERENCES

1. Agnivesha, Charaka, Drudhbala, Charaka Samhita (Uttarardha), Chikitsa sthan, Kushta Adhyaya, 7/19, Acharya vidyadhar Shukla, Pro. Ravidutta Tripathi, Reprint ed, Chaukhambha Sanskrit pratistan, Delhi, 2012; 184.
2. Irvine C, Irvine F, Champion RH. Long-term follow-up of lichen planus. Acta Derm Venereol. 1991;71(3):242-4. [[PubMed](#)]
3. Mignogna MD, Lo Muzio L, Lo Russo L, Fedele S, Ruoppo E, Bucci E. Oral lichen planus: different clinical features in HCV-positive and HCV-negative patients. Int J Dermatol. 2000 Feb;39(2):134-9. [[PubMed](#)]
4. Halevy S, Shai A. Lichenoid drug eruptions. J Am Acad Dermatol. 1993 Aug;29(2 Pt 1):249-55. [[PubMed](#)]
5. Agnivesha, Charaka, Drudhbala, Charaka samhita (Poorvadha), Nidan sthan, Kushta nidana 5/8, Edited by Dr. Laxmidhar Dwivedi, Chaukhambha Krishna Academy, Varanasi, 718.
6. Vagbhat, Vagbhat, Ashtang Hridhyam, Nidan sthana, Kushta shwitra krimi Nidana Adhya 14/21- 22, Edited by Late Dr. Anna moreshwar Kunte, vai.sha.sam. Krushnashatri Navre edition

7. Acharya Sharangdhara, Sharangdharsamhita annotated with Dipika Hindi Commentary, narrated by Dr Brmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Reprint 2008,9/1, Page No 218.
8. Acharya Sharangdhara, Sharangdharsamhita annotated with Dipika Hindi Commentary, narrated by Dr Brmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Reprint 2008,9/12-13,Page No 220.
9. Researchgate.net. [cited 2024 Mar 31]. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341292104_Clinical_Evaluation_of_Efficacy_and_Safety_of_Classical_Ayurveda_Formulations_Panchatikta_Ghrita_and_Nalpamaradi_Taila_in_the_Management_of_Psoriasis_A_Study_Protocol

