

THE AYURVEDIC PATH TO RADIANT SKIN - AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO DERMATOLOGY

Rohan Verma¹, Khushbu Biban², Shashi Bala Saini³

1. Assistant professor, ODM Ayurvedic Medical College & Hospital, Mathura (U.P.).
2. PG Scholar, PG Department of Rasa Shastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, PGIA, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University, Jodhpur.
3. PhD Scholar, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur.

Corresponding Author: drkhushbu777@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj1313042025>

(Published Online: April 2025)

Open Access

© International Ayurvedic Medical Journal, India 2025

Article Received: 08/02/2025 - Peer Reviewed: 29/03/2025 - Accepted for Publication: 11/04/2025.



ABSTRACT

Introduction - Traditional *Ayurvedic* medicine's primary objective is to address a patient's skin conditions. It achieves this by ensuring that all of the *doshas* are in balance. Promoting good skin involves detoxing, using herbal medicines, dieting, and living a balanced lifestyle.

Objectives - This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of *Ayurveda* in treating dermatological problems, including psoriasis, acne, eczema, pigmentation disorders, preventative and treatment strategies, and beauty enhancers.

Methods - A comprehensive review of classical *Ayurvedic* texts, clinical studies, and dermatological research that have been conducted. *Ayurvedic* treatments, including herbal formulations, dietary regimens, and *Panchakarma* therapies, were analysed for their impact on skin health.

Discussion - *Ayurvedic* treatments for skin disorders have shown anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, and antioxidant qualities. Herbal remedies for acne and eczema have shown promise, and detoxification methods might help manage chronic conditions like psoriasis.

Conclusion - *Ayurveda* offers an all-encompassing, therapeutic, and preventative approach to skin care. It encourages skin health and general well-being and focuses on internal harmony and natural remedies.

Keywords: Lifestyle, Ayurveda, Doshas

INTRODUCTION

Dermatology in modern medicine primarily focuses on diagnosing and treating skin diseases using external therapies and medications. In contrast, *Ayurveda* adopts a holistic approach to skin health, viewing the skin not merely as a physical barrier but as a reflection of the body's internal balance. According to *Ayurveda*, skin issues arise from imbalances in the doshas (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*). The *Ayurvedic* approach combines detoxification, dietary adjustments, herbal remedies, and lifestyle modifications to address the root causes and visible symptoms of skin conditions. This personalized and integrative methodology promotes the treatment of existing issues, long-term prevention, and overall well-being.

Principles of Skin Health in *Ayurveda*

1. *Tridosha* and Skin Health

Ayurveda identifies three primary doshas - *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* - that control the body's physiological functions. Each *Dosha* is associated with specific qualities that, when balanced, maintain health, and when imbalanced, contribute to disease.

Vata dosha governs movement, dryness, and roughness, and an excess of *Vata* can lead to dry, rough, and flaky skin.

Pitta dosha controls heat, metabolism, and skin complexion. An aggravated *Pitta* can result in inflammation, acne, rashes, and other skin conditions.

Kapha dosha is associated with moisture, oiliness, and stability. Excess *Kapha* can lead to overly oily skin, clogged pores, and conditions like eczema or psoriasis.

2. *Agni* (Digestive Fire) and Skin Health - In *Ayurveda*, the concept of *Agni* or digestive fire plays a crucial role in overall health, including skin. Poor digestion, known as *Mandagni*, can form toxins (*Ama*), manifesting in various skin problems. Maintaining healthy digestion through proper diet and lifestyle is essential for good and healthy skin.

4. ***Dhatu* (Tissues) and Skin Layers** - *Ayurveda* explains that the skin is formed from *Mamsa dhatu*.

जलरू रू;अ ररुस जैल'त% द.मजु% फलु%
 एकलु}लु रुप% "कु~ प सुनल% लु;कुलुहुकु%¹

*Dhatu*s are different layers, starting from *Rasa dhatu* (plasma) to *Rakta dhatu* (blood), *Mamsa dhatu* (muscle), and beyond. According to *Ayurveda*, skin is one of the vital organs, and it includes layers that act as seats for various skin conditions. Skin problems, including cosmetic issues, affect almost 20% of all patients seeking healthcare globally². Skin disorders often result from imbalances in these tissues, and treatment involves restoring harmony across these layers.

4. ***Srotas* (Channels) and Skin Detoxification** - The skin is associated with its network of channels called *Srotas*, which plays a key role in eliminating toxins from the body. The proper functioning of these *Srotas* is essential for maintaining healthy skin. When these channels become blocked or impaired, they can lead to issues such as acne, boils, and other inflammatory skin conditions. Ensuring these channels clear and balanced flow is crucial for overall skin health.

***Ayurvedic* diagnosis tools for skin diseases**

Ayurveda emphasizes individualized diagnosis based on a person's *Prakriti* (constitution) and *Vikriti* (current state of imbalance). Skin diseases are diagnosed by assessing the condition of the *Doshas*, *Dhatu*s, *Srotas* and the presence of *Ama* (toxins).

1) ***Prakriti* Assessment** - *Prakriti* refers to a person's unique inherent constitution, which determines their susceptibility to certain skin conditions. A *Vata*-dominant person, for example, is more prone to dry, thin skin and conditions like eczema. In contrast, a *Pitta*-dominant person might experience more inflammatory conditions like acne or rashes. Understanding one's *Prakriti* helps in tailoring

personalized skincare and treatment strategies in *Ayurveda*.

- 2) **Nadi Pariksha** - Pulse diagnosis, or *Nadi Pariksha*, is a common diagnostic tool from ancient *Ayurveda* that assesses the balance of *Doshas* and identifies imbalances that might be causing skin issues.
- 3) **Darshana (Observation) and Prashana (Questioning)** - *Ayurveda* places significant emphasis on visual examination of the skin and detailed inquiry into lifestyle, diet, mental health, and environmental factors that may contribute to skin conditions.

Enhancing skin health with *Ayurveda* - *Ayurvedic Treatment*

Ayurvedic treatment for skin diseases aims to restore *Dosha* balance, detoxify the body, and improve skin health through a holistic approach that combines *Aantarika* (internal) and *Bahya* (external) therapies.

➤ *Aantarika* / Internal Therapies

- **Rasayanas** (Rejuvenation Therapies) - *Rasayana* treatments aim to rejuvenate and nourish the skin. *Bhallataka*, *Vidanga*, and *Gandhaka* are used for *Naimittika rasayana dravya*,³ and Formulations like *Chyawanprasha*⁴ and *Triphala* are recommended for their antioxidant properties and ability to promote youthful, healthy skin.
- **Single drug / Formulation** - Herbs play a major role in skin treatment. Common herbs used include *Neem* (*Azadirachta indica*), *Turmeric* (*Curcuma longa*), *Manjistha* (*Rubia cordifolia*), and *aloe vera*, which are known for their anti-inflammatory, detoxifying, and rejuvenating properties. These herbs are administered internally and externally to purify the blood, support digestion, and nourish the skin.

Herbal formulations, such as *Ekavimshatika guggulu* and many others, are helpful in treating *Kushtha roga* (skin disease). **Herbomineral formulations** also help treat skin ailments like *Arogyavardhini vati*⁵.

- **Panchakarma** is a purification therapy that eliminates toxins from the body. For skin health, therapies such as *Vamana*⁶ (therapeutic vomiting), *Virechana*⁷ (purgation), and *Raktamokshana*⁸ (bloodletting) are often used to cleanse the system of toxins.

➤ *Bahya* / External Therapies

- **Abhyanga**⁹ (Oil Massage) - Regular oil massage with medicated oils helps to balance the *Doshas*, especially *Vata*. It improves circulation, nourishes the skin, and promotes detoxification through the skin.
- **Lepa**¹⁰ (Masks) - The application of herbal pastes or masks, known as *Lepa*, is used to treat various skin conditions such as acne, eczema, and pigmentation.
- **Udvardana**¹¹ (Powder Massage) *Udvardana*, a massage using herbal powders, helps detoxify the skin, improve texture, and treat conditions related to excess *Kapha*, such as oily skin or cellulite.

Diet and Lifestyle Modifications

- **Dietary Adjustments**¹² - *Ayurveda* emphasizes the importance of a *Dosha*-specific diet to support skin health. For instance, individuals with a *Pitta* imbalance are often advised to avoid spicy, sour, and fried foods that can increase heat in the body. In contrast, those with a *Vata* imbalance may benefit from consuming warm, moist, and nourishing foods to counteract dryness and coldness.
- **Dinacharya**¹³ (Daily Routine) - Establishing a daily routine that includes regular sleep patterns, *Yoga*, and meditation is important for skin health. Stress and mental imbalance are seen as major contributors to skin disorders, and practices like *Pranayama* (breathing exercises) and meditation are recommended for their calming effects.

As beauty enhancer/beauty therapy–

- **Removal of hairs** – *Ayurvedic* texts mention formulations like *Haratala*, *Manahshila*, *Palasha kshara*, and *Sarjika kshara* for hair removal¹⁴.

They are safe and naturally removal without damaging the skin.

DISCUSSION

Dermatology deals with the study of skin and related issues. *Ayurveda* gave so many principles to rejuvenate skin healthy again from a diseased one. *Ayurvedic* dermatology takes a comprehensive approach to skin health, addressing the root causes of skin issues by ensuring balance within the body's internal systems. *Ayurveda* emphasizes the connection between skin health and overall bodily balance. An unhealthy diet, lifestyle choices such as eating incompatible or poorly timed meals, and habits like bathing immediately after physical activity can disrupt this balance. Excessive use of chemicals in cosmetics, soaps, shampoos, deodorants, and unhygienic practices can also harm the skin. Additionally, overuse of antibiotics and steroids may have negative side effects, weakening the skin's natural defense mechanisms. In *Ayurveda*, the *Doshas* - *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* - are the fundamental principles that regulate the body's overall functioning, including skin health.

The balance of these internal and external factors reflects an individual's overall health. In *Ayurveda*, the skin is believed to be a mirror for the body's internal processes, meaning treatment must address internal and external factors to foster long-term healing. A central concept in this approach is *Agni*, or digestive fire, which governs metabolism and digestion. Proper digestion ensures the absorption of nutrients and the elimination of toxins, while poor digestion can lead to the accumulation of *Ama* (toxins). This buildup of *Ama* is believed to contribute to skin conditions such as acne, eczema, and psoriasis.

This concept aligns with modern science's understanding of the gut-skin axis, where gut health is directly affected due to inflammation and toxin buildup. *Ayurveda* mainly focuses on the body's root system, which is *agni* or digestive fire, by improving and detoxifying the body, which purifies the blood and skin, leading to clear, healthy skin from within. A person remains healthy when *Dhatus* (body tissues) and *Doshas* are in harmony.

However, Diseases begin to develop if doshas get disturbed due to certain factors and start affecting dhatus. The health of *Dhatus* is determined by the nutrition they receive from food (*Ahara Rasa*). Healthy *Dhatus* means a healthy body, but when they are vitiated, diseases can manifest. Skin disorders are *Dhatupradoshaja vikaras*¹⁵ as skin is *Upadhatu* of *mamsa dhatu*. Diagnosis for skin in *Ayurveda* is intensely personalised. A *Prakriti* assessment determines a person's inherent constitution, which is *Prakriti*, and influences their susceptibility to skin conditions. According to *Prakriti*, the body is prone to diseases. Pulse diagnosis serves as a key diagnostic tool in *Ayurveda*. The technique involves assessing the *Doshas* through the pulse to check or identify any imbalances that may be causing skin issues. Visual examination and questioning of a person's lifestyle, diet, mental health, and environmental factors help identify any external influences that might contribute to skin conditions. *Ayurvedic* treatment combines internal and external therapies to address symptoms and root causes. Internally, *Rasayana dravyas* like *Amalaki*¹⁶, *Bhallataka*, *Gandhaka*, and *Chyavanaprasha* are used for their scientifically proven anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and detoxifying properties. This helps clean the blood, reduce inflammation, and promote digestion, improving skin health. *Panchakarma* is a therapy that eliminates toxins and improves skin health by reducing the toxins in the body. Externally, therapies such as *Abhyanga* and *Lepa* enhance circulation, nourishing the skin and treating conditions like acne and pigmentation. Improving circulation and using anti-inflammatory treatments can greatly benefit skin health. *Ayurveda* also highlights the importance of diet and lifestyle for maintaining healthy skin. According to *Dosha*, diet helps balance internal imbalances that affect the skin. The holistic approach considers physical, mental, and emotional factors and offers a comprehensive and scientifically grounded way to manage skin health and address disorders at their root.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda offers a holistic approach to skin health, focusing on treating the root causes of skin disorders rather than just masking symptoms. By emphasizing the importance of diet, lifestyle, detoxification, remedies, and mind-body practices, ayurvedic dermatology provides a personalized and sustainable way to care for the skin. This not only works to restore skin health but also enhances overall well-being. Balancing the doshas, maintaining digestive health, and detoxifying the body presents a timeless and practical framework for achieving healthy, radiant skin.

REFERENCES

1. Agnivesha, Charaka, Dridhabala, Charaka Samhita, Chikitsa Sthana, Grahani Dosh Chikitsa Adhyaya 15, edited by K. Shastri and G. Chaturvedi, Chaukhambha Bharati Academy, Varanasi, 2013; 462.
2. Choudhury B. Scopes of Skin Disease Management Through Ayurveda, Ijatm Vol 3 Issue 4 I June 2021
3. Yatendra Kumar Sethi et al: Concept of Rasayana and Its Utility (Rejuvenation Therapy): A Review. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2021 {cited November 2021 }
4. Tamboli, Firoj & Harinath, N. & Khairmode, Ss & Patil, Dhanashri & Tambare, Prajakta & Shinde, Anilkumar & Jadhav, Namdeo & Bhandari, Shahikant. (2021). CHYAWANPRASHA: A TRADITIONAL INDIAN BIOACTIVE HERBAL MEDICINAL FORMULATION TO BOOST IMMUNITY AND RESTORE YOUTHFULNESS.
5. Singh NK, Sengar AS, Khuntia BB, Om Prakash. Successful Ayurvedic Management of Dermatophytosis-A case report. J Ayurveda Integr Med. 2022 Jan-Mar;13(1):100491. doi: 10.1016/j.jaim.2021.07.007. Epub 2021 Dec 24. PMID: 34961687; PMCID: PMC8728070.
6. Acharya, Richa. (2021). Effect of vaman on psoriasis (Ekakushta): A case study. Journal of Ayurvedic and Herbal Medicine. 7. 225-228. 10.31254/jahm.2021.7402.
7. Bhende, Snehalv & Parwe, Shweta. (2020). Role of Nitya Virechana and Shaman Chikitsa in the management of Ekakushta with special respect to plaque psoriasis: A case study. Journal of Indian System of Medicine. 8. 57. 10.4103/JISM.JISM_16_20.
8. Raval HN, Thakar AB. Role of Raktamokshana by Jalaukavacharana and Siravedhana in the management of Vicharchika (Eczema). Ayu. 2012 Jan;33(1):68-72. doi: 10.4103/0974-8520.100314. PMID: 23049187; PMCID: PMC3456867.
9. Gupta, T., & Gupta, R. (Year). Management of Ekakushta w.s.r. psoriasis through Ayurveda – a case study. *wjpmr*, Volume 6, Issue 11, 2020.
10. Pallavi G, Gupta KL, Shreevathsa M, Chate VA, Balakrishna DL. Clinical evaluation of Varnya Gana Lepa in Vyanga (melasma). Ayu. 2015 Apr-Jun;36(2):151-6. doi: 10.4103/0974-8520.175543. PMID: 27011715; PMCID: PMC4784124.
11. Chavan, Shital & Rathi, J. (2013). The role of udvartana on skin health. International Journal of Research in Ayurveda & Pharmacy. 4. 414-416. 10.7897/2277-4343.04321.
12. Katta R, Desai SP. Diet and dermatology: the role of dietary intervention in skin disease. J Clin Aesthet Dermatol. 2014 Jul;7(7):46-51. PMID: 25053983; PMCID: PMC4106357.
13. Ayurveda-based diet & lifestyle guidelines for prevention and management of skin diseases, CCRAS, Ministry of Ayush, Gov. of India, page no. 4.
14. Mishra, K., Inchulkar, S. R., & Kaushik Y, Ayurvedic Hair – removal formulations for topical application: A Critical Review. *ijapc*, Volume 16, Issue 1, Jan 2022
15. Kulkarni, Archana. (2016). Review of Concept of Dhatu - Pradoshaja Vikara described in Classical Ayurvedic Texts. 32-03. 317-3326.
16. Neha Yadav, Amarendra Kumar Singh. Amalaki (*Emblia officinalis* Gaertn.): A review on its therapeutic properties. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2023; 08:155-162

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Rohan Verma et al: The Ayurvedic Path to Radiant Skin - An Integrative Approach to Dermatology. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2025 {cited April 2025 }