



ESOPHAGEAL SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA: A CASE STUDY OF SUCCESSFUL AYURVEDIC TREATMENT

Swati¹, Shashibala Saini², Anita Patiya³, Sarvesh Kumar Agrawal⁴

^{1,2}PhD Scholar, Department of Swasthavritta and Yoga, National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed University, Jaipur

³PG Scholar, Department of Swasthavritta and Yoga National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed University, Jaipur

⁴Associate Professor, Department of Swasthavritta and Yoga, National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed University, Jaipur

Corresponding Author: swati57parjesh@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj17p9022025>

(Published Online: January 2025)

Open Access

© International Ayurvedic Medical Journal, India 2025

Article Received: 17/12/2024 - Peer Reviewed: 05/01/2025 - Accepted for Publication: 14/01/2025.



ABSTRACT

Carcinoma of the oesophagus ranks seventh in incidence (572,000 new cases) and sixth in overall mortality worldwide (509,000 deaths). Esophageal cancer was, in fact, responsible for an estimated one in every 20. The most common histological variant worldwide was Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC) conventionally. Management of this disease includes all three primary modalities of treatment: surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy. In the present case, a 75-year-old female patient was diagnosed with SCC of Esophagus, and she did not want to take the conventional therapies. The patient had complained of difficulty in swallowing, a burning sensation in the throat, and constipation. She was managed with Herbo-mineral Ayurvedic combinations for this condition. After four months of continuous medication with follow-up on every 15 days, investigations revealed a significant reduction in size and thickness of carcinoma, i.e. from 20 mm thickness, 77 mm length to wall thickening varying 7 to 12 mm approx., 35 mm long.

Keywords: Squamous cell carcinoma, Case report, Ayurveda

INTRODUCTION

Esophageal cancer, according to GLOBOCAN 2018 data, ranks seventh in terms of incidence and sixth in mortality among all cancers worldwide. In India, it is considered the fourth most common cause of cancer-related deaths. Influenced by lifestyle, socioeconomic and environmental factors, striking geographic variations in incidence exist¹. Management of this disease includes all three primary modalities of treatment: surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy. Surgical resection, the only curative modality of treatment, remains a challenge even with advances like minimal access surgery and is feasible only in the early stage of the disease. The traditional system of medicines is gaining momentum with increasing acceptance in managing various pathologies; Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC) is also among such ones. This case is intended to provide evidence of the efficacy of Ayurveda treatment for patients diagnosed with SCC. This is a case of a female diagnosed with SCC of the oesophagus and denied surgery or Chemotherapy. An Ayurveda treatment regimen was prescribed and administered for four months; pre-treatment and during-treatment were also assessed based on patient symptoms and CECT Chest, and after following four months of medication investigations revealed a significant reduction in size and thickness of carcinoma, i.e. from 20 mm thickness, 77 mm length to wall thickening varying between 7 to 12 mm approx., 35 mm long.

Patient Information

Timeline

Table 1: Timeline of Different Events with Findings

Date	Event	Finding
30.09.2022	2D- Echocardiography and blood investigations done	Normal 2D- Echo, HbA1C- 8.04, RBS- 94mg/dl, Serum Creatinine- 0.96mg/dl
07.11.2011	Upper GI Endoscopy done	Ultero-proliferative growth at 25-30 cm from incisor (biopsy taken)? Ca Esophagus
08.11.2022	CECT Chest done	Circumferential irregular thickening is noted mild part of oesophagus measuring approx. 20 mm in thickness 77 mm in length
09.11.2022	Histopathology Study conducted	Moderately Differentiated Squamous Cell Carcinoma of esophagus
15.12.2022	Visited for the First time at Cancer OPD of National Institute of Ayurveda (DU), Jaipur	Ayurvedic Treatment started
30.12.2022 to 08.04.23	Visited OPD fortnightly	Same treatment continued

A 75-year-old female came with the chief complaint of difficulty in swallowing, pain in her lower chest and back, burning sensation in her throat and constipation for the last four months to Cancer OPD of National Institute of Ayurveda (DU), Jaipur on, December 15, 2022. The problem started four months back with difficulty in swallowing; for that, she visited the nearby clinic and started symptomatic allopathic medicines. The patient was not relieved; she was advised to investigate, including upper gastrointestinal endoscopy, CECT chest, and histopathology, which revealed Oesophagus SCC. There is no family history of Cancer and no history of alcohol/tobacco addiction. She has had a history of Type 2 Diabetes mellitus and hypertension for the last seven years and is taking allopathic medications for this (she is not taking any medication for this). She visited the OPD and commenced Ayurvedic treatment in November 2022. Her treatment continued for the next four months.

Clinical Findings

When the patient presented in OPD, a thorough clinical history revealed that the patient had decreased appetite and disturbed sleep, urination was normal with frequency and complained of frequent constipation. On systemic examination, pallor was present, but she did not exhibit any icterus, cyanosis, or clubbing. Her tongue was moist and clear; No other abnormalities were found. Her Blood Pressure was 112/66 mm Hg, her height was 154 cm, and her body weight was 58 kg.

08.04.2023	CECT Thorax done	Irregular eccentric circumscribed wall thickening varying 7 to 12 mm approx, 35 mm log segment of mild oesophagus
13.04.2023		Same treatment continued

Diagnostic Assessment

After all the initial investigations, including Upper Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, CECT Thorax, and biopsy, which confirmed the diagnosis of squamous cell carcinoma of the Esophagus, only CECT Thorax and Upper abdomen were advised to monitor the progress of the disease.

Therapeutic Intervention

After a confirmed diagnosis of SCC oesophagus, the patient was advised for esophagectomy by the Oncosurgeon, but she was not ready for surgery. Then, she visited NIA OPD expecting practical and economical treatment. Ayurvedic treatment was started on December 15, 2022, with herbo-mineral drugs. (Table 2)

Table 2: Medicines with dose, time, frequency and Anupana

S.N.	Medicine	Dose	Time & Frequency	Anupana
1.	Raktaprasadak hima	50 ml	Morning E/S and Night	Cold water decoction
2.	Avipattikar Powder Pittantak yoga Yastimadhu Powder Praval pisti Swarna Sutashekhar Ras Kaharawa pishti Vaikrant Bhasma	3 gm 2 gm 1 gm 250 mg 125 mg 250mg 50 gm	Before meal b/d	Water
3.	Syrup Tercid	10 ml	After the meal , b/d	-
4.	Cap. Dhatri louha	250 mg	After the meal, bd	Water

Follow-up and Outcome

The patient was followed up for treatment and assessment fortnightly. On the first visit, she complained of difficulty in swallowing, a burning sensation in her throat, pain in her lower chest and back and constipation. After 15 days of the treatment, she was relieved from the burning throat and her appetite. In the subsequent follow-up, Ayurvedic treatment significantly alleviated the other symptoms like disturbed sleep, pain in the lower chest and back, and constipation. After four months of medications, the Patient felt symptom-free, then a CECT Thorax and abdomen were performed on April 8, 2023, which reported decreased thickening and size of the Squamous Cell Carcinoma of the oesophagus.

DISCUSSION

Cancer is *Anukta* (~not directly mentioned in Ayurveda texts); it can be correlated with *Arbuda*, *Granthi*, and *Visarpa* in Ayurveda. First, modern pathophysi-

ology needs to be understood. After clinically assessing the investigations and the patient's condition, the principles of Ayurveda, such as the involvement of *Dosha*, *Dusya*, *Sthana*, *Srotas*, and *Srotodusti*, were evaluated. After assessing all principles, the treatment was prescribed. *Raktaprasadak Hima* a herbal formulation of NIA Hospital (contents – *Sariva*, *Manjistha*, *Kakamachi*, *Ushira* and *Bhumyamalaki*) has *Madhur-Tikta Rasa*, *Katu Vipaka*, *Sheeta Virya*, *Laghu-Ruksha Guna* and has *Pitta-Kapha Shamak* property. *Avipattikar powder* is a combination of many herbs like *Nishotha (Operculina Turpe-thum)* as main ingredient, *misri* (crystal sugar), *Clove (Syzygium Aromaticum)*, *Dried ginger (Zingiber officinale)*, *Black pepper (Piper nigrum)*, *Long pepper (Piper longum)*, *Haritiki (Terminalia Chebula)*, *Vibhitaki (Terminalia Bellirica)*, *Amla (Emblica Officinalis)*, *Mustak (Cyperus Rotundus)*, *Vidanga (Embelia Ribes)*, *Tejpatra (Cinnamomum Tamala)*, *Ela (Elettaria cardamomum)* *Vidalavana (Ammonium Salt)*. Different Clinical research displays that

Avipattikar Churna possesses significant gastro-protective activity. Contents of the drugs are very effective in curing the hyperacidity of multiple etiologies.² Pittantaka Yoga is an herbo-mineral composition pharmacy of the National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur, which contains Swarngarika, Amrittadhara, and Pudina satva. This combination alleviates Pitta's dominant condition. Yastimadhu powder has Madura- Kashaya Ras, Madhura Vipka, Sheeta Virya. Yasti has a Ropana (healing) effect. Pharmacological experiments have demonstrated that different extracts and pure compounds from these species exhibit a broad range of biological properties, including anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory, antiviral, antioxidant, and antidiabetic activities³. Praval Pisti has Rasayan (rejuvenating) properties. Prawal also has Deepan, Pachan, Vishad, Vish Shaman, and Bhootshaman properties.⁴. Praval Pishi is beneficial in Kasa, Pitta roga, Manodaurbalya, Ojakshaya, and Hrdoroga.⁵. Swarna Sekhar Ras corrects Pitta's vitiated state, improves the whole digestion process, and results in Agni's proper functioning. Syrup Tercid is an Ayurvedic proprietary medicine containing the main ingredients Mukta Sukti bhasama, Varatika bhasma, Praval piste, Dugdha pasha, and liquid extracts of Kokam (*Garcinia purpurea*), Yastimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza glabella*), Udumber (*Ficus racemose*), and Khas (*Vetiveria zizanioides*). These ingredients have Pitta Shamak and Agni Deepaka effects, help with gastric problems and heartburn, and improve digestive processes⁶. Dhatri Lauha is a herbo-mineral preparation comprising Dhatri (*Emblica officinalis*), Lauha churna (calcined iron), Yastimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) and Amrita (*Tinospora cordifolia*). The constituents of Dhatri Lauha possess Deepana (improves digestion and metabolism), Srotoshodhaka (correcting obstructive pathology occurring in body channels), Rasayana (medicines used to improve health and longevity), Shonitasthapana (restore the typical

properties of blood), hepatoprotective and bio-enhancer properties⁷.

CONCLUSION

The treatment results in this case of SCC of the oesophagus were quite exciting. This case may offer new hope for patients for whom conventional therapy is not feasible and will open a new domain of research for scientists in the field of Ayurveda Oncology.

REFERENCES

1. Veerendra Kumar KV, Sagar R, Mathew J. Squamous Cell Carcinoma: Esophagus [Internet]. Squamous Cell Carcinoma - Hallmark and Treatment Modalities. Intech Open; 2020. Available from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.86196>
2. Yadvendra Yadav, "An Updated Review on Recent In-Vitro, In-Vivo and Clinical Research of Avipattikar Churna" published in Scholars International Journal of Traditional and Complementary Medicine DOI:10.21276/sijtcm.2019.2.6.6
3. Pastorino G, Cornara L, Soares S, Rodrigues F, Oliveira MBPP. Liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*): A phytochemical and pharmacological review. *Phytother Res.* 2018 Dec;32(12):2323-2339. doi: 10.1002/ptr.6178. Epub 2018 Aug 17. PMID: 30117204; PMCID: PMC7167772.
4. Shastri K, Rasa Tarangini Varanasi: Chaukhambha Visvabharati; 1999, 23/139-141
5. Shri Baidynath, Ayurveda Sara Sanghrah, Shodhan Maran Prakaran, Page no. 140
6. www.glimayurveda.com, extracted on 15.12.2024
7. Srikanth, Narayana; Rao, Bhogavalli Chandra-sekhara1; Yadav, Babita1; Rai, Amit Kumar1, Jameela, Sophia1; Rana, Rakesh Kumar2; Singhal, Richa2; Khanduri, Shruti1; Sharma, Bhagwan Sahai1; Makhija, Pratap1. Dhatri Lauha in managing iron deficiency anaemia: A prospective open-label single-arm multi-centre trial. *AYU (An international quarterly journal of research in Ayurveda)* 42(2): p 69-75, Apr-Jun 2021. | DOI: 10.4103/ayu.ayu_379_21

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Swati: Esophageal Squamous Cell Carcinoma: A Case Study of Successful Ayurvedic Treatment. *International Ayurvedic Medical Journal* {online} 2025 {cited January 2025} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/210_213.pdf