

EFFECT OF DASAPUSHPA KERA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF VICHARCHIKA (ECZEMA)

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Published online: March 2020

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To study the effect of *Dasapushpa Kera* in the management of *Vicharchika* (Eczema) **Methods:** Sixty patients participated in the Randomized Control Trial (RCT) study and thirty patients each with signs and symptoms of *Vicharchika* was assigned into 2 groups namely study and control group. Before starting treatment, *Virechana* or purgation with *Avipatti Choorna* (powder) mixed with honey was given for both groups. Then *Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya* (decoction) was given twice daily for 4 weeks for both groups. Washing with *Triphala Kashaya* was also advised twice daily for both of them. *Dasapushpa Kera* is advised for external application for 4 weeks for the study group. The patients were reviewed on 15th day and 30th day. Follow up was done on 15th day and 30th day. The results were analyzed statistically. **Results & Conclusion:** Study group showed more relief in Itching, Oozing, Skin eruption and discoloration. No recurrence was seen in the follow up period. This treatment regime is significantly effective than the control group (p <0.001).

Keywords: *Vicharchika*, Eczema, *Dasapushpa*, *Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya*

INTRODUCTION

Skin is an emblem of health, beauty, confidence and social well being. Nowadays most of the skin diseases are due to modern lifestyles. Disorders in diet, sleep, urges and anxiety all contribute invariably to its origin and chronicity. Modern medicines are providing only symptomatic relief to most of them and their long-term use may cause adverse effects. Kerala have some

unique distribution of plants and many medicinal preparations were outlined based on them. *Dasapushpa*, a group of ten plants was one among them. It is familiar to Keralites as a group of flowers to wear on hair during *Thiruvathira* in the month of *Dhanu* (Dec-Jan).

Malayalam Chikitsa books like *Prayoga Samuchayam*,¹ *Chikitsa Manjari*,² *Kriyakoumudi*,³ *Arogya-kalpadruman*⁴ etc. have references and formulations of this valuable group. It is narrated mainly in *Vishav-rana*, *Visarpa*, *Apasmara*, *Matsyavisha* chapters. It is also believed that *Dasapushpa* improves brain function.

Vicharchika is one among the eighteen skin diseases mentioned in Ayurveda. Its symptoms are similar to Eczema. Although treatment for it is available the recurrence of the disease is increasing. Patients opting Ayurvedic treatment for *Vicharchika* is increasing day by day. *Dasapushpa* is easily available and a cost effective medicine in Kerala. Moreover it is described in various preparations for ulcers in Viper bite and *Visarpa*.

The overall management of the skin disease in Ayurveda consists of *Sodhana*, *Samana* and *Lepana*. In chronic skin diseases *Sodhana* procedures include purgation or emetic therapy, *Samana* with *Kustahara* and *Vishahara* preparations and *Lepana* with *Vranahara*, *Vishahara* and *Varnya* drugs will be effective. *Vishahara* preparation is a modified version which is estimated to be more effective in chronic skin diseases have included in this study.

A poison whether animal, vegetable or artificial which have not been fully eliminated from the system and partially inherent therein, which have become enfeebled due to the action of anti poisonous remedies upon them or which have become dried by fire, wind and the sun or which are naturally devoid of their specific properties are designated as *Dooshivisha*.

In Ayurveda, improper, incompatible and unacceptable food is considered as *Virudhahara*. *Ahara* is given prime place in this life science. But if improperly taken will cause derangement of *Doshas* which in turn affects *Dhathus*. In short all drugs and diet which dislodge the various *Doshas* but do not expel them out of the body can be regarded as unwholesome. *Vicharchika* is characterized by symptoms like *Kandu*, *Syava*, *Pidaka* and *Srava*. *Kandu* or itching is due to involvement of *Kapha Dosh*. *Pidaka* or skin eruption is due to vitiated *Pitta* accumulated in *Twak* and *Rakta*. *Pidaka* causes pain and in *Vicharchika*, generally small

circumscribed easily palpable lesions are found. *Srava* means discharge. Vitiated *Kapha* and *Pitta* are responsible for *Srava*. Susrutacarya have told *Rukshata* in *Vicharchika* which is due to *Vata* predominance. So *Vata* predominance shows dry lesions (dry eczema) and *Pitta* and *Kapha Dosh* shows wet lesions (wet eczema). *Syava* or blackish discoloration is due to vitiated *Vata*. *Daha* or burning sensation due to *Pitta* and *Vedana*.

Most of the drugs in *Dasapushpa* have anti-inflammatory, wound healing, anti toxic and anti oxidant property. Most of the anti poisonous property is mainly due to *Prabhava*. Moreover the predominance of *Tikta Rasa* in *Dasapushpa* group alleviates toxins. Out of this ten plants *Bhadra*, *Bhringaraja*, *Sahadevi* and *Sakralatha* have anti-inflammatory property. *Bhadra*, *Bhringaraja*, *Sahadevi*, *Vipareeta lajjalu* and *Vishnukranta* have antibacterial properties. *Bhringaraja*, *Musali*, *Durva*, *Sahadevi*, *Sasasruthi* and *Vipareeta lajjalu* are useful in skin disease, cuts and wounds. *Durva* and *Lakshmana* reduce burning sensation. *Sakralatha* is a rubefacient. *Bhringaraja*, *Sakralatha*, *Vipareeta lajjalu*, *Vishnukranta* are antioxidants. *Musali* reduces pruritis. *Sahadevi* have *Prabhava* in *Jwara*. *Bhringaraja* is a *Rasayana* plant. All plants are anti toxic. *Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya*⁵ (decoction) is having antitoxic property found to be effective in *Vicharchika* in a previous study conducted at *Agadatantra* Department, Government Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram.

From the pilot study conducted by the authors the preparation of *Dasapushpa* in Coconut oil as base was found to be more effective in skin disorders than *Tila Taila* preparation as *Taila* preparation increased oozing and skin eruption which worsened the condition.

The objective of the study was to find the effect of *Dasapushpa Kera* in the management of *Vicharchika* (Eczema)

Materials and Methods

Study Design - Randomized Controlled Trial

The study was carried out in O.P and I.P Department of *Agadatantra*, Government Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram with the approval of Institutional Ethical Committee.

Research Setting

After the initial assessment and selection, the patients were randomly divided into two groups namely study and control group each consisting of 30 patients. All the selected patients were subjected to *Virecana* with *Avipatti Churnam* (10-25gms) mixed with honey before treatment.

The study group was provided with *Dasapushpa Kera* and *Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya* while the control group is provided with *Kashaya* only. After *Virechana*, from the next day itself for both groups *Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya* was given in a dosage of 48 ml twice daily, early morning at 6 am in empty stomach and in evening at 6.00 pm before food for four weeks. *Kshalana* or washing with *Triphala Kashaya* was advised for both groups twice daily. In the study group, *Dasapushpa Kera* was given for external application after drying with cotton, twice daily for four weeks. Graded responses in both groups were analyzed on 15th and 30th day. After medicinal intervention, follow up was done for both groups on 15th day and 30th day. *Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya* drugs was given in coarse powdered form and advised to prepare *Kashaya*. *Triphala Kashaya* was available from the Pharmacy of Govt. Ayurveda college Hospital, *Poojapura*. *Dasapushpa Kera* was prepared and given to the study group patients.

In the present study the statistical hypothesis was tested with the help of Mann Whitney U and Wilcoxon Signed ranked test. Laboratory findings were analyzed using paired t - test.

Preparation of Medicines

A) *Dasapushpa Kera*

Dasapushpa is a group of ten plants told in Malayalam *Visha Chikitsa* book *Visha Vaidya Jyosnika* ⁶ in *Mandali Visha Sopha* and *Vrana Chikitsa*. The term *Dasapushpa* is very much familiar to Keralites and those who practice toxicology in Kerala. It is also known as *Pamktiprasoona*. The following are *Dasapushpas* with their botanical and vernacular names

1. *Poovankurunthila (Sahadevi) - Vernonia cineria*

2. *Muyal chevi (Sasasruthi) - Emilia sonchifolia*

3. *Vishnukranta (Vishnukranta) - Evolvulus alsinoides*

4. *Durva (Durva) - Cynodon dactylon*

5. *Kayyonni (Bhringaraja) - Eclipta alba*

6. *Uzhinja (Sakralatha) - Cardiospermum helicacabum*

7. *Thirutali (Lakshmana) - Ipomea sepiaria*

8. *Nilappana (Musali) - Curculigo orchoides*

9. *Mukkuti (Vipareetalajjalu) - Biophytum sensitivum*

10. *Cheroola (Bhadra) - Aerva lanata*

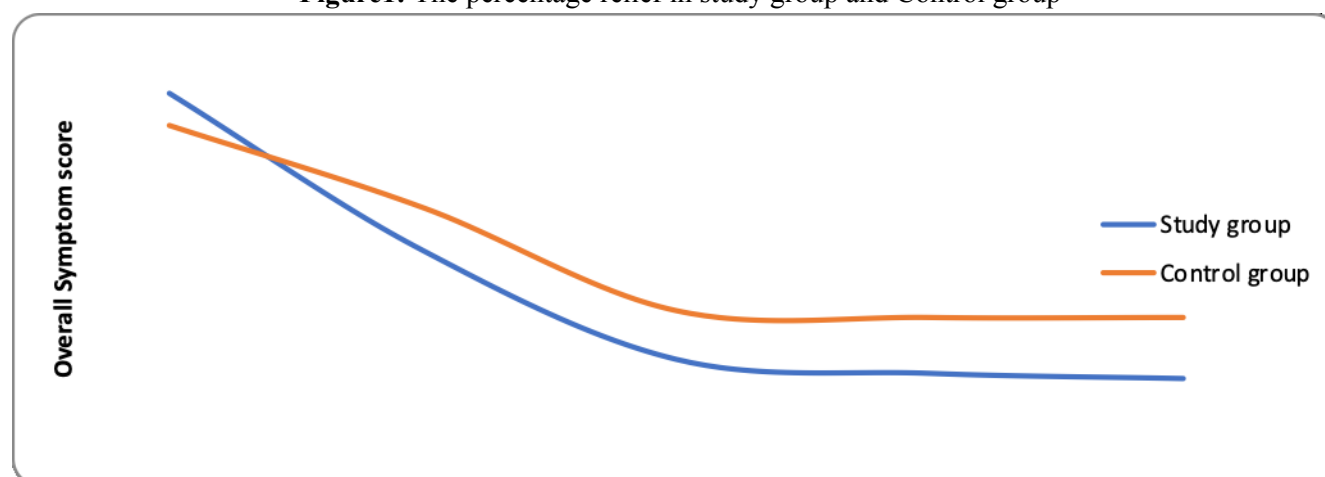
For preparing one liter of *Dasapushpa Kera* one liter of coconut oil, 4 liters of *Swarasa* (expressed juice) of whole part of *Dasapushpa*, 125 gm *Dasapushpakalka* (paste) are taken and boiled in fire until *Kharapaka* (hard boiled) is attained. The preparation was done at SNA *Oushadasala*, Thrissur, Kerala.

B) *Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya*: This formulation is described in Ayurveda Pharmacopoeia, Govt. Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram. The ingredients are *Nimba (Azadirachta indica)*, *Nilavaka (Cassia senna)*, *Aswagandha (Withania somnifera)*, *Aragwadha (Cassia fistula)*, *Khadira (Acacia catechu)*, *Daruharidra (Cosciniun fenestratum)*. The drugs were given in the coarse powder form and 48 gms of the same are boiled in 768 ml of water and reduced to 96 ml which was given in divided doses at 6 am and 6 pm. The preparation was done at Ayurveda college pharmacy, Thiruvananthapuram.

Results: The overall effectiveness of the treatment on itching was 70% in the study group and only 41.6% in the control group. The effectiveness of oozing was 23.3% in the study group and 6.7% in the control group. The skin eruptions showed 36.7% effectiveness in the study group whereas it was only 6.7% in the control group. The symptom of blackish discoloration showed 100% moderate or mild change while the control group showed 86.7% had only mild changes. The overall relief of study group was 79.8% and in the control group it was 58.6%. It was a significant observation ($p < .001$) (Table 1).

Table 1: Effectiveness of the treatment on symptoms

Symptoms	Good relief		Moderate relief		Mild relief		No relief	
	Study group	Control group	Study group	Control group	Study group	Control group	Study group	Control group
Itching	13.3	8.3	56.7	33.3	30	66.7	0	20
Oozing	0	0	23.3	6.7	73.3	70	3.3	23.3
Skin eruptions	6.7	0	30	6.7	60	86.7	3.3	6.7
Blackish discoloration	0	0	6.7	0	93.3	86.7	0	13.3

Figure1: The percentage relief in study group and Control group

(BT- before treatment, Second- 2nd week, at – After treatment, af2 –Follow up 2nd week, af 4- follows up 4th week)

DISCUSSION

The study showed better relief to patients with symptoms of *Vicharchika*.

Itching – Both groups showed reduction in the symptom itching but quicker relief was attained in the study group. This is due to *Tikta Rasa*, *Kapha Samaka Karma* and anti-poisonous effect of *Dasapushpa*. Administration of *Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya* only was not effectively controlling severe itching which leads to more skin changes.

Skin eruption – Both groups showed good result in controlling *Pidaka* due to *Pittaharatwa* of *Tikta Rasa*. Due to *Vranahara* property of *Dasapushpa* it was effective in controlling formation of *Pidakas*. *Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya* was having drugs which have *Raktaprasadana* property but local application with *Da-*

sapushpa gave quicker relief. Oozing – The study group showed better result than control group. Some patients showed *Alpa Srava* having *Vata* predominance, some showed *Raktabha Puyabha* and *Prabhuta* having *Pitta* predominance and some showed *Pichila* and *Prabuta* having *Kapha* predominance *Srava*. Due to *Rooksha Guna*, *Vranaharata*, antibacterial property and effectiveness in cuts and wounds the external application of *Dasapushpakera* was highly effective in controlling *Srava* and infection.

Discoloration - Both groups showed good result in reducing discoloration. Drugs in *Nimbanilavakadi Kashaya* were having *Varnya* property and *Sakralatha* in *Dasapushpa* was having rubefacient property. So, local application of *Dasapushpa Kera* was effective in reducing discoloration.

Even though both groups showed significant reduction in itching, oozing, skin eruption and blackish discoloration, the effect in study group is statistically significant with $p < 0.001$.

CONCLUSION

Vicharchika is one of the common dermatological complaints met in clinical practice. The chronicity of the disease can be alleviated only by the use of anti-toxic and *Kushtahara* drugs. The use of Coconut oil in skin disease is also worthy. From this study it is very clear that *Dasapushpa Kera* is effective for external application in *Vicharchika* in controlling Itching, oozing, skin eruption and blackish discoloration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors are grateful to Government Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala for providing facilities to carry out this work

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Source of Support: Nil

Conflict Of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: C Sinju: Effect Of Dasapushpa Kera In The Management Of Vicharchika (Eczema). International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online publication - 2020 {cited March - 2020} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/2209_2213.pdf