

Management of Darunaka W.S.R to Seborrheic Dermatitis

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Abstract

Seborrheic dermatitis is a common dermatological disorder which affects the scalp and other seborrheic areas on the face, upper-chest, axillae, and inguinal folds. Its incidence peaks during three age periods – in the first 3 months of life, during puberty, and in adulthood with an apex at 40 to 60 years of age. It is also called as dandruff. *Darunaka* is the non-inflammatory type of seborrheic dermatitis. *Darunaka* is one among the nine *kapalagata rogas* explained by Acharya Vagbhata. It is characterized by *Kandu* (itching), *Keshachyuti* (falling of hair), *Swapa* (loss of touch sensation), *Rookshata* (roughness or dryness of the skin) and *Twaksphutana* (scaly skin of the scalp). In Ayurvedic classics different treatment modalities are told for the management of *Darunaka*, like *shiro abhyanga*, *shirolepa*, *shiro basti*, etc. *Shiro abhyanga* is one of the topical treatments, helps to pacify the vitiated local *doshas* and get rid of the problem. Here is a case report of seborrheic dermatitis where a male patient aged about 42 complains of itching of scalp, hair fall, red patches, flakes over the head and shoulder, since 2 years has been presented here. After the course of treatment there was marked improvement on symptoms like itching of scalp, hair fall and flakes.

Keywords: *Darunaka*; Seborrheic dermatitis; *Shiroabhyanga*; *Japapushpa taila*; *Panchanimba churna*.

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Introduction

Seborrheic dermatitis is a common dermatological condition marked by itching and flaking of scalp, red greasy skin and stubborn dandruff. Seborrheic dermatitis is shedding of dead skin flakes as the skin is constantly renewing itself, causes flakes of skin to appear which is marked by itching. It affects not only the scalp but also ears, sides of nose, beard and eyebrows.¹ It is not life-threatening but, causes physical discomfort such as itching; it is socially embarrassing and negatively impacts patients' self-esteem.² Treatment includes over the counter

shampoos and topical antifungals and topical corticosteroids, but these drugs have their own limitations.

In Ayurveda, Seborrheic dermatitis can be considered as *Darunaka*, one among the nine types of *shiro-kapalagata rogas*.³ *Darunaka* is a disorder of *kaphavata dosha*, characterized by *Kandu* (itching), *Keshachyuti* (falling of hair), *Swapa* (loss of touch sensation), *Rookshata* (roughness or dryness of the skin) and *Twaksphutana* (scaly skin of the scalp).⁴ According to Acharya Videha, *Rakta* and *Pitta dusti* is also there in the manifestation of the disease.

Bahyaparimarjana (external therapies) is a popular treatment modality in Ayurveda, advocated for disorders of *shiro-kapalagata rogas*, includes *shiro abhyanga* (massage), *shirolepa*, *shiro basti*, *nasya* and *raktamokshana*, etc. As the diseases affects the skin of the scalp, *shiro abhyanga* helps in eliminating the local vitiated *doshas* and brings the normalcy of *doshas*. *Shiro abhyanga* (head massage with certain specific steps) is the topical procedure of applying medicated oil and gentle massage by inducing specific movements to the scalp region. Warm medicated oil by virtue of its *snigdha* (unctuous quality) is likely to correct the imbalance of *vata* *doshas*. In addition to this, the warmth of the oil helps in rectifying the morbid *kaphadosha* as well. Hence considering this, *shiro abhyanga* was selected as treatment of choice to combat the root cause of *Darunaka*. Hence considering this point it is assumed that the use of *shiro abhyanga* with *Japa pushpa taila*⁵ along with internal medicine *Panchanimba churna* can be an effective solution in the management of *Darunaka* w.s.r to Seborrhic dermatitis. This case showed good results.

Case Report

A 42-year-old male presented with the complaints of itching over scalp, hair fall, red greasy skin, flakes over the head and shoulder, since 2 years.

The signs and symptoms

Frequent itching of the scalp, 15–20 strands of hair fall while combing, yellow flakes on the head and shoulders, red greasy skin of scalp were present on examination.

Past history

Patient was apparently normal before two years. Gradually he developed itching in his scalp along with hair fall. For that he approached contemporary medical sciences for treatment. But his complaints did not subside and which were aggravated in cold climate and winter season. Then patient approached to Ayurvedic doctor.

Table 1: Procedures administered to the patient

Sl. No.	Name of the treatment	Medicines used	No. of days
01	<i>Shiro abhyanga</i>	<i>Japa pushpa taila</i> Dose - 10–15 ml	daily for 1 month
02	<i>Abhyantara oushadhi</i>	<i>Panchanimba churna</i> 6 gram two times	Daily for 3 months

Follow Up: The patient was advised to follow up for once in a month for 6 months.

Results

After treatment patient got relief from itching of scalp, falling of flakes, greasy skin, reduced sensation and 5–10 strands of hair fall was present. Scalp sensation became normal. After 6 months the patient was absolutely normal. No side effects were seen.

Discussion

Darunaka is a condition in which, when *kapha* and *vata dosha*⁶ gets vitiated along with *rakta* and *pitta* (according to *Videha*), inturn leads to vitiation of *rasa*, *rakta* and *swedavaha srotas* and gets accumulated in *srotas*. Then causes *sroto avarodha* and takes shelter in *kapala pradesha* (scalp) and causes *Kandu* (itching), *Keshachyuti* (falling of hair), *Swapa* (loss of touch sensation), *Rookshata* (roughness or dryness of the skin) and *Twaksphutana* (scaly skin of the scalp). General line of treatment mentioned in Ayurvedic classics, for *Darunaka* is *nasya*, *raktamokshana*, *shiro abhyanga*, *shirobasti*, *shiroprakshalana* and internal medications. Out of these listed treatments *shiro abhyanga* has a vital role to play as this procedure is performed directly on the affected part. Charaka says that, depending on the location and *dushya* (tissue element vitiated by *Kapha* and *Vata*) each patient should be given specific therapies. Hence *shiro abhyanga* was selected, as this procedure is performed directly over the scalp area and can play a vital role in recovery. In this procedure the warm oil used for *abhyanga* over the scalp penetrates the scalp and pacifies the *Vata* and *Kapha dosha*, accumulated in micro channels by virtue of its *Sukshma*, *Snigdha*, *Ushna*, *Tikshna*, *Vikasi* and *Vyavayiguna* (*srotasam nirmalatwam* – softens the channels).⁷

Panchnimba Churna almost all drugs like *Nimba*, *Bakuchi*⁸ *Araghwadha*, *Haridra*, *Chakramarda*, *Bhallataka*, etc., are having *Rakta Prasadaka* and *Twak Doshahara* properties. In *Panchanimba Churna* the main ingredient is *Nimba* that have *Tikta*, *Kashaya Rasa* and *Laghu*, *Snigdha* properties by which *Kapha Pitta Shamaka* action can be observed. *Araghwadha*⁹ *Amalaki*¹⁰ *Maricha*, *Nimba* and *Haridra*¹¹ are having *Kusthaghna* and *Kandughna* properties and also *Nimba* is having the antifungal and antimicrobial properties, by which possibly significant efficacy was observed.

Japapushpa taila is formed only with *Japapushpa* and *tila taila*. *Japa* is having *laghu, rukshna guna, kashaya, tikta rasa, sheeta veerya, katu vipaka and kaphavata shamaka properties*, along with *Keshya prabhava*.¹² Thus all these properties help in pacifying the vitiated *doshas*. So *Japa pushpa taila* was advised for the patient in *Shiro abhyanga*.

Conclusion

As per the available treatment modalities of *Darunaka*, the local treatment *shiro abhyanga* with *japa pushpa taila* along with internal medicine *Panchanimba churna* is considered as the best, taking into the consideration its convenience, easy adoptability, cost-effectiveness and curative results. This effectiveness of topical treatment can be attributed to the *kapha vataghna* properties and *keshya prabhava* of *japa pushpa taila*.

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