

Lohamaladi Lepa: A Classical Cosmetic Yoga for Achromotrichia

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How to cite this article:

Vijaykumar. S. Kotrannavar. Lohamaladi Lepa: A Classical Cosmetic Yoga for Achromotrichia. Ind J Anct Med Yoga. 2024;17(2):105-107.

Abstract

Premature achromotrichia (Premature graying of hair) is one of the common cosmetic problems seen in general practice as well as in Shalakyatantra OPD, in which onset of graying of hair is seen before natural process. *i.e.* in young age or before the age of 30-35 years. In Ayurveda it is considered as *Palityaone* of the *kshudraroga* and *shiro-kapalagataroga*. And many *kesharanjakayogasare* explained for this condition in the form of *shirolepaalong* with other therapies like *shiroabhyanga*, *nasya* and internal *keshyarasayana*. *Lohamaladilepa* is one of such *kesharanjaka yoga* explained in *Bhaishajya Ratnavali*. This paper highlights about the action of *Lohamaladilepa* in *akalapalita* w r to pre mature graying of hair.

Keywords: *Palitya*; Pre mature gray hair; *Lohamaladilepa*; *Kesharanjana*.

INTRODUCTION

Healthy and vibrant hair plays a significant role in defining one's appearance. Well maintained and healthy hair can enhance the person's overall look; maketo feel more attractive and assertive. It frames the face, complements the features and adds a touch of elegance to one's personality. But hair related problems like hair loss, grey hair etc. are very common disorders in human belonging to every age group. These hair related ailments affects men and women and often significantly affects social and psychological well-being and results in

many consequences. Evaluating and treating such conditions is an important part of primary care, yet many physicians find it complex and confusing. Therefore it is highly imperative to find better solutions to address such problems. In Ayurveda these hair related ailments are explained in context of *kshudrarogas*¹ as well as *shirokapalagatarogas*², namely *khalitya*, *palitya*, *indruluapta* and *darunaka*.

Hair graying is a common and visible sign of aging resulting from decreased or absence of melanogenesis. Premature graying also known as canities is defined as the onset of graying of hair before the age of 20 in Caucasians and before the age of 30 in Asians³ and Africans or when 50% or more of scalp hair turns grey before the age of 50. The exposure to repeated rough washing, unprotected drying, friction actions, sunlight, alkaline chemical treatments, nutritional deficiencies, hormonal imbalance, specifically androgen sensitivity, genetics, thyroid disorders etc. are few causative factors.⁴ Graying of hair is caused when cells at the hair base (melanocytes) stop producing the pigment melanin which is responsible for giving the hair its color.⁵ And the treatment includes, nutritional supplements containing various combinations

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Received on: 18.03.2024

Accepted on: 14.05.2024



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of vitamins and minerals like biotin, calcium pantothenate, zinc, copper, and selenium, ingestion of large doses of p-aminobenzoic acid (PABA), hair colorants/dyes etc. Few oral therapies have been tried with rather inconsistent results. Despite the extensive molecular research being carried out to understand the pathogenesis of canities, treatment options still remain far from satisfactory and no effective therapy is available.

As per Ayurvedic classics, *palitya* is *vardhakyajanya*, but due to increased *UshmaGuna* of *Pitta Dosha*, early greying of hair occurs. The etiological factors of *palitya* are *Krodha*, *Shoka*, *AdhikaChinta*, *AtapaSevana*, *RajoSevana*, *DhumaSevana* and *DushitaVayuSevana*, *ShiroAbhyangadhvesha* etc. Thus *Pitta Dosha* aggravates and there by increases *Pittoshma* and *Shariroshma*. *Vata* which is also aggravated by *Shoka* and *Shramacarries* this *Pittoshmato* the *Shiras*. *SthanikaKapha* is also get vitiated as the *Siras* is the important location of *Kapha*. Thus, vitiated *Tridosha* settled in the *Romakupa* (*Sthanasanshraya*). Locally settled *Tridosha* further vitiate locally available *Bhrajaka Pitta*, which gives color to the hair. In this way the natural color of the hair is affected and *AkalaPalitya* is caused.⁶ *Chikitsa sutra* of *Palityaroga* includes *Nidanaparivarjana*, *Shodhana*, *Nasya*, *shiroAbhayanga*, *Rasayanprayoga* along with *kesharnjakalepas*.

Several formulations were explained by our *acharyas* for *palitya* (graying of hair) and the se remedies are derived from easily and naturally available resources. Some common *kesharanjakayogasare* *TriphaladiLepa*, *Palityanashak Yoga* with *Dugdika* (*Euphorbia thymifolia*) and *karvira* (*Neriumindicum*), *Priyaladi Yoga*, *Tiladi Yoga* and *Lohamaladilepa* etc. *Lohamaladilepa* is one of such *kesharanjna yoga* explained in *Bhaishajyaratnavali*.⁷ *Lohamaladilepa* consists of *ShudhaMandoorachurna*, *Amalakichurna* and *Japapushpachurna*. Paste of these drugs is prepared and applied over the scalp whole night and next day morning washed with *Triphalajala*.

MODE OF ACTION

Definition

Shoka Srama Krodha Kritah Shariroshma Shirogata KeshanSaDosha PachatiPalitam Sambhavatyata |⁸

Palitya occurs at the stage of *Vardhakyajanya*, but due to increased *UshmaGuna* of *Pitta Dosha*, early graying of hair is observed. When we go through the causative factors, all are *pitta vardhaka factors*.

As per *Acharya Charak*, *tejas* (heat) of the body in association with *vayu* and other *doshas*, burns up the hair root giving rise to alopecia. But if there is partial burning, then it gives rise to premature graying of hairs.

Thus based on the *nidana* and *samprapti*, the main culprit in *palitya* is *pitta dosha* and associated *doshas* are *vata* and *kapha*. *Lohamaladilepa* consists of *Shudha Mandoorachurna*, *Amalakichurna* and *Japapushpachurna*.

Properties of Mandoorbhasma:

It is an Ayurvedic calcined iron formulation. Old iron rust is a raw material used for manufacturing of *Mandoorbhasma*. Chemically, it is Ferric Oxide (red iron oxide). It has *Kashaya Rasa*, *SheetaGuna*, *SheetaVeerya*, *KatuVipaka*, *Pitta KaphaShamaka* and *Rasayana Karma*. This *Bhasma* is known for its efficacy in anemia. There is a close relation in anemia and graying of hairs. This can be correlated as its effect in *AkalaPalitya*. Moreover, *SheetaVeerya* and *MadhuraVipaka* of drug directly help in pacifying *UshmaGuna* of *Pitta* which leads to *AkalaPalitya*. *Mandooris* used externally in hair applications as a natural dyeing agent. The dyeing action is because of acceleration of blood circulation, activation of local tissues and increased nutrition to the hair follicle. *Mandoorbhasma* is a micro fine powder of iron oxide containing Fe, Fe₂O₃, Fe₃O₄ and interaction of iron oxide with fine *amlaki* powder (ascorbic acid) produces fused black particles (chelates) capable of dyeing hair.⁹

Thus combination of *amla* and *bhasma* in a *kesharanjana* for mulation enhance penetration of black particles as well as laws one and in digotin, deep into the medulla region, there by increasing color intensity and retention property. Further tannins present in large amounts in *amla* create affinity between adjective dyes and hair.

Amalakichurna- has *AmlaPradhana LavanaVarjita Pancharasa*, *Guru guna*, *SheetaGuna*, *Madhura Vipaka*, *Tridosha Shamaka*, *Vayasthapana*, *Chakshushya* and has *Rasayanaproperties*. *SheetaVeerya* and *Madhura Rasa* of *Amalakipacify Pitta Dosha* which is a major *Samprapti Ghatakain Palitya*. And also does *Dhatuvaradhaka* and *Rasayanaaction*. The antioxidant qualities of *amla* powder help restore hair's natural color by eliminating oxidization from hair follicles.

Japapushpachurna- *Japapushpa* (*Hibiscus Rosa sinensis*) possesses *kashayatiktta rasa*, *laghu*, *rukshaguna*, *katuvipaka* and *sheetavirya* and *kaphapitta shamaka*. *Hibiscus* leaves contain a reddish pigment called lawsone, which imparts color to

hair strands. Also Anthocyanin is one more natural pigment present in hibiscus responsible for hair dyeing. Flowers and leaves have great potential for promoting hair growth as well as anti-greying property. The natural flavonoids, pigments, and antioxidants in hibiscus plants impart lustre and pigmentation to hair strands, making them darker and shinier.

Lepa is a *bahirparimarjanachikitsa* that helps in bringing *samyata* (equilibrium) in *sthanikadosha* (in situ action) and *dhatu*.¹⁰ Acharya Vagbhatta in *Ashtangasangraha* has told smearing of paste of medicinal plants in *Pratilomagati*. This ensures *Lepa* sticks properly and enters hair follicle and dyes the hair follicles. Thus does the *samprativighatamevachikitsa*.

CONCLUSION

Palitayais one of the common complaints seen in present era affecting all age groups and gender. Gray hair has great impact on people's mental health and social life; there is no effective countermeasure other than hair dyes. *LohamaladiKesharanjaka yoga* is a simple formulation that is mentioned to be used as a *lepa* for coloring of hair. This review article offers some insights for further clinical trials to check the effect of such *kesharanjakayogas*, hidden cosmological formulations in Ayurveda.

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