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AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF *EKAKUSHTHA*: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

Ekakushtha is a type of *Kshudrakushtha* characterized by *Vata-Kapha* dominance. It is often compared with plaque psoriasis and classically presents with extensive scaling, dry plaques, and impaired sweating. This case study reports the successful management of a 58-year-old male with an 11-year history of severe, recurrent dry scaly patches, blackish discolouration and intense itching on the dorsal aspect of his right forearm, hand, and facial region, diagnosed with *Ekakushtha*. The patient was treated conservatively for 30 days using oral *Shamana Aushadhis* and supportive topical applications. At the end of treatment and follow-up, marked resolution of skin dryness (*rukshata*), scaling (*twak sphutana*), plaque thickening and itching (*kandu*) was achieved, restoring near-normal skin texture and clearing blackish discolouration. The case illustrates the efficacy and safety of targeted Ayurvedic treatment in the management of *Ekakushtha*.

Keywords: *Ekakushtha*, *Kshudrakushtha*, Psoriasis, *Shamana Chikitsa*.

Introduction

In *Ayurveda*, dermatological disorders are comprehensively classified under the umbrella term *Kushtha*. Although all forms of *Kushtha* involve the vitiation of the three *doshas*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* alongside the affliction of four primary *Dushyas*—*Twak*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa* and *Lasika* - their clinical manifestations vary according to *doshic* predominance.¹ *Kushtha* is considered to be *Ashtamahagada Roga*² and *Aupasargika Roga*.³ *Kushtha* is traditionally classified into two main groups: *Mahakushtha* and *Kshudrakushtha*.⁴

Ekakushtha is one of the varieties of *Kshudrakushtha*. It is considered a *Tridoshaja disorder*, with predominance of *Vata and Kapha doshas*. According to the *Charaka Samhita*, the condition is classically distinguished by three cardinal features: *Aswedanam* (absence or reduced sweating), *Mahavastu* (extensive involvement of the skin), and *Matsyashakalopama* (fish-scale-like scaling).⁵

Additional documented symptoms include *Rukshata*, *Shosha*, *Toda*, *Sankocha Ayama*, *Parushya Kharata*, *Romaharsha*, *Shyava* or *Aruna Varnata*.⁶ Ayurvedic literature describes several treatment approaches for *Kushtha*, including *Shamana Aushadhi* (internal medication), *Shodhana* therapy (purificatory procedures), *Raktamokshana* (bloodletting) and various external applications such as *lepa*. The present case report discusses the successful outpatient treatment of *Ekakushtha* with oral and topical *Shamana Chikitsa*.⁷

Case Presentation

A male patient aged 58 years attended the OPD of Roga Nidana and Vikriti Vigyana, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur on 26th December 2025 with the following complaints:

Chief Complaints

Widespread dry, thickened scaly plaques associated with blackish discolouration and severe itching over the dorsal aspect of the right forearm, hand, and facial region for 4 months.

Associated Complaints

Disturbed sleep due to severe itching for the last 4 months.

Intermittent constipation for the last 15 days.

History of Present Illness

The patient was apparently normal 11 years ago when he developed dry, thickened scaly plaques and itching over the dorsal aspect of the right forearm, hand, and facial region. He consulted local practitioners and received intermittent conventional treatments without sustained relief. In the last 4 months, the itching intensified significantly, leading to severe sleep disruption and generalized thickening of plaques. As the condition worsened, he visited our hospital for further management.

Past History

Medical History: No known history of diabetes mellitus, hypertension, or bronchial asthma.

No documented drug allergies.

Personal History

Diet – Vegetarian

Appetite - Normal

Bowel - Irregular, with alternating episodes of constipation.

Sleep – Disturbed because of itching

Addiction - Cigarette smoking

Clinical Examination

Local Dermatological Examination: Well-demarcated, dry, indurated plaques with prominent silvery-white scales (*Matsyashakalopama*), blackish discolouration (*krishna varnata*) and intense itching over the dorsal aspect of the right forearm, hand, and facial region.

Diagnosis

Based on clinical presentation and classical signs, the condition was diagnosed as *Ekakushtha*.

Therapeutic Intervention

The treatment plan was structured as follows:

1. *Abhyantar Chikitsa* (internal medications) and *Bahya Chikitsa* (external applications): Administration for 30 days as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Treatment protocol for 30 days

S.No.	Shamana Aushadhis	Dose	No. of Days
1.	<i>Panchatikta Guggulu Ghrita</i> (10 ml) + <i>Shatavari Churna</i> (4 g) + <i>Godanti Bhasma</i> (250 mg)	2 TSF mixture twice a day before food with warm milk	30 days
2.	<i>Dashamoola Kwatha</i> + <i>Brihat Manjisthadi Kwatha</i>	40 ml in equal parts, twice a day before food	30 days
3.	<i>Kaishor Guggulu</i> (500mg)	2 Tablets, twice a day before food along with the warm <i>kwatha</i>	30 days
4.	<i>Arogyavardhini Vati</i> (500mg)	2 Tablets twice a day after food with lukewarm water	30 days
5.	<i>Dashamoolarishta</i> (10 ml) + <i>Khadirarishta</i> (10 ml)	4 TSF (~20 ml) twice a day after food diluted with equal quantity of water	30 days
6.	<i>Dadhi</i> + <i>Eranda Taila</i> (Curd + Castor Oil) 1:1	Mixed in equal parts applied topically over the affected area in sufficient amount for 15-20 min, then washed off; twice a day	30 days
7.	777 Oil	Applied gently over the affected region twice daily	30 days

Observation**Table 2: Follow-up assessment**

S.No.	Symptoms	Baseline (Day 0)	1st follow up (Day 15)	2nd follow up (Day 30) Last visit
1	Dryness of skin (<i>Rukshata</i>)	Severe	Mildly reduced	Almost completely reduced
2	Scaly plaques	Severe	Mildly reduced	Reduced
3	Thick raised plaques	Severe	Mildly reduced	Reduced
4	Blackish discolouration (<i>Krishna varnata</i>)	Severe	Mild improvement	Reduced
5	Itching (<i>Kandu</i>)	Severe	Mild improvement	Reduced

Photographic Evidence

Before Treatment	After Treatment
	

Before treatment, the patient presented with well-defined, thickened, dry and scaly plaques over the affected limb and face, associated with prominent scaling and blackish discolouration. Following treatment, gradual reduction in scaling, plaque thickness, dryness and skin roughness was observed, with progressive improvement in the overall appearance of the affected skin.

Discussion

Ekakushtha can be correlated with modern-day plaque psoriasis, while the *Samhitas* do not prescribe a specific treatment for it. According to *Charaka Samhita* the condition can be treated based on the

dosha involved.⁸ In *Charaka Samhita*, the condition is distinctly characterized by skin that resembles fish scales (*matsyashakalopama*), thick raised plaques, *Aswedanam* (absence or reduced sweating) classic presentations seen in plaque psoriasis. The treatment given to the patient was aimed at reducing the dryness, thick plaques and generalized itching.

The internal *Shamana Aushadhis* worked synergistically:

***Panchatikta Guggulu Ghrita & Shatavari*:** The medicated ghee acts as a *Srotoshodhaka* and *Raktashodhaka*⁹. *Shatavari* acts as a nourishing, restorative tonic (*balya and rasayana*), replenishing vital moisture to counteract deep tissue dryness.

***Dashamoola Kwatha & Brihat Manjisthadi Kwatha*:** *Dashmool* settles aggravated *Vata* and eases underlying inflammation whereas *Brihat Manjisthadi* purifies the blood (*rakta-prasadana*) and directly targets inflammatory skin presentations.

***Kaishor Guggulu*:** This formulation features *Guduchi*, a revered *Rasayana* (rejuvenator). It is enriched with *Triphala*, which promotes healthy bowel elimination (*Mala Nirharana*) aiding in metabolic digestion.

***Arogyavardhini Vati*:** According to the classical authorities, *Arogyavardhini Vati* is regarded as one of the most effective remedies for dealing with skin disorders (*Kushtha Roga*), since the majority of its components are specifically aimed at addressing dermatological ailments. The formula improves digestive and assimilative function by strengthening the *Grahani*.

***Dashamoolarishta & Khadirarishta*:** *Dashmoolarishta* offers systemic anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving support, while *Khadirarishta* is formulated with *Madhura* (sweet) and *Teekshna* (sharp/penetrating) herbs. It works as a natural antimicrobial agent, clearing pathogens and accumulated impurities from the bloodstream.

***Dadhi (Curd) & Eranda Taila (Castor Oil)*:** Used as a topical emollient to reduce skin dryness and hydrate cracked skin. The probable mode of action of this combination is to moisturize the affected area and forming a protective barrier.

777 Oil: Applied topically, this formulation works to balance the *Vata and Kapha doshas*-the primary imbalances driving *Ekakushtha*. Formulated with *Kutaja*, it calms irritation and soothes raw skin. Its deep moisturizing action replenishes severe dryness, helping repair painful cracks and fissures.¹⁰

Conclusion

This case study demonstrates that a 30-day conservative protocol of oral and topical *Shamana Aushadhis* is safe and highly effective in managing chronic, refractory *Ekakushtha* (plaque psoriasis). The patient showed a significant improvement in the generalized dryness, severe itching, roughness and thickened plaques, hyperpigmentation after treatment, restoring near-normal skin texture. Thus,

the proper use of herbal medicines can be beneficial in the management of various skin diseases. However, more research is needed to evaluate the long-term recurrence of the disease.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this case study.

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Nil.

Patient Consent

The authors certify that they have obtained all appropriate patient consent forms. The patient understood that his name and initials would not be published and due efforts would be made to conceal his identity.

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