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A NOVEL APPROACH TO VITILIGO TREATMENT: YOGA AND NATUROPATHY AS A PATH TO TOTAL CURE

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Abstract:

This study aims to investigate the efficacy of lifestyle modifications, including dietary modifications and yoga practices, in the repigmentation of vitiligo. A study was conducted at the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga on a 32-year-old individual who showed signs of skin discoloration and white patches on various area of the body. The patient underwent treatment consisting of a whole-food plant-based diet, herbal supplementation, gluten-free dietary regimen, and yoga sessions. Following the prescribed daily routine, significant improvements and complete remission were observed in the patient's condition, with the reappearance of melanocytes in affected areas. This case study highlights the potential benefits of adopting a whole-food plant-based diet and a gluten-free approach for managing skin ailments, such as vitiligo. These findings underscore the importance of lifestyle modifications, including dietary interventions and yoga, in the holistic management of vitiligo.

Keywords: Vitiligo, Yoga, Naturopathy, Pigmentation, Gluten-Free Diet.

Introduction:

An autoimmune condition called vitiligo is typified by a loss of skin pigmentation that leaves white spots on the skin. About 0.5% to 2% of people worldwide suffer with vitiligo, which presents individuals with both esthetic and psychological difficultiesⁱ. People of different ages, genders, and ethnic origins are impacted by this illness, which has an unknown specific cause. Although vitiligo is largely a cosmetic concern, its psychological and social ramifications can have a substantial influence on one's quality of life. The immune system of the body destroys melanocytes, which are the skin's pigment-producing cells, causing the depigmentation process associated with vitiligo. Depigmented patches that stand out from the surrounding normal skin arise from this autoimmune response's interruption of melanin synthesisⁱⁱ. Vitiligo's pathogenesis is multifaceted and poorly understood due to the intricate interactions between genetic, environmental, and immunological variables. Although genetic predisposition is acknowledged as a major risk factor, other environmental factors, including stress, trauma, exposure to specific chemicals, and infections, have also been linked to the onset or aggravation of the disorderⁱⁱⁱ. Furthermore, vitiligo's psychological effects should not be undervalued. People who have vitiligo frequently face stigma, social exclusion, and low self-esteem, which can cause severe emotional anguish and compromise their mental health. Treatment options and research have advanced, although vitiligo management is still difficult. The goals of current treatment strategies are to stop the disease's progression, cause repigmentation, and deal with the psychological effects of the illness. However, individual treatment outcomes differ greatly, necessitating the need for more focused and efficient approaches^{iv}.

Recent developments in dermatological research have illuminated the immunological pathways that underlie the pathogenesis of vitiligo, opening the door to innovative therapeutic approaches meant to slow the disease's progression and promote repigmentation. Treatment options for vitiligo range from topical corticosteroids and calcineurin inhibitors to phototherapy and surgical procedures, each having unique safety considerations and efficacy profiles. Nonetheless, many patients still struggle to get satisfactory results when managing their vitiligo, which emphasizes the need for ongoing research to fully understand the complexity of this mysterious condition.

This research highlights the revolutionary potential of integrated medicine in dermatological practice as the first to suggest a complete treatment for vitiligo with yoga and naturopathy. Through the adoption of a holistic approach that respects the body's

natural ability to cure itself and is consistent with the values of patient-centred care, we hope to transform the vitiligo treatment environment and stimulate additional research into alternative therapy approaches.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the pathophysiology, diagnostic evaluation, and treatment approaches, such as naturopathy and yoga, for vitiligo. Researchers anticipate that better understanding of the underlying causes and complexity of this disorder will lead to more accurate diagnosis, individualized treatment plans, and improved psychosocial support for vitiligo patients.

Patient Information:

The case involves a 32-year-old male from Sonipat, Haryana, who works as a Stenographer (English) in the Central Government Office in Delhi. The patient first felt irritation in both arms, which was followed by the emergence of red areas on the arms and chest (**Picture1**). In June 2023, he sought quick medical assistance and went to see a local Allopathic Doctor. After a week of applying a prescribed serum, the red areas faded into conspicuous white patches, particularly on the knuckles and chin, where the affected hair also became white. The resulting stress and poor sleep quality encouraged the patient to seek expert care. As a result, he went to the renowned RML Hospital in New Delhi, where a dermatologist recommended weekly check-ups at the vitiligo clinic and prescribed certain drugs.



Picture 1 (Red Patches)

Health History –issue of Vitiligo

The patient was born in Haryana August,1990 however he did not have the opportunity to have a happy and family-oriented life. As the younger child in his family, he received a lot of attention and had the freedom to choose his favourite foods. His mother recalls that he never drank enough breast milk and began eating outside foods at a young age. Until the age of five, he would only eat the skin of rotis with lots of butter. Being fond of butter and having buffaloes at home made it easily accessible, in line with the popular phrase in Haryana, "Desh

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mere Haryana Jit dudh dahi ka Khana." Unlike many children, who are encouraged to drink milk from the age of five to ten, He had a distinct upbringing. He grew up drinking tea in a variety of formats, including bed tea, tea before meals, tea with meals, tea after meals to aid digestion, and even as a recreational beverage. He grew accustomed to drinking tea during school lunch breaks until the fifth grade, despite the fact that his peers found it hilarious. He continued to consume milk and tea while being unaware of the potential adverse effects.

Tragedy happened when he was in the fifth grade. His father, a cloth shopkeeper, committed suicide himself owing to financial problems involving business loans. This prompted him to go to a child orphanage, where he spent 6-7 years and completed his education up to the 11th grade in Haryana's Karnal and Sonipat districts. Life in the orphanage was difficult, with few food options and subpar cleanliness standards. During this time, he suffered from asthma, skin problems such as ringworms and rashes, and extreme itching as a result of his dry skin.

When he finished his 12th grade and returned home, he brought with him a persistent skin problem marked by acute itching and discolouration on his lips. Despite attending physicians in Sonipat City, the discoloration was identified as a mild form of vitiligo, which neither he nor his family considered severe. The extreme itching, which caused major rashes on his body, was the most aggravating issue for him. This ailment limited his capacity to engage in physical activities, resulting in depression.

While working part-time at the Income Tax Office in Sonipat and finishing his graduation degree, he began to take his ailments seriously and sought medical attention for his skin disease. Despite trying a variety of allopathic medications, including antihistamines such as Cetirizine to relieve itching, his disease remained, increasing his emotional distress. These conditions angered him, prompting him to resent his mother and her family for placing him in an orphanage dormitory following his father's death. However, he eventually recognized that it was owing to their bad family situation. During the summer, he struggled to concentrate on his schoolwork because of the severe itching.

Despite being intellectually gifted, he was unable to pass any competitive tests for government employment, believing that hard work was worthless in a world in which he could not even enjoy childhood completely due to illness. He wished to appear gorgeous but was discouraged by his vitiligo-affected lips, so he grew a large moustache to disguise them. Doctors, relatives, and his health circumstances taught him a variety of strategies for dealing with itching. Despite taking hot water baths, applying coconut oil, mustard oil, various

creams, and drinking plenty of water, nothing provided long-term relief, thus he became reliant on allopathic medications such as "Cetirizine" and "Betnovate GM."

In 2015, he began working at the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, which is run by the Ministry of Ayush. There, he studied about the healing history of yoga and Indian systems of medicine. However, the allopathic remedies suggested by Doctor provided little relief, leaving him dissatisfied and resigned to his difficult life.

Patient moderate vitiligo began to spread dramatically on his hands, legs, and face in



June 2023, turning his black beard hair white and causing his skin to glitter **(Picture 2)** conspicuously. Some coworkers

(Picture 2)

and family expressed difficulty sitting with him, while others avoided shaking hands. Concerned well-wishers urged getting treatment at the top facilities, but patient questioned the efficiency of allopathic treatments. He went to the Dermatology Department in New Delhi, where a dermatologist identified his ailment as vitiligo **(Picture 3)** and warned him that it could spread to his face. Patient's personal allopathic doctor suggested starting treatment after winter, but he couldn't say whether the rainy season and peak germ activity would exacerbate the illness.



(Picture 3)

Meanwhile, he saw a Naturopathy Doctor, who regarded his situation as a challenge and gave him confidence. She suggested treating the sickness with household foods, lifestyle modifications, and dietary changes, assuring him of no adverse effects and the possibility of permanent healing. Patient concluded that this strategy may effectively treat his disease.

With an optimistic perspective, his treatment began on June 26, 2023, under the direct supervision of a naturopathic doctor. The treatment approach included dietary changes, weekly counselling sessions, Yoga practices, some detoxifications with BNYS and Yoga expert. Despite having finished a Basic Course in Yoga Practices at MDNIY, he had lost all confidence and felt the need for a loving family-like figure to lead him on his path from unhealthy to healthy.

Clinical Findings (Before starting the treatment):

- Height: 176cm
- Weight: 73 kg
- Blood Pressure: 110/70
- Blood Sugar: 95
- Signs & Symptoms: Prominent white patches on hands, chin, and face
- Diet: Vegetarian
- Family History: No known cases; no genetic predisposition

The Timeline of Events for the Patients

Date	Events and Interventions
10th June, 2023	The patient noticed red patches occurring on both hands and upper elbow parts
11th June, 2023	Visited local doctor few pills and the serum was given to the patients.
17th June, 2023	Meanwhile the red patches turned into mild white patches (depigmentation) over the hands and below shoulders
21st June, 2023	The white patches also become extensive visible on face at chin area, chest and ankle on the right leg
23rd June, 2023	Visited at Dr. RML Hospital where dermatologist declared vitiligo
26th June, 2023	Patient determined to start his treatment with Yoga and Naturopathy
07th August, 2023	The patients develop confidence and a very mild regimentation noticed while undergoing the treatment strictly
11th September, 2023	Significant regimentation noticed on the face and back side of palm over hands.

Diagnostic Assessment:

In July, the patient sought a second opinion from a Naturopathy Consultant, expressing concern about the ineffectiveness of allopathic treatments. The patient, initially hesitant about naturopathic intervention, feared potential exacerbation of the condition. After detailed consultations and interactive sessions, Doctor reassured the patient, instilling confidence in the efficacy of naturopathic treatment.

Progression of Vitiligo:

- Initial Presentation: White patches on hands, chin, and face (Picture 4, 5, 6 & 7)



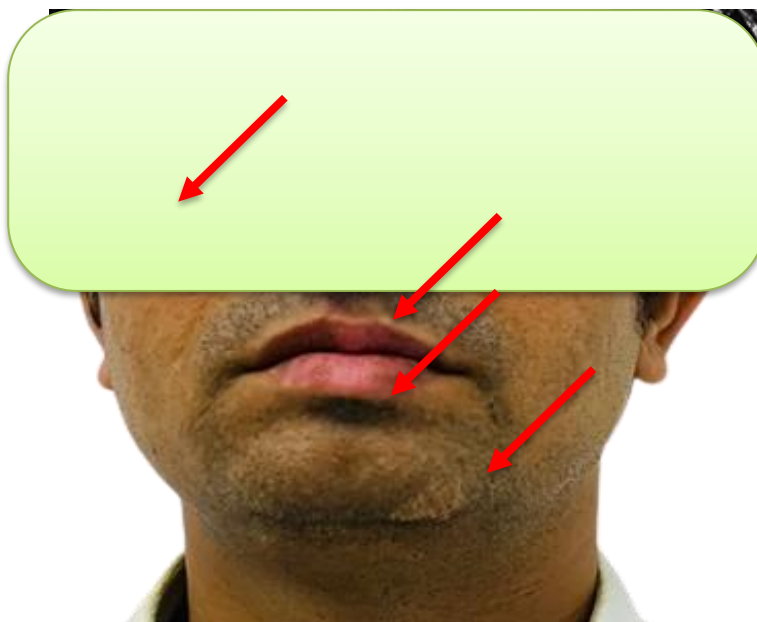
(Picture 4)



(Picture 5)



(Picture 6)



(Picture 7)

- Subsequent Development: Additional white patches observed on the neck and near the left ankle, indicative of generalized vitiligo.

Therapeutic Intervention:

Initially, the individual conducted the Kunjal Kriya and Surya Namaskar at home with the help of an instructor. They used to rise at 4:00 am and complete their daily routine before

reaching instructor residence by 6:00 am for the Yogic Kriya. Initially, they do daily Kunjal Kriya and five rounds of Surya Namaskar. However, because they lived about 60-70 kilometres distant from Delhi, they found it difficult to sustain consistent and long practices, especially given their daily commute.

After stomach cleansing, they consumed a vegetable juice containing Ivy Gourd, Organic Lemon, Amla, and Raw Banana with peel, totalling around 500gm, before 7:30 a.m, around 8:30a.m. breakfast was served, which often included stuffed roti made from millets and various vegetables. They were told to avoid specific veggies to avoid causing skin allergies. In addition, they had dal for breakfast and lunch. They were instructed to limit their water intake between breakfast and lunch and to avoid drinking liquids shortly after meals. Lunch, which they enjoyed at 1:00 pm every day as part of their office routine, often featured gluten-free rice (forbidden rice), cooked vegetables, and dal, preceded by consuming Ivy Gourd and a portion of raw banana. They initially craved snacks around 4:00 p.m., but eventually limited themselves to 1-2 pieces of millet biscuits. When they returned home, they replaced tea or coffee with Karunguruvai rice malt, ragi malt, beetroot malt, or carrot malt blended with jaggery to make a refreshing and energetic drink.

Despite feeling weakened as a result of dietary changes and tiredness from daily travel, they stayed committed to the cleansing kriyas. Within about 25 days of starting therapy, they noted a halt in the number of discoloration patches, with some minor areas showing symptoms of re-pigmentation, giving them confidence in the treatment's efficacy.

The consultant introduced them to a plant called "Kuppaimeni" that grows in surrounding woodland areas. They started applying a paste produced from Kuppaimeni and Ivygourd leaves to their entire body **(Picture 8)**, focusing on problematic areas in the evenings and on weekends off from work. They assumed that this naturopathic treatment would complement their food and cleansing routine, thereby promoting outward recovery. *-+



(Picture 8 Applying External mixture of extract of Kuppaimeni and Ivy Gourd leaves on body)

Within three months, significant depigmented regions returned to normal skin tone. As winter came, stopped taking Kuppaimeni and Ivy Gourd and vegetable juice consumption. Despite initial difficulties, they committed to a gluten-free diet, avoiding milk, milk products, sugar, and Maida products, despite family and cultural pressure.

Their dietary limitations resulted in a weight loss of 10-15 kg in a month, but they emphasized vitiligo treatment over physical attractiveness. These lifestyle changes increased their flexibility and confidence, allowing them to tackle life's obstacles with newfound zeal. They thanked their gods, instructor, and consultant for their blessings and guidance on the journey.

Duration: 08 Months**Diet (Every Day)**

Time	Items	Quantity
07:00am	Ivy Gourd Juice	400ml
08:30am	Millets added roti with Chutney + Jaggery	02-03 Roti's
11:00am	Coconut Water/Chukki Coffee	01 cup
12:40noon	Raw Ivy Gourd + Raw Banana	02-03 pcs
01:00pm	Forbidden Rice + Dal (different variety everyday)	01 Bowl
03:30pm	Multigrain Biscuit (Gluten free) (if cravings)	2-3 Biscuit
06:30pm	Black Rice Pudding (daily) + Coconut Milk (Twice in a Week)	1 Small Bowl
07:00pm	Boiled Vegetables or Millets Adai, Green Peas, Carrot, Beetroot	1 Bowl

Note: During the period treatment, patients consumed 150 ml copper water per day.

External Application (Every Day)

	Application Items	Duration
Before Bath	Kuppaimeni Leaves + Ivy Gourd Leaves Paste	20-40 minutes or till dry
After Bath	Coconut Oil	On full body as massage
Before Bed	Kuppaimeni Leaves + Ivy Gourd Leaves	Especially on prominent patches on skin

Yoga Protocol (Every Day)

Time	Kriya	Duration
05:30am	Kunjil with warm water	-
08:00pm	Nadi Shuddhi Pranayama	15 Minutes
08:15pm	Om Chanting	15 Minutes

Treatment Protocol:

Following an evaluation, the patient was prescribed a comprehensive naturopathic treatment plan that addressed the symptoms and underlying causes of vitiligo. The treatment plan comprised both internal and exterior therapies targeted at encouraging detoxification, improving immunological function, and maintaining skin health (**Picture 9 & 10 reducing stage**).

Internal Interventions:

- Dietary modification: The patient was recommended to follow a certain diet, which included consuming antioxidant-rich vegetable juices. The juice of ivy gourd, lemon, and raw banana was provided.
- Include black rice, jowar, ragi flour, and millets in your diet for important nutrients and metabolic balance.
- Use green chutney for potential therapeutic advantages.
- Avoiding dairy goods including milk, tea, and coffee can reduce inflammation.
- Avoiding wheat, grains, refined sugar, and fat can reduce inflammation and oxidative stress.





(Picture 9)

(Reducing Stage)

(Picture 10)

External Interventions:

1. Yogic Kriyas: The patient was instructed to perform certain yogic kriyas, such as kunjal kriya, a cleansing technique in ancient yoga that promotes detoxification and improves intestinal health.

2.External Applications: Herbal extracts were used externally to treat damaged skin areas, including:

Ingredients include Kuppaimeini leaf extract, Ivy gourd leaf extract and coconut oil.

Clinical Findings (After the treatment):

Particular	Before	After
Height	171 cm	171cm
Weight	72kg	60kg
Blood Pressure	110/70	120/80
Blood Sugar	95	90
Signs & Symptoms	Most Visible Patches on the both hands	White patches almost vanished

Follow-Up and Outcomes:

Regular follow-up sessions were set up to assess treatment progress, monitor any changes in symptoms, and adapt the treatment plan as necessary. There were no side effects



observed during or after the treatment.(Picture 11 & 12 during the treatment and Picture No. 13 after the treatment)

(Picture 11)

(During the treatment)

(Picture 12)



(Picture 13, After the treatment all major patches vanished from hands and face)

Conclusion:

This case study describes the complex journey of a vitiligo patient who, frustrated with traditional therapies, resorted to naturopathy for a more holistic and tailored approach. The treatment plan, which combined naturopathic principles and holistic techniques, sought to address the multifactorial character of vitiligo by targeting both internal imbalances and external symptoms. The patient started on a complete therapeutic path that included dietary changes, yoga practices, and herbal therapy, with the goal of restoring skin pigmentation and improving general well-being. Regular monitoring and documenting will be required to determine the effectiveness of the naturopathic intervention and its effects on the patient's overall well-being.

This is the first scientific report to be published, and it comprises a case study of vitiligo repigmentation using yoga and Naturopathy. The case study concludes that yoga and naturopathy can effectively treat vitiligo. This approach is considered safe, standard, and cost-effective for treating vitiligo. Patient testimonials below this line attest to the beneficial effects. However, to validate efficacy, this therapy strategy should undergo clinical evaluation on a broader scale, involving many patients.

To summarize, this research report is the first inquiry into the use of Yoga and Naturopathy as modalities for repigmentation in vitiligo cases without any side effects. Our findings, based on rigorous case study analysis, highlight the potential efficacy of incorporating these alternative medicines into standard therapy regimens for vitiligo maintenance. The observed results not only help to broaden the therapeutic discourse on vitiligo, but they also provide vital insights into holistic treatments that may improve repigmentation outcomes. As the first study of its sort, this study establishes a platform for further investigation and validation of Yoga and Naturopathy as adjuvant therapy in vitiligo treatment plans. As a result, our study serves as a spark for future research focused at clarifying the mechanisms and enhancing the therapeutic application of these integrated approaches in dermatologic treatment.

Patients Perspective: -

The patient and their parents, along with many others, embarked on a difficult journey to find effective treatment for vitiligo, and after trying various conventional treatments/therapies without success, a few of them, including him, chose the right path to delve into Yoga and Naturopathic-based treatment, they stated.

He felt serenity and an approach to healing from the moment he decided to take treatment in the Yoga and Naturopathic system, when the doctor explained to him about the healing process through our natural food items, vegetables, fruits, juice therapy and diet modifications with tailored yoga session, and it is even more difficult for him to manage all diets and yoga sessions because he lives approximately 60 kilometres away from the office. He was also afraid that allopathic treatments would cause more trouble, aggravate or worsen the vitiligo symptoms based on the experience he learned from social media or directly.

The specific diet and treatment plan crafted involved with a proper balanced of healthy life for patient's professional life conditions and doctors took enough time to understand the lifestyle, stressor and overall health problem foods (passive diet).

Patient dedication is also an important factor in achieving the intended result, and the patient dedicatedly and gradually followed the prescribed diet and yoga session for at least four months before observing subtle but considerable improvements in his skin pigmentation within one month. Soon, the vitiligo-affected regions began to restore colour (Picture 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13), and he felt a renewed sense of confidence and well-being. Overall, the patient expressed eloquently about his transforming experience that extended beyond healing vitiligo, and during this therapy, he dedicated to keeping this sense of balance till life which he learnt through naturopathic and yogic treatment for vitiligo.

Patient Consent:

Authors hereby certify that the case study is being published with the explicit consent of the patient. The attached consent form duly signifies the patient's acknowledgment and approval for the dissemination of all pertinent information, including photographs, details, and clinical data, pertaining to their case. This publication adheres to ethical standards and respects the patient's autonomy and confidentiality throughout the dissemination process.

Conflicts of Interest:

There are no conflicts of Interest.

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