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A review on etiological factors (hetu) of vicharchika

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ABSTRACT

All skin diseases in Ayurveda are termed as kustha .Vicharchika is a type of *kshudra kustha* with predominance of *kapha dosha*. It is a *chirakari Vyadhi* of the *Raktavaha strotas dushti*. With increasing modernization, urbanization, altered food habits, stress, lifestyle induced disorders, reduction of *satva guna*, excessive practice of etiological factors of *kustha vyadhi* as described in classics worsens one's Immunity & increases the incidence of *kustha roga*. Due to this its prevalence is high in modern civilized developing country like India & at large globally.

In this study sincere attempt has been made to write a review on causative factors of *Vicharchika*.

Keywords: Etiological factors (hetu), Vicharchika

INTRODUCTION

Human lifestyle changes according to the changes in the environment during diurnal and seasonal variations. Strict adherence to these lifestyle changes is far from satisfactory as the human beings are tempted towards the indulgence of taste and obnoxious behaviours like roaming, addictions and divergent behaviour .The changing food habits have added effects

on the human body, the food consumed now a days are many times incompatible with each other i.e. *Viruddha anna* and also incompatible with the constitution of the people consuming them. This leads to the changes in the body, mind and manifestation of many skin diseases.

Etymology: Vicharchika word is derived from “*Charcha*” *dhatu*, Vee- prefix and ‘Navul’- suffix. It means that a type of *Svalpa* (Minor type) *Kustha*. (*Vachaspatyam* part 6, Pg. 4896). *Vicharchika* is formed by “*Charcha Tarjane*” *Dhatu* by adding ‘*Navul*’ to it. Means a type of disease. (Shabdakalpadrum, part 4) As per sir Monier Williams the word *Vicharchika* means “Coating, cover a form of Cutaneous eruption itch, scab.

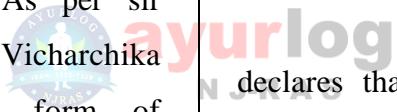
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

सकण्डः पिङ्का श्यावा बहुम्नावा विचर्चिका॥२६॥
| च. चि. ७/२६

“*Vichar*” means to move in different directions, spread, and expand to differ. Whereas *Vicharchika* means coating, cover, a form of cutaneous eruption, itching, scab. So, it can be concluded that, it is cutaneous eruption, itching, scab which spread in different directions. (M. Monier William) Thus, *Vicharchika* is

derived from “*Charcha Adhyane*” by adding prefix ‘Vee; to it. The word *Adhyane* has two syllables viz. *Adhi* and *Ayne*. *Adhi* means above and *Ayne* means spread out. Thus it reads as “*Visheshate Charchate Adhi Eyate Anaya Sakandu Kshudrapidika Swarupena Charmani Upariti Vicharchika*”, which means *Kshudrapidika* spreads with *Kandu* elevated on the surface of the skin is termed as *Vicharchika*. Itchy papules having blackish colour and copious oozing is called as *Vicharchika*.

HETUS OF VICHARCHIKA

 Charakacharya, at an outset, declares that a single etiological factor can be an etiology for many diseases and/or for a single disease. A particular disease can be produced by single etiological factor or the same etiological factor can be responsible for many diseases. Likewise there can be many etiological factors for one disease or for many other diseases.

This verse holds good for *Kushtha* also. *Kushtha* in general i.e. any variety of *kushtha* can be produced by any of the single etiological factors mentioned as „*Samanya Nidan*” or many of these factors or all of them may be responsible for production of any of the

type of „Kushthas” mentioned. The classification mentioned in the classics is to show the path, there can be many varieties in these types or there can be other varieties which are not mentioned. Hence they have given a general list of „Kushtha Nidanas” as *Samanya Nidan* of *Kushtha*. There can be other similar etiological factors responsible for the disease. e.g. „chilichilam” which is explained by chakrapani as „Rohit bheda” i.e. a variety of *Rohit* grass. Where as in modern days many patients suffer from a skin disease which has intense itching, exfoliation and blackish or black discoloration of the skin due to direct contact of Congress grass.

Charakacharya has given a general list of etiological factors of *Kushtha* in the 5th chapter of *Nidanstana* of Charak Samhita.

तत्रेदं सर्वकुष्ठनिदानं समासेनोपदेश्यामः-

शीतोष्णव्यत्यासमनानुपूर्वोपसेवमानस्य तथा स
न्तर्पणापतर्पणाभ्यवहार्यव्यत्यासं, मधुफाणितम
त्स्यलकुचमूलककाकमाचीः सततमतिमात्रमजीर्णे
च समश्रतः, चिलिचिमं च पयसा, हायनकयवकची
नकोद्दालककोरदूषप्रायाणि चान्नानि क्षीरदधितक्र
कोलकुलत्थमाषातसीकुसुभ्लेहवन्ति, एतैरेवाति
मात्रं सुहितस्य च व्यवायव्यायामसन्तापानत्युपसेव
मानस्य, भयश्रमसन्तापोपहतस्य च सहसा शीतो
कमवतरतः, विदर्घं चाहारजातमनुल्लिख्यविदा

हीन्यभ्यवहरतः, छर्दिं च प्रतिप्रतः, स्नेहांश्चातिचर
तः, | च.नि ५/६

i) When one indulges in alternative hot and cold things i.e. ingesting food particle having „hot” (*Ushna*) properties and immediately after that ingesting food particle having cold (*Shit*) properties. Likewise if one walks in the hot sunlight and immediately enters in the cold atmosphere like air cooled or drinks ice cold water and immediately has hot tea or coffee. This type of alternate use of hot & cold or cold & hot is considered as causative factor for *kushtha*.

ii) If one ingest heavy food or a nutritive food followed by non nourished food or has heavy exercise i.e. *santarpan, apatarpan vyat�asa*.

iii) If one ingests honey, *fanit* (i.e. a semisolid material produced after heating sugarcane juice, this is one step before the jaggery is produced. *Fanit* is popularly known in Marathi as “*Kakavi*”). Fish, a fruit known as *Lacucha, mulaka* i.e. *Raddish, kakamachi* constantly; excessively and during indigestion. When the milk is ingested with *chilichim* grass, a variety of *Rohita*, or milk is ingested with certain Cereals or *Kshudra Dhanyas Hayanak, Yavak, Vrihi* etc.

iv) When one has excessive food consisting of cereals like horse gram (*Chana*), black gram (*Udid*), *kala* and linseed oil mixed with milk, curd or butter milk and indulges in sexual activity; physical exercise or enters in the intense hot environment. Or it takes a deep in cold water when one is fearful, exhausted, or feeling hot due to environment or enraged. Or if one indulges in over cooked or half burnt food; along with food stuffs having pungent and hot properties, if one tries to suppress the urge of vomiting, over indulges into unctuous food.

Vicharchika stems from the aggravation of more than one *dosha*, the specific *nidan* would correlate to the most prevalent *dosha* noted in the condition.

All the three *doshas* of such indulgent individually get vitiated and the consistency of the four *Dushyas* i.e. *Twacha* (skin), *Mansa* (Musculature), *Shonit* (blood), *Lasika* (plasma & extracellular body fluid) is affected and they become vulnerable to the affliction of the vitiated *doshas*; which get lodges in the *dushyas* of the body places where they can easily enter and the skin over that region is affected and *Kushtha* is produced.

More etiological factors are described in the *Chikitsa sthana* before describing the symptoms; pathogenesis, classification & management.

विरोधीन्यन्नपानानि द्रवस्त्रिग्धगुरुणि च।
भजतामागतां छद्मिं वेगांश्चान्यान्तिन्नताम्॥४॥
व्यायाममतिसन्तापमतिभुक्त्वोपसेविनाम्।
शीतोष्णलङ्घनाहारान् क्रमं मुक्त्वा निषेविणा
म्॥५॥
घर्षश्रमभयार्तानां हृतं शीताम्बुसेविनाम्।
अजीर्णाध्यशिनां चैव पञ्चकर्मापचारिणाम्॥६॥
नवान्नदधिमत्स्यातिलवणाम्लनिषेविणाम्।
माषमूलकपिष्ठान्नतिलक्षीरगुडाशिनाम्॥७॥
व्यवायं चाप्यजीर्णेऽन्ने निद्रां च भजतां दिवा।
विप्रान् गुरुन् धर्षयतां पापं कर्म च कुर्वताम्॥८॥
च. चि. ७/८

The description suggests that those who indulge in incompatible food & drinks which means that eating food items like fish along with milk & milk products which are incompatible, (An elaborate list of such incompatible foods is given while describing “*Ahar Vidhi Visheshayatan*”) those Who indulge in having excessive liquid diet & drinks, unctuous food having more oily properties, heavy food which is difficult to digest; those who suppress the urge of vomiting and other natural bodily urges

like passing urine, feces, flatus etc., those who indulge in excessive physical exercise & exposed to intense heat after having excessive meals, those who do not observe the practices advocated for consuming cold and hot foods, cold &/or hot to touch and having these properties. So also the light-to-digest & heavy-to-digest foods; those who drink cold water after having excessive sweating which might be due to heavy physical exercise or exposure to intense heat, or after getting unduly frightened, those who have indigestion and/or those who ingest food before the previous eaten food gets digested, those who do not follow the food regimen prescribed for the patient after the Panchakarma where Panchakarma procedures are not done properly, those who ingest recently ripen grains, either food grains like wheat, *jwar*, *bajara* or cereals; excessive curds, excessive fishes & sea foods, excessive salty or sour food items, black grain, raddish, excessive carbohydrate food of *floar*; *sesame*, *milk*, *jaggery*, having sexual intercourse immediately after food; regularly sleeping during day time; to disobey or insult the respectable people like spiritual guides, *Brahmines*, teachers etc or indulge in sinful activities meaning thereby antisocial activities. All these people

listed above are likely to suffer from “*Kushtha*”.

मिथ्याहाराचारस्य विशेषाद्गुरुविरुद्धासात्म्या
जीणाहिताशिनः स्नेहपीतस्य वान्तस्य वा व्या
यामग्राम्यधर्मसेविनोग्राम्यानूपौदकमांसानि वा
पयसाऽभीक्षणमश्वतो यो वा मज्जत्यप्सूष्माभित
सः सहसा छर्दि वा प्रतिहन्ति, तस्य पित्तक्षेप्मा
णौ प्रकुपितौपरिगृह्यानिलः प्रवृद्धस्तिर्यग्गाः सि
राः सम्प्रपद्य समुद्धूय बाह्यं मार्गं प्रति समन्ता
द्विक्षिपति, यत्र यत्र च दोषो विक्षिप्तो निश्चरति
तत्र तत्रमण्डलानि प्रादुर्भवन्ति, एवं समुत्पन्न
स्त्वचि दोषस्तत्र तत्र च परिवृद्धिं प्राप्याप्रतिक्रि
यमाणोऽभ्यन्तरं

प्रतिपद्यते धातूनभिदूषयन् ॥३॥ सुनि/ ५/३

One comes across a similar list of etiological factors in the 5th chapter of *Nidana Sthana* of Sushruta Samhita where in they describe a detailed pathogenesis after giving a similar list of etiological factors. Sushrutacharya has categorically mentioned that a couple or a partner in the couple, if is suffering from “*Kushtha*” their ovum and sperms carry the disease to their offspring's, as the genital cells are affected. Asthanga Hridaya also gives a short list of etiological factors which deals with the irregularities of the eating and behavioural habits. More stress is given on the spiritual and social

behaviour; which can be summed up as sinful acts, acts of disrespect to the respectable elders in the present worldly life and previous life. Thereafter, they have also elaborated on pathogenesis. Though the heredity is not mentioned directly in these lists

Dosha : Tridosha

Pradhana Dosha: Kapha
(Charaka & Vagbhata)

Pitta (Sushruta)

Involvements of different types of Dosha are:

Vata : Vyana, Samana

Pitta :Pachaka,

Bhrajaka Kapha :Avalambaka,
Kledaka

Dushya : Twak, Rakta, Mamsa, Lasika

Agni : Jatharagni and Dhatwagnimandhya

Srotas : Rasa, Rakta, Mam avaha

Srotodusthi : Sanga and Vimargagamana

Udhibhava sthana: Amashaya

Sanchara sthana: Tiryakgami sira

Adhisthana :Twacha

Rogamarga: Bahya

Swabhava: Chirakari

CONCLUSION

- *Vicharchika* is one of the major skin disorders occurring in current Era. It is incurable chronic and irritating skin disease.
- Specific *nidana* (Causative factors) for *Vicharchika* is not mentioned in the ayurvedic text.
- The factors responsible for *Kushtha Vyadhi* were found to influence in causation of *Vicharchika*. Amongst them most prevalent factors are *Divaswap* (day time sleep), *Viruddhaannapana* (Incompatable diet) *Sheet – Ushna Vyatyasat* (Eating cold and hot things simultaneously), *Matsya ahara* (Intake of fish), *Dahisevan* (Excessive intake of curd) etc.
- Besides this the close relation of mental and emotional stress with skin diseases has to be noticed. With increasing industrialization and urbanization, more and more exposure to chemicals, colours, dyes etc have also known to cause and aggravate the disease.
- Of all the body's organs, none is more easily inspected or more exposed to infection, disease and injury than the skin. Changes in skin colour may indicate homeostatic imbalances in the

body. Many interrelated factors affect both the appearance and health of the skin, including nutrition, hygiene, circulation, age, immunity, genetic traits, psychological state and drugs. So important is the skin to one's image that people spend much time and money to restore skin to a more normal or youthful appearance.

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