



AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF ALLERGIC CONJUNCTIVITIS (VATAJA ABHISHYANDA) - A CASE REPORT

***Dr Sanamika Gupta¹, Dr Anjali Sharma², Dr Hitesh Dagar³, Dr Alreeza Fernandes⁴,
Dr Riju Agarwal⁵**

¹PG Scholar, Dept. of Shalaky Tantra, KAHER's Shri B.M.K Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Belagavi, Karnataka

²PG Scholar, Dept. of Shalaky Tantra, KAHER's Shri B.M.K Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Belagavi, Karnataka

³PG Scholar, Dept. of Shalaya Tantra, KAHER's Shri B.M.K Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Belagavi, Karnataka

⁴Medical Officer, Dept. of Shalaky Tantra, All India Institute of Ayurveda, Dhargal Goa

⁵Associate Professor & Head, Dept. of Shalaky Tantra, Ch. Brahm Prakash Ayurved Charak Sansthan Khera Dabar, Najafgarh, New Delhi

ABSTRACT

Human body is gifted with 5 sensory organs viz eyes, nose, ears, tongue and skin, amongst which eyes are considered to be the most important one. In ayurveda it is said by acharyas that "sarvendriyanam nayanam pradhanam" At present the world faces an enormous number of challenges when it comes to eyes. Among them allergic conjunctivitis is an escalating one, which is managed by ophthalmologists with the help of antihistamines, NSAIDs, corticosteroids etc. Whereas the same condition can be almost correlated with vataja abhishyanda in ayurveda and its treatment is remarkable with less possibilities of recurrence. Hence, here is a shot to illuminate the ayurvedic intervention of vataja abhishyanda demarcated in samhitas to treat the cases of allergic conjunctivitis.

KEYWORDS - Allergic conjunctivitis, ayurveda, vataja abhishyanda, Kriyakalpa

INTRODUCTION

Allergic conjunctivitis is an inflammatory disorder that affects the eyes by presenting with redness, itching and watering eyes. It is caused because of the exposure to dust, pollen and mold spores. Conjunctiva being the outermost protective, transparent layer of the eye is most susceptible to the allergens. It is the body's reaction towards the substances which are harmful for the body. This condition may or may not be associated with a runny nose. Allergic conjunctivitis alone has been estimated in 6-30% of the general population and in up to 30% in children alone or in association with allergic rhinitis.^[1] Modern trend of management of such conditions advocates avoidance of the allergen and treatment with either topical or systemic steroids/decongestant drops/mast cell stabilizers along with antihistamine and anti-inflammatory agents. This management is not satisfactory and seems to be temporary and also has its own side/adverse effects^[2]. *Vataja abhishyanda* having its *lakshana* as *toda* (Pricking pain), *Sangharsha* (foreign body sensation), *Achhasruta* (watery discharge), *Alpa Shopha* (mild chemosis), *Vishushka Bhava* (feeling of dryness) that is almost resonating the signs of allergic conjunctivitis. Therefore, the treatment modality of *vataja abhishyanda* in case of allergic conjunctivitis is more productive than the antihistamines, NSAIDs.

CASE REPORT

A male patient aged 74 years had a complaint of severe itching, frequent rubbing of eyes since past 5 days associated with watering and congestion in both eyes and on getting up in the morning, he noticed matting of eyelashes. He slowly developed photophobia due to which his everyday routine was interrupted. He had similar recurrent episodes since past 2 years, along with complaints like excessive sneezing and nasal blockage, aggravated by exposure to dust and smoke. He consulted various ophthalmologists but had found no satisfying result, for which the patient shifted this time towards *ayurvedic* treatment and visited our hospital.

**CLINICAL FINDING****Eye examination (Visual Acuity Assessment)**

				PG	
	DV	NV	PH	DV	NV
RE	6/36	N12	6/9	6/9	N6
LE	6/12	N8	6/6	6/6	N6
BE	6/12	N8		6/6	N6

	AR Readings			KR Readings		
	Sph	Cyl	Axis	K1	K2	Axis
RE	-1.75	-0.75	89	43.00	44.00	93
LE	-1.00	-0.50	110	43.50	44.50	98

Slit Lamp Examination (Before Treatment)

PARTS OF EYE	RIGHT	LEFT
Head Posture	Not effected	Not effected
Ocular Posture	Orthophoric	Orthophoric
Eye brows	Normal position	Normal position
Eye lashes	Matting of eyelashes	Matting of eyelashes
Eye lid margin	Normal	Normal
Eye lids	Difficulty in movement of lids	Difficulty in movement of lids
Conjunctiva	Congested	Congested
Sclera	Normal	Normal
Cornea	Clear	Clear
Anterior Chamber	Normal Depth	Normal Depth
Iris	Normal pattern, brown	Normal pattern, brown
Pupils	Normal, Reactive, 3mm	Normal, Reactive, 3mm
Lens	Pseudophakia	Pseudophakia

INVESTIGATIONS

Complete blood count was done, where Hemoglobin, WBC, ESR were in normal range; Lymphocytes, Eosinophil count were higher than normal range but there was mild decrease in Neutrophil, Monocyte count. Absolute Eosinophil count was highly increased(800cells/mm). Sac patency test, Tear break up test (TBUT) and Schirmer's Test was also done and readings were noted down.

CLINICAL ASSESSMENT

Patient was assessed using subjective characteristics (*lakshanas*) of *vataja* abhishyanda. And also the signs of allergic conjunctivitis observed which were as follows -

Sign & Symptoms	Ayurvedic correlation ^[3]
Pricking sensation	<i>Nishtoda</i>
Unsteady	<i>Chala</i>
Watery discharge	<i>Shishirabh Ashruta</i>
Nasal congestion	<i>Nasanaha</i>
Oedema	<i>Alpashopha</i>
Tearing pain	<i>Sphutana</i>
Breaking pain	<i>Bhedana</i>
Recurrent sneezing	
Photophobia	
Matting of eyelashes	
Congestion	
Excessive itching	



INTERVENTION GIVEN

Acharyas have mentioned *Shodhana Vidhi* (drug with *shodhana guna* helps in removing toxins from gut and cleanse body from inside) followed by *Sthanik chikitsa* such as *Nasya*, *Aschyotana*, *Netra Seka*, *Pindi*.^[4] In this case, a combination of herbo-mineral/herbal preparation was administered to provide therapeutic effects.

INTERNAL MEDICINE

Haridrakhandha churna-1.5gm

Sitopladi churna-1.5gm

Talisadi churna-1.5gm

Haritaki churna-0.5gm

This powder combination dose was given 2 times daily for 7 days with honey after food.

IPD PLAN OF CARE-

1	<i>Sadhya virechana</i>	<i>GHC oil(60ml) + Milk(100ml) + Guda (10gm)</i>	1 st Day, 5 vegas, diet: <i>peya</i> for lunch and <i>laghu ahara</i> at night for dinner
2	<i>Nasya</i>	<i>Anu taila</i>	Once daily for 7 days
3	<i>Aschyotana</i>	<i>Shigru patra + Madhu</i>	Twice daily for 7 days
4	<i>Netra Seka</i>	<i>Triphala Kashaya</i>	Twice daily for 7 days
5	<i>Pindi</i>	<i>Eranda + Nimbu patra kalka</i> ^[5]	Twice daily for 7 days

Timeline

Total Study Period- 1 month

Treatment period-7 days

Follow up- 15th and 30th day

Outcome

During course of IPD admission-

Reduction in lacrimation

Itching and foreign body sensation reduced completely

No photophobia and matting of eyelashes on waking up.

Follow up on 30th day

AEC reduced to 580 cells/mm

Bowels are regular

Overall health status maintained.

DISCUSSION

As a preventive aspect Sushruta Acharya says *Nidanaparivarjana*, to break up the entry of causative factors and prevent the disease, so we advised him to avoid exposure to cold and smoke, intake of cold water that in turn vitiates the *Alochaka pitta* present in the eyes.

Virechana

Administration of *GHC (gandharvahasthadi castor oil)*, Milk and jaggery spreads throughout the body at cellular level and enters into micro and macro channels with its specific quality, dragging the *doshas* from *shakha* to *kostha* and eliminates them through anal route. *virechana karma* helps in samprapti vighatana of *abhishyanda*.

Nasya

Nasya refers to nasal instillation of medication in form of smoke, powder or drops of oil, liquid or *swarasa*. The medicated *taila* given here poses *sukhshma guna* so it is easier to absorb through *shleshmika kala* of nose and from the nose, it reaches the *shringataka* a *siramarma*, and enters the *murdha* and expels the morbid *doshas* from *urdhrajatru* and *uttamanga*.^[6] According to Acharya Charaka,



Anu taila being *vataghana*, *brumhana* and *snehana* helps in reducing the symptoms as it liquifies the doshas, extract them from the site and ultimately improve the efficacy of *indriyas* i.e *nasa karna* and *netra*^[7]

Aschyotana

It is the first line of treatment in all eye-related disorders. Usually, the medicine, (medicated ghee or drops) are instilled into the eyes that are kept open. The prescribed height from which this should be done is mentioned as 2 *Angula*^[8] It can be done in the following conditions: foreign body sensation, irritation and redness of the eye, itching of the eye, painful and watery eyes and burning sensation of the eyes. *Madhu Shigru Aschyotana* contains *katu rasa* of *shigru* will help in *srotoshodana* and breakdown of *abhishyantdva* which alleviates itching, lid and conjunctival swelling and *Guruta Tikta Rasa* is also present in *Shigru*. *Tikta* rasa will do *shoshana*. *Shigru* having *vata kapha shamaka chaksushya* and *Lekhana* properties, which alleviates *Abhishyanda*^[9]

Seka

Medicated liquid is poured as *Suksma Dhara* (thin stream) over the closed eyes continuously from a recommended height of 4 *Angula*, for a specified time. *Thiphala kashya seka* was used in this patient. *Triphala* has *chaksushya* property and could prove helpful in breaking the *abhishyantdva* of *doshas* in the *srotas* by virtue of its *ushna* and *ruksha* properties. Further, *triphala* is reported to be a potent free radical scavenger and possesses antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, analgesic, antibacterial, and immuno-modulatory properties. So, *triphala kashya seka* helps in removing the congestion, increases vasodilation and reduces the symptoms.^[10]

Pindi

The medicated paste is wrapped in a thick cotton bandage or *Doshaghna* leaves and then kept in tightly over the closed eyelids. The medicine is absorbed through skin lids and due to heat of *pindi* local temperature increases result in vasodilation. It relieves symptoms such as *Netra Abhishyanda*, *Adhimantha*, *Shotha*, *Netra Kandu* and also indicated in acute stages of all eye diseases. *Eranda patra* being *vata shamka* and *nimba patra* being *kapha shamka* and having *raktshodhaka* and *krimighana* properties will help in reducing the symptoms.

Shamana Ayushadhi

Haridra khanda having *rasayana*, *jeevaniya*, *balya*, *brihaniya*, *dhatuposhaka* indirectly increases will help in reducing the recurrence of disease^[11]. *Sitopaladi churna* has antihistaminic activity and can help you tackle allergies.^[12] Similarly, *Talisadi choorna* has significant anti-inflammatory and antihistaminic properties.^[13] *Haritaki* contain five Rasa except *Lavana* with *Kashaya* predominance. It has inherent properties for absorption of secretion in the body thus doing *srotoshodhana*. It also helps in *vata anulomana* and having anti allergic and anti-inflammatory properties.^[14]

CONCLUSION

The clinical features of *Vataja Abhishyanda* explained in all classical texts resemble with most of sign and symptoms of allergic conjunctivitis. The treatment helps in reducing the absolute eosinophilic count. As a conclusive remark, we affirm that *Ayurveda* possess a useful approach, quality procedures and abundant reserve of herbal drugs which can be employed in the management of *vataja Abhishyanda*(Allergic Conjunctivitis) with proper diet and regimen.^[15] *Ayurvedic* drugs used in this treatment are easily available. This overall regimen did not cause any unwanted effects.

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