

**AYURVEDA AND MODERN PERSPECTIVE ON VISARPA AND ITS MANAGEMENT THROUGH CLASSICAL APPROACHES****Dr. Ranjit Singh\*<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Upasana Priya<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, *Shalya Tantra* Department, Kunwar Shekhar Vijendra Ayurved Medical College and Research Centre, Shobhit University, Gangoh, Saharanpur (UP) India.<sup>2</sup>Ex. Associate Professor, *Rachna Sharia* Department, Kunwar Shekhar Vijendra Ayurved Medical College and Research Centre, Gangoh, Shobhit University (UP) India.**\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Ranjit Singh**Associate Professor, *Shalya Tantra* Department, Kunwar Shekhar Vijendra Ayurved Medical College and Research Centre, Shobhit University, Gangoh, Saharanpur (UP) India.

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**ABSTRACT**

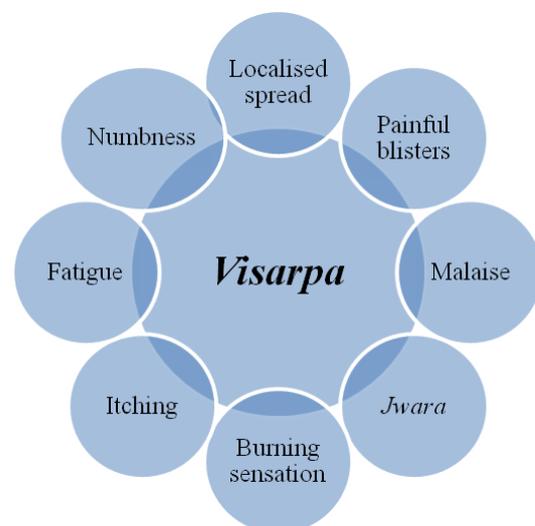
Skin is the outermost covering of the body serving as a barrier between the external and internal environment. It is the largest organ of the body which acts as a first line of defense in providing resistance to the body. The aggravation of various *Dhatus* and *Doshas* result in skin diseases. More than one-fifty skin related diseases are mentioned in various *Ayurvedic* texts. They are categorized as *Visarpa*, *Kustha*, *Shotha*, *Upadansh* etc. *Visarpa* is a very common disease mentioned in *Ayurvedic* texts which spreads in body in various directions. It is said to be caused by *Varicella zoster* virus as per modern concept. It manifests as *Daha*, *Jwara*, *Anunnatashopha* and *Vedana*. *Ayurveda* consider *Raktmokshan* (blood sucking) and *Pradeha* (local application of drugs) as the best suitable treatment modalities for *Visarpa*. *Virechana* can help in faster healing of the lesion and provide the relief for various symptoms. The details about *Visarpa*, its modern perspective and classical treatment are described here.

**KEYWORDS:** *Ayurveda*, *Visarpa*, *Skin*, *Raktmokshana*, *Pradeha*.**INTRODUCTION**

*Twacha* word in *Ayurveda* is derived from the word 'Tvach' which means 'to cover something'. It is first line of defense which protects body in various ways. According to *Ayurvedic* classics, *Twacha Rogas* are produced by the imbalance of *Tridoshas-Dhatus* and *Raktadushti*. As per conventional medical field, skin is an organ which is supplied by blood vessels, nerves and it is rich in hair follicles and sweat glands. Skin diseases occur as a result of any change in these components. Healthy skin is the primary requirement of an individual. Any abnormality in skin is a visible pathology and thus has a negative impact on the person's life. It gives financial, social and psychological stress to the person.

According to the report, skin diseases contribute around 1.79% to the global burden of diseases. Around 0.16% is the contribution of viral skin diseases and such percentage place skin diseases as the 18<sup>th</sup> leading cause of diseases. According to a study conducted in India, higher incidence of *Visarpa* observed in younger age group (21-40 years of age). Recent studies have revealed that the incidence of skin problem and skin diseases caused by virus are increasing. It is a painful disease which immediately catches the eyes of the doctor with its symptoms. It is characterized by the localized painful

spread of skin rashes and blisters. *Ayurveda* classics mention that *Visarpa* spreads like a snake and thus it is considered as *Pradhan Vyadhi*. Some other manifestations of *Visarpa* are mentioned in **Figure 1**.

**Figure 1: Lakshana (Symptoms) of Visarpa.**

Many skin diseases are mentioned in *Ayurveda* classics on the basis of their origin. Most of the skin diseases are caused due to *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha Dosh* aggravation.

Some are *Raktaja Vyadhi* and some are caused by *Agantuja* (foreign agents). It is an *Aashukarvyadhi* (acute disease) of skin whose complications such as post-herpetic neuralgia can affect till many years.

#### Classification of *Visarpa*

Ayurvedic scholars have classified *Visarpa* into following categories:

- *Vataja Visarpa*
- *Pittaja Visarpa*
- *Kaphaja Visarpa*
- *Agni Visarpa*
- *Kardama Visarpa*

- *Granthi Visarpa*
- *Sannipataja Visarpa*

#### *Hetu of Visarpa (etiology)*

Dietary factors such as excessive intake of *Amla*, *Katu*, *Ushna* and *Lavana* food stuffs aggravates *Doshas*. Frequent and excessive consumption of *Shukta*, *Mandaka*, *Sura*, *Kilata*, *Kurchika*, *Asatmya* and *Viruddha Ahara* along with vitiated *Doshas* affect the element of the body which results *Vyadhi* like *Visarpa*. The major *Samprapti Ghatakas* of *Visarpa* mentioned in **Figure 2**.



**Figure 2: *Samprapti Ghatakas* of *Visarpa*.**

#### **Etiopathogenesis and *Lakshana* of various types of *Visarpa***

Various etiological factors cause aggravation of all the *Doshas* in the body affecting muscular and vascular tissues. Vitiated *Doshas* result in diminished *Agni* which causes development of *Ama* in the digestive tract. *Ama* spreads and causes vitiation of *Mamsa*, *Rakta* and *Twak*. Then *Dosha-dusya Sammurchhana* takes place either in *Abhyantara* or *Bahya* path resulting into *Visarpa*. This combination of aggravated *Doshas* and *Dushya* results in *Visarpa*.

According to modern medicine, Herpes is caused by *Varicella zoster* Virus which affects the central nervous system, internal organs and predominantly mucocutaneous surfaces. Virus enters into the body through abraded skin or wound and affects sensory and autonomic nerve endings. It is transported to the nerve cell bodies and then spreads by involving new skin and thus covers more area. After receiving treatment for the primary infection, sometimes the virus goes into the dormant stage in the ganglion. Due to some triggering agents such as trauma, ultraviolet light, change in cell mediated immunity, the virus gets reactivated again.

*Vatika Visarpa* is the result of obstruction caused by aggravated *Doshas*. It shows resemblance to the acute skin infections such as Erysipelas. Its clinical features are burning sensation, fever, pain, affected area becomes edematous and red, small blackish or reddish blisters with thin clear reddish and scanty discharge are seen.

*Pitta* dominant *Visarpa* causes various problems such as fever, pain, burning sensation etc. Pustules are formed in the affected part causing intense pain and burning sensation. It can be co-related with the skin diseases such as Erysipelas, Herpes and burns etc.

*Kaphaja Visarpa* spreads slowly in the body and it shows resemblance to the Erysipelas. It causes fever, vomiting, chills etc. The affected area becomes edematous, red with pale coloured eruptions covered by thick skin. They can leave deep seated ulcers also if not treated on time.

*Agni Visarpa* is a very serious condition resembling septicemia. Affected area gets covered by red coloured blisters. Person suffers from severe burning sensation and becomes restless. It spread rapidly to the vital organs and it is considered as incurable.

*Kardam Visarpa* is caused due to *Pitta* and *Kapha* aggravating factors. The affected area looks like mud and hence the name *Kardam* is given. It is a serious skin ailment of necrotizing nature and is considered as similar to necrotizing fasciitis and gangrene etc. Affected area gets covered by reddish, pale eruptions which are suppurated, having putrid flesh and skin. When they are touched they burst and throw out decomposed and putrefied flesh showing blood vessels, ligaments and cadaverous smell. It is mentioned as incurable *Visarpa* in various *Ayurvedic* texts.

*Granthi Visarpa* is caused by aggravated *Rakta* and *Kapha-Pitta Doshas*. It causes glandular enlargements which are red in colour, small and painful located in the bones, muscles, blood vessels etc. It can be correlated with B-cell lymphoma and is considered as incurable.

### **Visarpa Chikitsa (Treatment)**

*Visarpa Chikitsa* is based on the site of the *Dosha*. If the aggravated *Doshas* are situated in the *Kapha sthana* (upper body) then *Vamana* and *Langhana* therapies are preferred. *Lepa* of materials possessing *Sheeta* and *Snigdha Guna* should be used. If the vitiated *Doshas* are located in the *Pitta Sthana* then *Sheetala Chikitsa* (recipes with cooling effect) has to be done. *Lepa*, *Vamana* and *Langhana* suggested along with *Raktamokshana*. *Rakta mokshana* should be done to remove the vitiated blood which is the main cause of *Visarpa* (Erysipelas). In *Vataja Visarpa*, *Snehana Chikitsa* preferred. Patient should be given *Vamana* therapy using drug like; *Madhuka* and *Nimba*, etc. *Jwara* associated with *Visarpa* can be treated using *Virechana* therapy by *Triphala Kwatha*, *Trivrit Churna* and *Ghee*. *Agni Visarpa* should be treated with *Vata Pitta Shamaka Chikitsa* and *Kardama Visarpa* should be treated with *Kapha Pitta Shamaka Chikitsa*. In *Granthi Visarpa* the patient is given *Seka* therapy with *Raktamokshana*, *Vamana* and *Virechana*, here medicated *Ghritha* prepared of *Kashaya* and *Tikta Dravyas* also suggested.

After cleansing of body from inside, removal of morbid *Doshas* from the *Twacha* and flesh is very necessary. *Lepa* therapy helps in *Rakta Prasadana*, *Vrana Shodhana*, *Rakta-Pitta Prashamana* and *Vrana Ropana*. *Ghritha* if applied along with various herbs then it can help in the healing of wound.

*Ekamulika Prayoga* (Single drug therapy) is also effective in case of *Visarpa*. *Masura* with *Ghritha*, *Mrunala* (root of *Nelumbonucifera*) and *Aragwadha Twak* (bark of *cassia fistula*) are rich in properties such as *Ruksha Guna*, *Sheeta Veerya* and *Madhura Rasa* thus provides symptomatic relief.

*Ayurveda* also includes appropriate *Ahara* in the treatment modality as it is the main balancing factor for the *Doshas*. *Ayurvedic* scholars have suggested *Rukta* and *Pitta Prashamama* diet for treating *Visarpa*. Patient is advised to consume old grains which do not aggravate

the *Kapha Dosha*. *Ahara* of *Sheeta*, *Ruksha*, and *Snigdha* qualities should be given to the patient. *Visarpa* is very acute condition and is also fatal in nature. Thus physician should explain the prognosis of the disease properly to the patient's family and then only proceed for the treatment.

### **CONCLUSION**

*Visarpa* is an acute condition of erythematous, pustular and glandular lesions which spread rapidly in localized or generalized pattern. Components such as *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Lasika* and *Twak* are mainly involved in this condition which leads production of *Vistruta*, *Anunnata Shopha* that has *Sarpana Prakruti* associated with *Daha* and *Vedan*. Treatment modalities such as *Virechana Kashaya* provide relief to the symptoms such as *Daha*, *Kandu* and helps in drying of lesions. *Lepa* helps in relieving burning sensation and *Raktamokshana* is helpful in stopping the pathology of disease and its spread. *Visarpa* shows a tendency of relapse thus repeated *Shodhana Chikitsa* is suggested after considering patient's health status.

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