

## EXPLORATION OF CONCEPT OF LASIKA: A REVIEW ARTICLE

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## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has underlined the importance of knowledge of body both anatomy and physiologically. It is done with the help of analysis of every body component. With the help of this analytical knowledge of body components, one can know the factors that are healthy and unhealthy for these components and ultimately to the body. Classical texts had described that there are innumerable body components. Out of these few components are explained grossly which should be studied in detail and with the help of these components the factors which are not explained should also be learned by clever physicians. *Lasika* is one of the important body components which is a part of *udak dhatu* (water component in the body) and is a seat of *Pitta*. It is having prime involvement in causation of diseases like *Prameha* (diabetes mellitus), *Kushtha* (skin diseases), *Visarpa* (erysipelas). So, with the purpose of understanding the nature, characteristics and importance in the context of disease pathology is studied in this article.

**KEYWORDS:** Body components, *Lasika*, *udak dhatu*.

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a science of life where very much importance is given to maintenance of body in healthy state by keeping all other things aside because, in its absence there will be complete absence of all the bodily entities.<sup>[1]</sup> To achieve this, it is of utmost importance to know the components of body initially, what vitiates or affects them, thus, causing diseases or complete destruction of body.<sup>[2]</sup> The structures and components of body, if differentiated by *parmanu bhed* (at micro level), are *aparisanakheya* (innumerable) because of *atibahuta* (abundance), *atisukshma* (highly subtle), *atindriya* (imperceptible).<sup>[3]</sup>

All the major three classical texts of Ayurveda have dedicated a separate chapter for studying different body components which depicts its importance. A truly wise person, one who knows every aspect of the body including all the components, does not fall into the afflictions of *doshas* caused due to lack of knowledge.<sup>[4]</sup> The physician who is always well versed with the various aspects of the entire body is highly proficient in Ayurveda, and therefore can bring about happiness to the universe.<sup>[5]</sup>

From treatment part of view, gaining this analytical knowledge of the human body helps in improving the wellbeing of the individual. Only after gaining such knowledge of body one can know the factors that are healthy or unhealthy. Hence, the analytical knowledge of

body components is advocated by the experts.<sup>[6]</sup> The key organizing, or governing components of the body have been described grossly in classical texts of Ayurveda.

*Lasika* (lymph) is one of the important body components described in Ayurveda classical texts. It is explained as a part of *udaka dhatu* (water component in the body).<sup>[7]</sup> Many texts have commented about its nature. It is involved in pathogenesis of diseases like *Kushtha* (skin disorder), *Visarpa* (erysipelas) and *Prameha* (diabetes mellitus). So, it is important to understand the concept of *Lasika*. So, information about *Lasika* is studied and interpreted with the help of main classical texts of Ayurveda along with their commentaries.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The concept of *Lasika* is studied with the help of Charak Samhita with Ayurved deepika commentary by Acharya Chakrapani, Sushrut Samhita with Nibandhsangraha vyakhya by Acharya Dalhan, Ashtang sangraha with Shashilekha commentary by Acharya Indu, Ashtang hriday with Ayurved rasayan commentary by Hemadri and Sarvangasundari commentary by Acharya Arundatta. The conceptual review is presented in result. Interpretation of result is done in discussion and conclusion is drawn on its basis.

## RESULT

- *Nitukti* (etymology) – *Lasatiti Lasika*<sup>[8]</sup> - it is the derivative of *lasa dhatu*.

- *paryaya*(Alternative words) – *ambu*(water)<sup>[9]</sup>, *piccha*(slimy fluid)<sup>[10]</sup>
- *swarupa*(Nature)
  1. It is explained as a part of *udak dhatu* in body.<sup>[7]</sup>
  2. Water within the whole body is stored in the external layer of skin. Whenever there is any wound in the skin, the liquid which oozes out is *Lasika*.<sup>[7]</sup>
  3. It is said to be a liquid part residing in between *twaka*(skin) and *mamsa*(muscles).<sup>[11]</sup>
  4. It is said to be the *piccha bhaga*(slimy part) of *udaka*.<sup>[12]</sup>
  5. It is *jala sadrushhi*( its nature is similar to water)<sup>[13]</sup>
  6. It is narrated as *jalapraya*( predominantly contains water) and is *twak ashrayi*( abodes in skin).<sup>[14]</sup>
  7. Whenever *Pitta* causes the sudation of *mamsa*(muscle), there is oozing of a liquid part which is known as *Lasika*.<sup>[14]</sup>
  8. It is explained as *srava*(discharge) from the wound.<sup>[15]</sup>
  9. *Saumya rasa* is also considered as *Lasika*.<sup>[8]</sup>
  10. It is said to be having nature of *vilina meda prayaha*( like melted fat)<sup>[16]</sup>
  11. It is circulated in *kaphavaha sira* or *rasavahini* in the whole body.<sup>[8]</sup>
- *Dosha sambandha*(Relation with *Dosha*)

It is one of the prime seats of *Pitta dosha*.<sup>[17,18,19]</sup>

- *Dushya sambandha*( Relation with body tissues)
  1. It is explained as a *dhatu*( body tissue).<sup>[20]</sup>
  2. It is considered to be *upadhatu* of *rasa dhatu*.<sup>[21]</sup>
  3. It is considered to be *mala*( waste product) of *rasa dhatu*.<sup>[22]</sup>
- Involvement in disease pathogenesis as *dushya*
  1. It is one of the *dushya vishesha*(vitiated body component) in *Prameha*.<sup>[23,24]</sup>
  2. Due to the vitiated *Vata* which is having the property of dissipation of things, the *lasika* which is already present in large quantity in body enters the urinary bladder resulting in excess amount of urine causing continuous urge for micturition and thus passing copious amount of urine without pressure or is not having control over it results in *Hastimeha* which is a type of *Vataj Prameha*.<sup>[25,26,27]</sup>
  3. It is one of the vitiated *dushya* in *sapta dravya sangraha*( 7 vitiated body tissues) in *Kushtha*.<sup>[28,29,30]</sup>
  4. It is one of the main 7 *dushyas*(vitiated body tissues) mentioned in *Visarpa*.<sup>[31]</sup>
- Involvement in disease in the form of symptom (*lasika srava*)
  1. *Kapal Kushtha*<sup>[32]</sup>
  2. *Udumbar Kushtha*<sup>[33]</sup>
  3. *Pundarika Kushtha*<sup>[34,35]</sup>
  4. *Sidhma Kushtha*<sup>[36]</sup>
  5. *sadhya Kushtha upeksha*<sup>[37]</sup>
  6. *Vataj Karnaroga* in *Pakwa avastha*<sup>[38]</sup>
  7. *Kaphaj Shotha*<sup>[39]</sup>

## DISCUSSION

It is explained as a part of *udaka dhatu* in body. So, its quantity may increase or decrease physiologically as well

as pathologically. The variability in quantity could be measured logically. Its quantity is measured in terms of *anjali Praman* as it is liquid in nature. It resides in skin which is present all over the body.<sup>[7]</sup>So, it also circulates in whole body. As it resembles water or is having predominance of water, it is *apa mahabhuta* dominant in nature. But the slimy or melted fat like nature directs to the slight involvement of *Prithvi mahabhuta*. The *ushna guna* of *Pitta* which causes the fomentation of *mamsa*, leads to the oozing of *lasika*. As the *ushna guna* is responsible for sudation.<sup>[40]</sup>*Vayu mahabhuta* is responsible for its transportation and the channels through which it is circulated is *Akash mahabhuta* predominant. So, it is *panchabhautik* as every body constituent but is having the predominance of *apa mahabhuta* by *vyapadeshastu bhuyasa nyaya*.<sup>[41]</sup>

As it is an *apya dravya*, it possesses qualities like *drava* (liquid), *sheeta* (cold), *guru* (heavy), *snigdha* (unctuous), *manda* (slow), *Sandra* (solid) and *rasa* (taste) predominance. It is having functions like *snehana* (oleation), *vishyandana* (dissolution), *kledana* (moisturisation), *pralhadana* (feel good effect) and *bandhana* (keeping united) in the body.<sup>[42,43]</sup> According to *Samanya vishesha siddhanta*, drugs having above mentioned qualities will lead to its increment.<sup>[44]</sup> Also, whenever there is vitiation of *Pitta* due to *ushna guna*, more amount *lasika* will be formed in body. It circulates in the body through *kaphavaha sira* or *rasayani*.

It is one of the prime seats of *Pitta*. So, here mostly disorders caused due to vitiation of *Pitta* are commonly seen. These disorders if occurred are difficult to treat and if the vitiated *Pitta* at this site is relieved then the other *Pitta* dominant disorders in the body will get pacified.<sup>[45]</sup> It is considered as a *dhatu*(body tissue) which means it is having capacity to nourish other *dhatu*s as well as whole body. It is considered as *upadhatu* which means it is having capacity of nourishment of body.<sup>[46]</sup>It is considered as waste product of *rasa dhatu* i.e. whenever *rasa dhatvagni* acts on the *rasa dhatu*, the *prasad ansha*(essence form) provides nourishment to the *rakta dhatu* and *kitta ansha*(waste form) results in *Lasika*.<sup>[47]</sup> So *Rasa dhatu*, *Rasa dhatvagni* and *parinaman*(transformation) process is of prime importance while considering *Lasika*.

It is one of the *dushya vishesha* in *prameha*. It is explained as having the quality of *Bahuta*(excessive in amount).<sup>[48]</sup> Its involvement is not seen in every kind of *prameha*.<sup>[49]</sup> It is specifically depicted in pathology of *hastimeha* which is a type of *vataj prameha*. It is one of the *sarvan dhatu*(essence body tissue) in the body so its involvement results in *maha atyayikatwa* of *vataj prameha*(serious and requiring emergency management).<sup>[50]</sup> It is mentioned as one of the main *dushyas* in *kushtha* and *visarpa samprapti*(pathogenesis) where the manifestation of symptoms is on skin and the *lasika* resides there. Types of *kushtha* like *kapal*, *audumbar*, *pundarika* and *sidhma* along with other

diseases like *kaphaj shotha*, *pakwa avastha* of *vataj karnaroga* and wound have *lasika* in the form of discharge.

So, the etymology, alternative words, nature, relation with *dosha* and *dushya*, involvement in pathology of diseases and presentation as a symptom in the form of discharge is studied with the help of this article. Other body components should also be studied in the same way from classical texts of Ayurveda.

## CONCLUSION

Knowledge of every body component is important. *Lasika* is part of *udaka dhatu* in the body which is watery in nature and slightly slimy. It abodes in skin and circulates all over the body. It is *panchabhautik* in nature with predominance of *apa mahabhuta*. It is the prime seat of *Pitta* and is having relation with *rasa dhatu* either in the form of *upadhatu* or *mala*. It is involved as a *dushya* in pathogenesis of *prameha* particularly *hastimeha*, *kushtha* and *visarpa*. It is also present in the form of discharge in skin disorders like *kapal Kushtha* along with other diseases like *kaphaja Shotha*, wound and *pakwa avastha* of *vataj karnaroga*.

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