

Efficacy of Chaturangulparnadi Lepa in Management of Vicharchika: A Comprehensive Review

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Abstract

Vicharchika is one of the common type of Kshudra Kushtha described in Ayurveda, characterized by symptoms such as Kandu (itching), Pidika (eruptions), Shyava varna (discoloration), Rukshata (dryness), and Srava (discharge). It can be correlated with eczema in contemporary medicine due to its chronic relapsing nature and significant impact on quality of life. Ayurvedic management emphasizes Shodhana and Shamana therapies along with local applications for symptomatic relief. Among these, Chaturangulparnadi Lepa mentioned in Gadanigraha is considered beneficial in the management of Vicharchika. The formulation comprises patra churna of Aaragwadh (Cassia fistula), Kakamachi (Solanum nigrum), and Karveer (Nerium indicum) is mixed with Takra for external application. The ingredients of Chaturangulparnadi Lepa possess Kandughna, Kushthaghna, Krimighna, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and wound-healing properties, which may help alleviate the pathological manifestations of Vicharchika. Takra acts as a Yogavahi and enhances the therapeutic efficacy of the formulation while reducing Kapha and Kleda. This comprehensive review aims to analyze the classical references, pharmacological actions, and therapeutic potential of Chaturangulparnadi Lepa in the management of Vicharchika. The study highlights the scope of integrating traditional Ayurvedic formulations as safe and cost-effective approaches in chronic dermatological conditions.

Keywords: Vicharchika, Chaturangulparnadi Lepa, Kshudra Kushtha, Eczema, Aaragwadh, Kakamachi, Karveer, Takra, Ayurveda.

Introduction

Skin diseases are among the most common health problems affecting individuals worldwide and often have a significant impact on physical, psychological, and social well-being. Ayurveda has described, all skin disorders under the heading of Kushtha Roga, which are further classified into Mahakushtha and Kshudra Kushtha. Vicharchika is one of the Kshudra Kushtha characterized by symptoms such as Kandu (itching), Pidika (eruptions), Shyava varna (blackish discoloration), Rukshata (dryness), and Bahusrava (oozing). Due to its chronic and relapsing nature, Vicharchika can be correlated with eczema or dermatitis described in modern medicine. The prevalence of eczema has increased considerably because of changing lifestyle patterns, environmental factors, stress, and improper dietary habits. The lifetime prevalence of

eczema (atopic dermatitis) is about 2-10 % in adults and 15- 30 % in children.^[1] Although modern treatment provides temporary symptomatic relief through antihistamines, corticosteroids, and immunosuppressive agents, long-term use may lead to adverse effects and recurrence of the disease.

Ayurveda offers a holistic approach in the management of Vicharchika through Shodhana, Shamana, Pathya-Apathya, and Bahirparimarjana Chikitsa. Among Bahirparimarjana therapies, Lepa Kalpana plays a vital role in reducing local symptoms and promoting healing of the affected skin. Chaturangulparnadi Lepa, mentioned in Gadanigraha, is one such formulation indicated in Vicharchika. It contains Aaragwadh (Cassia fistula), Kakamachi (Solanum nigrum), and Karveer (Nerium indicum) Patra Churna mixed with Takra for external application.^[2] These ingredients possess Kushthaghna, Kandughna, Krimighna, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and wound-healing properties, which may help in alleviating the symptoms of Vicharchika.

This review article aims to comprehensively analyze the classical references, pharmacological properties, and therapeutic efficacy of Chaturangulparnadi Lepa in the management of Vicharchika and to explore its potential as a safe and economical Ayurvedic treatment modality for chronic skin disorders.

Aim and Objectives

To review the efficacy of Chaturangulparnadi Lepa in Vicharchika.

To analyse its pharmacological properties.

To correlate classical concepts with clinical utility.

Materials and Methods

This review is based on

Classical Ayurvedic texts- Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, Gadnigraha, Bhavprakash Nighantu, published articles on Vicharchika, Eczema, Chaturangula, Kakamachi, Karveer and Takra.

Concept of Vicharchika

Being a type of Kushtha; same Nidana, Samprapti should be considered for Vicharchika, as there no special Nidana, Samprapti is mentioned for Vicharchika in Ayurved Samhitas

Nidana^[3] - Guru, Snigdha, Amla Ahara, Viruddha Ahara, Poor hygiene, Psychological stress

Samprapti^[4] - Dosha – Vata, Pitta, Kapha; Dushya – Twacha, Rakta, Mansa, Ambu.

Pathogenesis - Nidana Sevana → Agnimandya → Aama → Kapha-Pitta Dushti → Rakta Dushti → Twak involvement → Vicharchika manifestation.

Lakshana -

सकण्डूः पिडका श्यावा बहुस्रावा विचर्चिका^[5] च.चि. 7/26

राज्योऽतिकण्ड्वर्तिरुजः सरूक्षा भवन्ति गात्रेषु विचर्चिकायाम्^[6] सु.नि. 5/12

पिटिका श्यावा लसिकाद्या विचर्चिका^[7] वा.नि. 14/18

Table 1: Lakshana of Vicharchika as per different Acharyas

Ayurvedic Term	Charaka	Sushruta	Vagbhata	Clinical Correlation
Kandu	+	+	-	Itching
Srava/Lasika	+	-	+	Oozing

Pidika	+	-	+	Papules
Shyava Varna	+	-	+	Hyperpigmentation
Rukshata	-	+	-	Dryness
Ruja/Arti	-	+	-	Pain
Raji	-	+	-	Streak/Striped patterns

These features resemble eczema described in modern dermatology.

Lepa Chikitsa: Lepa is described in Ayurveda as Bahirparimarjana Chikitsa means as an external therapeutic application.

Nirukti: According to Shabdakalpadruma

लिप्+ करणेल्युट्- “लिम्पत्यनेनेति”॥^[8]

Table 2: Types of Lepa according to different Acharyas

Acharya	Types of Lepa
Sushruta ^[9]	Pralepa, Pradeha, Alepa
Sharangdhara ^[10]	Doshaghna, Vishaghna, Varnya
Vagbhata ^[11]	Snaihika, Nirvapana, Prasadana, Stambhan, Vilayan, pachana, Peedana, Shodhana, Ropana, Savarnikaran

Chaturangulparnadi Lepa: Classical Reference - Described in Gadnigraha

Formulation - Chaturangula (Cassia fistula), Kakamachi (Solanum nigrum), Karveer (Nerium indicum), Takra (Buttermilk)

Table 3: Pharmacological Analysis of contents of Chaturangulparnadi Lepa

Dravya	Rasa	Veerya	Vipak	Karma
Aaragwadh ^[12]	Madhur	Madhur	Sheet	Kusthaghna, Pittakafghna, Raktashodhaka
Kakamachi ^[13]	Tikta, Katu	Katu	Anushnasheet	Pittahara (Anti-inflammatory), Tridoshghna, Kushthghna
Karveer ^[14]	Tikta, Kashay, Katu	Katu	Ushna	Krimighna (Antimicrobial), Vranalaghav, Kushthaghna
Takra ^[15]	Kashay, Amla, Madhur	Madhur	Ushna	Kaphahara, Lekhana

As the proportion of drugs used in Lepa are not mentioned hence the drugs are to be taken in same proportion (Samabhaga). Fine and uniform paste of all contents is prepared in appropriate quantity of Takra with help of mortar and pestle, to maintain the consistency of Lepa.^[16] And as per Sharangdhara thickness of Doshaghna Lepa for topical application should be one fourth of the Anguli.^[17]

Table 4: Mode of Action

Action	Explanation
Anti-inflammatory	Reduces Pitta-Kapha imbalance

Antipruritic	Relieves Kandu
Antimicrobial	Prevents infection
Shoshana	Absorbs discharge
Ropana	Promotes tissue repair

These actions are supported by Ayurvedic pharmacological principles and clinical observations.

Discussion:

In Ayurveda, Vicharchika is considered a type of Kshudra Kushtha predominantly involving Kapha and Pitta Dosha along with vitiation of Rakta and Twak. Clinically, it presents with symptoms such as Kandu (itching), Srava (oozing), Vaivarnya (discoloration), Pidika (eruptions), Rukshata (dryness), and Daha (burning sensation). Chaturangulparnadi Lepa, which is to be prepared from Aaragwadh, Kakamachi, Karveer Patra Churna, and Takra, appears to act on the samprapti (etiology) of Vicharchika through its Kushthaghna, Kandughna, Krimighna, Shothahara, and Raktashodhaka properties.

Aaragwadh (Cassia fistula) possesses Madhura Rasa, Madhura Vipaka, and Sheeta Veerya, which help in pacifying aggravated Pitta and Kapha Dosha involved in Vicharchika. Its Kushthaghna and Pittakaphaghna Karma aid in reducing inflammatory manifestations such as Daha, Raga, and Srava. The Raktashodhaka property helps purify vitiated Rakta Dhatu, thereby improving discoloration and chronic skin changes. Due to its soothing and cooling action, it may reduce irritation and itching associated with eczematous lesions. Modern studies also suggest anti-inflammatory and wound-healing activities, which support restoration of damaged skin tissue.

Kakamachi (Solanum nigrum) has Tikta, Katu Rasa, Katu Vipaka and Anushna-Sheeta Veerya. Tikta Rasa is known for its Deepana, Pachana, and Kleda-Shoshana effects, which help to reduce excessive moisture and discharge in skin disorders. Kakamachi is described as Tridoshaghna and Kushthaghna, indicating its efficacy in balancing the vitiated Doshas involved in Vicharchika. Its Pittahara and anti-inflammatory actions help to reduce erythema, burning sensation, and local inflammation. Additionally, its antioxidant and healing properties may aid in tissue repair and reduction of recurrent lesions.

Karveer (Nerium indicum) possesses Tikta, Kashaya, Katu Rasa, Katu Vipaka and Ushna Veerya. The Tikta-Kashaya Rasa exerts drying and cleansing effects on the lesions, thereby reducing Srava and Kleda. Its Ushna Veerya helps to remove Kapha-induced obstruction in the skin channels and promotes proper circulation at the local site. Karveer is known for Krimighna and Kushthaghna Karma, which may help to prevent microbial infection and reduce chronicity of lesions. Vranalaghava property contributes to wound healing and reduction in thickened or lichenified skin. The Lekhana-like action of Karveer may also help in reducing scaling and hyperkeratosis observed in chronic Vicharchika.

Takra, used as the medium for Lepa preparation, which plays an important role in enhancing the therapeutic action of the formulation. It possesses Kashaya, Amla, Madhura Rasa, Ushna Veerya and Madhur Vipaka having Kaphahara, Lekhana properties. Takra helps in absorption of excessive Kleda and reduces Kapha dominance in the lesions. Its Lekhana Karma may assist in removing dead tissue, thickening, and excessive exudation from affected skin. Ushna property improves local circulation and facilitates deeper penetration of the active principles of the drugs. Takra also helps maintain local cleanliness and may contribute to antimicrobial action.

The combined effect of these ingredients makes Chaturangulparnadi Lepa effective in breaking the pathogenesis of Vicharchika. The formulation acts by pacifying Kapha and Pitta Dosha, purifying Rakta, reducing Kleda, controlling itching and inflammation, and promoting wound healing. The Kushthaghna

and Krimighna properties help in managing chronic skin lesions and preventing secondary infection, while the anti-inflammatory and wound-healing actions support regeneration of healthy skin. Therefore, Chaturangulparnadi Lepa may provide significant symptomatic relief and improve the overall condition of signs and symptoms of Vicharchika.

Conclusion:

This review suggest that Chaturangulparnadi Lepa is an effective Ayurvedic topical formulation for Vicharchika disease. Its anti-inflammatory, antipruritic, antimicrobial, and healing properties make it a promising alternative therapy. Further pre-clinical (animal studies), clinical studies are needed to validate its efficacy on a larger scale.

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