

# A Single Case Study on Ayurvedic Management of Shitapitta (Urticaria)

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**Abstract:** *Shitapitta is a most common among allergic manifestation on skin. Madhava nidana has explained shitapitta as a vata pradana tridoshaja vyadhi with involvement of rasa (lymph) and rakta (blood) dhatus (tissues). Sheeta means cold and pitta refers to warmth so, shitapitta can be considered as a disease caused by predominance of cold (in vata and kapha doshas) over pitta dosha. Vitiated tridoshas get lodged beneath the skin producing reddish rashes with intense itching and pricking sensation which resembles the urticaria rashes. Being a condition of bahya roga marga (external disease pathway) there are possibilities to get cured easily. Urticaria is a localised dermal oedema secondary to a temporary increase in capillary permeability. Urticaria is considered acute if it persist for less than 6 weeks and chronic if it continues for more than 6 weeks. The present case study is of a 60year old female patient with complaints of skin rashes associated with itching, general weakness of body and joint pain.*

**Keywords:** Shitapitta, tridosha, bahyaroga marga

## 1. Introduction

Shitapitta is a commonly encountered dermatological condition which is not life threatening but effect the quality of life. Causitive factors like contact with cold wind and cold substances, excessive intake of salty and pungent foods, consuming excessive amla dravya (sour foods and drinks), sarshapa (mustard), day sleep, improper administration of vamana (emesis therapy), shishira and varsha rithu viparyaya (altered features in winter and rainy season), keeta damsha (insect bite), krimi samsarga (contact with insects, bugs) can result in kapha and vata prakopa (aggrevation), which then associated with pitta spreads out externally to skin and internally to rakta dhatu (blood tissues) [1]. Premonitory symptoms of this condition include pipasa (thirst), aruchi (tastelessness), hrillasa (nausea), dehasada (lethargy), anga gaurava (feeling heaviness in the body) and rakta lochana (redness of eyes) [2]. Cardinal features of shitapitta includes varatidashta (rashes produced by bite of wasp), vatashotha (skin marks resembling the bite of nettle sting), kandu (itching), toda (pricking sensation), chardi (vomiting), hrillasa (nausea), jwara (fever), vidaha (burning sensation) [3]. Charaka Samhita Sutra Sthana have mentioned Shitipitta as Bahudosha Avastha. Symptoms of Shitapita shows similarity to urticaria. Ayurveda has specified effective management of Shitapitta through shodana (purification therapy), shamanoushada (oral medication) and nidana parivarjana (avoidance of causative factors) [4]. Wheals are the characteristic feature of urticaria which is an evanescent discrete areas of dermal oedema, often centrally white due to masking of local blood supply by fluid, wheals can be papules, macules, patches and plaques. Causative factors include autoimmune factors, allergens in food and inhalants, contact allergens like latex, animal saliva, certain drugs like NSAIDS, ACE inhibitors, physical stimuli like heat, cold, infections like intestinal parasites. Mast cell degranulation and release of histamine and other vasoactive mediators is the basis of urticaria. Urticaria may be precipitated by aspirin,

NSAIDS, codeine and opioids. More over repeated intake of antihistamines and corticosteroids for managing urticaria that may last for months or years with a short period of frequent relapse may end up with reduce immunity of the body [5]. Madhava nidana has explained a similar condition called udarda in which kapha dosha is predominant [6].

## 2. Case Report

### Presenting complaints

A 60 - year - old female patient visited the Kayachikitsa Outpatient Department (OPD) in Karnataka Ayurveda Medical College Hospital with the presenting complaints of prickly reddish skin rashes associated with mild burning sensation, general weakness of body and pain since 6 months

### History of Present Illness

Patient was apparently healthy. She gradually developed redish rashes on body associated with sever itching, prickly and burning sensation sensation. She also complaints about general weakness of body and joint pain. Complaints aggravated on exposure to cold climate and during night. Patient also have complaint of reduced appetite. On 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023 she visited Karnataka Ayurveda Medical College and Hospital, Manglore and took mediciations for the same complaints. But the symptoms dint not got much relief. Patient was admitted to Karnataka Ayurveda Medical College and Hospital on 23<sup>rd</sup> september 2023 for further management.

### Treatment History

Nothing relevant

### History of Past Illness

Nothing relevant

### Personal History

Bowel - Hard stools

Appetite - Reduced

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Micturition - 2 to 3 times a day, no discolouration, no increased frequency

Sleep - Disturbed

Habit - No habit of smoking, tobacco, alcohol

### Family His Tory

Not significant

### General Examination

**Table 1:** General examination details

PULSE	72/min
B. P	140/90 mm/hg
R. R	16/min
H. R	72/min
TEMPERATURE	98 F
WEIGHT	60kg
HEIGHT	5.6 ft

### Systemic Examination

Central nervous system - All cranial nerves intact, no sensory or motor loss

Cardio vascular system - S1S2 heard, no added sounds

Respiratory system - B/L vesicular breathe sounds heard with equal air entry on both sides.

Gastrointestinal system - No organomegaly, per abdominal examination - soft, no rebound tenderness, no discolorations

Muco - cutaneous examination - Inspection – reddish rashes all over body. Multiple erythematous wheals over the back, upper and lower extremities

Palpation – mild tenderness present, mild rise in temperature

### Dasavidha Pareeksha

Prakruti – kapha pitta

Vikruthi – pitta, vata, kapha, rasa, rakta

Sara - Mamsa

Samhanana - Madhyama

Pramana - Madhyama

Sathmya - Sarvarasa

Satwa - Madhyama

Ahara Sakthi - Pravara

Vyayama Sakthi - Madhyama

Vaya - Madhyama

### Ashta Sthana Pareeksha

Nadi - Drutam

Mootra - Anavila

Mala - Nirama

Jihwa - Nirlipta

Shabda - spashtam

Sparsha - Anushna sheeta

Drik - spahstam

Akruthi - Madhyama

### Diagnostics Focus and Assessment

In the view of signs and symptoms of the patient was diagnosed with shitapitta. Assessment was done by cardinal clinical features of Shitapitta with repeated evaluation of symptoms before and after the treatment along with urticaria activity score (UAS7) with patient score of 2.

**Table 2:** Examination of shitapitta using urticaria activity score (UAS7) <sup>[7]</sup>

Wheals	Pruritis	Score
Nil	Nil	0
Mild < 20 wheals over 24 hours	Mild - present but not annoying	1
Moderate 20 - 50 wheels over 24 hours	Moderate - troublesome but doesn't interfere with normal daily activity or sleep	2
Intense > 50 wheals over 24 hours or a large area of wheal that blend into one	Intense - sever itching which is sufficiently troublesome to interfere with normal daily activity or sleep.	3

### Therapeutic Intervention

**Table 3:** Treatment Schedule of Shodhana Chikitsa

Sr. No	Procedure	Drug	Duration
1	Sadyo Vamana	Kshira (akanthapana) yashtimadhu phanta, lavana jala	1 day
2	<b>Virechana</b> Deepana pachana  Snehapana  Sarvanga abhyanga and bashpa sweda  Virechana  Samsarjana krama	Chitrakadi vati  Tliktaka ghrita Tliktaka ghrita Tliktaka ghrita Tliktaka ghrita Tliktaka ghrita Tliktaka ghrita Tliktaka ghrita  Nalpamaradi tailam  Trivrit lehya Triphala Kashaya  Proper diet was given to the patient.	2 days  Day 1 - 30ml Day 2 - 30ml Day 3 - 60ml Day 4 - 60ml Day 5 - 80ml Day 6 - 100ml Day 7 - 100ml  2 day  2 days  3 days

**Table 4:** Treatment Schedule of Shamana Chikitsa

Sr. No	Medicine	Dose and Frequency	Anupana	Time of administration	Duration
1	Drakshadi Kashaya	10ml with 30ml warm water twice a day	-	Before meals	2 weeks
2	Aragvadadi Kashaya	5ml with 30ml warm water twice a day	-	Before meals	2 weeks
3	Sutasekara rasa	1 tablet thrice a day	Lukewarm water	Before meals	2 weeks

**Table 5:** Observation and Result

Sr. No	Symptoms	Before treatment	After treatment
1	Varati Damsha Samsthana Shotha (rashes)	Present	Abscent
2	Redness	Present	Mild
2	Kandu (itching)	Present	Reduced
3	Dehasada (lethargy)	Present	Abscent
4	Thoda (pain)	Present, sever pain	Mild pain
5	Daha	Present	Abscent

Table 5 shows the observation and result of the patient before and after treatment. The main symptoms of this condition were rashes, itching, redness, general body weakness, burning sensation and pain. All the symptoms reduced significantly by the above mentioned shodhana chikitsa and shamana aushadhas.

### 3. Discussion

As a first line treatment, patient was advised for Nidana parivarjana i. e to rule out the cause and avoid it as possible. Shodhana chikitsa (purifactory therapy) removes the vitiated dosahas from body and reduces recurrence of the disease<sup>[8]</sup>. Shitipitta pathology involves tridoshas, signs and clinical presentation suggest involvement of rasa and rakta dhatu so there is rasavaha sroto dushti and rakta vaha sroto dushti<sup>[9]</sup>. Sadyovamana with yashtimadhu phanta and lavana jala (salt water) eliminates the aggravated kapha and thus removes avarodha (obstruction) of vata by kapha. Due to the pervasiveness quality of drugs without being subjected to digestion starts acting immediately. Due to prabahava (non-specific effect) of vama dravya (drug for emesis) dosas are eliminated through oral route. Virechana (purgation) is the prime shodhana therapy for pitta and it purifies rakta. Virechana with trivrit lehya and triphala Kashaya results in srotoshodhana especially in rasavaha, raktavaha and swedavaha srotas. It corrects vimargagamana (movement of doshas in wrong direction) of vata dosha and removes vitiated pitta. Samsarjana krama (dietary rules) was advised to prevent agnimandhya and to improve agni gradually.

Drakshadi Kashaya<sup>[9]</sup> is an excellent antioxidative medicine which relieves drowsiness, lethargy and burning sensation. Draksha is rakta prasada (blood purifying) and daha prashama (removes burning sensation), vatanulomaka (downward movement of vata) due to sara guna (mobility), vatashamaka due to madhura rasa (sweet taste), snigdha guna (unctuous) and madhura vipaka (sweet after digestion). Most of the drugs are vata pitta shamaka (pacifying) and some are kapaha pitta shamaka. Thus it acts mainly on pitta dosha along with kapha and vata. Being a tikta and madhura rasa pradhana kashaya it act as digestive stimulant and carminative, tikta rasa pacify pitta kapha, maadhura rasa pacify vata pitta promotes strength, vitality, nourishes, improves psychological and physiological strength of body. Being a cold potency kashya it helps pacify pitta, and improves blood cell production. Draksha *Vitis vinifera* Linn.

act as mild laxative thus corrects apana vata vaigunya (disorders).

Acharya Vagbhata has mentioned araghwadadi gana in shodhanadi gana samgrahaniya adhyaya. Araghwadadi Kashaya act as kapaha pitta shamaka (pacifier) removes kleda (stickiness) in rekta and mamsa and reduces kandu (itching). Araghwada the main ingredient act as shodhaka. Pharmacological screening studies revealed this as vishahara (destroy body toxins), kushtahara (destroys skin diseases), krimighna (anti parasitic), antipruritic, antiinflammatory property. It is having hot potency and katu vipaka (pungent after taste) and act as mild purgative so eliminates toxins from body. Drugs like nimba, saireyaka are having rakta shodhaka and visha hara property. Kapha aggravation can be the main cause of itching, this kashaya being kapha hara reduces itching, and prickly sensation. Acharya Susruta mentioned it as vrna shodhaka.<sup>[10]</sup>

Agni mandya and ama (undigested food) plays a major role in manifestation of shitapitta. Chitrakadi vati and Sutasekara rasa balances pitta dosha and corrects agnimandya (digestive impairment). Chitrakadi vati contains mainly the drugs having digestive stimulant and carminative, shoopalprasamana (reduces pain) properties, having ushna virya (hot potency), katu, tikta and lavana rasa (pungent, bitter and salty taste), laghu (lite). Ruksha (ununctuous) guna dravya along with tikta rasa dravyas improves metabolism. Tikshna guna (sharp) cleanses channels of circulation. Snigdha guna and ushna virya neutralises vata dosha and due to madhura rasa and madhura paka it balances pitta. It contains anulomaka dravyas which removes aama (undigested food materials) and usha guna (hot) prevents further accumulation of ama.<sup>[11]</sup>

Sutashekara rasa contains mostly drugs which are digestive stimulant and carminative, pain reducing properties. This medicine acts by its ushna virya, katu tikta, kasahya, madhura rasa, laghu (lite) ruksha, tikshna, vyavayi (diffusing), vikasi (quick action) guna, madhura and katu vipaka. The ruksha and laghu guna dravyas balances abhishyandatva (sliminess). It act as pachana rupa shamana by amapachana, deepana with tikta ruksha dravyas, reduces agnimandya. Most of its drugs act as kapahavata shamaka.<sup>[12]</sup>

### 4. Conclusion

Ayurveda gives equal importance in assesment of the vitiated dosas, ruling out the nidana, treating the pradhana dosa and

rogaavstha, along with following pathyapathya in treatment of a disease and for avoiding its recurrence. In this diagnosed case of Shitapitta since the patient was having good strength was subjected to sadyo vamaana and later virechana after examining the constitution, cause, dosha, digestive capacity, roga avastha and rogi avstha. Nidana parivarjana, Shodhana chikitsa along with shamana aushdha showed significant reduction in the signs and symptoms after the treatment.

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