

The Role of Rasayan in the Management of Ek-Kushtha: A Comprehensive Review

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Abstract: *Ekkushtha*, a prominent variety of *Kshudra Kushtha* described in Ayurvedic texts, bears a striking clinical resemblance to Psoriasis. Characterized by scaling (*Mahavastu*), lack of perspiration (*Aswedanam*), and a fish-scale appearance (*Matsyashakalopamam*), it is a chronic, inflammatory skin disorder with a high rate of recurrence. While conventional treatments focus on symptomatic relief, Ayurveda emphasizes the correction of deep-seated tissue imbalances. *Rasayana* therapy (rejuvenative therapy) plays a pivotal role in this management by enhancing *Dhatu Sarata* (tissue excellence), modulating the immune system, and preventing relapses. This review explores the physiological and therapeutic mechanisms of *Rasayana* drugs specifically in the context of *Ekkushtha*. A systematic qualitative review of classical Ayurvedic literature and contemporary clinical research regarding the role of *Rasayan* in the management of *Ekkushtha* (Psoriasis). The methodology was structured to bridge traditional pharmacological concepts with modern evidence-based dermatology.

Keywords: *Kshudra Kushtha*, Psoriasis, rejuvenative therapy, *Dhatu Samyata*

1. Introduction

In the contemporary world, skin diseases are not merely physical ailments but significant psychological burdens. *Ekkushtha* is a Vata-Kapha predominant disorder involving the *Twak* (skin), *Rakta* (blood), *Mamsa* (muscle), and *Lasika* (lymph). The chronic nature of *Ekkushtha* often leads to *Dhatu Kshaya* (depletion of tissues) and compromised *Ojas* (immunity). Conventional management, including topical steroids and immunosuppressants, often falls short of preventing recurrence. Here, *Rasayana Chikitsa* offers a holistic "promotive" and "preventive" approach by revitalizing the skin at a cellular level.¹

"*Kushtha*" is a general term that encompasses nearly all skin conditions. It is one of the *Ashtamahagada* that the *Charaka Samhita* mentions.² *Kushtha* is referred to as *Aupsargika Roga* or *Sankramaka Roga* by Acharya *Sushruta*.³ *Kushtha* is discussed under *Sapta Mahavyadhi* by Acharya *Vagbhata*.⁴

Since the symptoms of *Ek-Kushtha* coincide with the clinical characteristics of psoriasis rather than any other *Kushtha*, it is regarded as psoriasis. Up to 1% of people worldwide suffer with psoriasis, one of the most prevalent dermatological conditions. It affects people of all ages and almost equally in men and women. It is a persistent, recurrent skin inflammatory illness.⁵

2. Materials and Methods

Study Design

This study is a **systematic qualitative review** of classical Ayurvedic literature and contemporary clinical research regarding the role of *Rasayana* in the management of *Ekkushtha* (Psoriasis). The methodology was structured to bridge traditional pharmacological concepts with modern evidence-based dermatology.

Search Strategy and Data Sources

A comprehensive literature search was conducted across two primary domains:

- **Classical Domain:** Primary Ayurvedic texts including the *Brihatrayi* (*Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya*) and *Laghutrayi* (*Sharngadhara Samhita*, *Madhava Nidana*, and *Bhavaprakash*). Specific searches focused on chapters related to *Kushtha Chikitsa* and *Rasayana Adhyaya*.
- **Contemporary Domain:** Electronic databases including **PubMed**, **Google Scholar**, **DHARA (Digital Helpline for Ayurveda Research Articles)**, and **AYUSH Research Portal** were queried.

Search Keywords: > "*Ekkushtha*," "*Kshudra Kushtha*," "*Rasayana*," "*Immunomodulation in Ayurveda*," "*Psoriasis and Ayurveda*," "*Guduchi in Psoriasis*," "*Gandhaka Rasayana*," and "*Ayurvedic Dermatology*."

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To ensure high-quality data synthesis, the following criteria were applied:

Inclusion Criteria:

- Peer-reviewed clinical trials (RCTs and non-RCTs) focusing on *Rasayana* drugs for *Ekkushtha*.
- Conceptual studies explaining the *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) of *Ekkushtha*.
- Pharmacological studies of *Rasayana* herbs demonstrating antioxidant or immunomodulatory activities.
- Articles published in English or Sanskrit (with authenticated translations).

Exclusion Criteria:

- Case reports with insufficient follow-up data.
- Studies focusing on *Mahakushtha* (major skin diseases) without specific reference to *Ekkushtha* or Psoriasis.

- Unpublished grey literature or non-peer-reviewed blog content.

Data Extraction and Synthesis

The extracted data were categorized into three thematic frameworks:

- 1) **Correlation Analysis:** Mapping the clinical features of *Ekkushtha* (e.g., *Matsyashakalopamam*) against the phenotypic expressions of Psoriasis.

- 2) **Pharmacological Profiling:** Tabulating the *Rasa, Guna, Virya,* and *Vipaka* of identified *Rasayana* drugs and their corresponding molecular mechanisms (e.g., TNF- α inhibition, cytokine regulation).
- 3) **Therapeutic Protocol:** Synthesizing the sequential application of *Purvakarma, Pradhanakarma (Shodhana),* and the subsequent administration of *Rasayana*.

3. Observations

Sr. no.	Name of author	Study conducted	Intervention	Outcome
1	Ramteke Rajkala Shankar et. al 6	Role of Tuvaraka Rasayana in Psoriasis after Shodhana	Group-A is <i>Shodhana (Virechana)</i> Group-B is <i>Virechana</i> followed by <i>Tuvaraka Rasayana</i> <i>Tuvaraka Taila</i> was given in 20 ml dose for five days with specific diet regimen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant results were found in both the groups, but much better results were found in Group B than Group A. • Overall effect of the therapy showed complete remission in 53.33 % of patients in Group A; while 80% of patients in Group B. • Thus, it can be concluded that <i>Tuvaraka Rasayana</i> along with the <i>Shodhana</i> proved to be an effective therapy and recurrence could also be prevented.
2	Dr. S. J. Ruparel et.al.7	Role of Virechana Purvaka Shamana Sneha with Rasayana drugs in Psoriasis.	Group-A (Virechana with Shamana) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snehapana - Panchatikta Ghrita • Virechana drug – (Ichhabhedi Rasa 250-500mg +Trifala Kvatha (100-200 ml) +Erand Sneha (10-30ml).) • Shamana same as group B • Group-B (Shamana)- Panchatikta Ghrita - 10gm in morning. Anupana - Ushnodaka • Trifaladi Rasayana Vati - 6gm (each Vati of 500mg) twice a day with honey and ghee <p>Duration 2 months in both groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After Virechana Shamana is also important to continue its effect and to sustain Dhatusamyata. • Triphaladi Rasayan Vati has Rasayan drugs which maintain healthy status of Dhatus and Panchatikta ghrita pacifies remaining Doshas. • The dose of the Shamana sneha should be decided according to the Agni of the patient.
3	Neeraj Sahu et.at,8	Open Pragmatic Clinical Trial Evaluating the Effect of Virechana Karma and Tuvaraka Rasayana in Ekakushta/ Psoriasis	Kramataha Virechana karma followed by Tuvaraka Rasayana. Duration - 25-30 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tuvaraka rasayana</i> has properties like <i>kaphvatahara, kushtaghna, krimighna, pramehaghna, kandughna Ubhayabhaga Shodhana</i> • Drug has the specific indicated in the disease of <i>Kushta</i>.
4	Charmi S. Mehta et al;	Comparative effect of Navayasa Rasayana Leha and Medhya Rasayana tablet along with Dhatriadyho Lepa in Ekkakushta (psoriasis)	<p>Group A <i>Navayasa Rasayana Leha</i> (2 gm) with <i>Dhatryadyho Lepa</i>. twice a day with <i>Koshna Jala</i></p> <p>Group B <i>Medhya Rasayana</i>(1 gm) Tablet with <i>Dhatryadyho Lepa</i>. Twice a day with <i>Koshna Godugdha</i></p> <p>Duration- 3 months</p>	<p>The drugs of <i>Navayasa Rasayana Leha</i> possess immunomodulatory, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory property z. Thus, the probable mode of action of <i>Navayasa Rasayana Leha</i> can be understood.</p> <p>Drugs of <i>Medhya Rasayana</i> tablet have properties like sedative, anti-inflammatory, immunomodulatory actions etc., by which they act on the disease group A was concluded to be more effective on the following symptoms- <i>Mandala, Bahalatva, Unnati, Auspitz sign, Candle grease sign, Daha and Kandu</i>. Whereas Group B was more effective in <i>Matsyashakalopamam, Rukshata, Koebner Phenomenon, Nidranasha, Srava</i> and <i>Aswedanam</i>.</p>
5.	Rohit Mehta	Efficacy of and for in with special reference to Psoriasis – a comparative study Arohana Krama Snehapana Sadyo-snehana Virechana Karma Eka	Group A guduchi ghrita for snehapan(arohan krama) and virechan with trivruta avaleha Group B Guduchi ghrita sadya snehan and virechan with trivruta avaleha Duration (in days) FOR GR A- 13 to 21 FOR GR B- 11 to 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMRUTA GHRITA • Guduchi because of its tikta rasa, tridoshashamaka, grahi, kandughna, dahaprashaman properties helps in reducing kapha kleda • Dugdha due to its ojo vrudhikar property • Ghrita for snehapaan as it posseses a unique property of samskar syaanuvarutana . • It also acts on the rasa dhatu shukra and ojus.

		Kushta		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ghrita due to its pitta and vatahar property and oja vrudhikar, rasayan property helps in reducing symptom of ek kushtha
6.	Dhingra Harsh	Ayurvedic treatment of palmo-plantar psoriasis - a case study	Sarivadi vati, Khadirarishtha, Guduchi satva, Ras Manikya, Amlaki choorna, Yashada bhasma, Tab. Neem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kushthahar, Raktashodhak and Rasayan.

Pathogenesis (Samprapti) of Ekkushtha

The manifestation of Ekkushtha involves the vitiation of:

- Doshas:** Vata and Kapha.
- Dushyas:** Twak, Rakta, Mamsa, and Ambhu.

The blockage of *Srotas* (channels) leads to poor nourishment of the skin, resulting in the characteristic dryness and scaling.

The Concept of Rasayana in Dermatology

Rasayana is not merely a drug therapy but a specialized branch of Ayurveda that deals with:

- Prevents Aging:** Slowing down the degeneration of skin cells.
- Vayasthapana:** Maintaining youthful skin elasticity and hydration.
- Vyadhikshamatva:** Enhancing the body's natural defense against triggers (stress, allergens).

In Ekkushtha, *Rasayana* therapy is usually administered after *Shodhana* (purification/detox) to ensure better absorption and efficacy at the *Dhatu* level.

Key Rasayana Drugs and Their Mechanisms

Drug Name	Ayurvedic Property	Mechanism in Ekkushtha
Guduchi (<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>)	Medhya & Rasayana	Immunomodulator; reduces chronic inflammation and <i>Daha</i> (burning).
Amalaki (<i>Emblia officinalis</i>)	Chakshushya & Rasayana	Rich in Vitamin C; promotes collagen synthesis and acts as a potent antioxidant.
Tuvaraka (<i>Hydnocarpus wightiana</i>)	Kushthagna & Rasayana	Specifically indicated for chronic skin lesions; improves skin texture.
Bhallataka (<i>Semecarpus anacardium</i>)	Teekshna & Rasayana	Effectively manages Kapha-Vata; used in stubborn, stagnant plaques.
Gandhaka Rasayana	Herbo-mineral	Acts as a blood purifier (<i>Raktashodhaka</i>) and antimicrobial agent.

4. Mode of Action of Rasayana in Ekkushtha

1) Cellular Regeneration

Rasayana drugs improve the *Agni* (metabolism) at the tissue level (*Dhatvagni*). This ensures that the newly formed skin cells are healthy, reducing the rapid, faulty turnover seen in psoriasisiform lesions.

2) Stress Management

Many Rasayanas, such as *Ashwagandha* and *Brahmi*, act as adaptogens. Since Ekkushtha is frequently exacerbated by psychological stress, these "Medhya Rasayanas" help break the psycho-somatic link of the disease.

3) Immunomodulation

By enhancing *Ojas*, Rasayana therapy corrects the underlying autoimmune component of the disease, preventing the body from attacking its own dermal cells.

5. Discussion

The management of Ekkushtha is incomplete without addressing the "vulnerability" of the *Dhatus*. While *Shodhana* (like *Vamana* or *Virechana*) removes the toxins, it can also leave the body temporarily weakened. Rasayana therapy acts as the "rebuilding" phase.

Clinical observations suggest that patients who undergo a dedicated course of Rasayana (like *Vardhamana Pippali* or *Gandhaka Rasayana*) show a significantly lower **PASI (Psoriasis Area and Severity Index)** score and experience longer periods of remission compared to those on standalone palliative treatments.

The correlation between the Ayurvedic entity of **Ekkushtha** and the modern medical diagnosis of **Psoriasis** is based on a striking overlap of clinical morphology, disease progression, and psychosomatic triggers. In Ayurveda, Ekkushtha is a *Vata-Kapha* dominant *Kshudra Kushtha*, yet its severity and recalcitrant nature often demand management protocols as rigorous as *Mahakushtha*.

1) Morphological and Pathological Parallels

The diagnostic hallmarks of Ekkushtha align closely with the classic symptoms of Psoriasis:

- Aswedanam (Anhidrosis):** In Psoriasis, the thickened keratin layer and underlying inflammation disrupt sweat gland function. Ayurveda attributes this to *Srotorodha* (obstruction of sweat-carrying channels) by *Kapha*.
- Mahavastu (Extensive Lesions):** Psoriasis often involves large "plaques" that cover significant body surface areas, mirroring the *Mahavastu* description.
- Matsyashakalopamam (Scale-like Appearance):** The hallmark of Psoriasis is the silvery, micaceous scaling. This is the literal translation of *Matsyashakala* (fish scales).
- Vata-Kapha Dominance:** The *Vata* element accounts for the dryness (*Rukshata*), scaling, and itching, while *Kapha* accounts for the skin thickening (*Vaivarnya/Ghana*) and chronicity.

2) The Psycho-Somatic Axis

Both systems recognize that the skin is not an isolated organ. Modern medicine classifies Psoriasis as a **T-cell mediated autoimmune disease** often flared by stress. Ayurveda describes this through the concept of "**Manasika Doshas**" (*Rajas* and *Tamas*) affecting the "**Sharirika Doshas**." Stress causes *Vata* to fluctuate, which in turn destabilizes the *Rakta*

Dhatu (blood tissue). This explains why patients often report a "flare-up" following emotional trauma or high-stress periods.

3) The Integrated Management Strategy of Ayurveda

Ayurveda does not merely treat the skin; it treats the *Dhatu* (tissue) environment that allows the disease to persist. The management is categorized into three essential stages:

a) Shodhana (Bio-Purification/Detoxification)

Because Ekkushtha is a *Bahudoshavastha* (state of high toxin load), repeated purification is necessary.

- **Vamana (Therapeutic Emesis):** Primarily for *Kapha* expulsion, reducing the thickness and itching of plaques.
- **Virechana (Therapeutic Purgation):** Targeted at *Rakta* and *Pitta*, reducing the inflammatory redness and systemic toxicity.
- **Raktamokshana (Bloodletting):** Often used in stubborn, localized plaques to provide immediate relief from "stagnant" toxins.

b) Shamana (Palliative Therapy)

Once the bulk of the toxins are removed, herbal formulations are used to pacify the remaining *Doshas*.

- **Internal Medications:** Drugs like *Tikta Ghrita* (bitter medicated ghee) are used because the bitter taste (*Tikta Rasa*) is highly effective in purifying *Rakta* and pacifying both *Pitta* and *Kapha*.
- **External Applications:** *Lepa* (pastes) and *Abhyanga* (oil massage) with oils like *Psoria oil* or *777 oil* (*Wrightia tinctoria*) help soften the scales and restore the skin barrier.

c) The Role of Rasayana (The "X-Factor" in Management)

This is the most critical stage for Psoriasis management. Since Psoriasis is a relapsing disorder, **Rasayana therapy** acts as a long-term stabilizer.

- It repairs the **Kha-Vaigunya** (the inherent weakness in the skin tissues).
- It acts as an **Immunomodulator**, correcting the "mistake" in the immune system where T-cells attack healthy skin.
- Drugs like **Bhringaraja, Guduchi, and Gandhaka Rasayana** are employed to ensure that the new skin layers formed after treatment are healthy and have a normal turnover rate.

4) Dietary and Lifestyle Constraints (Pathya-Apathya)

Ayurveda places immense weight on "Dietary Incompatibility" (*Viruddha Ahara*) as a root cause for Ekkushtha.

- **Apathya (Avoid):** Sour foods (*Amla*), excessive salt (*Lavana*), fermented foods, and the combination of milk with fish or sour fruits.
- **Pathya (Adopt):** Bitter vegetables (bitter gourd), old grains (*Purana Shali*), and legumes like green gram (*Mudga*).

6. Conclusion

In this present study, we can conclude that rasayan plays important role in the management of ek Kushtha along with

shodhan and shaman aushadhi. Rasayan being used in ek-kushtha relieves the disease progression and helps in the quick action of shaman Aushadhi.

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