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An Ayurvedic approach to the management of *Shushkakshipaka* w.s.r. to Dry Eye Syndrome - A Case Report

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: *Sushkakshipaka* is one among the *Sarvagata, Sadhya Netrarogas* described in in classical *Ayurveda* texts. A feature of *Shushkakshipaka* includes hard and dry eye lids, found drooping; blurred vision and difficulty to open the eyes with irritation and foreign body sensation. The *Lakshanas* of *Shushkakshipaka* can be equated with the signs and symptoms of Dry Eye Syndrome. Dry eye is a multifactorial ocular surface disease characterized by symptoms of discomfort, irritation, and visual disturbance. Here the patient presenting with signs and symptoms of dry eye disease was treated according to the treatment principles of *Shushkakshipaka* as explained in *Ayurvedic* classics. *Erandamoola Kheera Seka* and *Shatavari Ghrita* was selected for the treatment and the same has been presented in the article. **Materials and Methods:** The subject who approached *Shalaky Tantra* OPD of Sri Jayachamarajendra Institute of Indian Medicine Hospital, Bengaluru, with signs and symptoms of dry eye disease was thoroughly examined and systematically reviewed. Treatment was planned based on the *Chikitsasutra* of *Shushkakshipaka*. **Result:** The patient showed considerable improvement subjectively and objectively. Improvement in Schirmer's reading, visual acuity improvement was observed in both eyes. **Conclusion:** The maintenance of stability of tear film is the main challenge in this pandemic time due to the increased screen time. This can be achieved up to an extend by proper administration of treatment techniques described in classical *Ayurveda* texts along with *Pathyasevana*.

Key words: *Shushkakshipaka, Erandamoola kheera, Seka, Anutaila, Case Report*

INTRODUCTION

Sushkakshipaka is one among the *Sarvagata, Sadhya Netrarogas* described in in classical *Ayurveda* texts. *Shushkakshipaka* is *Vataja* according to *Sushruta*^[1] and *Vata-Pittaja* according to *Vagbhata*.^[2] Features of *Shushkakshipaka* includes hard and dry eye lids, found drooping; blurred vision and difficulty to open the eyes with irritation and foreign body sensation. The

Lakshanas of *Shushkakshipaka* can be equated with the signs and symptoms of Dry Eye Syndrome. Dry eye is a multifactorial ocular surface disease characterized by symptoms of discomfort, irritation, and visual disturbance. The climate of tropical India and globalization along with the sprout of millions of IT professionals are making Dry Eye Syndrome, a fast-growing disease, as all these leads to increased tear evaporation (due to dry wind, air conditioning, decreased blink reflex etc.) along with other causes like aqueous tear deficiency, mucin deficiency, lipid deficiency, impaired lid function, irregular corneal surface etc.

During this pandemic period, the digital screen time has increased drastically due to the online classes, work from home etc. that affect the tear film stability and augments the occurrence of dry eye syndrome in young adults and children. The prevalence of DES in India is higher than the global prevalence and ranges from 18.4% to 54.3%. To explore effective solution in

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Ayurveda is the need of the hour as there is no complete cure for Dry eyes in contemporary medicines at present. Some of the treatment modalities which have been tried with variable results include supplementation with tear substitutes, topical cyclosporine, mucolytic, topical retinoid, preservation of existing tears etc. along with correction of lid abnormalities, which are not long lasting and thus long-term usage is recommended. *Ayurveda* has described safe and cost-effective treatment for *Shushkakshipaka* with oral medications and topical therapies (*Kriyakalpa*). A case of *Shushkakshipaka* treated with *Ayurvedic* management is recorded here.

CASE REPORT

Basic information of the patient

Age: 35 years

Sex: Male

Religion: Hindu

Occupation: IT Professional

Chief complaints

Patient consulted Shalakya Tantra OPD of Sri Jayachamarajendra Institute of Indian Medicine Hospital, Bangalore on 27/01/2022 with the complaints of irritation, foreign body sensation and dryness in both eyes with burning sensation which was leading to slight visual disturbance.

History of present illness

The subject was apparently normal a year back. He gradually started experiencing foreign body sensation in both eyes in the past 1 year, dryness in both eyes in the past 2 months, itching, burning sensation, pricking pain and painful lid occasionally associated with slight visual disturbance. For these complaints he approached an ophthalmologist where he was diagnosed as having dry eye disease. He was prescribed with artificial tear drops. The symptoms get relieved by putting drops but reappears whenever stops. During the lockdown period when he started working from home the symptoms get aggravated. With all these complaints he approached Shalakya Tantra OPD for *Ayurvedic* management.

History of past illness

No past history of any systemic diseases like Hypertension, Diabetes, Hyperthyroidism and RA. No surgical history.

Family History: Nothing significant.

Personal history

Appetite: Good

Sleep: disturbed

Bowel: once a day.

Micturition: 4-5 times a day

Habits: None

Ashta Sthana Pareeksha

Nadi: 74/min

Mala: Prakrutha

Mutra: 4-5 times a day

Jihwa: Aliptha

Shabdha: Prakrutha

Sparsha: Prakrutha

Drik: Shushkatha

Akriti: Krisha

Vitals

Pulse: 74/min

Respiratory rate: 16/min

Temp: 98.4°F

Systemic Examination: All systemic examination was within normal limits.

Ophthalmic Examination: findings are explained in Table No. 1.

Table 1: Ophthalmic Examination

Ocular structures	Right eye	Left eye
Adnexa	No abnormalities	No abnormalities
Conjunctiva	Congested	Congested

Sclera	No abnormalities	No abnormalities
Cornea	Clear	Clear
Anterior chamber	Within normal limit	Within Normal limit
Pupil	3mm, Round, regular, reactive to light	3mm, Round, regular, reactive to light
Lens	Phakic	Phakic
IOP	12mm of Hg	14 mm of Hg

Diagnostic Tests / Assessment Criteria

Subjective parameters: Self formulated scale was considered. Assessed parameters before the treatment, after the treatment and during follow up are explained in Table No. 3.

Objective parameters

- Schirmers I Test.
- Tear film breakup time.
- Visual acuity (Distant Vision and Near Vision)

All these parameters assessed before treatment and after treatment and also during follow up are explained in Table No. 4

Treatment Given

Treatment was planned accordingly and given *Sadyovirechana* and *Sthanika Shodhana* followed by *Erandamoola Ksheeraseka* in 2 sittings with a gap of 14 days in between along with Internal administration of *Shatavari Ghrita*. Treatment given is described in Table No. 2.

Table 2: Treatment given

Treatment given	Medicine	Dosage	Duration	Time
<i>Snehavirechana</i>	<i>Gandharv ahasta Eranda Taila</i>	30 ml	1 day	Early morning
<i>Nasya</i>	<i>Anu Taila</i>	8 drops (In each nostril)	7 days	Morning in empty stomach

<i>Ksheeraseka</i>	<i>Erandamoola Ksheera</i>	Quantity sufficient	2 sittings of 7 days with a gap of 14 days	Morning
<i>Shamana Snehapana</i>	<i>Shatavari Ghrita</i>	10 g b.d	28 days	Morning and evening after food

Patient was assessed after first sitting of *Ksheeraseka*. After the completion of 2nd sitting, follow-up was on 15th day. Readings were taken after assessing the patient on follow up.

RESULT

The study showed marked improvement in signs and symptoms of the patient after the treatment as shown in the table no. 3 and 4. The improvement was maintained at the time of follow up.

Table 3: Effect of treatment on Subjective Parameters.

Subjective Parameters	Before treatment (BT)	After First sitting of Treatment (AT1)	After Second sitting of Treatment (AT2)	During Follow Up (FU)
Foreign body sensation	Severe(+++)	Moderate(+)	Mild(+)	Absent (-)
Pricking pain	Mild(+)	Mild(+)	Absent(-)	Absent (-)
Dryness in lid and eye	Moderate(+)	Mild (+)	Absent(-)	Absent (-)
Painful lid and eye	Mild(+)	Absent(-)	Absent(-)	Absent (-)
Burning sensation	Severe(+++)	Moderate(+)	Mild(+)	Absent (-)
Photophobia	Moderate(+)	Mild(+)	Absent(-)	Absent (-)

Congestion	Mild(+)	Absent(-)	Absent(-)	Absent(-)
BT - Before treatment, AT1 - After First sitting of Treatment, AT2 - After Second sitting of Treatment, FU - During Follow Up				

Table 4: Effect of treatment on Objective Parameters.

Objective Parameters		Before treatment (BT)	After First sitting of Treatment (AT1)	After Second sitting of Treatment (AT2)	During Follow Up (FU)	
Schirmer's Test	R E	4mm	8mm	13mm	12mm	
	LE	3mm	7mm	12mm	11mm	
TBUT	R E	5sec	10sec	12sec	12sec	
	LE	2sec	8sec	10sec	10sec	
Visual Acuity	D V	R E	6/18	6/18	6/9	6/9
		LE	6/9	6/9	6/6P	6/6
		B E	6/9	6/9	6/6	6/6
	N V	R E	N8	N6	N6	N6
		LE	N6	N6	N6	N6
		B E	N6	N6	N6	N6

DISCUSSION

Vata and Pitta along with Raktha are the factors which get vitiated in Shushkakshipaka. The Vata, Pitta, Vridhis indirectly leads to Kapha Kshaya. Decrease of Snigdha Guna and increase of Ruksha Guna initiates the pathology. Ruksha, Laghu, Khara, Sukshma Gunas of Vata and Ushna, Laghu, Tikshna Gunas of Pitta increases and Kapha Kshaya sets in which leads to decreased Netraposhana.

The symptoms of Shushkakshipaka are foreign body sensation, pricking pain, burning sensation, dryness, and photophobia. Ksheeraseka described as one of the treatment techniques for Shushkakshipaka. In Gadanigraha Erandamoola Siddha Ksheerapaka Seka is mentioned which is indicated in Vataja Netrarogas.^[3] Here the above formulation was selected for Seka along with Shatavari Ghrita internally which is described in Bhaishjyaratnavali.

Before the Sthanika Chikitsa systemic and local Shodhana administrated. Sneha Virechana with Gandharvahastha Eranda Taila and Nasya with Anutaila carried out which cleanses the macro and micro channels of the body and imparts Snigdha-guna.

Among the treatment modalities told in the classics for Shushkakshipaka, Ksheeraseka and Snehapana are known to increase the stability of tear film and give relief from the symptoms of Shushkakshipaka. It is the Virya, Karma and Prabhava of the drugs which acts, when comes in to contact with the Skin of the eyelids (Netra Vartma), Netra Sandhi and Siras of Netra. By these quality of the drugs Pachana and Shamana of Netra Gata Dosha can be attained, as Seka is mainly indicated in Amavastha of Netra Rogas. By considering it as effective drug delivery format. As this formulation can successfully cross the barriers present in eye for drug absorption by its amphiphilic nature. It nourishes ocular and periorcular structures, gives nutrition directly to the target organ.

Eranda having the property of Madhura-Katu-Kashaya Rasa, Snigdha-Tikshna-Sukshma Gunas, Ushna Veerya and Shulahara-Shothahara-Vedanasthapana Karma. It alleviates Vatadosha. Due to the Sukshmaguna the drug acts through the minute channels of the skin and conjunctiva. Due to the Snigdha-guna reduces the dryness of the ocular surface. Shoolahara property of Eranda may help to defeat the pain in Shushkakshipaka.^[4]

Goksheera (cow's milk) have properties like Madhura Rasa, Guru Snigdha Guna, Sheeta Veerya, Madhura Vipaka, Chakshushya and Rasayana. By these properties it is able to cure Vata and Pitta and thus reduces the symptoms, yields stability of the tear film.

The ingredients are *Shatavari*, *Ghrita* and *Ksheera*, all of them has *Madhura Rasa*, *Guru Snigdha Gunas*, *Sheeta Virya*, *Madhura Vipaka*, *Vata Pittahara*, *Chakshushya*, *Jeevaniya* and *Rasayana* properties. *Shatavari* has Anti-inflammatory, Antibiotic, Anti haemorrhagic, Anti-oxidant and immune-modulator property. *Ghrita* contains Vitamin A, Vitamin E and β carotene which are anti- oxidants and are helpful in reducing ketone bodies and prevents the oxidative injury to the body. Mainly Vitamin A keeps the epithelial tissue of the body intact, keeps the outer layer of the eyeball moist.^[5]

The nourishing property and *Chakshushya Guna* of *Shatavari*, *Ghrita* and *Ksheera* helps in relieving the *Vata Prakopaka* symptoms like dryness, pricking pain etc.

CONCLUSION

Subjective and objective parameters is found to be improved. Hence the treatment helps in maintaining the integrity of Aqueous and lipid layer of Tear Film. *Erandamoola Ksheerapaka Seka* is mentioned for *Vata-Paittika Netra Roga* and found to be beneficial in reducing signs and symptoms of *Shushkakshipaka* during treatment. *Shatavari Ghrita* having *Vata-Pittahara* properties and *Chakshushya Rasayana Karma* shown significant result in the relieving the symptoms of *Shushkakshipaka* by enhancing the tear film integrity and rejuvenating the ocular surface tissue. Systemic and local *Shodhana* procedures before the local therapies augmented the action of drugs by opening the minute channels and increased micro

circulation in the ocular area. Well organized Ayurvedic management is effective in the management of dry eye syndrome and provides sustainable results.

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