

Ayurvedic Management of Tinea Capitis (Alopecia): A Case Report

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DOI:10.21760/jaims.10.8.57

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Introduction: Tinea capitis, a fungal infection of the scalp, often presents with alopecia and pruritus. This case highlights an Ayurvedic management approach for a chronic case unresponsive to previous homeopathic treatment.


Patient Information: A 36-year-old male presented with patchy hair loss over the scalp, right eyebrow, and beard, accompanied by intense itching and scaling.

Intervention: Treatment included external application of Karanj Taila with Tankan Bhasma and oral administration of Arogyavardhini Vati, Gandhak Rasayana, Krimi Kuthar Rasa, and Manjisthadi Kwath for 3 months.

Outcomes: Complete resolution of itching was observed within 15 days, followed by progressive hair regrowth and cosmetic improvement over 3 months, without adverse effects.

Conclusion: This case demonstrates the potential efficacy of classical Ayurvedic formulations in treating Tinea Capitis-associated alopecia.

Keywords: Tinea capitis, Alopecia, Ayurveda, Fungal infection, Karanj Taila, Gandhak Rasayana

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Manuscript Received
2025-06-11

Review Round 1
2025-06-27

Review Round 2
2025-07-07

Review Round 3
2025-07-17

Accepted
2025-07-27

Conflict of Interest
None

Funding
Nil

Ethical Approval
Not required

Plagiarism X-checker
11.51

Note



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Introduction

Tinea capitis is a superficial dermatophytic infection of the scalp and hair shafts, primarily caused by *Trichophyton* and *Microsporum* species.[1,2] It is more commonly observed in children but may also occur in adults, particularly those with compromised immunity or prolonged exposure to unhygienic conditions. Clinically, the condition manifests as round or irregular scaly patches of alopecia, broken hairs, black dots, pruritus, and occasionally pustules or kerion formation. Chronic cases may extend to involve other facial hair regions, such as the eyebrows and beard.

In modern medicine, treatment primarily involves systemic antifungal agents, which may carry risks of side effects and relapse upon discontinuation. Ayurveda, however, offers a holistic treatment strategy focusing on *Dosha* balance, detoxification, and tissue rejuvenation.

In Ayurvedic texts, tinea infections can be correlated with *Dadru Kushtha*, a condition attributed to the vitiation of *Pitta* and *Kapha* *Doshas*, often associated with *Krimi* (pathogenic organisms).[3,4] The treatment protocol involves both internal and external therapies, including *Krimighna*, *Kusthaghna*, and *Rasayana Dravyas*, to eliminate the root cause and rejuvenate affected tissues. This case study highlights the successful Ayurvedic management of a 36-year-old male suffering from tinea capitis alopecia, using a combination of local applications and internal medications. The outcome demonstrates the potential of Ayurvedic interventions in managing chronic dermatological conditions, especially those involving fungal infections and hair loss.

Patient Information

- **Age/Gender:** 36-year-old male
- **Presenting Complaints:** Patchy alopecia over scalp, right eyebrow, and beard with intense itching and scaling for 5 months
- **Medical History:** No systemic illness or immunosuppression
- **Previous Treatment:** Homeopathic therapy which worsened the symptoms

Clinical Findings

- **Scalp:** Multiple round to oval alopecic patches; dry and scaly with black dot hairs

- **Eyebrow:** Partial loss over right lateral eyebrow with scaling
- **Beard:** Complete loss over right half of the beard
- **No lymphadenopathy or mucosal involvement**

Diagnostic Assessment

- **Provisional Diagnosis (Modern):** Tinea Capitis
- **Ayurvedic Diagnosis:** *Dadru Kushtha* involving *Kapha-Pitta Dosha* and *Krimi*
- **Samprapti Ghataka:**
 - *Dosha:* *Kapha-Pitta*
 - *Dushya:* *Rasa, Rakta, Asthi*
 - *Agni:* *Mandagni*
 - *Srotas:* *Rasavaha, Raktavaha, Asthivaha*
 - *Sroto Dushti:* *Sanga*
 - *Adhithana:* Scalp, Eyebrow, Beard
 - *Sadhyasadyata:* *Krichra Sadhya*
- **Investigations:** Wood's lamp and KOH mount not performed due to facility unavailability

Therapeutic Intervention

Treatment Protocol

Formulation	Dosage[5]	Route	Frequency	Duration	Purpose
Karanj Taila + Tankan Bhasma	Q.S. (topical area)	External	Twice daily	3 months	Antifungal, keratolytic, anti-pruritic
Arogyavardhini Vati	250 mg	Oral	Twice daily	3 months	Detoxification, Pitta-Kapha balance
Gandhak Rasayana	250 mg	Oral	Twice daily	3 months	Rasayana, antimicrobial
Krimi Kuthar Rasa	125 mg	Oral	Twice daily	3 months	Anti-parasitic
Manjisthadi Kwath	40 ml	Oral	Twice daily	3 months	Rakta Shodhana, anti-inflammatory

Follow-up and Outcomes

Time Point	Clinical Status
Day 0	Severe itching, dry scaly patches, alopecia on scalp, beard, and eyebrow
Day 15	Itching completely resolved, no new lesions
1 Month	Reduced scaling, initial signs of hair regrowth
2 Months	Marked scalp hair regrowth, early beard/eyebrow recovery
3 Months	Dense hair growth in scalp and eyebrow, beard recovery visible

- **Adverse Effects:** None reported
- **Patient Satisfaction:** High, due to cosmetic and symptomatic relief

Discussion

Tinea capitis often becomes chronic or recurrent due to incomplete treatment, resistance, or immune factors. In this case, Ayurvedic management targeted multiple aspects - eliminating *Krimi*, correcting *Doshic* imbalance, and promoting *Rasayana* (rejuvenation).

- *Karanj Taila* has antifungal and anti-inflammatory properties.[6]
- *Tankan Bhasma* works as a keratolytic agent to reduce scaling.[7]
- *Arogyavardhini Vati* and *Gandhak Rasayana* detoxify and purify *Rakta Dhatu*. [8]
- *Krimi Kuthar Rasa* targets the underlying fungal component (*Krimi*). [9]
- *Manjisthadi Kwath* supports blood purification and skin healing. [10]

The holistic and synergistic effect of these medicines led to sustained symptom relief and visible cosmetic recovery.

Patient Perspective

The patient expressed satisfaction with symptom relief and cosmetic improvement. He appreciated the natural approach and lack of adverse effects.

Written informed consent was obtained from the patient for publication of this case and accompanying images

Conclusion

This single case study demonstrates the potential of Ayurvedic treatment in managing Tinea Capitis alopecia effectively, without side effects.

The results suggest that classical Ayurvedic formulations can serve as a reliable therapeutic option for chronic fungal scalp infections. Further large-scale, controlled clinical trials are recommended to establish statistical significance and broader applicability.

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