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Review on etiopathogenesis and role of lifestyle modification in the management of *Khalitya* (hairfall)

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ABSTRACT

Now a days, the world is full of glamour and glory. The concept of beauty is gaining more and more attention globally, which is defined on some factors, amongst them hair is an important one. Hair is a mirror of healthy or unhealthy state of the body. Ayurvedic approach, falling of hair is coined as *Khalitya*. In Ayurvedic texts management of *Khalitya* has been described in the form of *Nasya*, *Shiroabhyanga*, *Shirolepa* and *Rasayana* therapy. The main aim of this paper is to explain the *Nidana* of *Khalitya* in present era and treat the disease too.

Key words: Ayurveda, Abhyanga, Lifestyle, *Khalitya*, *Nasya*.

INTRODUCTION

Khalitya is a disease in which hair fall occur. *Acharya Charaka* has described *Khalitya* under the heading of *Trimarmiya Chikitsa Adhyaya* in very close relation of *Shiroroga*^[1] and also mentioned in the context of negotiation of *Dushtapratishyaya*.^[2] It comes under *Kshudrakushtha* according to *Acharya Sushruta*^[3] and also *Acharya Vagbhatta* describes *Khalitya* as one of the nine '*Shirah Kapal Vyadhi*' in "*Shiroroga Vigyaniya Adhyaya*".^[4]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This article is mainly based on a review of Ayurveda classics. Material related to *Khalitya* has been collected from *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtang Sangraha* and *Ashtang Hridaya* along with

respective commentaries available and data related with topic available at different journals, books and websites.

Hetu (Aetiological Factors)

The following are the aetiology of *Khalitya*.

Aharaja Nidana (According to Acharya Charaka)^[5]

1. *Ati Amla Ahara* (excessive intake of sour food)
2. *Atisheetambu Sevana* (excessive intake of cold food)
3. *Dusta-Ama Bhojana* (stale and uncooked food leading to indigestion)
4. *Guru Ahara* (Intake of heavy food)
5. *Harita Shaka Atisevana* (excessive intake of green leafy vegetables)
6. *Hina Ahara* (intake of cold food)
7. *Lavana Ati Sevana* (excessive intake of salt)

Viharaja Nidana (According to Acharya Charaka)^[6]

1. *Atapa Ati Sevana* (exposure to hot weather)
2. *Ati Maithuna* (excessive sexual indulgence)
3. *Divaswapna* (day sleep)
4. *Sheeta Sevana* (exposure to cold weather)

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5. *Asatmya Gandha Sevana* (inhalation of bad odour)
6. *Pragvata Sevana* (exposure to easternly wind)
7. *Ratrijagarana* (night vigil)
8. *Rajo Dhuma Sevana* (exposure to dust & fumes / smoke)
9. *Rodana* (excessively crying)
10. *Sandharana / Vegadharana* (suppression of natural urges)
11. *Manastapa* (mental agony)
12. *Shiro Abhigata* (Trauma on Head/Scalp)
13. *Desha Kala Viparyaya* (changes in weather & place)
14. *Meghagama* (cloudy weather)

Further, *Acharya Vagbhata* has added few other factors responsible for the diseases which are as below;

Aharaja Evam Viharaja Nidana (According to Acharya Vagbhata)^[7]

1. *Atimadyapana* (excessive intake of alcohol)
2. *Atisheetambu Sevana* (excessive intake of cold food)
3. *Dusta-Ama Bhojana* (stale and uncooked food leading to indigestion)
4. *Ati Swapna* (excessive sleep)
5. *Ati Bhashya* (excessive talking) *Bashpa nigraha* (suppression of tears)
6. *Pragvata Sevana* (exposure to extremely wind)
7. *Rodana* (excessively crying)
8. *Sandharana / Vegadharana* (suppression of natural urges)
9. *Abhyanga Dwesha* (Not following oleation therapy)
10. *Mruja Dwesha* (Not keeping hygiene).
11. *Krimi* (Infection / infestation)

Linga of Khalitya (symptoms of hairfall)

Lakshana of *Khalitya* according to its type are as follows:^[8]

1. **Vataja Khalitya:** In this type, *Keshbhoomi* (Scalp) appears as if it is *Agnidagdha* and it becomes *Shyava* and *Aruna*.
2. **Pittaja Khalitya:** In this type the colour of scalp appears as *Peeta*, *Neela* and *Harita*. The scalp is surrounded by the *Siras* (veins). Sweat may be found all over scalp.
3. **Kaphaja Khalitya:** In this type, the colour of the scalp is more or less same as the colour of skin but here it is *Ghana* (dense) and *Snigdha* (oily) in appearance and the colour tends towards whitish tinge.
4. **Tridoshaja Khalitya:** In this type of *Khalitya*, characteristic of all the three *Doshas* are observed. The scalp looks like burnt and it bears nail like appearance.

Acharya Harita has denoted this disease by the name of *Keshaghna* and classified its symptoms according to its type's viz.^[9]

1. **Vataja Khalitya:** *Ruksha* and *Pandura Keshaboomi*
2. **Pittaja Khalitya:** *Raktabha* and *Agnidagdha Saman Keshaboomi*
3. **Kaphaja Khalitya:** *Snigdha Keshaboomi*
4. **Raktaja Khalitya:** *Puyaukta* (with pus) *Keshaboomi*
5. **Sannipataja Khalitya:** *Tridosha Lakshanayukta Keshaboomi*

Samprapti of Khalitya (pathogenesis of Khalitya)

Pitta along with *Vata* get vitiated due to consumption of faulty diet and following of faulty lifestyle by involving the *Romakoopa* causes fall of Hairs (*Kesha*) and thereafter *Shleshma* (*Kapha*) along with *Shonita* (*Rakta*) obstructs the channels of *Romakoopa* leading to the stoppage of the regeneration of the new hairs and this condition is known as *Khalitya*.^[10]

Pitta along with *Vata* by involving the *Romakoopa* causes fall of *Romas* and thereafter *Shleshma* along

with *Shonita* obstructs the channels of *Romakoopa* leading to the stoppage of the regeneration of the other and this condition is known as *Indralupta*, *Khalitya* or *Rujya*.^[11]

Acharya Vagbhatta also has described *Khalitya Samprapti* as per *Acharya Sushruta* but differentiated *Indralupta* and *Khalitya* by saying that in *Khalitya*, loss of hair occurs gradually in *Indralupta*, hair loss occurs suddenly.

Khalitya has been considered under *Indralupta* and treatment has been described under *Kshudra Roga* by *Acharya Chakradatta*^[12] and *Sharangdhara*.^[13] *Acharya Bhavamishra* also described *Khalitya* as *Kshudra Roga* during explaining *Samprapti* of *Indralupta*.^[14] *Madhukosha* commentator explained the differentiation between *Indralupta*, *Khalitya* and *Ruhy*.^[15]

Treatment

The *Samprapti Vighatana* or the treatment of a disease involves all those measures adopted to eliminate the morbidity of the *Doshas* and hence bringing about equilibrium of *Doshas*, If *Dosha* get more vitiated, then *Panchakarma* should be adopted for the treatment.

The line of treatment of *Khalitya* mentioned by different Acharya is as below:

Acharya Charaka says that after adequate *Samshodhana* patient of *Khalitya* should be subjected to *Nasya*, massage of oil and *Shirolepa*.^[16]

Therapeutic measure adopted by *Ashtanga Samgrahakara* coincides with that of *Charaka* and *Sushruta*. He advises to adopt regimens of *Indralupta* and *Palitya* in *Khalitya* along with administration of *Samshodhana* as per *Dosha*.

He adds further that the *Sira* nearer the site of disease should be opened successively different *Pralepa* should be applied. He suggests another method for the *Raktamokshana* by scraping of the scalp either by *Suchi*, *Kurchika* or by rough leaves before application of *Lepa* (Application of medicated herbs). After *Snehana* (Oleation), *Swedana* (Fomentation) and

Asravana (bloodletting), *Acharya Vagbhatta* advises to give *Nasya*.^[17]

The common management can be divided as following:

- *Abhyanga*
- *Lepa*
- *Shodhan*
- *Nasya*
- *Rasayan and Keshya Dravya*

DISCUSSION

Acharyas have described common etiological factors for *Khalitya*. A comparative study of these factors reveals that importance is given to *Acharanas* and psychological factors along with the *Ahara* and *Viharaja Nidana*.

Charaka mentions *Amla*, *Lavana* and *Kshara* as the main *Rasas* which on excess intake cause *Khalitya* and other *Kesha* and *Twak Rogas*. These *Rasas* increase *Rakta* and vitiate the *Pitta*. *Guru* and *Sheeta Ahara* leads to *Kapha Dosha*. *Dusta* and *Ama Bhojana* leads to *Amothpatti*; there by *Rasa Dhatu Poshana* to the *Kesha* is hindered. Excessive indulgence in cold water and cold weather leads to *Vata* and *Kapha Doshas*.^[18]

Atapa Atisevana, *Raja* and *Dhooma Sevana* means excessive exposure to heat, dust and fumes, without proper protection to head which may result in excessive sweating and blockage of *Romakupas* by *Rakta* and *Pitta*. *Ati Maithuna* increases *Vatadosha*,^[19] *Atiswapna* and *Ratrijagarana* leads to *Kapha* and *Vata* respectively,^[20] *Vegavarodha* leads to *Vata Vaigunya*,^[21] *Shiro Abhyanga* is essential for preventing *Khalitya*. The absence of that leads to dryness and there by increases the *Vata* due to *Rookshata*.^[22] *Atimadyapana* leads to *Pitta* and *Rakta Dusti*.^[23] *Manasika Karanas* such as *Kama*, *Krodha*, *Bhaya*, *Shoka* etc. lead to *Vata Dusti* and there by *Rasa Dusti* which in turn leads to vitiation of other *Doshas* also.^[24] Hence with the above analysis, one can conclude that *Khalitya* is caused by the predominance of vitiated *Pitta*, *Vata* associated with *Rakta* and *Kapha*.

Suggestion of lifestyle modification for prevention of hairfall^[25]**Do's**

- Food should be taken regularly as per routine schedule it helps to improve digestion.
- Wheat, Ghee, Milk, Buttermilk, sprouted beans, Butter and Pulses are beneficial for hair as it rich in Protein and fibres.
- The cogs of combs and the bristle of brushes must not be very hard and sharp and should be round ended. They must be blunt at the tips. Otherwise it will harm to hairs root and increase hairfall.
- The use of Vegetable ghee must be ceased and the intake of green vegetable, beans should be increased.
- Hair and Scalp must be oiliated daily and Oil should be applied only after the hairs are properly dried after washing.
- If possible, the tender and warm rays of the sun of early morning should be seeked after massaging oil all over the body. The massage must be done with the fingertips all over the scalp especially around the hair roots.
- Always a lukewarm water i.e. neither very hot nor very cold must be used to wash the hair according to the season.
- If the hairs are greasy and itching is persistence, then the hair should be washed with slightly hot water.
- The use of shampoo, strong soap etc. should be ceased for washing the hair and instead of that *Triphala* powder, Buttermilk, *Shikakai* (*Acacia concinna*) etc. must be used.
- Hair must be washed regularly twice to thrice in a week

Don't

- Frequent fast food should be avoided as these items containing Acrid taste, Excessive oil, Soda bicarbonate, Citric acid and Sourness which leads to more hairfall.

- Cold and unfresh food items kept in freeze should not be used because it increases *Vata Dosha*.
- All Addiction like Tea, Coffee, Tobacco, Betel Nuts, and Smoking and Cold beverages, Ice cream etc. must be restricted, as they are harmful for hairs.
- Frequent hair cutting, repeated use of hair dyes, change of hairstyle, use of various hair sprays etc. are harmful for hairs.
- Vigorous massage or rubbing must be avoided. The use of artificial Chemical hair cream, hair lotion, hair dye etc. must be avoided.
- Roaming with open head in sun light and excessive labour should be avoided as it creates more dryness on hairs.
- Waking up till late night and sleeping during the day, both are equally harmful for hair.

CONCLUSION

Khalitya is a disease having gradual onset. *Khalitya* occurs due to various causes regarding dietetic habits, *Vihara*, excessive stress, various types of hair care products having chemicals etc. *Khalitya* has various aggravating factors like salty hard water, rainy and winter season, stress, hair dye, colors, straightening etc. reported by patients also. Major part to avoid the occurrence of *Khalitya* is prevention of the causes. Life style modification is very important part for the prevention of *Khalitya*. Hence every people should be aware about consumption of faulty diet and follow proper life style.

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