

Khalitya (Hair Fall) Management - Ayurvedic Perspective

Dr. Princy Purwar¹, Dr. S. S. Yadav², Dr. Pragya Gangele³

¹JR 2, ²Assistant Professor, ³JR 3,
Department of Samhita & Sanskrit, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, BHU, Varanasi,

Corresponding Author: Dr. Princy Purwar

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a deep ocean of knowledge in which not only systemic disease but also local minor diseases are described in detail. Hair fall is one of the minor diseases which is affecting approximately 1.7% of the world population and challenging task for physicians. Hair fall has been described in Ayurveda by the name of *khalitya roga* under the heading of *kshudra roga* (minor disease) or *shiroroga* (diseases of head & scalp). It is progressing disorder people living in sedentary ways of life, stress induced hectic schedules along with indiscriminate dietary habits result in many disturbance and deficiencies in the body which directly reflect in loss of hair. We can reduce & manage this rising problem of hair fall through modifying life style, purification therapy and medication practicing in Ayurveda.

Key words: *Khalitya, indralopa, hair oil, nasya.*

INTRODUCTION

Healthy, long and vibrant hair helps a lot in improvement of personality. Therefore, to keep hair in healthy state is entirely duty of human being, because just like face, hair is also a mirror of healthy state of body. In this advanced modernized era, the humans are gifted with lot of sophistication, luxuries but at the same time left with sedentary life style, stress induced hectic schedules along with faulty dietary habits. These all habits influences the homeostasis of the body and with many other health problems, fall is one of them. Problem of falling of hair is progressively increasing in society which is also affecting quality of life. Many years of hair loss have impact on mental health. Dermatology life quality index scores in patients with hair loss were similar to those recorded in severe psoriasis. This study specifically identify the feeling of self - confidence, low self -

esteem and heightened self-consciousness in people affected by hair loss. ^[1]

Hair fall has been described in almost all the Ayurvedic literatures as *Khalitya*. It has been included in *Shiroroga* by *Acharya Charaka & Ashtanga hridayakar*. This inclusion has been done on the basis of *Shtana* (location) of diseases and similarity of etiopathogenesis of diseases. It is clearly mentioned in *Ashtanghridaya* that nine diseases occurring on the outer part of head over scalp should be called *shiroroga*.

Sushrut Samhita, Ashtangsamgrah, Yoga Ratnakar and *Madhav Nidan*, has included *Khalitya* diseases under *kshudra roga*. This inclusion in *kshudra roga* is due to mildness of disease. These diseases are not life threatening and are of less severity in comparison to other major diseases. *Gayadasa* says that they are minor because of littleness of their cause, symptoms and

treatment. They are not only minor but also mean terrible which, though of a low stature frequently give pricks and embarrassment to patient.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Literature of all the Ayurvedic texts (both *brihat-trayi* and *laghu-trayi*), modern medicine literature and new researches published are studied for this review work.

Khalitya and Indralupta: Gradual falling of hair is known as *Khalitya*. When *pitta* combines with *vata* or *kapha dosha* to destroy the hair, it is called *khalitya*.^[7] According to *Acharya Chraka*, The *tejas dhatu* (heat of body) of the body in association with *vayu* and other *dosha*, scorches up the hair-root (scalp) giving instantaneous rise to alopecia (*khalitya*) in man. One more term used in texts for hair fall is *Indralupta*. *Ruchya* and *chach* are two of its synonyms.^[8] According to *Acharya kartika*, falling of hair from all over the body is called *ruhya*.

There are some differences between *khalitya* & *Indralupta*. In *khalitya*, hair loss is gradual and generalised over the scalp but hairs are lost suddenly and patch by patch in *indralupta*. When the *kapha dosha* combines with *rakta dhatu* it results in degeneration and shutting down completely of hair follicles thus leading to baldness. When *Khalitya* is due to *vata* it causes burning over scalp; when due to *pitta* it causes sweating and when due to *kapha* it causes thickening of skin.^[8]

Origin of hair-

Ayurveda mentioned that human body is made up of main seven *dhatus* (body elements) viz. *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mansa*, *Meda*, *Asthi*, *Majja* and *sukra*. Majority of *acharyas* believe that the production of later *dhatu* occurs from former *dhatu* by the function of their respective *agni* i.e. the *rasagni* turns the *ahara rasa* into *rasa dhatu* then *raktagni* converts part of *rasa dhatu* in *rakta* and so on. Along with production of later *dhatu*, there is side by side production of *upadhatu* & *mala* of former *dhatu*.

During this process of production of *dhatus* when metabolism of *asthi dhatu* occur by its own *agni* & *majja dhatu* emerges from *sara* part and at the same time hair of scalp & body and nails form as *mala*.^[2] According to *acharya Sharngadhar*, Scalp and body hair are the *updhatu* of *Majja dhatu*.^[3]

Among the all the *garbhaj bhava* (factors for development of foetus), hair is *pitraj bhava* means structure, colour and quantity of progeny are dependent on paternal side.^[4] Hair made up of mainly *parthiva mahabhoota* (earth element). Hair formation starts during sixth month of intrauterine life.^[5]

According to modern science, Hair can be defined as modified epithelial structure formed as a result of keratinisation of germination cell. Hair is an epidermal appendage that lies with the dermis. Every hair emerges from the hair follicles which resembles like a slim pocket insides epidermis. Hair is present in every discipline of the epidermis beside the palm, sole and lips. Hair development undergoes a repetitive cycle. In the scalp, hair growth cycle has three essential phases: Anagen, Categen and Telogen. The anagen segment is a progress phase which most commonly lasts 3-5 years. One a healthy scalp, there are roughly 100000 hair & 90% of the follicles are consistently in the anagen segment of hair development. Categen stage follows this phases, when the follicles begins to end up dormant which lasts for 2-3 week. The telogen stage is a dormant stage or resting interval that lasts 3-4 months. When this stage ends, hair falls out. That hair follicle then returns to the anagen stage & a new hair begins to develop. In this way, hair growth cycle continues. 50-60 hairs are lost per day in normal hair growth cycle.^[6]

Causes of Khalitya Roga-

- Due to *usna guna* of *pitta dosha* individual of *pitta prakriti* starts hair fall and greying of hair earlier than individuals of other *dosha prakriti*.^[9]
- The hair has tendency to lose its natural colour with advancing age. Although,

Aging is genetically predetermined but lifestyle, dietary habits, mental status, social & family life and many other environmental factors may influence the aging process and their unfavourable effects cause premature aging. In a survey study, 81.66% patients of premature aging of 30-40 years age had complaint of hair fall. Pre-mature aging could be a cause of increasing hair fall in peoples. [10]

- Causative factor of *shiroroga* are too much exposure to smoke, sunlight, mist, indulge in water sports; excessive sleep or avoiding sleep, sweating, eastern breeze or direct breeze, control of tars, weeping too much, drinking water & wine in large quantity, presence of worms in side body, suppression of urges, avoiding the use of pillow, bath and oil anointing, always looking downwards, unaccustomed, unhealthy, vitiated or raw smell, too much speaking etc; by indulgence in these and similar causes the *dosha* get aggravated and produces diseases in head. This can produce *khalitya* because of same place of manifestation. [11]
- **Darunaka (Dendruf)** - Deranged *kapha* and *vayu* cause minute fissures on the scalp which are dry and show sign of itching and leads to hair fall. Many times along with *kapha* and *vata*, *pitta* gets deranged leading to *darunaka*. [12] *Daruna* mean hard. Although vitiation of *kapha* and *vata* has been mentioned in *darunaka*, association (*anubandha*) of *pitta* and *rakta* is also seen. [13]
- Excessive consumption of salt and *kshara* leads to *khalitya*. [14] Improper diet or excess salt in diet consumption by pregnant lady causes *khalitya* early in her child due vitiation of *pitta dosha*. [15]
- Getting angry, talking & laughing too much, sneezing and over exertion after taking *nasya* leads to *khalitya* and *palitya*. Here, hair fall occurs because of not following agenda after *Nasya* procedure.

- Hair fall can be caused by decrease in *asthi dhatu* or vitiation of *asthi dhatu*. As hairs are formed by waste product of *asthi dhatu* and hair dependent upon it for nutrition. [16]
- Excessive combing during *ritukal* leads to hair fall in child. [17] (Su.)
- Causes according to modern science - Nutritional disorder, Local skin disorder, Endocrinal diseases, Post - acute illness, Stress, Drugs, Cosmetics and Genetic tendencies.

Approach to Patient of Khalitya -

Hair fall can be manifested as primary disease (as independent disease) as well as secondary to other disorder or can be present as symptom of many diseases. Because of its variable etio-pathogenesis, we need a careful approach to the patients for proper diagnosis and treatment of hair fall (*khalitya*). Proper history should be taken including all the criteria like past medical history, family history and personal history along with other general & systemic examinations. Scalp & body should be carefully examined to detect any abnormality in skin.

Management of Khalitya –

1. **Nidanparivarjan** - *Nidanparivarjan* should be first line of management. All the causative factors & risk factors should examine carefully and must be avoided to reduce development of disease.
- Prevention is better than cure. Individual of *pitta prakriti* are more prone to falling of hair. They should follow diet & habit as mentioned for them in Ayurvedic texts. Due to accumulation of *pitta dosha* in rainy season and vitiation in autumn season, these months of year are more uncertain for patients of hair fall, individual of *pitta prakriti* or persons with genetic history of baldness. These people are strictly advice to follow proper routine mentioned for rainy and autumn season respectively.

- In hair fall due to premature aging, *Rasayana* therapy is needed mainly with *vayasthapana* drugs.
 - Patient should protect himself from all the causes mentioned for *shiroroga* as hair fall numerated under *shiroroga* according to some author. He should protect himself from dust, smoke, fog, cold water, sunlight etc. he should avoid sleeping in day time and awakening late night.
 - Patients of hair fall must avoid excessive use of salt and *kshara* in his diet.
 - Harsh Chemical, heating treatment used in practice for cosmetic purpose should be avoided or minimally used.
2. **Hair Care-** Along with these precautions, patients of hair fall need to adopt a healthy life style for care of hair, discussed in *Samhita* for the health of hair are as following.
- **Moordha tail (oiling) and paste for local application over scalp** – Oil should be regularly applied on scalp. It prevents falling of hair, baldness and also makes the hair black long and deep - rooted. It provides nourishment to the hair follicles and also gives strength to the cortex and fibre of hair. [18] Mustard oil or Coconut oil can be used on regular basis for the massage oil hair.
 - **Nasya (nasal drop)** – Everybody should take nasal drop of “*Anu tail*” every year during the rainy, autumn and spring season when the sky is free from cloud. Along with many other benefits, it prevents hair fall and also accelerates the growth of hair. [19] *Nasya* nourishes the *srotas* present above the clavicle including the hair follicles which strengthen the hair and reduce falling.
 - **Snana (taking bath)** – *Acharya Sushrut* mention that the head and hair should not be washed with warm water or with very cold water. Pouring warm water over head reduces the strength of hair & eyes. [20] Proper hair wash should be done at least three times in a week. Shampoos and soaps used for hair wash should be mild and free form chemicals. Decoction or Shampoo made up of herbs like Henna, Bringraj, Jatamansi, Shoe flower, Triphala, Ghrit Kumari, Shikakai, Motha, Bhrami etc. can be used for washing hair.
 - **Dhoomapana (medicated smoke)**– Along with health of head & senses, dhoomapana cures the problem of hair fall by clearing the *dosha* from head region and also improves the firmness of hair on the head, beard & teeth. [21]
 - **Kshaurakarma** – Hair cutting & proper care of hair of scalp & beard should be done regularly. *Acharya charaka* mentioned that everybody should have a hair - cut, shave and nail cut thrice every fortnight. [22]
 - **Ushnishka** – The wearing of *ushnishka* (turban or cap) on head protect the hair from wind, heat, dust etc. which is pious and beneficial for hair. [23] Covering of head protect are hairs from environmental factor.
3. **Purification Procedure (Panchkarma)-** For the patient of hair fall *Vaman, Virechan, Vasti* and *Rakta mokshana* should be done according to the *dosha* involve. Because of involvement of mainly *pitta dosha, virechana* and *rakta mokshan* are commonly indicated in falling of hair & baldness.
4. **Medicated Oils for shiroabhyanga are** -
- *Neeli tail (Sushrut)*
 - *Sairiyaka tail (Sushrut)*
 - *Mahaneel tail (A.H.)*
 - *Snuhyadi tail (Chakradutta)*
 - *Chandanadhya tail (Chakradutta)*
 - *Mulethi + amlalaka + milk + tail paka (Chakradutta)*
5. **Pastes for local application over scalp are** -
- *Madhuka, amalaka + honey (A.S)*
 - *Tila, amalaka + honey + oil(A.S)*

- *Kapikakshu mool + aksha tail* in iron vessel (A.S)
- *Dugdika karveera+ milk* (A.S)
- *Kapalaranjaka lepa* (Chakradutta)
- *Bhringpushadi lepa* (Chakradutta)
- *Mandoor bhasma + amlaki churna + japapushpa* then wash with *triphala kwath*
- *Ayas churna + triphala + sour liquid* (Chakradutta)

6. Medicated Oils for Nasal medication are -

- *Anu tail Nasya* (A.S.)
- *Brihatyadi navana* (A.S.)
- *Sahacharadi navana* (A.S.)
- *Nimba tail* (Chakradutta)
- *Bhrigaraja rasa + mulethi + milk + tail paka* (Chakradutta)

7. Other yoga & Rasayana for the patient of hair fall mentioned in Charaka Samhita are-

- *Agastya haritaki*
- *Kankarishta*
- *Dwipanchmool ghrita*
- *Amalaki rasayana*
- *Navayas lauha*
- *Mandoor bhasma*

DISCUSSION

Khalitya is a common but very challenging and capricious disease of the world population and can have a profound effect on physical and emotional state. *Viruddha ahara, pitta vardhak ahara vihara, abhishyandi ahara*, sedentary lifestyle increases *Pitta* and *Vata* which leads to *khalitya*. Ayurvedic management for *Khalitya* are *Abhyang, shodhan, lepan, Nasya, Rasayana* therapies.

Abhyang chikitsa, especially with oil is best for *vata dosha shaman*. *Abhyang* of oil which prepared by *kapha, pitta* and *vatahar dravyas* helps in *vata shaman* along with *pitta* and *kapha shaman*. *Shirolepan karma* which performed by *vatahar, pittahar* and *kaphahar dravyas* normalizes *vata, pitta* and *kapha dosha* accordingly.

Shodhana and *nasya karma* is a specialised therapy of Ayurveda. *Shodhana* is a procedure which takes out the doshas from the nearest route of its vitiation. *Rasayana* therapy has immune-modulators, antioxidant properties and rejuvenating action which is very beneficial for the hair fall caused by any chronic illness, pre mature aging or nutrition deficiency.

CONCLUSION

Khalitya is a wicked disease which needs proper management. Some minor changes of life style and dietary habits can prevent hair fall. Proper hair care life oiling, washing, protection from external factors like environment, chemicals, heating etc is important for preventing hair fall and keeping them healthy. Before starting treatment of hair fall, physician should identify the cause and first treatment should be *Nidanparivarjana* or management of that cause. Than after other therapies like *Abhyang, lepana, shodhan, nasya, Rasayana* hould be prescribed accordingly. In this way, we can treat the *khalitya roga* or hair fall effectively.

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How to cite this article: Purwar P, Yadav SS, Gangele P. Khalitya (hair fall) management - ayurvedic perspective. Int J Health Sci Res. 2019; 9(4):255-260.
