

**EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF ALOPECIA AREATA
(INDRALUPTA) WITH LEECH APPLICATION
(JALAUKAVACHARAN)-A CASE REPORT**

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ABSTRACT

Acharya sushruta has described hair problems such as *darunak*, *palitya*, *indralupta* etc. under the heading of *kshudra roga*. Of these *Indralupta* is a specific condition characterized by hair loss in the form of patches in some scalp areas. According to acharya sushrut vitiated vata mixes with bhrajak pitta present at romakupa and sheds off hair and further vitiation of rakta along with kapha causes avarodh thereby preventing growth of new hair. Alopecia areata, an autoimmune disorder which is characterised by well-defined, non-inflammatory, non-scarring patches of alopecia, usually on the scalp can be correlated with indralupta in Ayurveda. Alopecia areata may respond to topical or intralesional corticosteroids. As this treatment having some side effects

and limitations; in order to treat the vyadhi completely from roots and to avoid recurrence some harmless treatment is expected from alternative medical sciences. Ayurveda has great potential to treat such autoimmune disorder. Chedan, Bhedan, Lekhan and vyadhan are the shastrakarmas & kshar karma, agnikarma, and jalaukavacharan are the ANUSHASTRA prayogas commonly used in shalyatantra. Here a case of female patient 26 year old suffering from *indralupta* treated with *ayurvedic raktamokshan* therapy by *Jalaukavacharan*.

KEYWORDS: kshudraroga, indralupta, jalaukavacharan, alopecia areata, autoimmune disorder.

INTRODUCTION

Alopecia areata(AA), an autoimmune disorder which is characterised by well-defined, non-inflammatory, non-scarring patches of alopecia, usually on the scalp.^[1] An autoimmune disorder, alopecia areata manifests as patchy loss of hair follicles into telogen (resting phase). Loss of hair in well-defined rounded patches is typical. The bald skin is hairless, smooth and lacks any signs of inflammation. However careful examination with lens reveals opening of hair follicles, indicating that this is non-scarring alopecia. Spreading margins bear broken stubs of hair that taper towards the skin surface, are easily pluckable and when plucked, show a round bulb (exclamation mark hair).

Scalp is affected most often, alone or in combination with other regions. Beard, moustache, eyebrows, eyelashes, axillae, pubis or extremities are some of the other sites. Involvement of the whole scalp leading to complete baldness is termed as alopecia totalis. When hairs are lost over the whole body it is termed as alopecia universalis. Both these conditions have poor prognosis. Differential diagnosis includes trichotillomania, tinea capitis and pseudopelade. Skin biopsy shows perifollicular infiltrates of lymphocytes around the hair roots.^[2]

It is one of the most common autoimmune conditions with the prevalence of 1.5%-2% in general population, without any respective gender or race. Irregular diet habit, air pollution, lack of cleanliness are causes of this disease. The onset of AA can occur at any age, but the peak incidence is in the second and third decades of life. Alopecia areata can be associated with significant psychosocial implications in the patients owing to the cosmetic disfigurement associated with it. In modern science, treatment is with corticosteroids which is having harmful side effects and not advisable for long term use. So some remedies from alternative medical science must be invented. In Ayurveda, acharya sushrut has explained the indralupta disease in which, he has told that vitiated vata mixes with bhrajak pitta present at romakupa and sheds off hair and further vitiation of rakta along with kapha causes avarodh thereby preventing growth of new hair^[3] which can be correlated with Alopecia areata. *Ayurveda* offers various kinds of effective treatment modalities for the management of autoimmune diseases. Alopecia areata can be correlated with *indralupta* disease in *Ayurveda*. Here is a case of female patient 26 year old suffering from *indralupta* treated with *ayurvedic raktamokshan* therapy by *Jalaukavacharan*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Leeches have been obtained from market.

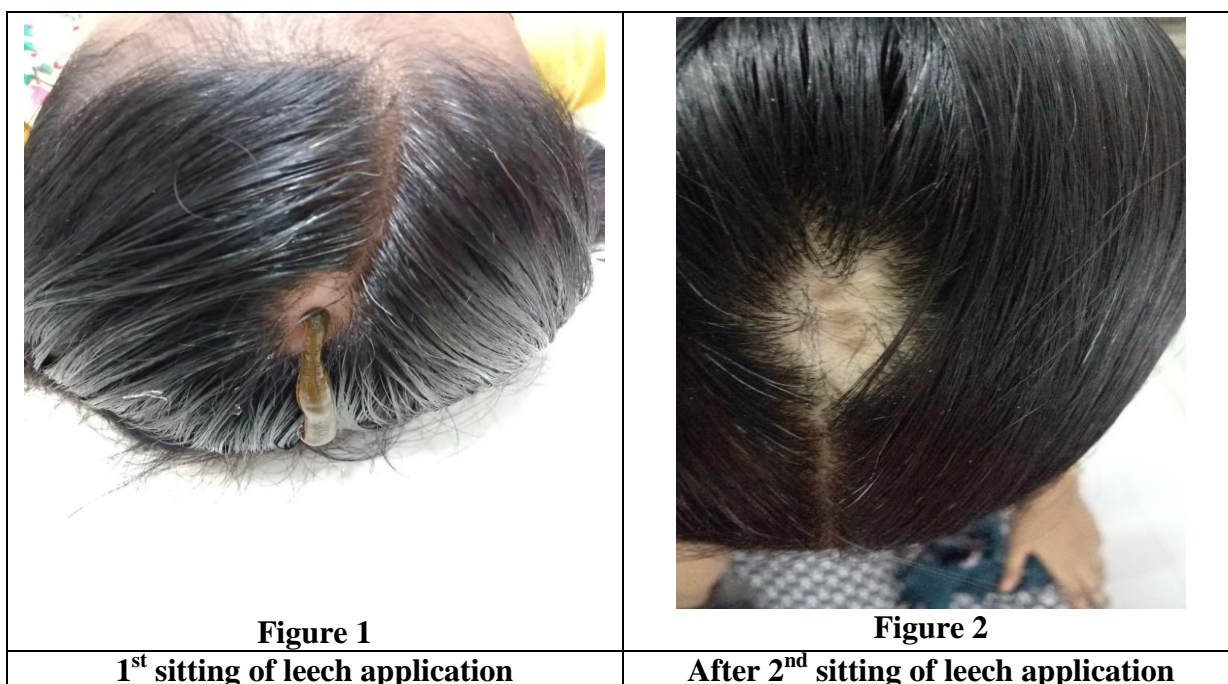
A single case study of a female patient 26 years old suffering from a single oval shaped bald patch over scalp which appeared abruptly since one year. On clinical examination she was diagnosed with alopecia areata (Indralupta). She had taken allopathic treatment for 3 months but no results found; so she came to surgery OPD of M.A.PODAR hospital for ayurvedic treatment.

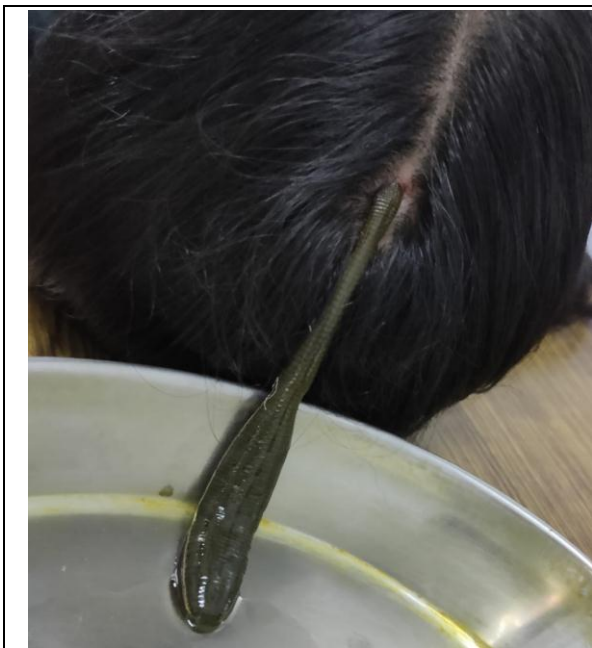
After thorough general and physical examination I decided to do raktamokshan by leech application^[4] for this patient.

Firstly, patient was explained the details regarding therapy.

The bald patch is cleaned with NS. Leech is applied over the patch. After about 40min leech detached itself from the site. Then vaman of leech is done & kept in bottle containing water. On every 3rd day water is changed. Likewise same leech is used for the same patient after every 7 days for 8 weeks. Meanwhile photographs of different sittings were taken and are represented in (Fig1-6)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



**Figure 3****After 4th sitting of leech application****Figure 4****After 6th sitting of leech application****Figure 5****8th sitting of leech application****Figure 6****After 8th sitting of leech application**

Raktamokshana, one of the panchkarma is indicated for indralupta in many samhitas.

In sushruta chikitsasthana; raktamokshan by siravedha at murdhni^[5] is indicated for indralupta.

Here in this study raktamokshan by jalauka is done which reduces the risk of wound sepsis and secondary infection. Leech application acts as avagadh raktamokshan, thus destroying avarodha caused by rakta & kapha. Also it helps in anuloman of bhrajak pitta & vata.

CONCLUSION

There was significant improvement with hair growth on bald patch after 8 sittings.

No adverse effects were noted during the treatment.

So the present study confirms that leech application is safe and effective remedy in the treatment of Indralupta.

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