

Leech Therapy in the Management of Herpes Zoster – A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Herpes zoster is an acute viral disease characterized by painful skin rashes along with blisters caused due to reactivation of varicella zoster virus (VZV) within patient's body. Herpes zoster also known as shingles. This condition is often associated with various risk factors including aging, weakened immune systems, and exposure to biological agents such as tumor necrosis factor inhibitors. The administration of best antiviral drugs or steroids or NSAIDs gives temporary suppression of pain without much relief in burning sensation. Due to low immunity further chance of complications like post herpetic neuralgia is there. Leeches when applied over affected part of herpes sucks the blood and there by interferes with extracellular communication through these exosomes and their by showing pain reduction, reduction in burning and arrest progression of disease. This technique is cost effective and easy to apply. In Ayurveda herpes can be correlated with Pittaj visarpa. Principle of treatment is Raktmokshan Bloodletting with Jalauka is specifically indicated in management of Pitta dominant disorder. **Case** 80 years male come to O.P.D Of Shalyatantra department of L.K Ayurved Hospital Yavatmal with chief complaints with acute vesicular eruption with of pain and burning sensation since 2 days. After local examination it was diagnosed with herpes zoster and choice of treatment was leech therapy. Consecutively 2 sittings were given.

Keywords: Herpes zoster; Leech therapy; raktamokshan, jaloukavacharan.

I. INTRODUCTION

Herpes zoster is an acute viral disease caused by reactivation of varicella-zoster virus (VZV). Symptoms begin with painful skin rash followed by vesicular eruption and sometimes fever may be present. There is unilateral vesicular eruption within dermatome associated with severe pain. The worldwide incidence of herpes zoster is 5-10% & in India there is 2-6%. Modern medicine doctors routinely manage it with antiviral therapy

like acyclovir corticosteroids and local application of lidocaine jelly. Though safety of acyclovir is established by many clinical trials but it has adverse drug effects like sleepiness or confusion, hallucinations, change in a behaviour, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea. The main aim of treatment is pain management, induce healing, reduction in viral spread and avoidance of complications. Leech therapy plays important role in pain management. Various studies show that medicinal leeches achieve analgesic, anti-inflammatory, platelet inhibitory, anticoagulant, thrombin regulatory function as well as extracellular matrix degradation and antimicrobial effect through hemophagy. This technique is cost effective and easy to apply. It is being used for wide range of diseases in Ayurveda including pain and burning management and skin diseases. Herpes zoster is closely related with Kaksha which is described in our Ayurveda. Kaksha is one of the major skin diseases which is described in Kshudraroga. In Kakshavyadhi signs, symptoms were seen such as Daha, Jwara, Shool and Pidika. In Shushrut Samhita Chikitsasthan described the treatment of Kakshavyadhi which is similar to Pittaj Visarpa. Sometimes Kakshavyadhi may be aashukarivyadhi i.e. it has acute manifestation & it needs urgent treatment. Three main type of Raktamokshan according to dosha are described in Sushrut Samhita. One of that type is Jaloukavacharana which is used in pittajvyadhi.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

To evaluate the efficacy of Jaloukavacharan in the management of Herpes Zoster.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

Jalouka used locally as an emergency treatment

Methods

80 years male come to O.P.D Of Shalyatantra department of L.K Ayurved Hospital Yavatmal with chief complaints with acute vesicular eruption with of pain and burning

sensation since 2 days. After local examination it was diagnosed with herpes zoster and choice of treatment was leech therapy. Consecutively alternate days treatment given for 2 days.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis is done entirely on signs & symptoms of herpes zoster

Laboratory investigation

CBC,Hb-9.7 gm% ,wbc -13,110 /cmm,platelet count 1,64,000/cmm.
Blood sugar -119mg/dl

HIV 1 & 2 -non reactive , HbSAg -non reactive

Treatment plan

Patient was treated on OPD basis. When patient came with above complaints, as an emergency treatment Jalouka (leech) was used. Patient was observed for follow up and next sitting of Jaloukavacharana was done.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

The criteria for assessment was done on the basis of the improvement shown in signs & symptoms.

A) Burning Sensation (Daha)

0	Absent
1	Mild, occasional and localized
2	Moderate and localized
3	Severe, localized generalized burning sensation

B)Vesicle (Pidika)

0	Absent
1	Erythematous rashes
2	Vesicle formation
3	Pustules with oozing

C)Fever (Jwar)

0	Normal temp. 98f
1	Mild up to 100 f
2	Moderate 100 to 102 f
3	Severe 103 f

D)Shool (Pain)

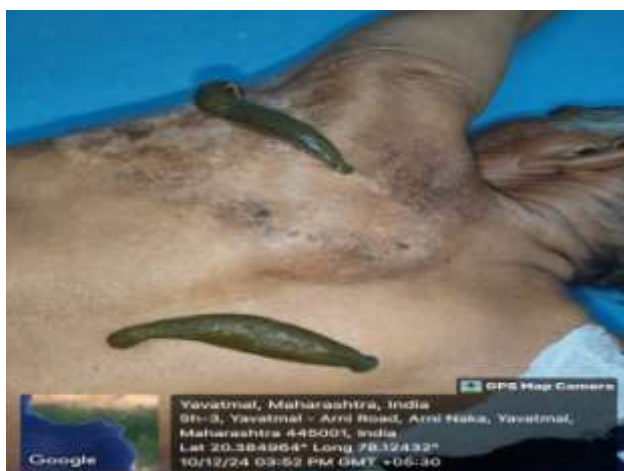
0	No pain
1	Mild
2	Discomforting
3	Horrible

OBSERVATION

Sign and symptoms	Before Treatment	1 Day	2nd Follow Up Day	3rd Follow Up Day	4th Follow Up Day
Daha (Burning Sensation)	+++	++	+	—	—
Shool(Pain)	+++	++	+	+	—
RaktvarniyaPidika (Blisters With Redness)	+++	+++	+++	++	+



a



b



c

Fig . a ,b,c Management of herpes zoster in Ayurveda through medicinal leeches,a before treatment , b) during treatment ,c) after treatment .

II. DISCUSSION

In Shushrut Samhita Nidanstan, Kshudraroga are described. Kakshavyadhi is one of this, which is described in Kshudraroga. In this there are formation of red color blisters with severe pain and burning sensation that appear near Kaksha (axilla region) which is caused by pittaprakopa. According to Sushruta, pitta dosha is mentioned for Kaksha but Acharya Charak and Vagbhat mentioned vataj & pitta dosha for Kakshavyadhi.

According to modern science, kakshavyadhi can be correlated with herpes zoster. There is severe pain, burning sensation and it spreads like kakshavyadhi which is similar to herpes zoster. In Sushrutchikitsasthan treatment for Kakshavyadhi is similar to pittajvisarpa which is Rakatmokshan.

In kakshavyadhi rakatmokshan is first line of treatment. If Rakatmokshan is not done in acute condition so there is formation of kleda in twaka, mansa, snayu.

Jalouka applies on skin easily, it sucks blood at superficial level mostly & from deep portion also. According to modern point of view Hirudin & Calin, enzymes are present in Jalouka's saliva which works as anticoagulant & helps in sucking of blood easily. Salivary glands of Jalouka also produce antihistaminic, anesthetic, antibiotic, & antiviral effect. When Jalokavacharana was done on herpes zoster to remove pure blood, immediately patients got relief of pain, and burning sensation. .

III. RESULT

Jalokavacharana was done as an emergency treatment in herpes zoster which gave immediate relief of pain as well as burning sensation. During follow up no any complication was seen in patient.

IV. CONCLUSION

It concludes that Jalouka is used as emergency treatment & it gives relief of pain in herpes zoster (kaksha).

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