



## VARNYA LEPA: AN AMBROSIA FOR COMPLEXION CARE

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**ABSTRACT** Complexion is a great cause of concern to majority of people irrespective of age and sex. Over exposure to external temperatures, chemical or hormonal factors are the main reported causes for skin discoloration. Skin is considered as one of the route of drug administration as *Bahyaparimarjan Chikitsa* and may be effective to deal the complexion issue. Many formulations for local application in paste form (*lepa*) have been described in classical texts of *Ayurved*. The *lepa* application is said to be effective in preventive and curative aspect. For enhancement of skin complexion *Varnyakara Lepas* are mentioned in classics. One such *Varnya Lepa* quoted by *Sarangadhara* has been modified with addition of four herbal medicinal drugs based on their complexion enhancing properties (*Varnya Karma*). This paper reports a randomised clinical study evaluating effects of this modified *Varnya Lepa*. Effect of *Varnya lepa* was tested on hyper pigmentation, tanning and dullness. Pre and post assessment were done based on the photographs. The collected data demonstrated promising results establishing the complexion enhancing properties of *Varnya Lepa*.

**KEYWORDS :** Varnya Lepa, Complexion, Tanning ,hyper-pigmentation.

### INTRODUCTION

Complexion is the major criteria to assess beauty. Clarity, texture and aura are the three parameters of complexion. Overexposures to extreme temperature, chemicals or hormonal imbalance are prime etiological factors for altering complexion.

Tanning, hyper pigmentation, dullness, moisture and oil content of complexion and wrinkled skin are parameters of complexion health. Market available cosmetic products give temporary results in the skin related illness. Many herbal medicines, prescribed in *Ayurvedic* text for various skin disorders are found to be effective in the treatment of skin diseases.

Moreover, skin is considered as one of the route of drug administration. Method of application of medicinal herbs on skin is named as *Bahirparimarjan Chikitsa*. [23] Bahimarjan chikitsa in the form of *varnya lepa* is said to be effective for enhancement of complexion. [21] Hence this study was designed to evaluate the effect of a herbal formulation, Varnya Lepa (VL) described in Ayurvedic text, *Sarangadhara Samhita* on hyperpigmentation, tanning, and dullness.

### AIM

To assess the efficacy of *Varnya Lepa* with *Godugdha* in enhancement of complexion and effects on Hyper pigmentation, Tanning, and Dullness.

### MATERIALS & METHODOLOGY

#### MATERIALS:

- *Varnya Lepa* with *Godugdha*
- Fairness Strip on basis of Fitzpatrick Scale
- Camera with 12 megapixel

#### METHODOLOGY:

A Clinical Trial was conducted on 10 patients with informed consent prior to the commencement of clinical trial. Test drug, The 11 raw ingredients of Varnya Lepa (VL) in form of fine powder were procured from authentic vendor of local market. For application a thick paste was prepared by using cow milk (*Godugdha*) as a medium for mixing.

The patients were advised to apply the freshly prepared VL paste of approximately (1/4<sup>th</sup> Angula), 0.5 cm thickness [15] on the affected area in morning for 15 days. After appearance of slight dryness on face (approximately after 15-20) minutes patients were advised to wash with lukewarm water in the medial to lateral direction i.e. opposite to direction of hair follicles as per the guidelines laid by *Sushruta Samhita*, [16]. The sun exposure to skin and use of cosmetics were restrained during the period of treatment.

The Individuals having normal, tanned, dull or pigmented skin were included in the trial whereas individuals having skin discoloration due to exposure to chemicals and hormonal imbalance and suffering from vitiligo and other serious skin disorders were excluded from the trial.

Pre and post assessment was done in two segments Day-7 and on Day-15 with the help of subjective and objective criteria as follows.

- **SUBJECTIVE PARAMETERS:** Fitzpatrick Scale of complexion and Photographs with 12 megapixel camera.
- **OBJECTIVE PARAMETERS:** Skin colour, Texture (dry/ oily), Clarity of skin, Pigmentation, Dullness

### RESULTS:

During the study it was noted that out of 13 enrolled patients, 10 patients completed the study. 50% patients have exposure to sun as aggravating factor and 60% has stress and worries as aggravating factor. 20% females have irregular menstrual history suggesting hormonal disturbance is also prime causative factor. 30% of patients have marked Hyper-pigmentation over the chick region.

Alleviation in tanning, hyper pigmentation, dullness, dryness with cooling and smoothening were noted in all patients.

There is marked improvement in level of tanning, hyper-pigmentation, dullness, dryness of skin. 80% patients got relief from tanning and hyper-pigmentation. 90% of patients got relief in dryness and dullness of skin. All the patients felt cooling and smoothening effect.

### DISCUSSION

*Sushrutacharya* has described utility of *Lepa* in *Vrana Chikitsa* as effective as pouring of water over a burning house. [21] *Dalhan*, a commentator of *Sushrut samhita* (one of the main text of Ayurveda) identified *Bhrajak Pitta* for the maintains of temperature and colour of skin. *Bharajak Pitta* absorbs the medicine applied in form of *Abhyanga*, *Parishek*, *Avagaha*, *Alepa* which results in *Varnya* or brightening of the skin. [17] All these activities of lepa have been noted in this clinical study.

The ingredients of test drug VL are *Raktachandan*, *Manjistha*, *Lodhra*, *Kustha*, *Priyangu*, *Vatankur*, *Masoors*, and *Yasthimadhu*, *Amlaki*, *Ushir*, *Kumkum* have further added to this prescribed formulation with the virtue of their properties to enhance skin health. [20] All the ingredients of the VL are *Kaphapitta Shamak* or *Tridosha Shamak* except *Masoor* is *Vatala* and *Yasthi* is *Kaphavardhak*.

According to *Atreya Punarvasu Yoni* of all *Rasa* is *Jala*. And he concluded that *Chedan* and *Upashaman* are two *Pradhan Karmas* of

the *Shad Rasas*. [18] The drugs of the *Varnya Lepa* mainly possess *Madhur, Tikta* and *Kashaya* hence pacifies the *Pitta*(*Bhrajak Pitta*) seated in the skin.[13]

Out of the 13 *Dravyas* of the VL, *drugs Kumkum, Godugdha* possesses *Snigdha Guna* which is responsible for softness (*Mardavata*) and enhancement of complexion (*Varnyaprasadan*). *Raktachandan, Manjistha, Lodhra, Kustha, Priyangu, Vatankur, Masoor, Amalaki, Ushir* have been mentioned as *raktashodhak* drugs (i.e. eliminates the impurities of body mainly from blood) be responsible for improvement of glow on skin (*Prabha*) and Complexion (*Varna*). Whereas drugs like *Raktachandan, Lodhra, Priyangu, Vatankur, Masoor, Yasthi, Amalaki, Ushir, Godugdha* possesses *Shiita Virya* which improves the quality of blood (*Rakta Prasadan Karma*). *Manjistha, Kustha, Kumkum* are *Ushna Viryatmak* and *Tikta Rasatmak* and removes the toxins (*Kleda Soshan Karma*). [19] While explaining the action of *Lepa* it is said that the active principle of the *Dravyas* enter through *Shira Mukha* and enters the circulation. [16]

The above lines justified the promising results obtained by *Varnya Lepa* on skin health parameters on basis of Ayurvedic concept.

The ingredients of the formulation have also been reported to have curative effect on skin through various research studies. *Raktachandan* and *Lodhra* are proven to have Anti-Bacterial activity [1,3]. *Manjistha* is established as one of the drug of choice for Acne [2]. *Kustha, Vatankur* and *Yasthimadhu* are proven to have Anti-Inflammatory activity on skin [4,5,7]. *Masoor, Ushir, Kumkum and Cows Milk* have been established for skin whitening properties in various clinical studies [6,9,10,11]. *Amlaki* is a potent antioxidant, rich in Vit-C, Tannins, and Gallic acid and is identified as best among rejuvenating drugs. It is *Kantikara* i.e improves complexion. [8,12]

## CONCLUSION

Thus with the obtained clinical data and references from ayurvedic texts and reported research studies it can be concluded that *Varnya lepa* with *Godugdha* is clinically effective in enhancing the complexion.

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