



## MANAGEMENT OF INDRALUPTA: A CASE STUDY

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**ABSTRACT** Ayurveda is an ancient science that primarily focuses on maintaining a healthy person and curing disease. The human body is made up of sapta dhatu (seven bodily tissues), tridosha (three biological energies), and trimala (three wastes). Any imbalance in these causes disease. Hair is a powerful metaphor in society that enhances one's personality. There are many hair-related health issues that have been seen in society due to many reasons. One such hair problem that is commonly encountered nowadays is Indralupta (Alopecia areata). Indralupta is one among the kshudra roga (minor diseases), and it is a rakta pradoshaja vikara (Diseases arising from blood vitiation). It is characterized by patchy hair loss over hair-bearing skin, including the scalp and beard, and is associated with the signs and symptoms of alopecia areata. Alopecia areata (AA) is an autoimmune disease that presents as a smooth patch of hair loss. This paper highlights a case study of Indralupta (Alopecia Areata) treated with Ayurvedic principles.

**KEYWORDS :** Ayurveda, Alopecia Areata, Icchabhedi Rasa, Jalaukavaharana, Pracchanna

## INTRODUCTION

According to Ayurveda, health depends on the harmony of vital biological energies in the body – vata, pitta, and kapha. Any imbalance occurring in these would lead to a variety of diseases. Indralupta (Alopecia Areata) is one among the kshudra roga (minor diseases), which is characterized by patchy hair loss. Acharya Sushruta has mentioned Indralupta (AA) as one among the rakta pradoshaja vikara.<sup>1</sup> Acharya vagbhata has enumerated Indralupta (AA) among shiroroga (Diseases of the head).<sup>2</sup> Due to various causes such as exposure to sun, breeze, suppressing natural urges, awakening during night, stress, anger, water sports, excessive use of salt, alkali, and pungent taste, causes the vitiation of pitta and vata dosha. Vitiated pitta, in association with vata, lodges within the hair follicles and initiates hair fall. Subsequently, kapha dosha, together with rakta (blood), obstructs the hair roots, thereby impeding the natural process of regrowth.<sup>3</sup>

Alopecia areata is an autoimmune disease characterized by patchy hair loss on the scalp and/or body without any clinical inflammatory signs. It is one of the most common types of hair loss problems and accounts for 25% of all alopecia cases.<sup>4</sup> Both males and females are equally affected, but some studies show male predominance.<sup>5,6,7</sup> Stress, hormonal imbalance, diet, genetic susceptibility, usage of harmful shampoos, workers in water treatment plants in a paper factory, and long-term exposure to the chemical acrylamide, etc, are considered as the probable etiological factors.<sup>8,9,10</sup> Treatment options include corticosteroids, Minoxidil, and laser therapy.<sup>11</sup>

Though modern treatment modalities prove beneficial in treating AA, which has harmful side effects and are not advisable for long-term use.<sup>12</sup> Ayurveda has various effective treatment modalities, which include shodhana (purification), shaman (palliative), lepa (external application), etc. Here is a case of Indralupta (AA) treated successfully with Ayurveda principles.

## Case Report

A 32-year-old male patient came to the OPD of Rajarajeshwari Ayurvedic Medical Hospital, Humnabad, presenting with the chief complaints of multiple patchy hair loss in the scalp over the right temporal and occipital region for 6 months, associated with mild itching.

**History of Past Illness:** Patient is not a known case of Diabetes mellitus, Hypertension, Ischaemic heart disease, or Thyroid dysfunction. No personal history of autoimmune diseases like psoriasis, asthma, rheumatoid arthritis, etc.

**Family History:** Nobody in the family is suffering from similar complaints.

**Treatment History:** Patient had taken allopathic treatment, but did not find any relief.

Table 1: Personal History

Appetite	Good
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Bowel	Regular
Micturition	5-6 times/day
Sleep	Sound
Diet	Mixed, likes spicy foods
Habits	Tobacco

Table 2: General Examination

Pulse	86 beats/min
Blood pressure	120/80 mmHg
Respiratory rate	18 cycles/min
Temperature	98.8 F
Height	168cm
Weight	70 kg

Table 3: Local Examination

Site	right temporal and occipital region
Number of lesions	2
Shape	2 asymmetric patches
Dimension	2*1.5, 3*2
Sensation	Normal
Itching	Present

Table 4: Ashta Vidha Pareeksha

Nadi	Pitta vata
Jihva	Alipta
Mala	Prakruta
Mutra	Prakruta
Shabda	Prakruta
Sparsha	Anushna
Drik	Prakruta
Akruti	Madhyama

**Diagnosis** – Based on inspection and local examination, it was diagnosed as Indralupta.

## Management

The treatment started initially with jalaukavacharana (leech therapy) followed by shamanoushadhi (palliative medicines) for 7 days.

On 1<sup>st</sup> visit

A. Jalaukavacharana – After taking proper septic precautions, 1 jalauka on each lesion was applied to remove the impure blood from the local area. Around 6-8ml of blood was removed.

## B. Internal Medicine

Sl. No.	Medicine	Dose	Anupana	Duration
1	Krimikutara rasa	2 bid	Warm water	15 days
2	Avipattikara churna	1 tsp HS	hot water	

On 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> visit (30<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> day)

A. Pracchanna – After taking proper aseptic precautions, small multiple pricks are done using an insulin syringe, starting from one end of the affected area. It was allowed to bleed for 3 minutes. Later cleaned with a sterile gauze piece.

B. Lepa – Icchabhedi rasa and nimbu swarasa lepa after pracchanna.

## C. Internal Medicine

Sl. No.	Medicine	Dose	Anupana	Duration
1	Manjishtadi kashaya	15ml bid	equal quantity of warm water	30 days
2	Arogyavardhini rasa	2 bid	Warm water	
3	Saptamrita loha	2 bid	Warm water	

**OBSERVATION AND RESULTS**

After 30 days of treatment, small hairs started to grow from the hair follicles in the patchy area.

**DISCUSSION**

Indralupta (AA) is one among the diseases of the head and neck (urdhva jatrugata) characterized by patchy hair loss over the bearing area, including scalp and beard. As it is a raktapradoshaja vikara (disease caused due to vitiated blood), as said by Acharya Sushruta, raktamokshana can be adopted to remove the impure blood. In this case, initially, jalaukavacharana (leech therapy) was done for one sitting to remove the impure blood from the upper body (urdhva jatrugata). It also helps to remove the srota avarodha (channel blockage).<sup>13</sup> Later, pricking was done for two sittings. It helps for the elimination of rakta (blood) and kapha dosha (humor), thereby effectively removing the avarana within the hair follicle. It purifies and revitalizes the hair follicles, thereby promoting the growth of new, healthy hair.<sup>14</sup> Lepa (external application) with Ichhabedi rasa; it contains Jayapala (Croton tiglium) as the main ingredient. Phobol esters present in Jayapala (Croton tiglium) irritate the skin and thereby regulate cell growth and cell differentiation, and thus favor hair regrowth.<sup>15</sup> As Jayapala (Croton tiglium) is one among the upavisha (semi-poisonous), the juice of nimbu (Citrus limon) is used as an antidote to prevent its toxic effect.<sup>16</sup>

Along with raktamokshana (bloodletting), lepa (external application), and internal medicines were advised to promote hair growth.

Avipattikara churna, due to its purgative action, removes the vitiated pitta and kapha dosha, thus helping for vatanulomana (downward flow of vata).

As krimi (worms) is also one of the causative factors for Indralupta (AA),<sup>17,18</sup> krimighna was done using Krimikutara rasa. Krimikutara rasa shows antibacterial and antifungal action.

Manjishtadi kashaya pacifies vitiated kapha and pitta dosha. Due to its blood purification property, it detoxifies and improves circulation, nourishes the scalp, and promotes healthy hair follicles.

Saptamrita loha, a herbo-mineral preparation, acts as a rasayana (rejuvenation), strengthens the rakta dhatu (blood), and rejuvenates hair growth.<sup>19</sup> Arogyavardhini rasa is said to be kushthagha (alleviate all types of skin diseases) and it is sarvaroga prashamani (can alleviate all types of disorders from the body). It contains Katuki (Picrorhiza kurroa) as the main ingredient, which works as shodhana (purification) and bhedana (splitting) of dosha (humors), and helps to remove toxins from the body.<sup>20</sup>

**CONCLUSION**

This case demonstrates the effectiveness of a comprehensive Ayurvedic approach in treating Indralupta (AA). By focusing on detoxification, dosha balance, and nourishment, the treatment addressed the root cause of hair loss. Mainly internal medicines and external therapies were adapted. This holistic approach provided

The case of Indralupta (AA) was successfully treated with leech therapy, prachhanna (pricking), and Palliative medicines. Along with these, removing causative factors was also a necessary part of treatment.

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