



Review Article

www.ijrap.net

(ISSN Online:2229-3566, ISSN Print:2277-4343)



HAIR REJUVENATION THROUGH AYURVEDA: A REVIEW

Geetanjali Sahu ^{1*}, Naresh Itani ¹, Amisha Dabhi ¹, Reetu Sharma ²

¹ PG Scholar, National Institute of Ayurveda (de novo), Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

² Associate Professor, National Institute of Ayurveda (de novo), Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Received on: 07/07/23 Accepted on: 27/07/23

*Corresponding author

E-mail: vaidyageetanjali14@gmail.com

DOI: 10.7897/2277-4343.1404121

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the science which places more emphasis on the prevention of disease and maintenance of health rather than simply treating it. This is achieved by following a strict *pathya-apathya*. Nowadays, the most common factors inducing hair fall include stress, major illnesses, medication use, depression, family history, autoimmune disease, hormonal imbalance, nutritional deficiencies, etc. Approximately 50% of Indians are losing hair faster than ever, and the current beauty industry has destroyed hair quality with poor-quality hair products. As hair fall is a complex problem, Ayurveda believes it's the effect of internal imbalances. Ayurveda has shown promising results in preventing hair fall and regrowth through herbal products and lifestyle modification. It has been observed that many herbs and their extracts have proven good results in such cases. For this article, we have compiled and critically analyzed the ayurvedic concept of *nidana* and *chikitsa* mentioned in different classics for this alarming condition.

Keywords: *Pathyaapathya*, Ayurveda, Lifestyle modifications.

INTRODUCTION

Healthy, long and shiny hair goes a long way in enhancing one's personality. Keeping hair in a healthy state is, therefore, wholly our responsibility because, just like the face, the hair is also a mirror of the healthy state of the body. In this advanced modernized age, people are blessed with many sophisticated luxuries, but at the same time, they are left with a sedentary lifestyle, stress-induced hectic schedules, and bad eating habits. All of these habits have a direct impact on the body's homeostasis and many other health problems, including hair loss. The issue of hair loss in society is gradually increasing, affecting the quality of life. Hair loss has been described as *Khalitya* in almost all Ayurvedic literature. It was included in *Shiroroga* by *Acharya Charaka* and *Ashtanga Hridaya* based on the *shtana* (location) of diseases and similarity in etiopathogenesis. According to *Ashtanga Hridaya*, nine diseases occur on the outer part of the head above the scalp, which should be called *kapalagata vyadhi*¹. *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Samgraha*, *Yoga Ratnakar* and *Madhav Nidana* have included *Khalitya* under *kshudra roga* due to the mildness of the disease. These diseases are less life-threatening and are less severe than severe other diseases². The etiological factors like *atilavansevena*, *atiksharsevena*, *viruddhaahara*, *atiatapasevena*, *avsaada*, nutritional deficiency, etc. are mainly responsible for *Khalitya*. Ayurveda is a safe and cost-effective alternative to maintain healthy hair and treat many hair issues. Ayurvedic herbs and home remedies treat hair fall completely if embraced in its early stages and by following strict *pathya-apathya*.

According to contemporary science, the main reasons behind hair fall include hormonal imbalance, certain medications, autoimmune diseases, stress, nutrient deficiencies, extreme hair care, etc. However, as per *Ayurvedic Samhitas*, hair loss is mainly due to excess *Pitta dosa* in the body. *Pitta* increases in the body due to excess alcohol, coffee, tea, spicy and acidic food products, smoking and hot climatic conditions. Hair-related issues like

premature greying, dandruff, and alopecia in the younger age group are increasing rapidly nowadays, for which proper guideline, counselling and management is needed.

The article is based on a review of various *Ayurvedic* texts and research papers related to *Khalitya*. *Ayurvedic* texts mainly used for this article are *brihatrayi* and *laghutrayi*, and we have also referred to some modern texts, journals and websites to collect information on the relevant topic.

Keshotpatti (Origin of Hair)

Ayurveda believes that the human body mainly comprises seven body elements named *dhatu*s viz. *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Asthi*, *Majja* and *Shukra*³. Despite some controversies, most believe that the production of the latter *dhatu*s occurs from the former by the function of their respective *agni*⁴. It has been further explained that, from the *poshakansha* of the former *dhatu*, there is not only production of the latter *dhatu* but also side-by-side production of its *upadhatu* and *mala*. Regarding the production of hair in particular, it starts in the process of *dhatu nirmana*, i.e., when *paka* of *Asthi dhatu* occurs by its own *Agni*, *Majja dhatu* emerges from the *sara bhaga* and at the same time, hair of scalp and body along with nails appears as *mala*⁵. According to ancient classics, the hair is one of the *pitruj bhava* means the structure, colour and quantity of hair of a progeny depends on the paternal side. *Acharyas* have considered the hair *parthiva dravya* because of its roughness, steadiness, and heaviness⁶.

According to contemporary science, hair is a modified epithelial structure generated due to keratinization. Hair is a type of epidermal tissue, an appendage attached to the dermis. Every hair grows from hair follicles, which are found in the scalp, and aside from the palms, soles, and lips, hair can be found in every area of the epidermis. The hair development cycle in the scalp has three phases: anagen, catagen, and telogen.

Keshotpatti Kaal (Time of origin)

According to *Charaka*, the *keshotpatti kala* in the fetus is at the seventh month during gestational age. According to *Vagbhata*, *keshotpatti kala* in the fetus is in the sixth month⁷.

According to contemporary science, the anagen phase is a development stage typically lasting 3-5 years. There are around 100,000 hairs on a healthy scalp, and 90% of the follicles are continually in the anagen phase of hair production. The catagen stage occurs after this phase when the follicles go dormant for 2-3 weeks. The formation of a club hair, an essential prognostic indicator in assessing hair pathology, also occurs. Next is the telogen or resting phase, in which the hair follicle is dormant, and hair shaft growth does not happen.

Kesh Poshan (Hair nutrition)

According to *Acharya Charaka*, from the ingested food, there forms an assimilable nutrition fluid (*ahara rasa*), which is further divided into two parts, namely essential fluid (*sara bhaga*) and the excretory matter (*kitta*). The waste product is responsible for producing and providing nutrition to many areas like sweat, urine, hair, nails, etc.; among them are the hair follicles of the head, beard and body⁸. According to *Acharya Sushruta*, *Kesha* gets its nutrition from the terminal part of the *dhamani*, which is supplied to the *romakoopa*⁹.

Kesha and Tridosha concept

Several considerations can be made to establish a relationship between the *Ayurvedic tridosha* and the modern concept of trichology. According to the *aadi*, *madhya*, *anta* concept and *utpatti*, *sihiti*, and *laya* concept of *tridosha*, the root, shaft and tip of a hair strand could be correlated with *Kapha*, *Pitta* and *Vata* dominancy. By this relationship between hair sections and *tridosha*, one can easily plan for treatment accordingly.

Samprapti of Khalitya (Pathogenesis)

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, the affected *pitta*, along with *Vata*, reaches *romakoopa* and causes hair loss, and then *Shleshma*, along with *Shonita*, obstructs *romakoopa*, which leads to stopping hair regeneration, and this condition is known as *Khalitya*¹⁰. *Acharya Charaka* describes that *Tejas* combined with *Vataadi doshas* achieves *shira kapala* and causes hair loss by *dahana romakoopa* (hair follicles)¹¹.

The *samprapti vighatana* of *Khalitya* can be done by the following steps:

Nidan Parivarjana: As prevention is better than cure, *Acharya Sushruta* states that *nidan parivarjana* is the basic principle of any treatment¹². Individuals with *Pitta prakriti* are more prone to falling hair. *Nidan parivarjana* in *Khalitya* includes avoiding all the *hetu* mentioned for *shiro roga*, particularly *atilavasevena*, *atiksharsevena*, *atiatapasevena*, *avsaada*, etc.

Samshamana chikitsa: This involves *rasayana*, *abhyanga* and *lepa*.

Rasayana prayoga: In case of hair fall due to premature ageing, *rasayana* therapy is needed mainly with *vayasthapana* drugs. *Acharya Sushruta* has advised *rasayana* in the context of *Khalitya chikitsa*¹³. According to modern science, the specific cause of alopecia is autoimmune disease, and *rasayana* drugs act as immunomodulators. Premature hair fall is a sign of an early ageing process, and *rasayana* is considered the best anti-ageing therapy. Eg. *Amalaki rasayana*, *Brahma rasayana*, *Narasimha rasayana*

Abhyanga: Medicated oils are used for light local massage. Some of the oils advised for *abhyanga* in *Khalitya* include *Bhringaraj tailam*, *Chitrakadya tailam*, *Nilikadi tailam*, *Karanjadi tailam*, *Snuhidugdhadhi tailam*, *Bhallatakadi tailam*, *Shringatakadi tailam*

Lepa: Some of the *lepa* mentioned in *Khalitya chikitsa* are *Gunja lepa*, *Hastidanta masi lepa*, *Kutannatadi lepa*, *Bhallatakadi lepa*, *Kasisadi lepa* with *Kapith swarasa*, *Haridradi lepa* with *navneeta*, *Keshvardhak lepa* with *madhu and ghrta*, *Langali mula lepa* with *Mahish dugdh*, *Dhatu lepa*

Shodhana chikitsa: According to *Ayurveda*, a well-planned *shodhana* or purification must be done before prescribing medications for better results.

Nasya: Administering medicines through the nasal route is known as *nasya*. All the *Acharyas* mentioned *nasya karma* for *urdhvajatrugat vyadhi*. The '*mashtiska gate path*' is said to lead through the nose path. Administered through the nasal route, the medicine penetrates everywhere in the head and relieves various *shiro roga*. *Nasya* provides *snehana*, which nourishes the hair roots, thereby preventing *Khalitya*. *Acharya Sushruta* has also mentioned *pradhamana nasya* in the management of *khalitya*¹⁴. Some formulation mentioned for *nasya* in *Khalitya* are, *Yastimadhukadhya tailam*, *Chandanadhya tailam*, *Prapoundrarikadhya tailam*, *Markavadhya tailam*, *Vidarigandhadhi tailam*, *Jambuadhya tailam*, *Anu tailam nasya*.

Pracchana and Viddha karma: *Pracchana* helps clear the obstructed *romakupa* through which vitiated *Rakta* is expelled. It drains out the vitiated blood from the *srotas*, and later, when *lepa* is applied over the region, it facilitates easy and faster absorption of the drug by the hair follicles, which, in turn, causes the pores to open up and by the effect of the drugs hair growth can be observed.

Jalauka avacharan: *Ashtanga samgrahkara* has mentioned for application of different types of *pralepa* after proper *pracchana* or *shuchi karma* only for better results¹⁵.

Virechana: As *Khalitya* is a *pitta pradhan vyadhi*, *Virechana karma* is considered the most suitable *shodhana karma*, alleviating *Pitta dosha*. *Virechana karma* by *Abhayadi modaka* can be helpful in *Khalitya*¹⁶. It is mainly indicated in *palitya* (premature greying of hair) but can also be used in *Khalitya* (hair fall), as the *samprapti* of *Khalitya* and *Palitya* are almost similar.

Shamana chikitsa: *Sanjeevani vati*, *Aarogya vardhini vati*, *Sutshekhar rasa*, *Kapardika bhasma*, *Shankha bhasma*, *Krumi kuthar rasa*, *Mahamanjisthadi Kashaya*, *Asthi posak vati*, *Ashwa gandha arista*, *Brahmi vati*, *Gunja tail*, *Karanj tail*, *Neeli bhrungraj tail*, *Pushpadhanwa vati*, *Guduchi ghan vati*, *Chyawan prash*, *Langali tail*, *Agastya haritaki*, *Swarna bhama*, *Maltyadi tail*, *Amrutadi guggul*, *Panchatikta ghrta*, *Triphala ghrta*, *Avipattikar churna*, *Shatavari kalp*, *Abha guggul*, *Dudurapatra tailam*, *Tapyadi lauha*, etc can be prescribed according to dosha involvement.

Lifestyle modification and Yoga: For proper growth of hair, there is a need for a healthy and balanced diet where the proportion of carbohydrates, proteins, fat, vitamins, and minerals should be equally balanced. Hair primarily comprises protein, so more thrust should be directed towards protein products. Here, some of the important diets are given for hair care and treating hair loss¹⁶

Stick to a protein-rich diet like fish, yeast, soybean, low-fat cheese, eggs, beans and yoghurt for proper hair growth and to prevent hair fall and baldness.

Increase iron intake as it is essential for haemoglobin and blood formation. To increase the quantity of green vegetables, raisins, dates, etc. Zinc is also related to hair fall, for which seafood could be a great option.

Restrict burgers, fries, cold, spicy, sugary foods, caffeine, fat, carbonated drinks, animal protein, excessive raw food, tofu, tomatoes, etc., as these are the culprits for the thinning and falling of hairs.

Some of the *asanas* beneficial for hair includes, *Sarvangasana*, *shirsasana*, *vajrasana*, *bhujangasana*, *kapalabhati*, *anulomaviloma*, *ushtrasana*, *utthanasana*, *pawanmuktasana*, *Shashank asana*, *bhujangasana*.

Tips to Prevent Hair Loss

- Take a sound sleep.
- Manage stress and anxiety through yoga and meditation.
- Hair dyes, hair dryers, curlers, and straighteners should not be used excessively.
- Take calcium in your diet for stronger hair.
- There should be a gap of at least 6-8 weeks for hair colouring.
- Avoid stiff and tight hairstyles like braids, buns and ponytails.
- Take vitamin C in your diet to prevent hair loss (Recommended dose is 1,000-3,000 mg/day).
- Protein-rich diet should be preferred as hairs are made up of protein.
- B vitamins and biotin are necessary for hair growth.
- Iron is needed for proper oxygenation of the blood in the scalp and other regions of the body. Vitamin E, too, stimulates hair growth.
- Avoid harsh shampoo, conditioners and other low-quality hair products.
- Alcohol and beverages must be restricted.
- Don't rub or comb your hair harshly after washing it wetly. First, let it air dry and then comb gently by detangling from the lower portion towards the upper for long hair strands.
- Massage over the scalp at least once a week with lukewarm medicated oil (*Moordha tailam/oiling*), mustard oil or coconut oil could be used regularly.

DISCUSSION

In today's era, there is a race to follow a modern lifestyle for which various cosmetics and, more critically, adaptation to Western culture and unhealthy dietary habits have made their hair either fall or grey at a younger age. Varieties of chemical products like hair oils, shampoos, conditioners, soaps, serums, gels and various beauty products, in the name of *saundarya prasadana* as pharmaceutical propaganda was launched to promote the growth of hair which has made the situation even worse. *Khalitya* is considered a natural physiological phenomenon that usually occurs after the mid-forties, but it is regarded as a disorder when it occurs before this time. Though it has been mentioned in *Ayurvedic* texts that we cannot improve two things which have been provided to us since birth, i.e., *dristi* and *romakoopa*, with proper *Ayurvedic* treatment, we can give strength to the hair follicles which have lost their ability to grow new hair.

CONCLUSION

Although most hair loss cases are caused by heredity and commonly occur in men, everyone can have this just by being exposed to irritants like chemical beauty products. Although there have been several studies about hair loss, no one can determine what exactly causes this condition. *Ayurveda* may be the answer to cure hair loss. Usually, the *Ayurvedic* treatment for hair loss includes diet, meditation, deep breathing, aromatherapy, some classical formulations, and oil massage. Being a holistic system of medicine, *Ayurveda* prescribes altering your lifestyle for treatment. As a result, it can be stated that *Khalitya* can be efficiently treated without side effects using appropriate *shodhana* therapy and *Ayurvedic* formulations.

REFERENCES

1. *Ashtanga Hridaya* with Hindi commentary by Kaviraj Atridev Gupta, *Uttara sthana* 23/20, Chaukhamba Bharti Academy, Varanasi. 2018: p 727.
2. Purwar P, Yadav SS, Gangele P, *Khalitya* (hair fall) management - Ayurvedic perspective. International Journal of Health Sciences and Research 2019; 9(4):255-260.
3. Lakshmidhar Dwivedi, *Charaka Samhita, Ayurvedadipika* Sanskrit Commentary by *Cakrapanidatta, Chikitsa sthana* 15/16. Chaukhamba Krishandas Academy, Varanasi, 2013: p 516.
4. Lakshmidhar Dwivedi, *Charaka Samhita, Ayurvedadipika* Sanskrit Commentary by *Cakrapanidatta, Chikitsa sthana* 15/15. Chaukhamba Krishandas Academy, Varanasi, 2013: p 516.
5. *Ashtanga Samgraha* with Hindi commentary by Atridev Gupta, *Sharira sthana* 6/63-64, Chaukhamba Bharti Academy, Varanasi, 2005: p 312-313.
6. Kashinath Shatri and Gorakhnath, *Charaka Samhita*, with *Vidhyotini* Hindi commentary, *Sharir sthana* 3/7, Chaukhamba Bharati Academy, Varanasi, 2007: p 858-859.
7. Atridev Gupta, *Ashtanga Samgraha*, with Hindi commentary by *Sharira sthana* 2/24, Chaukhamba Bharti Academy, Varanasi. 2005: 275.
8. Kashinath Shatri and Gorakhnath, *Charaka Samhita*, with *Vidhyotini* Hindi commentary by Chaturvedi, *Sutra sthana* 28/4, Chaukhamba Bharati Academy, Varanasi, 2007: p 568-569.
9. Kaviraj Ambika Dutt Shastri *Sushruta Samhita* with *Ayurvedatva sandipika* Hindi commentary, *Sharir sthana* 9/9, Chaukhamba Bharti Academy, Varanasi, 2010: p 94.
10. *Sushruta Samhita* with *Ayurvedatva sandipika* Hindi commentary by Kaviraj Ambikadatta Shastri, *Nidana sthana* 13/32-33, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, 2012: p 368.
11. *Charaka Samhita* with *Vidhyotini* Hindi commentary by Kashinath Shastri and Gorakhnath Chaturvedi, *Chikitsa sthana* 26/132, Chaukhamba Bharati Academy, Varanasi, 2012: 744.
12. *Sushruta Samhita* by Kaviraj Ambikadatta Shastri, *Uttartantra* 1/25, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, 2013: p 14.
13. *Sushruta Samhita* with *Ayurvedatva sandipika* Hindi commentary by Kaviraj Ambikadatta Shastri, *Chikitsa sthana* 20/25- 26, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, 2012: p 117.
14. *Sushruta Samhita* by Kaviraj Ambikadatta Shastri, *Uttartantra* 54/36-37, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, 2012: p 513.
15. Kanungo Swati, Kadus Priyadarshani Arvind, Vedpathak Surendra Martand, Conceptual Study of *Virechana Karma* by

Abhayadi Modak in *Khalitya*, International Journal of Ayurvedic Medicine, 2014; 5(4):283-287.

16. Sason DR, Sharma DM. Case Report on Ayurvedic Management of Hair Fall: International Research Journal of Ayurveda & Yoga [Internet]. 2021 Apr. 30 [cited 2023 Jul. 22];4(4):85-90. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47223/IRJAY.2021.4405>.

Cite this article as:

Geetanjali Sahu, Naresh Itani, Amisha Dabhi, Reetu Sharma. Hair Rejuvenation through Ayurveda: A Review. Int. J. Res. Ayurveda Pharm. 2023;14(4):95-98
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7897/2277-4343.1404121>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

Disclaimer: IJRAP is solely owned by Moksha Publishing House - A non-profit publishing house, dedicated to publishing quality research, while every effort has been taken to verify the accuracy of the content published in our Journal. IJRAP cannot accept any responsibility or liability for the site content and articles published. The views expressed in articles by our contributing authors are not necessarily those of IJRAP editor or editorial board members.