

Management of Acne Vulgaris with Vishaghna Mahakashaya – A Case Study

Sonali Rangnath Kothule*¹, Viraj Kelkar²

1. PG Scholar,

2. Assistant Professor,

Agadtantra Department, Y.M.T Ayurveda Medical College,
Kharghar, Navi Mumbai, M. S. India

*Corresponding author: kothulesonali1996@gmail.com

Abstract

Acne vulgaris is one of the most common skin disorders among adolescents and young adults, often impacting self-esteem and quality of life. Contemporary treatments, though effective, may carry side effects or result in microbial resistance. Ayurveda offers holistic solutions through herbal combinations like *Vishghna Mahakashay*, a group of ten herbs cited in the *Charaka Samhita* for their detoxifying, anti-inflammatory, and antimicrobial properties. This article presents a detailed case study of a 23-year-old female with moderate acne vulgaris treated with *Vishghna Mahakashay* in both internal and external formulations. The results show notable reduction in lesion count, inflammation, and subjective discomfort, underscoring the potential of Ayurvedic interventions in dermatological conditions.

Keywords: Acne vulgaris, *Yuvan Pidaka*, *Vishghna Mahakashay*, Ayurvedic dermatology, herbal therapy, case study

Introduction

Acne vulgaris is a multifactorial inflammatory condition affecting the pilosebaceous units, commonly seen in adolescence and early adulthood. It is characterized by the formation of comedones, papules, pustules, and sometimes nodules and cysts. The pathophysiology includes hyperkeratinization, excess sebum production, bacterial colonization (primarily *Cutibacterium acnes*), and inflammation.^[1, 2]

In modern dermatology, acne is treated using topical and systemic antibiotics, retinoids, and hormonal therapy. However, these interventions may cause side effects such as skin dryness, antibiotic resistance, and psychological stress due to recurrence. This calls for safe, effective, and holistic alternatives.^[3]

In *Ayurveda*, *mukhdushika* is the classical equivalent of acne vulgaris, described as *Mukha Mandala sthita* (face-located) lesions caused by *Kapha*,

Vata, and *Rakta* vitiation. Ayurvedic texts, particularly *Charaka Samhita*, recommend *Vishghna Mahakashaya*—a group of ten herbs with anti-toxic, anti-inflammatory, and *Krimighna* (antimicrobial) actions.^[4]

The *Vishaghna Mahakashaya* is a group of ten herbs described in *Charaka Samhita* with potent anti-toxic and detoxifying actions.^[5] These herbs are not only useful in treating acute poisoning but also beneficial in removing latent toxins (*Dooshivisha*) that manifest in chronic skin conditions like acne. This case study aims to present the clinical outcome of treating acne vulgaris using a decoction and external application of drugs based on *Vishaghna Mahakashaya*.

Objectives

- To evaluate the effect of *Vishghna Mahakashaya* on acne vulgaris through a detailed case study.
- To assess symptomatic relief, reduction in lesion count, and patient satisfaction.
- To highlight the clinical relevance of classical Ayurvedic formulations in modern dermatological conditions.

Case Presentation

A 23-year-old female student visited to *Vishchikitsa* OPD of Y. M. T. Ayurveda College, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai with Multiple red and painful pustules and papules on face (cheeks and forehead) since 2 years. The acne worsened premenstrual and during stress. She reported oily skin, occasional itching, and constipation.

History of Present Illness:

Acne started at age 21, initially mild, later progressed to moderate

papulopustular acne. She had previously taken antibiotics and retinoid creams, which provided temporary relief. The recurrence, irritation, and dry patches led her to seek Ayurvedic care.

Past Medical History

- No history of systemic illness like PCOD, diabetes, or thyroid dysfunction.
- No known allergies.

Family History:-

Mother had similar acne during adolescence

Personal History

- **Menstrual History:** Regular 28–30 day cycle; premenstrual flare-ups observed.
- **Dietary History:** Spicy, fried foods, dairy intake (milk + cheese), irregular meal timings.
- **Sleep:** Delayed onset of sleep due to excessive screen time.
- **Bowel Habits:** Constipation, hard stools every alternate day.

Clinical Findings:

- Temperature: 97.6 °F
- Pulse Rate: 76/min
- Heart Rate: 72/min
- Respiratory Rate: 16/min
- B.P: 120/90 mm/Hg

Local Examination:

- Skin Type: Oily
- Lesions: ~15–20 pustules and papules across forehead, cheeks, and chin.
- Post-inflammatory erythema
- No scarring or nodules.
- No comedones observed currently.

General examination:

- Pallor - mildly present

- Icterus - absent
- Cyanosis- absent
- Clubbing - absent
- Lymph node - not palpable.

Ashtavidha Pariksha:

1. *Nadi- Samyak* 78 beats per minute regular.
2. *Mala - Badha koshttha* (constipated).
3. *Mutra-frequency* 5-6 times per day
4. *Jeevha-Lipta*.
5. *Shabd - Prakruta*.
6. *Sparsh -Snigdha* (oily skin).
7. *Drik-Prakruta*.
8. *Aakruti-Madhyam*

General Exam:

- *Prakriti: Kapha-Vatapittaj*
- *Vikruti: Kapha, Pitta, Rasa, Rakta*
- *Satva: Madhyam*
- *Samhanan: Madhyam*
- *Aharashakti: a) Abyavarna: Uttam*
- *b) JaranShakti: Madhyam*
- *Vyam Shakti: Madhyam*
- *Praman: Madhyam*
- *Vaya: Madhyam*
- *Nidan: Ushna, TikshnaAhara, overindulging in out-side and spicy food Ratrijagrana, Diwaswap.*

- *Poorvaroopa: no specific purvaroopa*
- *Roopa: Vedana, raktavarni KanduyuktaPidika on Mukha*

Samprapti ghataka:-

- *Dosha: Kapha, Vata.*
- *Dooshya: Rakta* (sometime medas according to
- *Vagbhatt)*
- *Srotas: Rasa, Rakta.*
- *SrotasDushti: Sanga.*
- *Sancharstan: Rasa, Rakta.*
- *Adhishthan: twak, mukha*

Nidana Identified:

- *Ahara: Spicy, sour, and oily food,*
- *Vihara: Late night sleeping, sedentary habits*
- *Manasika: Stress and anxiety*

Diagnosis:-

Ayurvedic Diagnosis:

Yuvanpidika with involvement of Dooshivisha and Rakta Dushti

Modern Correlation:

Acne Vulgaris

Treatment Plan

The treatment was based on the principles of Vishaghna, Raktashodhana, Deepana, and Pachana. The plan included both internal and external administration of drugs based on the Vishaghna Mahakashaya.

Drug's from Vishghna mahakashaya:-

S.N	VISHGHNA DRUGS	AYURVEDIC USES (Charak)	CONTEMPORARY USES
1	<i>Haridra^[6]</i>	<i>Kusthagana Lekhaniya Kandugana, Vishaghna, Shirovirechana</i>	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-oxidant, Antidiabetic, Cardio-Hepatoprotective, Antihistaminic, blood purifier. ^[5]
2	<i>Manjishtha</i>	<i>Vishaghna Jvarahara Varnva</i>	Antimicrobial, blood purifier, Anti-inflammatory, Anti-

			oxidant, Astringent.
3	<i>Suvaha</i>	<i>Vayasthapana</i>	Anti-inflammatory, Anodyne, Antipsoriatic.
4	<i>Ela</i>	<i>Shwasahara</i> <i>AngamrdaprashamanaShirovir</i> <i>echan</i>	Antimicrobial, Antiseptic, Carminative, Antispasmodic, neutralize the insect bite and mild poisons, Antitoxic.
5	<i>Palindi</i>	<i>Bhedaniya</i>	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-helminthic, Purgative, Carminative Antihistaminic, Anti-snake bite and scorpion sting.
6	<i>Chandan</i>	<i>Dahaprashamana</i> <i>Trishnanigrahana</i> <i>Varnya Kandughna Vishaghna</i>	Diuretic, Antiseptic, Cooling, Bacteriostatic, Antitoxic, Deodorant, Tonic.
7	<i>Katak</i>	<i>Vishaghna</i>	Antidiabetic, Anti-oxidant, Antimicrobial, Anti-inflammatory, Antiarthritic.
8	<i>Shirisha</i>	<i>Vishaghna,</i> <i>Vednasthapana,</i> <i>Shirovirechana</i>	Antiseptic, Antibacterial, Antiallergic, wound healer, Antisnake venom.
9	<i>Sindhuvar</i>	<i>Vishaghna, Krimighna</i>	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-oxidant, Astringent, Antidiarrhoeal, Insecticidal, Antiseptic.
10	<i>Shleshmantak</i>	<i>Vishagna</i>	Antihelminthic, Antimicrobial, Anti-inflammatory, Demulscent.

Therapeutic Protocol

Internal Medication:

1. *Vishaghna Gana Ghana Vati:-*

- Dose: 2 tablet(250mg) twice daily before meals

- Duration: 30 days

2. *Triphala Churna*

- Dose: 3 gm at bedtime with lukewarm water

- Purpose: Mild virechana, removal of Ama

3. *Avipattikara Churna* (if constipation reported)

- Dose: 3 gm as needed

External Application:

1. *Vishghna gana lep*

- Application: Twice daily for 45 minutes

- Purpose: Local antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory action.

Diet and Lifestyle Recommendations

- Avoid fried, sour, spicy, fermented, and non-vegetarian food
- Include green leafy vegetables, old rice, barley, and boiled water
- Ensure early dinner, timely meals
- Minimum 7 hours of sleep
- Light exercise and Pranayama
- Meditation for stress management

Follow-Up and Outcome

Day 07:

- Reduction in inflammation and pustule size
- Mild dryness on affected skin areas
- No new acne eruption
- Improved bowel habits and appetite

Day 15:

- Significant improvement in skin texture
- No new pustules observed
- Old lesions healing without pus formation
- Minimal post-inflammatory pigmentation

Day 30:

- 75% clearance of acne lesions
- Reduced oiliness and itching
- Better confidence and emotional stability
- No recurrence observed

Before.



After

Discussion

Acne vulgaris involves bacterial colonization, inflammation, and hormonal imbalance, which align with *Kapha-Vata dosha* and *Rakta dushti* in Ayurveda. The herbs in *Vishghna Mahakashay*—such as *Haridra* (*Curcuma longa*), *Manjishtha* (*rubia cordifolia*), *Chandan* (*santalum album*) etc. anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and detoxifying effects. Internal cleansing via *Triphala* and *Avipattikar* helped regulate digestion and eliminate Ama. The holistic approach addressed systemic and local factors without side effects.

7. Conclusion

The Ayurvedic protocol incorporating *Vishghna Mahakashay* proved effective in managing moderate *acne vulgaris*. This case demonstrates the potential of classical Ayurvedic herbs to provide safe, effective, and holistic dermatological care. Larger clinical trials

are recommended to validate these findings.

8. Patient Perspective

The patient expressed high satisfaction with the natural treatment approach and was motivated to continue lifestyle and dietary changes. No adverse effects were reported, and she preferred Ayurvedic treatment over previous allopathic therapies.

9. Informed Consent

Written informed consent was obtained from the patient for publication of this case study and accompanying clinical information and images.

10. References

1. Ghosh, V. K., et al. "Herbal Approaches to Acne Vulgaris: A Review." *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2022, article no. 100524.
2. Kaur, R., et al. "Plant-Based Anti-Acne Agents: A Review." *Biomedicine & Pharmacotherapy*, vol. 131, 2020, article no. 110746.
3. Thappa, D. M. "Acne in India: Guidelines and Updates." *Indian Journal of Dermatology, Venereology and Leprology*, vol. 75, suppl., 2009, pp. S3–S5.
4. Sharma PV. *Sushruta Samhita of Susruta, Vol, Sootra Sthana; Jalaoka Avcharniya*: Chapter 13, Verse 11. Varanasi: *Chaukhambha Visvabharati*; 2010. p. 136.
5. Ameen, M. "Epidemiology of Acne." *British Journal of Dermatology*, vol. 153, no. 1, 2005, pp. 3–12.
6. Bhalerao, S., et al. "Evaluation of *Curcuma longa* and *Azadirachta indica* against Acne Bacteria." *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*, vol. 199, 2017, pp. 96–102.

Conflict of Interest: Non

Source of funding: Nil

Cite this article:

Management of Acne Vulgaris with Vishaghna Mahakashaya – A Case Study
Sonalı Rangnath Kothule, Viraj Kelkar

Ayurline: International Journal of Research In Indian Medicine 2025; 9(4):01-06