

# YOUVAN PIDIKA (ACNE VULGARIS) AND ITS MANAGEMENT THROUGH AYURVEDIC PRINCIPLES (A REVIEW ARTICLE)

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## ABSTRACT

*Beauty is defined as having the quality of being pleasing or someone that gives great pleasure especially when you look at them. The human face expresses this beauty in its most natural form, unfortunately, the skin of the face is affected by a most common skin disorder 'Acne Vulgaris' and it occurs most frequently in the adolescent ages. Acne Vulgaris is a chronic inflammatory condition of the pilosebaceous follicles on the face and upper trunk, which develops into blackheads, papules, pustules and cysts and may leave scars upon resolution. Since adolescents are highly conscious about their health and beauty, they tend to resort to using various OTC beauty products available on the market, which most of the times causes the Acne to exaggerate and occasionally some side effects occur.*

*Youvan Pidika simply means that this disorder usually occurs in the young aged persons. It is also known as Mukhadushika. Although it is briefly mentioned, the symptoms closely resemble that of Acne Vulgaris. According to the Ayurveda, the management of Youvan Pidika is by doing Shodhana and Shamana Chikitsa which will be discussed in this article.*

*Keywords: Acne Vulgaris, Youvan Pidika, Mukhadushika, Beauty, Ayurveda.*

## INTRODUCTION

The face is the first to be seen when meeting others and people usually read facial expressions to decipher their feelings on first encounter. Confidence or low self-esteem can easily be observed on the face by those who possess that skill. Hence, people tend to base physical attractiveness on facial beauty. This idea also emanates from the Greek Philosopher 'Plato' in the prose "Beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder". With this thought, it is known that for centuries, beauty is based on facial attractiveness, and even more so in today's modern day society. Everyone desires an attractive and beautiful face in order to socialize and fit into the society. But there is one skin disorder that puts a damper on this beauty and confidence at a young age. This disorder is known as *YouvanPidika* in Ayurveda and Acne Vulgaris in modern science.

Acne Vulgaris is a common chronic inflammatory condition of the skin, often characterized by the development of comedones in the form of papules, pustules and occasionally nodules. Approximately 95-100% of adolescent boys and 83-85% of adolescent girls aged 15-18 years are having Acne Vulgaris.

Although Acne Vulgaris itself is not life threatening, it causes a severe distress to the human psychology. Those suffering with this skin disorder are usually scorned and criticized on a daily basis, which can lead to low self-esteem, depression, anger, frustration, social impairment etc. apart from the emotional distress caused, it also evokes anxiety, which aggravates the Acne Vulgaris thereby creating a vicious cycle for that individual.

Acne Vulgaris is considered as an adolescent disorder, characterized by formation of open and closed comedones, papules, pustules,

nodules and cysts. Studies indicate that several factors are responsible for the pathophysiology of Acne Vulgaris which may include: disturbed hormonal production, excess sebum production, epithelial cells and keratin obstruct the pilosebaceous follicle. This obstruction causes formation of a keratin plug and the follicle swells beneath the skin surface, thus resulting in the formation of the Acne lesion. Colonized bacteria of the skin such as P. Acnes, may cause a severe type of infection, leading to scarring and an unsightly look on the face. Some predisposing factors that can lead to the onset of Acne Vulgaris are: Diet, Climate, Occupation, Stress, Cosmetics etc.

*YouvanPidika* comprises of two Sanskrit words: *Youvan* and *Pidika*.

*Youvan*: it is derived from the root 'Yu'dhatu by using *KaninPratyaya*. The word *Youvan* is used to indicate the young aged.

*Pidika*: it is derived from the root 'Peed'dhatu which is used in this context to mean painful eruptions.

Thus, the eruptions on the face during the adolescent period caused by *Kapha*, *Vata* and *Rakta* is known as *YouvanPidika*. Also it is mentioned that *Pidika* (papules) resembling the sprouts on the bark of *Shalmali* tree (*Salmalia malabarica*) appearing on the face of adolescents is known as *YouvanPidika*, which make the face ugly. Synonyms of *YouvanPidika* in Ayurveda are: *Mukhadushika*, *Ananadushika*, *Tarunypidika*.

In the Ayurvedic texts, it has been mentioned that all diseases are due to a disturbance in the equilibrium of the *Tridosha* i.e. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*. Thus those factors causing the *Dusthi* (abnormality) in the *Dosha* are considered as the *Nidana* (causative factors) of *YouvanPidika*. Acharya Susruta also mentioned in his treatise, that systemic and local components related to sexual changes during adolescents is responsible for *YouvanPidika*. According to him, the causative factors can be categorized under the following headings: *Aharaj*, *Viharaj*, *Manasik*, *Kaalaj*.

According to *AcharyaKashyap*, at the age of 16 years, there are changes in secondary sexual characteristics and the appearance of *SukraDhatu* (Semen/Ovum) occurs. He further elaborates that these changes occur due to the combined and forceful action of *Panchamahabhutas* during the adolescent period. Acharya *Sharangdhara* also mentioned that *Youvan Pidika* is caused due to the

*SukraDhatuMala* (by-product formed during semen formation).

In *SusrutaSamhita*, *KshudraRogaNidanAdhyaya*, there it is mentioned the description of *Mukhadushika* under *KshudraRogas*, which can be correlated with modern day Acne Vulgaris. Based on the characteristic appearances it can be classified as follows:

**Vataj**: Severe itching, dryness, blackish discoloration.

**Pittaj/Raktaj**: Redness, heat, pus formation.

**Kaphaj**: Increased oiliness, and pus formation.

## MODERN MANAGEMENT

In modern medicine, a variety of medications are available for the treatment of Acne Vulgaris. Before the medicines are prescribed, the Grading of Acne Vulgaris is done and then the medicines are prescribed, based on the severity of the eruptions. Retinoids, benzoyl peroxide and topical antibiotics are the first line of treatment used by modern practitioners in the management of Acne Vulgaris. Other topical agents such as salicylic acid, Sulphur, zinc, aluminum chloride, nicotinamide etc. are also used<sup>1</sup>. In some cases, a combination of topical and oral medicines has been used. Common topical combinations are erythromycin plus benzoyl peroxide and topical retinoids etc.

The drawbacks with these treatments are that they come with a trailer load of side effects. Retinoids for example causes skin dryness and skin peeling. Benzoyl peroxide causes the risk of allergic contact dermatitis and sometimes burning of the skin. Erythromycin causes erythema, dryness and burning sensation, just to mention a few.

## AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT

In Ayurveda, mainly two types of *Chikitsa* (treatment) are described i.e. *ShodhanaChikitsa* (purification treatment) and *ShamanaChikitsa* (palliative treatment). In *ShodhanaChikitsa*, it seeks to excite/vitiate the *Doshas* in the body and then it is subsequently expelled out through the nearest route available. Once these *Doshas* are expelled, disorders due to *Kapha* and *Pitta* have a lesser chance of reoccurrences. In *ShamanaChikitsa*, it is the treatment which neither aggravates the *Doshas* nor is

it expelled out of the body, instead it seeks to normalize the Doshas in their *Sthanas* (location) to bring about a state of equilibrium of the *Doshas* in the body.

For *Youvan Pidika*, *Vamana Karma*(Emesis), *Nasya Karma*(Errhines)and *Siravedhana*(Bloodletting)is mentioned as the line of treatment for this disorder, according to various *Acharya*.

#### ShodhanaChikitsa

- *Vamana Karma*: it is the best *ShodhanaChikitsa*, indicated for disorders caused by *KaphaDosha*. Since *KaphaDosha* is involved in the pathogenesis of *YouvanPidika*, *AcharyaSusruta* and *Vagbhat* has mentioned *VamanaKarma* as the main line of treatment. *VamanaKarma* helps in the *SampraptiVighatana*(removal of pathogenesis) of *YouvanPidika*. Almost all texts mention *Vamana* as the prime treatment modality in the successful management of *YouvanPidika*.
- *NasyaKarma*: *AcharyaVagbhat* has mentioned that *NasyaKarma* is effective in the management of *Youvan Pidika*. The medicines that are administered through the

nasal route in *UrdhvagatrugataRogas*(disorders above the neck region) aid in the management of *YouvanPidika*.

- *Siravedhana*: Since *Pitta/Rakta* is involved in *YouvanPidika*, *Raktamokshana* (bloodletting) is also one line of treatment in its management.

#### ShamanaChikitsa

For *ShamanaChikitsa*, many herbo-mineral compounds are advocated for both internal and external use. As the disease is spread over the face, external applications have a greater impact on the features of *YouvanPidika*. The medicines can be in powder form, paste, oil, ghee etc. The method advised for the application is based on assessment of the eruptions and they may be: *Prakshalana*, *Snehana*, *Lepana*. In *YouvanPidika*, *Lepa* (paste) prepared out of drugs like *Vacha*, *Lodhra*, *Saindhava*, *Dhanyaka*, *Kusta*, *Narikel* *Pushpa*, *Shukti* and *Narshapa* can be used. Some oral medications that can be used simultaneously with the mentioned drugs are: *Kaishora Guggulu*, *Triphala Guggulu*, *Arogya Vardhini Vati*, and *Panchnimbachurna*.

ACHARYA	TREATMENT
<i>Susruta Samhita</i>	<i>Vamana, Lepana</i>
<i>Ashtanga Sangraha</i>	<i>Lepana, Vamana, Siravedhana</i>
<i>Ashtanga Hrudaya</i>	<i>Lepana, Vamana, Siravedhana, Nasya</i>
<i>Sharangdhar</i>	<i>Lepa</i>

## DISCUSSION

Since *Vata*, *Kapha* and *Rakta* are mainly involved in the pathophysiology of *YouvanPidika*, *AcharyaCharaka* has stated the involvement of *PittaDosha* along with *Rakta* in the manifestation of the *Pidikas*. As Ayurveda promotes the use of *Yukti* (rationale) in understanding the diseases, the symptoms manifested in *YouvanPidika* can be correlated with the various *Doshas* mentioned. In the vitiation of *VataDosha*, there is pain present, watery discharges and scar formation. While in *PittaDosha* vitiation, there is *Paka* (inflammation) and *Daha* (burning sensation) causing blackish discoloration. The vitiation of *KaphaDosha* can lead to the formation of *Puya* (pus) *Sotha* (swelling), *Snigdhatta*

(oiliness), *Srava* (discharge) and *Kandu* (itching). All of these symptoms are mostly present in the manifestation of *YouvanPidika*, hence it can be correlated with *Acne Vulgaris*.

In a study conducted by Dr. Chandrakaret.al. significant improvement was seen in patients after *VamanaKarma*. The relief was found 70.69% in Number of *Pidika*, 76.47% in *Vaivarnya*, 64.73% in *Sotha*, 66.67% in *Vedana* and 68.75% in Covered Area. Complete remission was observed in 20% of patients, in 40% of patients marked improvement was noticed, 30% have moderate and 10% patients showed mild improvement.

**CONCLUSION**

In the current era, *YouvanPidika* is one of the most common disorders affecting adolescents. Modern remedies are quick but they leave the individual with more side effects than necessary and once the treatment is stopped, the reoccurrence is

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- high. As such, Ayurveda offers a safe and effective treatment modality in eliminating the occurrence of *YouvanPidika*. *Panchakarma* therapies such as *VamanaKarma*, *NasyaKarma* and *Siravedhana/Raktamokshana* offers such great relief in this disorder.
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