CONCEPT OF ALLERGIC CONJUNCTIVITIS ON AYURVEDIC PROSPECTUS

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ABSTRACT

Allergic conjunctivitis can be correlated with Netrabhishyanda in Ayurveda. Netrabhishyanda is a group of disorders mentioned in classical Ayurvedic texts which have been categorized under Sarvagata roga. The study of literature reveals that Allergic conjunctivitis occurs due to vitiation of Kapha and Raktā. The features like itching, tearing, lid swelling and chemosis are similar to signs and symptoms of kaphaja Abhisyanda as described in classical Ayurvedic texts. Despite of this feature of Irritation of eye (Sangharsh and Parushya,) Vataja and burning sensation (daha) Pittaja symptoms also involved in some extent. The objective of this literary paper to find out relation of Allergic conjunctivitis with all types of Netrabhishyanda (mainly Kapha with subsidiary role of vata and pitta and rakta doshas).

KEYWORDS: Allergic conjunctivitis, Netrabhishyanda, Sarvagata roga, Kaphaja, Rakaja etc.

INTRODUCTION

Allergic conjunctivitis can be correlated with “Abhisyanda”. It has been mentioned in review that various etiological factors of eye disease seasonal changes, atmospheric changes and habitual factors of the patients, immunological status of patient etc contribute in occurrence of Abhisyanda.¹

Based on clinical features allergic conjunctivitis can be correlated with Abhisyanda of predominantly Kaphaja etiology. The features like itching, edema of conjunctiva and lid, heaviness of eyelid indicate Kapahja² etiology of allergic conjunctivitis. Features like burning sensation indicate vitiation of Pitta. Dryness of eye indicates vitiation of Vata. Redness suggests vitiation of Raktā. Hence, features of allergic conjunctivitis are mainly linked with kaphaja activity with subsidiary action of other doshas¹. A conceptual study was carried out regarding the disease and drug from Ayurveda and modern points of view to understand them in terms of each other and, to find out the possibility of addressing the pathogenesis and drug mechanism in a better way.

DISCUSSION

ABHISHYANDA

Abhishyanda is a disorder which is described under Sarvagata roga. The word Abhishyanda is derived from the root ‘syanda’ which is prefixed by ‘Abhi’ upsarga and suffixed by ‘Ghan’ pratayaya. It means that ‘Ativridhi’ and ‘Asrava’.³ The term ‘Sarvakshi’ generally refers to all the five netra mandals, netra sandhis and also intraocular structures. If the vitiated doshas is confined to all these structures, their signs and symptoms will be distributed throughout these portions. Such a disease is called Sarvakshi roga.

In the eye, transparent structures, such as Krishnumandalam, drishtikacham etc. are supplied by rasa dhatu and the vascular portion such as iris, choroid etc. are supplied by rakta dhatu. Abhisyanda can be explained as the pathological changes in the srotas of the head region which directly influence the vascular and avascular circulation of Intraocular fluids and nutrition of the ocular structures leading to functional defects. The vascular changes mainly are:

- Congestion of the vessel
- Dilatation of the vessels
- Increased permeability of vessels

Ocular Changes are,

- Increased in blood volume especially of ciliary vessels
- Increase in pressure of episcleral vein

The Abhisyanda are classified into four on the basis of these signs and symptoms which can be traced back to the predominant doshas². These are
1. Vatabhishyanda
2. Pittabhishyanda
3. Kaphabhishyanda
4. Raktabhishyanda

VATABHISHYANDA

Acharya Sushruta described that it is a condition in which vata dosha vitiates and this deranged vata produces signs and symptoms of Vatabhishyanda:

- Nistodana- Pricking pain in the eye
- Stambhana- Loss of movements and feeling of stiffness
- Nirodhan- Horripillation
- Parushya- Foreign body sensation or irritation
- Parushya- Roughness
- Sirobhitapa- Headache
- Vishushakabhava- Dryness in eyes
- Shishirashruta- Cold watery discharge
According to Acharya Vagbhatta sign and symptoms of Vatabhishyanda are:
Shankha, Akshi, Bhru, Lalata toda, sphurana and bhedana- Pricking and cutting type of pain
Chula ruja- Radiating type of pain in above places
Shushka alpa dashika- Dried and little eye discharge
Sheeta cool- Cooling sensation
Nimeshoonmeshana Kruchram- Difficulty in opening and closing the eyelid

Janthunam ev sarpana- Foreign body sensation
Nasanaha- Nasal obstruction
Alpa shopha-edema of eye².

These features of Vatabhishyanda are frequently seen in clinical conditions like; engorgement of conjunctival vessels (conjunctivitis), epithelial erosions (keratitis), dry eye, concretions.

### Table 1: Symptoms of Vataja Abhisyanda according to different Acharyas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>S.S.</th>
<th>A.H.</th>
<th>A.S.</th>
<th>M.N.</th>
<th>B.P.</th>
<th>Sha.S.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nistodana (Pricking pain)</td>
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<td>Stanbhana (Frickity)</td>
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<td>Romsharsa (Horrification)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sangharsa (Foreign body sensation)</td>
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<td>Parusallya (Hardness)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shiroabhita (Headache)</td>
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<td>Vishushka Bhava (Dryness)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shishrashruta (Cold wetery discharge)</td>
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<td>Nidanasha (Feeling of blocked nose)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alpa Shopha (Mild Swelling)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shankha, Akshi-Bhru and Lalata toda, Sfurana and Bhedana (Fasciculations and prickling pain in Temples, Eyes, Eyebrows and Forehead)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sushka Alpa Dushika (Mild dryness)</td>
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<td>Sheetan Achnam Ashru (Cold and clear tears)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chula Raju (Shifting pain)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kirchhaha Ummesh-Nimesh (Difficulty in blinking eye)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jantunam ev Sarpanam (Tingling sensation in eye)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling of Akshadihmata (Fullness or Heaviness in eyes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling of Sukshma Shaloya in eye</td>
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</table>


### PITTABHISHYANDA

According to Acharya Sushruta sign and symptoms of Pittabhishyanda are:
Daha- Burning sensation in the eye.
Prapaka- inflammatory suppuration of the eyes
Dhoom vasha samuchaya- Smoky sensation
Ushna ashru- Hot lacrimation
Peeta netrata- Yellowish eyes
Shishirabhinnanda- Feels happy with cool touch or cool medications⁶

Vartma shopha and Shyava vartma- Oedema and black discouloration of eyelids
Antha Kleda- Exudation in the eyes
Ksharokshita kshatakshitvam- Feeling severe burning sensation like in agnidagdha vrana¹

These features of Pittabhishyanda resembles with sign and symptoms seen in inflammatory ocular surface diseases. So, Pittabhishyanda can be compared with the moderate to severe acute mucopurulent conjunctivitis with punctuate corneal erosions.

Acharya Vagbhatta added some extra features:

### Table 2: Symptoms of Pittaja Abhisyanda according to different Acharyas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>S.S.</th>
<th>A.H.</th>
<th>A.S.</th>
<th>M.N.</th>
<th>B.P.</th>
<th>Sha.S.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daha (Burning Sensation)</td>
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<td>Paka (Severe inflammation)</td>
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<td>Shishirabhinnanda (Longing for Cold)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dhumayunam (Smokiness in eyes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vaspa Sarnadhabwascha (Sensation as if steam is coming out)</td>
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<td>Ushmaarshruta (Warm lacrimation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pitakankettra (Yellow Discolouration of the eye)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shopha (Inflammation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shyavata of Vartma (Discolouration of Eye- lids)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antaral Kleda (Exudation in the eyes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peeta &amp; Ushnasrhu (Yellow and Warm lacrimation)</td>
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<td>Raga (redness)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peetab Darshanam (Patient visualizes objects as yellow)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ksharokshita Kshatakshitvam (Burning sensation like with Alkali)</td>
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</table>


¹: Agnidagdha vrana is a condition characterized by excessive heat and inflammation involving the eyes.
²: Alpa shopha is a condition characterized by edema of the eye.
KAPHAJA ABHISHYANDA

The sign and symptoms of Kaphaja Abhishyanda described by Sushruta are:
- Gurutwa- Patient feels heaviness
- Shopha- Edema
- Kandu- Itching
- Upadeha- Sticking of lids together
- Sitata- Excessive whiteness

It can be correlated with Acute Hemorrhagic Conjunctivitis.

RAKTABHISHYANDA

This is a condition more or less similar to Pittabhisyanda. Its sign and symptoms are merely equivalent to Pittaja Abhishyanda. In Raktabhisyanda rakt dhatu is more involved. The symptoms are; Lohit netrata (congested vessels are very prominent on Shuklamandala), Tamrashrut (reddish tears) and the presence of deep red stripes all along. It can be correlated with Acute Hemorrhagic Conjunctivitis.

CONCLUSION

From above discussion, it may conclude that symptoms of Allergic conjunctivitis are including all types of Netrabhisyanda having mainly Kaphaja origin with more or less of other doshas.

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