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AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF ALOPECIA AREATA USING VIDDHAKARMA AS A PARA-SURGICAL PROCEDURE: A CASE STUDY

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KEYWORDS

Alopecia Areata, Indralupta, Viddhakarma, Panchatikta Ghrita, Asthiposhaka Vati.

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Abstract

Alopecia areata is a common autoimmune dermatological disorder characterized by non-scarring, patchy hair loss. In Ayurveda, this condition is described as Indralupta and is attributed to Tridoshaja involvement with Rakta Dushti and obstruction of hair follicles (Romakupa Avarodha). Conventional management includes corticosteroids and immunomodulators, which may provide temporary relief but are often associated with adverse effects and recurrence. The present case report evaluates the effectiveness of Viddhakarma, a para-surgical procedure described in Ayurvedic texts, along with internal medications in the management of Indralupta. A 21-year-old male presented with patchy hair loss over the scalp for one year. Viddhakarma was performed twice weekly for six weeks, supported by Panchatikta Ghrita and Asthiposhaka Vati. Significant hair regrowth was observed, with marked improvement in SALT score and no adverse effects. This case highlights the potential role of Viddhakarma as a safe, cost-effective, OPD-based Ayurvedic intervention for alopecia areata.

INTRODUCTION:

Alopecia areata is a common autoimmune dermatological condition characterized by non-scarring, patchy hair loss. Conventional treatment primarily involves corticosteroids, which may provide temporary improvement but are often associated with adverse effects and recurrence. Consequently, there is a need to explore safe and effective alternative therapeutic approaches.

In Ayurveda, alopecia areata is correlated with *Indralupta*, a *Tridoshaja* disorder described under *Kshudraroga* and *Raktapradoshaja Vikara*. Classical

Ayurvedic texts recommend para-surgical interventions such as *Siravedha* for its management; however, clinical documentation on the use of **Viddhakarma**, a modified form of Siravedha, remains limited. This case is unique in demonstrating the clinical effectiveness of Viddhakarma, administered as the primary intervention along with internal Ayurvedic medications, resulting in significant hair regrowth without adverse effects. This report adds evidence supporting Viddhakarma as a feasible, OPD-based Ayurvedic para-surgical treatment option for alopecia areata.

Patient Information:

A 21-year-old male student from a professional college presented to the Shalya Tantra OPD on 25/03/2025 with complaints of hair loss. The patient's identity has been anonymized to maintain confidentiality. The primary concern was **progressive patchy hair loss over the scalp**, involving the frontal, temporal, and occipital regions, present for the past one year.

The patient had **no known history of autoimmune disorders or other chronic systemic illnesses**. There was **no family history of similar illness** or autoimmune disease. No significant psychosocial stressors were reported. The patient did not have any addictions. Sleep was reported to be **inadequate and disturbed**. Dietary habits were vegetarian, with a history of frequent consumption of junk food and excessive intake of Lavana Rasa and Abhishyandi Ahara.

There was **no history of prolonged medical treatment** prior to the onset of lesions. The patient reported the use of a specific shampoo preceding the onset of patchy hair loss; however, discontinuation did not result in improvement. No previous effective treatment outcome was noted.

TABLE NO.1 Personal History

Parameter	**Observation**
Diet	Vegetarian
Appetite	Good
Bowel habits	Regular
Micturition	5–6 times/day; 0–1 time/night

Table 2. General and Systemic Examination Findings

Parameter	**Findings**
Build	Moderately built
General condition	Good
Pulse	86/min
Blood pressure	124/84 mmHg
CVS	S1 S2 normal, no added sounds
CNS	No abnormality detected
Per abdomen	Soft, non-tender

Table 3. Ashtavidha Pariksha Findings

Parameter	Observation
Nadi	86/min, regular
Mala	Regular
Mutra	Normal frequency
Jivha	Coated
Shabda	Clear
Sparsha	Normal
Drik	Normal
Akruti	Madhyama

Table 4. Local Examination and Investigations

Parameter	Findings
Scalp examination	Patchy, non-scarring alopecia over frontal, bilateral temporal, and occipital regions
Hemoglobin	12.5 g/dL
BT, CT	Within normal limits
TLC, DLC	Within normal limits

Table 5. Timeline of Historical and Current Episode of Care

Date	Event
15/03/2024	Patient first noticed gradual hair shedding followed by development of patchy hair loss over the scalp
02/04/2024	Patient consulted a dermatologist and received conventional treatment; no significant improvement observed
25/03/2025	Patient presented to Shalya Tantra OPD, Khemdas Hospital
25/03/2025 – 25/06/2025	Ayurvedic treatment initiated with Viddhakarma and internal medications; significant hair regrowth observed

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESMENT:

The diagnosis was established based on clinical history and physical examination, which revealed well-defined, non-scarring patches of hair loss over the scalp. Routine hematological investigations including hemoglobin, BT, CT, TLC, and DLC were within normal limits. Disease severity and treatment response were assessed using the Severity of Alopecia Tool (SALT) score. There were no problems in doing the tests. The patient had good access to medical care, no money-related difficulties, and no cultural issues that affected diagnosis.

Prognosis

Alopecia areata generally has a variable prognosis depending on disease

duration and severity. In this case, the moderate baseline SALT score indicated a favorable prognosis. Following treatment, there was marked improvement with significant hair regrowth, suggesting a good therapeutic response.

Table 6. SALT Score Assessment Before and After Treatment

Scalp Area	SALT Score Before Treatment	SALT Score After Treatment
Vertex (40%)	16	0
Right scalp (18%)	6.5	0
Left scalp (18%)	6	2.5
Occipital scalp (24%)	3.5	0
Total SALT score	32	2.5

Therapeutic Intervention:

The therapeutic intervention included a **para-surgical procedure (Viddhakarma)** along with **internal pharmacological Ayurvedic medications**.

Viddhakarma was performed **twice weekly for a duration of three months**. The procedure consisted of multiple superficial pricks over the affected areas of the scalp using a sterile fine-gauge needle under strict aseptic precautions. Internal medications included **Panchatikta Ghrita** administered orally at a dose of **5 g once daily on an empty stomach**, and **Asthiposhaka Vati** administered as **one tablet twice daily after meals with water**, for the same duration.

No changes were made to the planned therapeutic intervention during the treatment period, as the patient showed consistent clinical improvement and did not experience any adverse effects.

Follow-up and Outcomes:

Progress was assessed clinically and through patient feedback during follow-up visits. After **six sittings (three weeks)** of Viddhakarma, the patient reported **stoppage of hair fall**, and early regrowth of new hair was observed over the affected patches. After **24 sitting (twelve weeks)**, complete hair regrowth was noted over the frontal, parietal, and bilateral temporal regions. Both clinician assessment and patient satisfaction indicated a marked improvement.

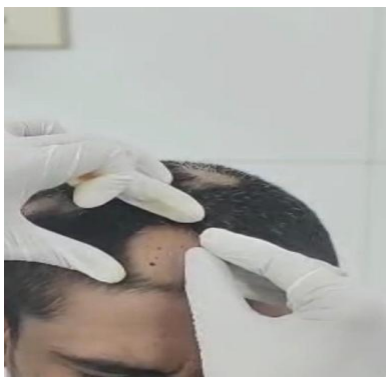

Fig :1 Viddhakarma procedure

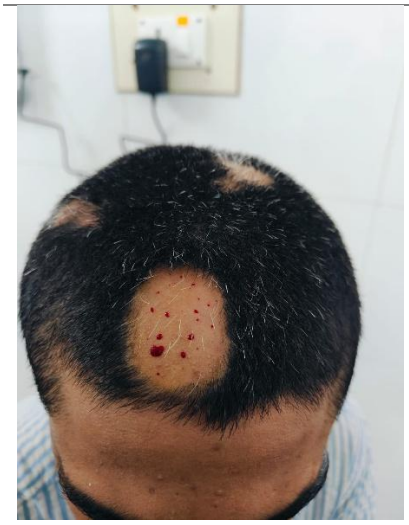

Fig :2 Before treatment

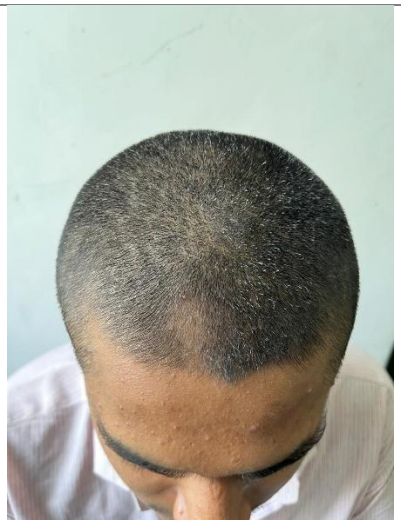

Fig :3 After treatment

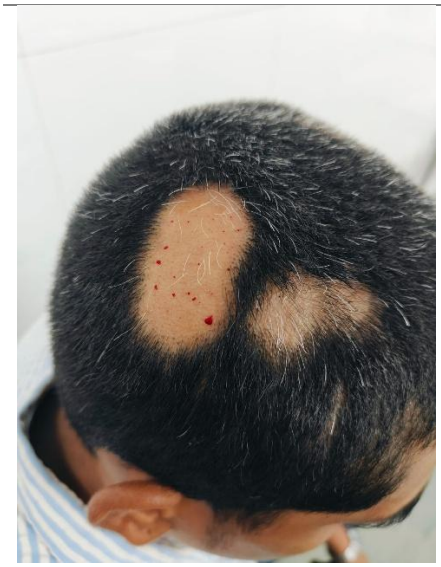

Fig :4 Before treatment

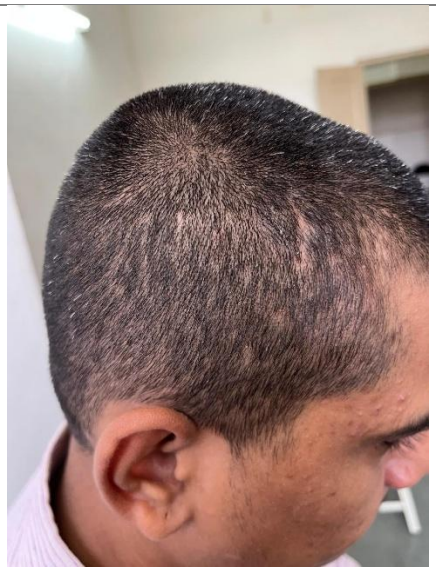

Fig :5 After treatment

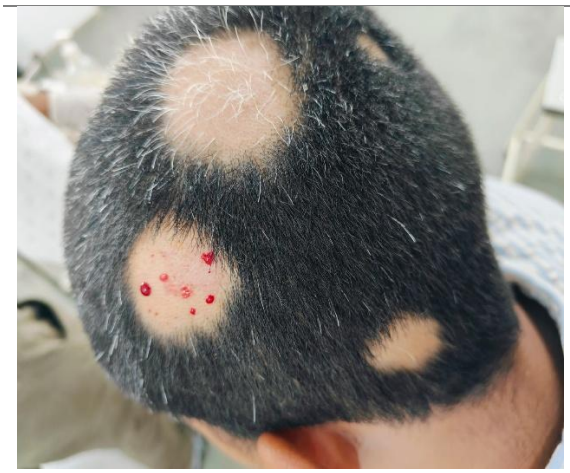

Fig :6 Before treatment

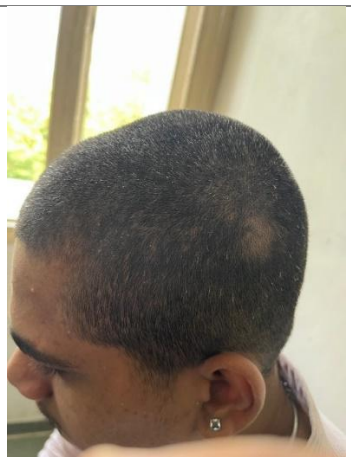

Fig :7 After treatment

Discussion:

This case shows that **Viddhakarma**, a special Ayurvedic procedure, along with internal Ayurvedic medicines, can help treat alopecia areata (*Indralupta*). The main strength of this report is that it carefully documents the treatment and measures improvement using the SALT score, showing clear hair regrowth. The procedure was safe, well tolerated, and could be done in an outpatient setting.According to Ayurveda, hair loss happens because of imbalance in **Pitta and Vata**, and blockage of hair follicles by Rakta and Kapha. Viddhakarma works by giving small shallow pricks on the scalp to remove this blockage, while also triggering the body's natural healing process and improving blood flow to the hair roots. **Panchatikta Ghrita** helps balance Pitta and Rakta, and **Asthiposhaka Vati** nourishes bones (Asthi Dhatu), which supports hair growth, since hair is considered a by-product of bone tissue. This case suggests that **Viddhakarma with internal medicines can be a safe and effective outpatient treatment for alopecia areata**, resulting in good hair regrowth, and may be useful for people with long-standing or recurring hair loss.

Patient Perspective

Before starting treatment at the Shalya Tantra OPD, I was very worried about my patchy hair loss. I had tried treatments with a dermatologist before, but nothing worked, and my confidence was affected. When I was advised to try **Viddhakarma along with Ayurvedic medicines**, I was a little nervous about the procedure because it involved small pricks on my scalp.

After starting the treatment, I noticed that **hair fall stopped within a few weeks**, and new hair began to grow on the bald patches. By the end of three months, most of my hair had regrown, and the results were visible. I felt the treatment was **safe, tolerable, and effective**, and I am happy with the outcome. The medicines were easy to take, and the procedure was not painful. Overall, this experience has improved my hair growth, confidence, and hope for long-term results.

Informed Consent

Written informed consent was obtained from the patient prior to publication of this case report.

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