

MANAGEMENT OF *DARUNAKA* (DANDRUFF): A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF *CHITRAKAADYA TAILAM*

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ABSTRACT

Background: *Darunaka*, commonly correlated with dandruff in modern dermatology, is a prevalent scalp disorder characterized by itching, dryness and flaking of the scalp. While modern medicine attributes dandruff primarily to fungal proliferation and scalp barrier dysfunction, Ayurveda describes *Darunaka* as a *Vata-Kapha* predominant *Shudra Roga* localized in the scalp region. Classical Ayurvedic toxicology (Agada Tantra) interprets chronic dermatological disorders as manifestations of *Dooshi Visha* (latent toxins) accumulated in tissues. **Objective:** This review aims to explore the Ayurvedic pathogenesis of *Darunaka* and evaluate the therapeutic role of *Chitrakaadya Tailam*, a classical herbal oil formulation used in the management of scalp disorders. **Methods:** Classical Ayurvedic texts including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita* and *Ashtanga Hridaya* were reviewed alongside modern dermatological literature regarding dandruff pathogenesis. Pharmacological properties of the ingredients in *Chitrakaadya Tailam* were analyzed using published scientific studies. **Results:** *Darunaka* arises primarily due to *Vata*-induced dryness and *Kapha*-induced itching and scaling of the scalp. *Chitrakaadya Tailam* contains herbs with antifungal, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and wound-healing properties, which collectively address microbial growth, scalp inflammation and tissue damage. **Conclusion:** *Chitrakaadya Tailam* demonstrates a multi-target therapeutic mechanism that aligns with both Ayurvedic and modern dermatological understanding of dandruff. The formulation represents a promising integrative therapy for long-term scalp health.

KEYWORDS: *Darunaka*, dandruff, Agada Tantra, *Chitrakaadya Tailam*, Ayurvedic dermatology, scalp disorders.

INTRODUCTION

Hair and scalp disorders represent a significant dermatological concern worldwide. Among these conditions, dandruff is one of the most common chronic scalp disorders affecting nearly 50% of the adult population globally.^[1]

Dandruff is characterized by excessive shedding of scalp epidermal cells, accompanied by itching, irritation, and visible flakes. The condition often leads to cosmetic discomfort and psychological distress among affected individuals.

Modern dermatology attributes dandruff primarily to:

- proliferation of *Malassezia* species fungi
- increased sebaceous gland activity
- impaired scalp barrier function
- inflammatory responses.^[2]

Despite the availability of antifungal shampoos and medicated treatments, dandruff frequently shows chronic recurrence, highlighting the need for alternative therapeutic strategies.

Ayurveda provides a detailed description of scalp disorders under the category of *Kshudra Roga* (minor diseases). Dandruff is described as *Darunaka*, a disease characterized by dryness (*Rukshata*), itching (*Kandu*), scaling and hair fall.

Classical Ayurvedic toxicology, Agada Tantra, plays an important role in the management of chronic skin diseases, as many dermatological conditions are believed to arise from *Dooshi Visha*, or latent toxins that accumulate in tissues over time.

This review explores the Ayurvedic understanding of *Darunaka* and the therapeutic significance of *Chitrakaadya Tailam*, a traditional medicated oil used for scalp disorders.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study represents a narrative integrative review of classical Ayurvedic literature and modern scientific research.

Data Sources

The following sources were used:

- **Classical Ayurvedic texts** - *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya* and *Bhavaprakasha Nighantu*
- **Modern scientific literature** - PubMed, Google Scholar, dermatology research databases, ethnopharmacology journals

Ayurvedic Concept of *Darunaka*

Darunaka is classified under *Kshudra Roga* in Ayurveda.

According to *Ashtanga Hridaya*:

"*Darunakam Kapalagate Vata Kaphajam Vyadhi*"^[3]

This indicates that *Darunaka* is a *Vata-Kapha* predominant disorder affecting the scalp region (*Kapala*).

Clinical Features of *Darunaka*

<i>Kandu</i>	Itching
<i>Rukshata</i>	Dryness
<i>Twak sphutana</i>	Cracking of scalp skin
<i>Kesha Chyuti</i>	Hair fall
<i>Twak Parusha</i>	Roughness

Modern Understanding of Dandruff

Modern dermatology describes dandruff as a non-inflammatory form of seborrheic dermatitis.

Key Etiological Factors

Factor	Role
Malassezia fungi	metabolize scalp lipids
Sebum production	provides fungal substrate
scalp barrier dysfunction	leads to flaking
immune response	triggers inflammation

Malassezia species metabolize sebum into fatty acids that irritate scalp cells, resulting in accelerated keratinocyte turnover and visible scaling.^[4]

Chitrakaadya Tailam

Chitrakaadya Tailam is a classical Ayurvedic oil formulation used in the management of scalp disorders.

The formulation contains four primary ingredients processed in sesame oil.

Composition of *Chitrakaadya Tailam***Table 1: Ingredients and Ayurvedic Properties**

S.No.	Ingredients	Properties	Pharmacological properties
1.	<i>Chitrak</i> (L.N. – <i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> Family – Plumbaginaceae)	<i>Rasa – Katu</i> <i>Guna – Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna</i> <i>Veerya – Ushna</i> <i>Vipaka – Katu</i> <i>Dosha prabhav -Kaph-vatahara</i>	Antibacterial, Antifungal, Anti-Inflammatory, Antidiabetic, Anticancer, Antioxidant, Hepatoprotective, Cytotoxic and Wound Healing
2.	<i>Danti</i> (L.N. – <i>Baleospermum montanum</i> Family – Euphorbiaceae)	<i>Rasa – Katu</i> <i>Guna – Guru, Tikshna</i> <i>Veerya – Ushna</i> <i>Vipaka – Katu</i> <i>Dosha prabhav – Kaph-pittahara</i>	Anticancer, Antimicrobial, Free Radical Scavenging, Immunomodulatory, Anthelmintic, Hepatoprotective
3.	<i>Koshataki</i> (L.N. – <i>Luffa acutangula</i> Family – Cucurbitaceae)	<i>Rasa – Tikta</i> <i>Guna – Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna</i> <i>Veerya – Ushna</i> <i>Vipaka – Katu</i> <i>Prabhav - Ubhayatobhaghara</i> <i>Dosha prabhav – Kaph-pittahara</i>	Hepatoprotective, Antidiabetic, Antihyperlipidemic, Anticancer, Analgesic, Anti-Inflammatory, Antibacterial, Immunomodulatory, CNS Depressant, Antiulcer
4.	<i>Tila</i> (L.N. – <i>Sesamum indicum</i> Family – Pedaliaceae)	<i>Rasa – Madhura</i> <i>Anurasa – Kashaya, Tikta</i> <i>Guna – Guru, Snigdha</i> <i>Veerya – Ushna</i> <i>Vipaka – Madhura</i> <i>Dosha prabhav - Vatahara</i>	Antioxidant, Anticancer, Antipyretic, Antihypertensive, Hepatoprotective, Anti-Inflammatory

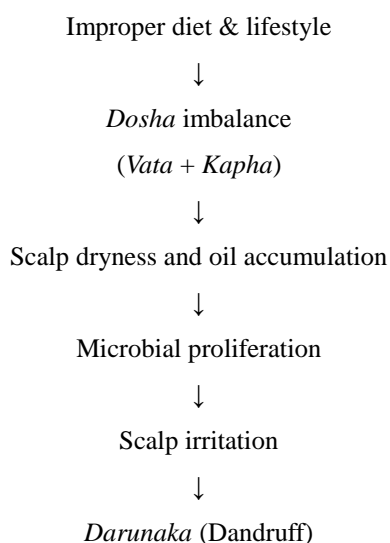
Mechanism of Action

Chitrakaadya Tailam works through multiple therapeutic mechanisms:

- Antifungal Action - *Chitraka* demonstrates strong antifungal activity against pathogenic microorganisms responsible for scalp disorders.
- Anti-inflammatory Effect - *Chitraka*, *Koshataki* and *Tila* reduce scalp inflammation and itching.
- Tissue Repair - *Chitraka* and *Tila* promote wound healing and tissue regeneration.
- *Tikshna* Penetration - *Tikshna* herbs penetrate deeply into the scalp tissues and hair follicles.

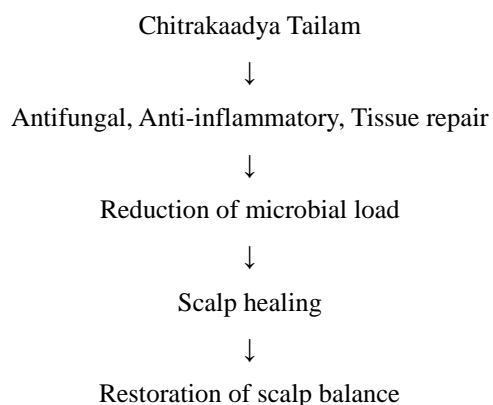
Ayurvedic Therapeutic Model

Pathogenesis of *Darunaka*



Mode of Action of *Chitrakaadya Tailam*

Therapeutic Mechanism



DISCUSSION

The therapeutic action of *Chitrakaadya Tailam* reflects a sophisticated integration of Ayurvedic pharmacology and modern dermatological principles.

The antifungal activity of *Plumbago zeylanica* is particularly relevant because fungal overgrowth is a major etiological factor in dandruff. Research has shown that extracts of this plant exhibit strong antimicrobial activity against pathogenic microorganisms.

Similarly, *Baliospermum montanum* demonstrates antimicrobial and antioxidant properties that support scalp detoxification and immune defense.

The anti-inflammatory effects of *Koshataki* and *Tila* reduce scalp irritation, thereby breaking the itch–scratch cycle that often aggravates dandruff.

From an Ayurvedic perspective, the *Tikshna* and *Ushna* properties of *Chitraka*, *Danti* and *Koshataki* help dissolve *Kapha* accumulation and clear scalp channels.

Meanwhile, *Tila Taila* acts as an ideal therapeutic base due to its *Snigdha* and *Vatahara* properties, which prevent excessive dryness.

CONCLUSION

Darunaka represents a common scalp disorder with complex etiology involving microbial proliferation, inflammation, and scalp barrier dysfunction.

Ayurveda interprets this condition as a *Vata-Kapha* imbalance affecting the scalp region.

Chitrakaadya Tailam offers a comprehensive therapeutic strategy by combining:

- antifungal action
- anti-inflammatory effects
- tissue healing
- *Dosha* balancing properties.

Thus, the formulation represents a valuable integrative approach for the management of dandruff and long-term scalp health.

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