



AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF VARTMA SHOPHA (EYELID SWELLING): A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Background: Eyelid swelling is a frequently encountered ophthalmic condition resulting from inflammatory, infective, or allergic etiologies. In Ayurveda, such presentations are described under Vartmagata Netra Rogas, particularly Vartma Śopha, attributed mainly to Pitta–Kapha doṣa vitiation with Rakta duṣṭi. Conventional management often relies on antibiotics and anti-inflammatory agents, raising concerns about recurrence and drug resistance.

Objective: To evaluate the effectiveness of classical Ayurvedic external and internal therapies in the management of acute eyelid swelling (Vartma Śopha) and to correlate Ayurvedic principles with modern inflammatory pathology.

Methods: A single-case observational clinical study was conducted on a 45-year-old male presenting with acute painful eyelid swelling of 3 days' duration. The Ayurvedic diagnosis of Vartma Śopha (Utklishta Vartma) was established. Treatment included Bāhya Cikitsā – Seka with Manjiṣṭhā, Haridrā, and Nimba kwātha and Vidalaka with Haridrā, Śunṭhi, and Chandana – along with Abhyantara Cikitsā using Triphala Guggulu. Clinical assessment was done before and after treatment and at follow-up.

Results: Significant reduction in eyelid swelling, redness, pain, and heaviness was observed within 7 days. Normal eyelid movements were restored without visual disturbance or recurrence. The condition resolved completely without the use of antibiotics.

Conclusion: Ayurvedic management focusing on Pitta–Kapha śamana and Rakta śodhana proved effective in treating acute eyelid swelling. The case highlights the potential of Ayurveda as a safe, holistic, and antibiotic-sparing approach in inflammatory eyelid disorders, with strong correlation to modern pathophysiological concepts.

KEYWORDS: Vartma Śopha, Eyelid Swelling, Vartmagata Netra Roga.

INTRODUCTION

Eyelid swelling is a common ophthalmic complaint encountered across all age groups due to the anatomical and physiological vulnerability of the eyelids. The eyelids consist of thin skin, loose areolar tissue, rich vascular supply, and extensive lymphatic drainage. Because of these features, even mild inflammatory, infective, or allergic stimuli can rapidly result in visible edema, pain, redness, and functional impairment. Clinically, eyelid swelling affects ocular protection, blinking, tear distribution, and patient comfort, thereby reducing quality of life¹.

From the modern medical perspective, eyelid swelling may result from inflammatory conditions such as blepharitis, hordeolum, chalazion, allergic edema, or early preseptal cellulitis. The underlying pathology involves increased capillary permeability, inflammatory mediator release, and tissue congestion leading to fluid accumulation in the eyelid tissues. Management typically includes warm compresses, topical or systemic antibiotics, anti-inflammatory drugs, and antihistamines. However, recurrent cases and rising antibiotic resistance necessitate alternative, holistic approaches².

Ayurveda provides a detailed description of eyelid disorders under Vartmagata Netra Rogas, where eyelid swelling is described as Vartma Śopha or Utklishta Vartma. Acharya Suśruta states that Vartma Śopha is predominantly caused by Pitta–Kapha doṣa vitiation, often associated with Rakta duṣṭi,

affecting the Rakta and Māmsa dhātu of the eyelid. The vitiated doṣas localize in the vartma pradeśa and manifest as śoṭha (swelling), rāga (redness), ruja or toda (pain), dāha (burning), gaurava (heaviness), and sometimes srāva (discharge)³.

Dietary factors such as abhiśyandi āhāra, environmental exposure to dust and heat, excessive eye strain, improper sleep, and poor hygiene—commonly described in Ayurveda—closely correlate with modern etiological factors for eyelid inflammation. Ayurvedic management focuses on nidāna parivarjana, local therapies to reduce inflammation and rakta duṣṭi, and systemic medications to correct doṣa imbalance and prevent recurrence⁴.

The present case study documents the successful Ayurvedic management of acute eyelid swelling (Vartma Śopha) using classical external and internal therapies and highlights the Ayurvedic–modern correlation with a detailed therapeutic mode of action⁵.

METHODS (MATERIALS AND METHODS)

Study Design

Single-case observational clinical study.

Patient Profile

- Age/Sex: 45-year-old male
- Occupation: Labourer

- Chief Complaint: Painful eyelid swelling
- Duration: 3 days

- Srotas: Raktavaha, Māmsavaha
- Adhiṣṭhāna: Vartma (eyelid)
- Vyādhi Mārga: Bāhya

Clinical Examination

- Diffuse eyelid swelling
- Mild redness
- Pain and heaviness around the eye
- Restricted eyelid movement
- No visual disturbance or systemic symptoms

Ayurvedic Diagnosis

- Vyādhi: Vartma Śopha / Utklishta Vartma
- Doṣa: Pitta–Kapha pradhāna tridoṣa duṣṭi
- Duṣya: Rakta, Māmsa

Follow-Up Care

- Triphala Kwātha Netra Prakṣālaṇa, Review after 7 days

Modern Correlation: Acute inflammatory eyelid swelling corresponding to early preseptal inflammatory edema.

Treatment Protocol

Bāhya Cikitsā (External Therapy)

1. **Seka:** *Manjiṣṭhā + Haridrā + Nimba Kwātha*. Twice daily for 5 days
2. **Vidalaka:** *Haridrā + Śuṅṭhi + Chandana Cūrṇa*. Applied locally for 5 days

Abhyantara Cikitsā (Internal Medication)

- Triphala Guggulu. 1 tablet three times daily after food

BEFORE



AFTER

RESULTS

After 7 days of treatment:

- Eyelid swelling and redness were markedly reduced
- Pain, discomfort, and heaviness resolved completely
- Normal eyelid movements restored
- No discharge or visual impairment
- No recurrence noted during follow-up
- Treatment achieved without antibiotic usage

Clinical photographs documented complete resolution of inflammatory signs.

DISCUSSION

Ayurvedic Pathophysiology and Modern Correlation

Vartma Śopha is a Pitta–Kapha pradhāna inflammatory condition with Rakta duṣṭi. Pitta causes rāga and dāha, Kapha leads to śoṭha and gaurava, while Rakta involvement intensifies inflammation. From the modern viewpoint, these changes

correspond to vascular congestion, increased capillary permeability, and inflammatory mediator release.

DETAILED MODE OF ACTION OF THERAPIES

1. Seka with Manjiṣṭhā, Haridrā, and Nimba

Ayurvedic Perspective:

- Manjiṣṭhā: Raktashodhaka, Pitta–Kapha śāmaka⁶
- Haridrā: Śoṭhahara, Krimighna, Vraṇaropaṇa⁷
- Nimba: Tikta rasa, Raktaprasādana, antimicrobial⁸

Mode of Action:

Seka delivers medicated decoction directly to the affected site, allowing rapid absorption through eyelid skin. The formulation reduces rakta duṣṭi, clears srotorodha, and pacifies Pitta–Kapha locally. It alleviates edema by improving microcirculation and lymphatic drainage while preventing secondary infection⁹.



Modern Interpretation:

Anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and vascular-stabilizing effects leading to reduced edema and redness.

2. Vidalaka with Haridrā, Śuṅṭhi, and Chandana

Ayurvedic Perspective:

- Chandana: Pitta śāmaka, dāha praśamana
- Haridrā: Anti-inflammatory and tissue healing
- Śuṅṭhi: Kapha hara, srotoshodhaka¹⁰

Mode of Action:

Vidalaka provides sustained topical action, reducing local heat, pain, and stiffness. Chandana cools inflamed tissues, Haridrā promotes healing, and Śuṅṭhi reduces Kapha-induced stagnation, thereby restoring eyelid mobility.

Modern Interpretation:

Topical anti-inflammatory, analgesic, and decongestant effect.

3. Triphala Guggulu (Internal Medication)

Ayurvedic Perspective:

- Triphala: Netrya, Raktashodhaka, Rasāyana
- Guggulu: Śothahara, Lekhana, Srotoshodhaka

Mode of Action:

Triphala Guggulu corrects systemic doṣa imbalance, reduces inflammatory load, enhances tissue repair, and prevents recurrence by cleansing microchannels and improving metabolic activity¹¹.

Modern Interpretation:

Anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, immunomodulatory, and detoxifying action.

CONCLUSION

This case study demonstrates that Ayurvedic management of Vartma Śopha using targeted external and internal therapies is effective in treating acute eyelid swelling. By addressing Pitta–Kapha doṣa vitiation and Rakta duṣṭi, Ayurveda provides rapid symptom relief, tissue restoration, and prevention of recurrence without antibiotic dependency. The integrative understanding of classical Ayurvedic principles with modern inflammatory mechanisms highlights the relevance of Ayurveda in contemporary ophthalmic care.

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