



# EFFICACY OF JALAUKAVACHARANA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF VYANGA (MELASMA): A CASE REPORT

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Appearance places a high value in human society. There is a growing focus on skincare and maintaining beautiful and healthy skin. In Ayurveda skin diseases are included under the heading of Kshudra and Kshudrarogas. Vyanga is one of the Kshudra rogas and is distinguished by the presence of the Niruj, Tanu and Shyava varna mandalas on the face, particularly the forehead, nose and cheeks with 90% patients are women. Clinical features of Vyanga are similar to that of Melasma. Bhrajak Pitta, which is responsible for skin coloration, is closely related to the complexion of skin. Vitiated Pitta Dosh plays an important role in the formation of Melasma. The management of this condition should focus on pacifying the aggravated Doshas and Promoting Raktashodhana. Jalaukavacharana (Leech Therapy) is considered a key treatment modality, as it aids in blood purification, removes toxins, and eliminates the vitiated Doshas accumulated in the body.

**Aims and Objectives:** To evaluate the efficacy of Jalaukavacharana (Leech Therapy)

**Material:** A 42 year old female patient reported to Rognidan O.P.D. with complaints of brownish colored patches on face mainly on cheeks and just above the eyebrow region since 1 and half year. No pain, itching and burning sensation.

**Methods:** Jalaukavacharana sitting on 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> day. Two Jalauka's were applied over cheeks.

**Discussion:** Vyanga is Raktapradoshaja Vyadhi mentioned under Kshudraroga which has major concern with respect to beauty of the person specially females. Raktamokshana (Jalaukavacharana) is one of the shodhana karma which cures the disease originated by Rakta and Pitta.

**Conclusion:** Present case report of patient with vyanga. The therapy was effective in reducing the symptoms. Hence, Jalaukavacharana is effective in treatment of vyanga patient.

**KEYWORDS:** Vyanga, Melasma, Jalaukavacharan, Raktamokshana, Leech therapy

## INTRODUCTION

Vyanga is described in Ayurveda as a Kshudra Roga characterised by the appearance of Niruj, Tanu, Shyava Varna Mandala on Mukha (painless, thin, bluish-black/brown patches on face). Though painless, Vyanga significantly affects cosmetic appearance and psychological well-being, especially in women.<sup>[1]</sup>

In contemporary dermatology, Vyanga closely resembles Melasma, an acquired hypermelanosis presenting as symmetrical hyperpigmented macules and patches over sun-exposed areas of the face, particularly cheeks, forehead, nose and upper lip.<sup>[2]</sup>

Ayurveda considers Vyanga as a disorder involving; Vata + Pitta Dosh alongwith Rakta Dushti.

For Rakta Dushti and Pitta-dominant skin conditions, Raktamokshana is described as a prime therapy. Among Raktamokshana methods, Jalaukavacharana (leech therapy) is specifically indicated for Pitta-Rakta predominant conditions<sup>[3]</sup> due to its secretions which possess Madhur Rasa (sweet taste) & Sheeta (cooling) property<sup>[4]</sup> leading to Raktaprasadana. According to Acharya Sushruta for female patient<sup>[5]</sup> application of leech is indicated.

## AIM

To evaluate the efficacy of Jalaukavacharana (Leech Therapy) in the management of Vyanga (Melasma)

## OBJECTIVES

- To assess improvement in: colour intensity, size of patches, patient satisfaction
- To observe safety of procedure.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Vyanga, as mentioned by various Acharyas, is classified under Kshudra Roga. Acharya Charaka describes it as a Raktadushtigata Vyadhi.<sup>[6]</sup>

Acharya Vagbhata considers Vyanga as manifestation of Rakta Vrudhhi Lakshana.<sup>[7]</sup>

While Acharya Sushruta categorizes it as a Raktaja Roga.<sup>[8]</sup>

Raktamokshana (bloodletting) is an important therapeutic procedure for Raktaja Rogas<sup>[9]</sup>

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Centre of study-** OPD of Rognidan Dept. GAC&H Nagpur.

## CASE REPORT

A 42year old female patient with Regn. No.- 20260001350 came to Rognidan Department OPD of GAC&H Nagpur, with chief complaints of –

- Dark brown patches on both cheeks and the forehead.
- No any itching or burning sensations over the past 4 years.



History of present illness-The patient was normal 4 years back. But since then Vyanga develop on her both cheeks gradually it increased and spread above right eyebrows.

She received Allopathic treatment for 1 month, but there was no significant improvement. As a result, she sought treatment at our hospital.

**Past History-** No H/O HTN/DM/Hypothyroidism  
 No any surgical history

**Family History-** No significant family history.

**Menstrual History-** Regular menstrual cycle.

**Table 1. Personal History**

Name- ABC	Bala- Madhyama	Prakriti- Pitta Vata
Age/Sex- 42/F	Sleep- Adequate	Pulse rate-78/min
Address-Ashirwad Nagar, Nagpur	Addiction-None	B.P.- 110/70 mm of Hg
Marital status- Married	Bowel habit- Regular	Height-157 cm
Occupation- Housewife	Appetite- Normal	Weight- 51 kg

**Table 2. Ashtavidha Pariksha**

<i>Nadi</i> (pulse): <i>Pitta-vata</i> 78/min	<i>Shabda</i> (speech): <i>Spashta</i>
<i>Mala</i> (stool): <i>Nirama</i>	<i>Sparsha</i> (touch): <i>Ruksha</i>
<i>Mutra</i> (urine): <i>Samyak</i>	<i>Druk</i> (eyes): <i>Samanya</i>
<i>Jivha</i> (tongue): Coated ( <i>Ishat saam</i> )	<i>Akruti</i> (built): <i>Madhyam</i> BMI: 20.7 kg/m <sup>2</sup>

**Assessment Criteria**

**Table 3: Melasma Area and Severity Index (MASI) <sup>[10]</sup>**

Parameter	Finding	Score
<b>Severity of Pigmentation</b>	No Visible Pigmentation	0
	Slight Pigmentation	1
	Mild Pigmentation	2
	Moderate Pigmentation	3
	Severe Pigmentation	4
<b>Area of Involvement</b>	No Involvement	0
	<10% Involvement	1
	11-29% Involvement	2
	30-49% Involvement	3
	50-69% Involvement	4
	70-89% Involvement	5
<b>Homogeneity</b>	90-100% Involvement	6
	Absent	0
	Slight (Specks Involvement)	1
	Mild (patch<1.5 cm Diameter)	2
	Moderate (patch >2 cm Diameter)	3
	Severe (Uniform skin involvement without any clear area)	4

MASI Score Calculation: For each facial region, the MASI score is calculated as follows:

$$MASI = 0.3 \times (DF \times HF \times AF) + 0.3 \times (DRM \times HRM \times ARM) + 0.3 \times (DLM \times HLM \times ALM) + 0.1 \times (DC \times HC \times AC)$$

Where:

D = Darkness score

H = Homogeneity score

A = Area score

F = Forehead

RM = Right Malar (Right Cheek)

LM = Left Malar (Left Cheek)

C = Chin

**Treatment Protocol**

**Pre-Procedure:** Informed written consent was taken from the patient after thoroughly explaining the details of the *Jalaukavacharana* procedure.

The patient was advised to take a light meal before the procedure. The patient's face was thoroughly cleansed with cold water, and the treatment area was dried.

The patient was asked to lie on the bed in supine position. Two *Jalauka* were kept in *Haridra* mixed water<sup>[11]</sup> until they become active and then kept in clean water for 2-3 minutes.

**Procedure:** *Jalaukas* were applied simultaneously to both cheeks. The *Jalauka* sucked blood, forming a *Ashwakhuravadanan* (horseshoe shape).<sup>[12]</sup> A wet gauze was

kept over the Jalauka to keep its body moist.<sup>[13]</sup> Middle portion of the Jalauka slowly became swollen. *Raktamokshana* through *Jalaukavacharana* was performed across three sessions. The subsequent sessions were conducted at 7 day intervals by using same *Jalaukas*.<sup>[14]</sup> Once an adequate amount of blood was extracted, the leeches detached naturally within approximately 45 to 60 minutes.

**Post- procedure:** After the Jalauka dropped off, i.e., the procedure was done.

A Y-shaped mark occurred at the sucking site. Wound dressing was done using *Haridra churna* after letting some blood come out.

Then *Jalauka vaman* was done by using *Haridra churna*.<sup>[15]</sup> The patient was asked to change the dressing after 6-8 hours.

**Quantity:** 2 leeches were used in each session, applied once a week to the affected area.

**Duration:** The duration of therapy was 3 weeks with each session lasting for 45-60 minutes with an interval of 7 days.



Leech Therapy

**OBSERVATIONS AND RESULT**

**Table 2: Showing the Result of Improvement**

Parameter		Before T/t score	After T/t score
<b>Severity of Pigmentation</b>	Forehead	3	2
	Right cheek	3	2
	Left cheek	3	1
	Chin	0	0
<b>Area of Involvement</b>	Forehead	1	1
	Right cheek	3	2
	Left cheek	3	1
	Chin	0	0
<b>Homogeneity</b>	Forehead	2	1
	Right cheek	3	2
	Left cheek	3	1
	Chin	0	0
<b>MASI Score</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>3.3</b>

**Before Images (9 Jan 2026)**



Figure 1 Right cheek



Figure 2 Left Cheek

**After Images (15 Feb 2026)**

Figure 3 Right Cheek



Figure 4 Left Cheek



24<sup>th</sup> Jan- First session

After first *Jalaukavacharana* session, mild improvement was observed in hyperpigmentation over cheeks.

31<sup>th</sup> Jan- Second session

After second session Homogeneity decreases in Left cheek and somewhat in Right cheek

7<sup>th</sup> Feb- Third session

After the third session colour of patches turned from brown to light brown. And there is improvement in skin texture.

Post three sessions of *Jalaukavacharana*, there was significant reduction in the MASI(Melasma severity index score), indicating substantial improvement in *Vyanga*.

No adverse effects were observed throughout treatment course.

## DISCUSSION

### Ayurvedic Interpretation

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, *Vyanga* results from the vitiation of *Vata-Pitta Doshas* with *Rakta dushti*.

*Jalaukavacharana* acts as *Raktashodhaka* and *Pittashamaka*.

Leech saliva contains numerous bioactive compounds with anti-inflammatory, analgesic, thrombolytic, antioxidant, vasodilatory, anticoagulant and anti-bacterial properties that improve microcirculation and detoxification.

### Probable Mode of Action

Removes vitiated Rakta → Reduces discoloration

Improves Microcirculation

Reduces inflammation and heat in skin.

Enhances skin nourishment → Improves *Varna*

### Modern Concept

*Vyanga* correlates with Melasma (hypermelanosis).

Blood-letting improves circulation → Reduces pigment deposition.

Findings are consistent with previous Ayurvedic case studies.

## CONCLUSION

The Leech Therapy treatment given in three sessions with an interval of 7 days. This treatment is effective in the management of *Vyanga*.

The Main Aim of treatment is to be pacify of *Pitta Dosh*.



Leech therapy given in this case of *Vyanga* can treat vitiated *Vata* and *Pitta Dosha* and *Raktadushti*. Following the treatment, the Scoring shows a reduction in all evaluated parameters such as severity of pigmentation, area of involvement and symmetry, highlighting significant improvement.

The Case report conclude that *Jalaukavacharana* (Leech Therapy) is highly effective in the treatment of *Vyanga* and can be considered a promising Ayurvedic therapy for Melasma.

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