



EFFICACY OF INDIVIDUALIZED HOMEOPATHY AND KAIYAN THYLAM IN THE MANAGEMENT OF DIFFUSE HAIR LOSS

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ABSTRACT

Hair is a protein filament that grows from follicles found in the dermis, the innermost layer of the skin. Hair is one of the defining characteristics of mammals. In this fast paced modern lifestyle, diffuse hair loss is one of the most common problems among men and women. Hair loss is a distressing condition and adversely affects the quality of life of the patient. Hair loss sufferers spend a large amount of money on remedies ranging from drugs, vitamins to special tonics and shampoos. Homoeopathy is holistic system of medicine that treats 'individual' cases based on physical make-up of the patient as well as the intellectual and mental characteristics. Siddha is an ancient indigenous Indian System of medicine that is holistic in nature. In Siddha, external oil application of Kaiyan Thylam has traditionally good results in hair loss. A clinical study was conducted by using Individualized homoeopathy (oral medicines) and Siddha medicine Kaiyan Thylam (external oil) application on scalp in a total of 20 patients suffering from diffuse hair loss for 90 days. Patients reported significant improvement in hair fall ($P < 0.001$), hair texture ($P < 0.001$) and dandruff ($P = < 0.001$). The integrated approach to diffuse hair loss using Homoeopathy and Siddha system of medicine has promising results and warrant further studies with more stringent criteria.

KEYWORDS: Diffuse hair loss, Homoeopathy, Kaiyan Thylam, Siddha.

INTRODUCTION

Hair is an important component of the body derived from ectoderm of skin. Hair is composed primarily of proteins (88%). These proteins are of a hard fibrous type known as keratin which is composed of polypeptide chains. The hair consists of modified keratin and is divided into the hair shaft, a keratinized tube and hair bulb that consists of actively dividing cells, and melanocytes which give pigment to the hair. Each single hair follicle enters its own growth cycle that occurs in 3 main phases including anagen- the long growing phase, catagen-short regressing phase and telogen – the resting or shedding phase.^[1] Growth of hair is cyclic. Under normal conditions, 85-95% of the hair is in anagen phase, 1% is in catagen phase and 4-14% is in telogen phase. Scalp hair follicles normally rest for 3 months, are active for 2-6 years but are known to grow for as long as 25 years; daily growth is about 0.4mm.^[2] Changes in duration of the growth cycle i.e. premature entry of hair follicles into the telogen phase lead to hair loss.^[3] Hair loss is a common problem that has nearly 50 percent lifetime prevalence among men and women. It can occur anywhere on the body, but more commonly affects just the scalp.^[4] It is normal to

lose between 50-100 hairs a day as this is part of the hair renewal process. However, majority of the people suffer from excessive hair loss at one time in their life.^[5] Etiologically, hair loss may be traced to hormonal and nutritional factors, thyroid disease, generalized or local skin disease, psychogenic stress, medication, radiation, chemotherapy, and exposure to chemicals. Many of these causes are temporary while a few are permanent.^[5] Hair loss is a distressing condition due to cosmetic reasons, and significantly affects the quality of life of suffering patient.^[6]

Homeopathy is a holistic system of medicine that believes that body and mind are integrated. Dr. Hahnemann, the founder of Homoeopathy; in his momentous work "Organon of Medicine" emphasised that no two persons are alike and each is different in his physical, mental and behavioural patterns. According to homoeopathic concept physical disease is accompanied by a change in the mental/emotional state and mental/emotional states, especially if prolonged may lead to physical illness. It attempts to go to the root level of disease in each individual patient by studying the

physical make-up of the patient as well as the intellectual and mental characteristics. This process is called 'individualization'.^[7,8] Homoeopathic literature gives detailed description of dermatological disorders including hair disorders including their treatment.

In Siddha System of Medicine, various medicines have been mentioned in literature for hair loss, among one is Kaiyan Thylam (Siddha Formulary of India, Part-I). The ingredients are extract of *Eclipta alba* (91%) and *Sesamum indicum* (Q.S). The indications for internal use are Anemia, Odema and Bronchial asthma and also externally used for hair loss.^[7] *Eclipta Prostrata* (L.)L (family, Asteraceae) is popularly known as false daisy or Bhingaraj. It is a creeping and moisture loving herb commonly distributed on roadsides and wastelands throughout India.^[8] According to the Siddha system of medicine by controlling pitta (heat) in the head, this wonderful herb controls, cures and prevents hair loss.^[9,10] Therefore, Siddha external oil formulation- Kaiyan Thylam and oral intake of Individualized Homoeopathy can be explored as a valid option for treatment of growing burden of diffuse hair loss.

OBJECTIVES

To evaluate the efficacy of Individualized Homeopathy and Kaiyan Thylam in the management of Diffuse Hair Loss.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

20 patients who reported to the OPD with symptoms diffuse hair loss and agreeing to be a part of this clinical study were recruited as per the inclusion criteria and exclusion criteria. Detailed case history along with physical examination was carried out in all the patients to confirm the diagnosis as well as to exclude any other pathology. During the case taking, it was asked whether the loss is predominantly hair thinning or shedding, if there is a relationship to any inciting/ precipitating event, and if there are symptoms of anemia, hyperandrogenism, or thyroid disease. The patient who presents with gradual hair thinning most likely has male or female pattern hair loss recognized by the typical patterns. A hair pull test was also performed, the hair pull test is positive where the hair is thinning, but negative away from the thinning areas. Besides this, routine haematological, urine, stool and biochemical investigations and thyroid function test were carried out.

Inclusion Criteria

- Patients of both sexes between the age group 20 to 60yrs.
- Patients who consented to participate in the study.
- Patients who are clinically diagnosed for diffused hair loss, either with predominant hair thinning or increased hair shedding.

Exclusion Criteria

- Pregnancy or Breastfeeding.
- Patient suffering from severe systemic illness.
- Patients who had disease focal hair loss having Alopecia areata, Tinea capitis, Traction alopecia, Trichotillomania, scarring hair loss etc.

Treatment protocol

A single suitable homeopathic remedy was prescribed after case taking, individualizing each patient and consulting Material Medica/ Repertory. Medicine was prescribed in 30/200/1M potency and repeated as per case requirement. The patients were advised to apply Kaiyan Thylam as regular hair oil daily and wash scalp with a mild shampoo thrice a week. For Kaiyan Thylam application, the patients were advised to apply the oil on scalp gently by finger tips, rub lightly and avoid vigorous massage. All patients were prescribed balanced diet including seasonal fruits and vegetables and were advised against use of hair spray, hair gels, saloon treatments like hair bleaching/ hair pressing/ perming/ smoothening etc.

Criteria for Assessment

The pre and post assessments of the patients were done on the basis of parameters including hair loss, hair texture and dandruff. The hair was examined by the simple method of touching the patient's hair. Hair loss was counted after constant combing of patient's hair for one minute with the same comb. The detail of assessment criteria is given below:

1. Hair texture

Hard-3
A little smoother-2
Greatly smoother-1
Smooth and shiny-0

2. Hair loss

>150 strands/day- 3
100-150 strands/day-2
50-100 strands/day-1
<50 strands/ day-0

3. Dandruff

Permanently seen-3
Seen after 2-3 days of hair wash-2
Occasionally seen-1
No dandruff-0

Statistical Analysis

The information collected on the basis of above observations was subjected to statistical analysis in terms of mean (X), standard deviation (S.D.) and standard error (S.E.) Paired 't' test was carried out at $P > 0.05$, $P < 0.01$ and $P < 0.001$ levels. The obtained results were interpreted as: - Insignificant $P > 0.05$ Significant $P < 0.05$ highly significant $P < 0.01$, $P < 0.001$

RESULTS

The mean age (\pm SD) of the patients was 27.15 ± 10.09 years and the mean duration of complaints (\pm SD) was 12.75 ± 10.63 months. Eleven (55%) patients were suffering from dandruff, 4(20%) patients were hypothyroid, 4(20%) patients reported use of hair gel/ hair spray/ chemical treatment before hair fall incidence, 2(10%) patients gave history of oral corticosteroid

intake. Of the 12 female patients, 3 (25%) gave history of incidence since pregnancy/lactation. The patient characteristics are described in Table 1 and results of assessment before and after three months of treatment is described in Table 2. The results were highly significant ($P < 0.001$) with respect to the assessment criteria (table 2).

Table 1: Patient characteristics.

Characteristics	N=20
Mean age \pm SD (range)	27.15 ± 10.09
Male (%)	8 (40%)
Female (%)	12 (60%)
Duration of complaints in months \pm SD (range)	12.75 ± 10.63
Family history of similar complaint	8(40%)
No. of patients suffering with dandruff	11 (55%)
K/C/O Hypothyroidism	4(20%)
Complaints started during pregnancy/ lactation (n=12)	3(25%)
History of oral corticosteroid intake	2(10%)
History of hair gel/ hair spray/ chemical treatment	4(20%)

Table 2: Assessment before and 3 months after treatment.

Assessment Criteria	Mean			% of difference	Standard deviation	T value	P value
	B.T	A.T	Mean				
Hair texture	2.6	1.4	1.2	81.08	0.84	8.08	<0.001
Hair Fall	2.65	1.1	1.55	82.67	1.1	7.58	<0.001
Dandruff	1.4	0.33	1.07	76.19	0.79	5.17	<0.001

DISCUSSION

Hair has great psychosocial significance for persons. The treatment and management of hair loss is extremely complex nowadays due to commercialization. Although hormone therapy, use of e-reductase inhibitions, synthetic drugs, cosmetic hair transplant are available for the treatment of hair loss but it is costly and has some adverse effects. In this context it is relevant to explore safe and holistic AYUSH system of medicine that may be effective for this common distressing condition.

Homoeopathy is increasingly becoming the treatment of choice among patients for chronic skin diseases. Published literature indicates that a large number of authors have published case reports of successful cases of alopecia areata,^[11,12,13,14] alopecia totalis^[15] and alopecia universalis^[17] in peer reviewed journals. It is imperative that clinical studies/ randomised controlled trails should be conducted using Homoeopathic medicines for diffuse hair loss which is a common disease condition now-a-days.

Kaiyan Thylam is used exclusively in Tamil Nadu and Kerala as hair oil in their day today life. Its main constituent is Eclipta alba (L). commonly known as bringhraj. The natural habitat of this plant is moist land and is widely used in traditional medicine for its medicinal virtues. The important pharmacological

activities are hepato-protective, antibacterial, analgesic and hair growth promoter, improves quality of hair and maintains hair black. Various researches have been done on its hair growth promoter activity.^[8,16] Published research has reported better results than minoxidil in hair growth promoter activity of Eclipta alba. In a randomized controlled trial, petroleum, ether and ethanolic extracts of Eclipta alba were incorporated into Oleaginous cream and applied topically on shaved denuded skin of albino rats. The time required for hair growth initiation as well as completion of hair growth cycle was recorded. Minoxidil 2% solution was applied topically and served as positive control for comparison. The result of treatment with 2 & 5% petroleum ether & ethanolic extracts were better than the positive control minoxidil.^[17]

In the present study, Homoeopathic medicines were prescribed in 30/200/1M potency after detailed case taking, case analysis and repertorization along with local application of Kaiyan Thylam regularly. A total of 11 homeopathic remedies were prescribed for diffuse hair loss after individualising the case. The most prescribed remedies were Natrum mur (4), Silicea (4), Arsenic album (2), Chinchona (2) and Thuja (2). Antim crud, Graphites, Phosphoric acid, Pulsatilla, Sepia and Sulphur were prescribed to one patient each. Patients reported highly significant improvement in hair fall ($P < 0.001$), hair texture ($P < 0.001$) and dandruff ($P < 0.001$).

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While the results of this study are promising, this is essentially a preliminary study due to small sample size. Further studies with larger sample size and more stringent criteria may be undertaken to further validate the results of this study.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that integrated approach to diffuse hair loss using Homoeopathy and Siddha system of medicine has promising results and warrant further studies with more stringent criteria.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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