



“An Integrative Perspective on Shuktika: Insight into Conjunctival Xerosis Management - PRESENTING

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ABSTRACT -

Shuktika is an Ayurvedic eye condition correlated with **conjunctival xerosis**, which is the abnormal dryness of the conjunctiva (the clear membrane covering the white part of the eye and the inner surface of the eyelids). In Ayurveda, the condition known as **Shuktika** is classified as a **Shukla Gata Roga** (a disease affecting the white part of the eye) in Sushruta Samhita. Shuktika is described as a raised, silvery-white, foamy, triangular patch on the bulbar conjunctiva, resembling an oyster shell (*shukti*). It can also present as multiple spots on the sclera. It is considered a Pittaja Netra Roga, meaning it is primarily caused by an imbalance or vitiation of the Pitta dosha, which governs heat and metabolism in the body. The condition is deemed Sadhya roga, implying it is curable.

This condition is correlated with **conjunctival xerosis**, which in modern medicine refers to the abnormal dryness of the conjunctiva (the clear membrane covering the white part of the eye and the inner surface of the eyelids). Conjunctival xerosis is characterized by dryness, lusterlessness, and a non-wettable conjunctiva. It can further lead to thickening, wrinkling, and pigmentation of the conjunctiva. This condition is often associated with Vitamin A deficiency, which is crucial for maintaining healthy conjunctival and corneal epithelia.

Both Shuktika and xerosis can cause symptoms like burning sensation, pain in the eyes, and a feeling of a foreign body in the eye, and sometimes systemic issues like diarrhea, fever, and thirst.

Ayurvedic treatment aims to pacify Pitta dosha and restore moisture to the eyes. This may involve therapies like:

- i) Aschyotana:** Topical application of herbal eye drops, such as those containing Gambhari, Amalaki, and Haritaki.
- ii) Herbal Remedies:** Certain herbs like Shatavari, Ghrita (ghee), and Ksheera (milk) are also recommended due to their cooling and nourishing properties.
- iii) Diet and Lifestyle:** Recommendations include consuming cooling and hydrating foods, and avoiding excessive heat and exposure to irritants.

Modern medicine recognizes conjunctival xerosis as a symptom of Vitamin A deficiency, among other causes. Vitamin A is crucial for maintaining the health of the conjunctiva and cornea. Treatment may involve **Vitamin A supplementation and artificial tears**.

KEYWORDS - Aschyotana , Conjunctival xerosis, Shukla gata roga, Shuktika , Vitamin A deficiency, Vitamin A supplementation.

INTRODUCTION -

Shalakyatantra is a branch of ayurveda which describes Urdhwajatrugata rogas i.e. the diseases related to Head ,Neck,Throat , Eyes , Ears . Netra / Eyes are one of the most important gnyanendriya explained in classics . The most important significant and attractive of five sense organ are the Eyes . It is very difficult to conceive world without eyesight for peoples

SHUKTIKA –

According to Ayurveda {ancient science}, **Shuktika** is classified as a **Shukla Gata Roga** (a disease affecting the white part of the eye) in Sushruta Samhita. Shuktika is described as a raised, silvery-white, foamy, triangular patch on the bulbar conjunctiva, resembling an oyster shell (*shukti*).

According to modern science , **conjunctival xerosis** is the abnormal dryness of the conjunctiva (the clear membrane covering the white part of the eye and the inner surface of the eyelids).

Hetu / causes –

According to Ayurveda,

- **Pitta Dosha Imbalance:** Ayurveda attributes Shuktika to an aggravation of the Pitta dosha, responsible for heat and inflammation in the body.
- **Dietary and Lifestyle Factors:** Improper diet (e.g., consuming junk food) and lifestyle choices like prolonged screen time, insufficient sleep, and exposure to smoke and pollution can exacerbate Pitta, leading to dryness and irritation in the eyes.

According to modern science,

- **Vitamin A Deficiency:** Conjunctival xerosis is a strong indicator of Vitamin A deficiency.
- **Oxidative Stress & Inflammation:** Studies highlight the role of inflammation and oxidative stress in the pathogenesis of dry eye syndrome.

Rupa / clinical features –

According to Ayurveda, Shuktika is an eye disorder classified as a Shukla Gata Roga (a disease affecting the white part of the eye) in Sushruta Samhita which is characterized by the appearance of a small, elevated blackish spot resembling a shell in the Shukla mandala (the white part of the eye, or sclera).

According to modern science, Conjunctival xerosis is a symptomatic condition where the conjunctiva becomes dry, lusterless, and non-wettable. These dry patches typically involve the interpalpebral area (the part of the eye exposed when open) of the temporal and sometimes nasal quadrants, and can be associated with conjunctival thickening, wrinkling, and pigmentation. Conjunctival xerosis is an early sign of xerophthalmia, a spectrum of eye diseases caused by Vitamin A deficiency.

Sadhyasadhytva – Sadhya

Chikitsa/ treatment :

Integrating traditional and modern perspectives offers valuable insights into managing this condition. **Traditional**

Ayurvedic insights

- **Herbal Remedies:** Ayurveda recommends various herbs and formulations to address Shuktika. These include:
 - **Triphala:** A blend of three fruits (Amalaki, Bibhitaki, and Haritaki) used as an eyewash or oral supplement, known for its cleansing, anti-inflammatory, and nourishing properties.
 - **Ghee:** Clarified butter, applied around the eyelids or consumed, provides lubrication and balances aggravated doshas.
 - **Chandana (Sandalwood):** Applying a paste of sandalwood and castor oil around the eyelids can soothe irritation.
 - **Netra Tarpana:** A therapeutic procedure involving retaining medicated ghee over the eyes, improving tear production and soothing irritation.
 - **Aschyotana:** Topical application of herbal eye drops, such as those containing Gambhari, Amalaki, and Haritaki.

Modern ophthalmology insights

- **Nutritional Support:** Diet rich in vitamin A (carrots, sweet potatoes, leafy greens), omega-3 fatty acids, and antioxidants are essential for eye health.
- **Lifestyle Modifications:** Reducing screen time, ensuring adequate sleep, and using humidifiers can help alleviate dryness and irritation.

DISCUSSION –

An integrative perspective combines the wisdom of Ayurveda with modern scientific understanding for comprehensive management:

- **Dietary and Lifestyle Changes:** Adopting an eye-healthy diet rich in Vitamin A, omega-3s, and antioxidants and addressing lifestyle factors like screen time and sleep are crucial.
- **Herbal and Traditional Therapies:** Incorporating Ayurvedic practices like Triphala Aschyotana (eyewash), ghee application, and potentially Netra Tarpana, under the guidance of a qualified practitioner, can provide additional support and relief.
- **Vitamin A Supplementation:** If Vitamin A deficiency is suspected, supplementation, guided by a healthcare professional, becomes essential.
- **Conventional Treatments:** Depending on the severity of the condition, conventional treatments like artificial tears or prescription eye drops may be necessary alongside integrative therapies.

CONCLUSION –

According to above discussion, Both Shuktika and xerosis can cause symptoms like burning sensation, pain in the eyes, and a feeling of a foreign body in the eye, and sometimes systemic issues like diarrhea, fever, and thirst.

Ayurvedic treatment aims to pacify Pitta dosha and restore moisture to the eyes. This may involve therapies like: Triphala Aschyotana (eyewash), ghee application, and potentially Netra Tarpana, under the guidance of a qualified practitioner.

Modern medicine recognizes conjunctival xerosis as a symptom of Vitamin A deficiency, among other causes. Vitamin A is crucial for maintaining the health of the conjunctiva and cornea. Treatment may involve Vitamin A supplementation and artificial tears. **REFERENCES -**

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