

Goghritapana in the Management of Xerosis: A Conceptual Study

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a traditional system of medicine that emphasizes maintenance of health as well as treatment of disease through harmony between body, mind, and environment. Preventive healthcare in Ayurveda is achieved through practices such as Dinacharya (daily regimen), Ritucharya (seasonal regimen), and Achara Rasayana (ethical lifestyle conduct), which help preserve health and prevent disease occurrence.

Xerosis, commonly known as dry skin, is a frequently observed dermatological condition characterized by roughness, scaling, flaking, itching, and reduced skin hydration due to impairment of the epidermal barrier. Factors such as environmental changes, aging, nutritional deficiencies, and excessive use of chemical-based skin products contribute significantly to its occurrence. Contemporary treatment mainly focuses on external moisturizers and emollients that provide temporary symptomatic relief.

According to Ayurveda, xerosis can be correlated with Rukshata or Ruksha Twak, which develops due to aggravation of Vata Dosha. Increased Vata causes depletion of Snigdhata (unctuousness) and Kleda (moisture), resulting in dryness and loss of skin softness.

Ayurvedic classics describe Sneha Chikitsa as the primary therapeutic approach for disorders caused by excessive dryness. While external therapies such as Abhyanga provide localized benefits, internal oleation through Goghritapana offers deeper and long-term effects. Goghrita nourishes tissues, improves digestion and metabolism, restores internal lubrication, and supports skin health at a systemic level. Therefore, Goghritapana can be considered a holistic approach for the effective management of xerosis.

INTRODUCTION

Xerosis is a common skin disorder characterized by dryness, scaling, roughness, irritation, and a sensation of tightness. It develops when the skin loses its natural ability to retain moisture due to disruption of the protective barrier.

In Ayurveda, this condition resembles Rukshata or Ruksha Twak, primarily caused by aggravated Vata Dosha. Since Vata possesses qualities such as Ruksha (dry), Laghu (light), and Khara (rough), it causes depletion of natural skin lubrication and moisture.

In modern lifestyle settings, xerosis has become increasingly common because of:

- Excessive use of soaps, detergents, and sanitizers.
- Exposure to cold weather and low humidity.
- Continuous use of air-conditioned environments.
- Poor dietary habits.



- Inadequate water intake.
- Irregular sleep schedules.
- Psychological stress.
- Aging-related decline in sebaceous gland activity.

Patients with xerosis may present with:

- Dryness.
- Scaling.
- Itching (Kandu).
- Roughness.
- Cracking of skin.
- Painful fissures.
- Dull appearance of skin.
- Increased sensitivity.

Severe dryness may lead to skin fissures, bleeding, and secondary infections. Conventional treatment methods mainly include moisturizers and emollients, which often fail to address the underlying cause and usually provide only temporary relief.

Properties of Goghrita

Nomenclature	Classification	Rasa Panchaka
Sanskrit Name: Sarpi / Ghrita	Included under Madhura Skandha in Charaka Samhita	Rasa: Madhura
Common Name: Cow ghee	Classified as Jangama Sneha	Guna: Snigdha, Guru
English Name: Clarified butter		Virya: Sheeta
		Vipaka: Madhura
		Prabhava: Samskara Anuvartana

Chemical Composition of Goghrita:

Goghrita mainly consists of lipids, with triglycerides forming the major proportion. It also contains phospholipids, diglycerides, monoglycerides, sterols, free fatty acids, and glyceryl esters.

- It is a natural source of fat-soluble vitamins such as:

Vitamin A

Vitamin D



Vitamin E

Vitamin K

- Important Fatty Acids:

Butyric acid, Caproic acid, Caprylic acid, Capric acid, Lauric acid, Myristic acid, Palmitic acid, Stearic acid, Oleic acid, Linoleic acid

These components contribute to nourishment, tissue repair, and maintenance of skin hydration.

Preparation of Goghrita

Traditional Method	Direct Cream Method
Milk is boiled and cooled	Cream is separated from milk
Starter curd is added	Cream is heated directly
Fermentation converts milk into cur	Clarified ghee is obtained
Curd is churned to obtain butter	Final product is filtered and stored
Butter is washed	
Butter is heated on mild flame	
Pure ghee is collected after filtration	

Difference Between Methods:

The traditional method is considered superior because it may contain comparatively higher levels of beneficial omega-3 fatty acids and better nutritional value, whereas the direct cream method is faster and easier.

Action on Doshas	Therapeutic Actions	Indications (Beneficial in)
Tridosha balancing	Rasayana.	Children.
Particularly useful in pacifying Vata and Pitta.	Vajikarana.	Elderly individuals.
	Varnya.	Debilitated patients.
	Medhya.	Women.
	Oja Vardhaka.	Wound healing.
	Agni Vardhaka.	Nutritional deficiency states.
	Balya.	

DISCUSSION

Goghrita is regarded as one of the most effective Sneha Dravyas in Ayurveda because of its nourishing and rejuvenating actions. Its Snigdha property combats dryness, while Guru quality provides deep tissue nourishment. Its Madhura Rasa and Madhura Vipaka help in tissue rejuvenation.



The subtle (Sukshma) and spreading (Vyavayi) nature of Goghrita allows it to reach deeper tissues and nourish them effectively.

In xerosis management, Goghritapana acts through multiple mechanisms:

1. Vata Shamana

- Its unctuous nature helps reduce aggravated Vata, which is the primary cause of dryness.

2. Restoration of Moisture

- It improves Kleda and restores hydration at tissue level.

3. Dhatu Nourishment

- It nourishes Rasa and Rakta Dhatu, improving skin health and complexion.

4. Strengthening Skin Barrier

- It helps maintain lipid content of skin and reduces transepidermal water loss.

5. Reducing Irritation

Its cooling properties relieve burning sensation and skin sensitivity.

Unlike topical moisturizers that act only on the surface, internal administration works at deeper metabolic and tissue levels, providing long-term benefits.

RESULT

Regular administration of Goghrita in an appropriate dose may help reduce symptoms of xerosis such as:

- Dryness.
- Scaling.
- Roughness.
- Skin tightness.
- Cracking.

Daily intake of approximately 10–20 ml, depending on individual digestive capacity and physician guidance, may improve internal lubrication, skin elasticity, and hydration.

Consistent use for 4–8 weeks may provide sustained improvement by:

- Restoring Snigdhata.
- Improving Kleda.
- Enhancing Agni.
- Supporting tissue nourishment.
- Improving skin barrier function.



- Promoting overall health and immunity.

Thus, Goghritapana can be considered a promising Ayurvedic approach for the holistic management of xerosis by treating the root cause rather than offering temporary symptomatic relief.

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