



Overview on Siddha herbal medicine in the management of Leucoderma (*Venkuttam*)

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ABSTRACT

Leucoderma is a common long term dermatological issue characterized by hypo pigmented patches of the skin. Some dermatological outpatient records show the incidence of Leucoderma to be 3% to 4% in India. Leucoderma is considered as *Kanmavinai* according to siddha literatures. Peace of mind (*Mana Saanthi*) is the core therapeutic healing procedure in the diseases with *kanmavinai*. Other than this, *Siddha* system focuses on treating disease by nature gifted herbal preparations, Herbo-mineral combination drugs, Metallic preparations based on intensity and duration of the disease. This paper is a collection work of easily available herbal preparations in the management of leucoderma from classical siddha literatures. Herbal single drug therapies (*Yega Mooligai prayogam*) for the management of leucoderma are better discussed along with their common action, parts used, taste, and potency, how they alleviate *Thodakutram* (humoral derangement) of the illness.

Keywords:

Leucoderma, Vitiligo, *Venkuttam*, *Venpadai*, *Yegamooligaiprayogam*-Single herb therapy.

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INTRODUCTION

Leucoderma is a common long term dermatological issue characterized by hypo pigmented patches of the skin. Many of the skin diseases has a great influence in affecting psychological and social functions of the victim. Although there is clinically no life threat to the patients, the patients suffers psychologically a lot due to ignorance from the society.

Widespread taboos, myths and lack of scientific knowledge make the disease as social embarrassment. Not only the affected persons but also the family members have to face a lot of sufferings. In case of Young male or female becomes victim of the diseases, they were considered as ostracized and even unfit for the marriage.

Some dermatological outpatient records data show the incidence of Leucoderma is 3% to 4% in India although an incidence is as high as 8.8% has also been reported⁽¹⁾.

LEUCODERMA-SIDDHA PERSPECTIVE

Leucoderma is considered as *Kanmavinai* (the unavoidable consequence of good or evil acts done in this or in a past existence) according to siddha literatures.

The treatment for *Kanmavinai* was proposed as "*Kanma vinai manasaanthiyaal theerum*" (ceremonial cure for diseases acquired by Karmic actions) i.e Peace in mind is the core therapeutic healing procedure in the diseases by *kanmavinai*.

So *Siddha* system primarily focusses in maintaining the psychological balance (mental state of the patients) by teaching them *Pranayama* (Breathing exercise), *Asanas* (Yoga postures to achieve mental strength) and other meditation procedures. Other than this, *Siddha* system focuses on treating disease by nature gifted herbal preparations, Herbo-mineral combination drugs, Metallic preparations according to the disease.

This review paper is focus on easily available herbal preparations in the management of leucoderma from classical *siddha* literatures. According to siddha literatures, Kuttam has been classified as 18 types. Venkuttam classified in four types based on *vatham*, *pitham*, *kabam* and *megam*.

Figure 1. Picture of leucoderma of hands



Table 1. Herbs in the Management of Leucoderma

TAMIL NAME	ENGLISH NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	FAMILY
<i>Adhimathuram</i>	Liquorice	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>	Fabaceae
<i>Azavanam</i>	Henna	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i>	Lythraceae
<i>Kandangathiri</i>	Indian Nightshade	<i>Solanum surattense</i>	Solanaceae
<i>Sengonrai</i>	Red shower tree	<i>Cassia marginata</i>	Fabaceae
<i>Kaat-tuseeragam</i>	Purple fleabane	<i>Vernonia anthelmintica</i>	Asteraceae
<i>Serangottai</i>	Marking nut tree	<i>Semecarpus anacardi-um</i>	Anacardi-acea
<i>Thara</i>	Indian fumitory	<i>Fumaria parviflora</i>	papavarace-ae
<i>Nuna</i>	Indian mulberry	<i>Morinda tinctoria</i>	Rubiaceae
<i>Kattumalli</i>	Jasmine	<i>Jasminum grandiflo-rum</i>	Oleaceae

Table 2. Action of the herbs used in the Treatment of Leucoderma

HERBS	PARTS USED	ACTIONS
<i>Adhimathuram</i>	Root	Emollient, Demulcent, Mild expectorant, Laxative, Tonic
<i>Azavanam</i>	Seed	Seed- Deodorant, Astringent
<i>Kandangathiri</i>	Fruit	Expectorant, Diuretic, Carminative
<i>Sengonrai</i>	Bark	Expectorant, Anthelmintic
<i>Kaattu seeragam</i>	Seeds, Leaves	Anthelmintic, Stomachich, Antiperiodic, Alterative
<i>Serangottai</i>	Seed	Alterative, Caustic
<i>Thara</i>	Leaves	Diaphoretic, Diuretic, Anthelmintic, Laxative
<i>Nuna</i>	Leaves	Leaf- Deobstruent, Febrifuge, Emmenagogue, Stimulant
<i>Kattumalli</i>	Leaves	Leaf- Astringent

Methods of using herbs in the management of Leucoderma:

1. *Lawsonia inermis*- Seed extract of henna plant can be used externally in the affected sites.
2. *Chukrasia tabularis*- Bark paste can be applied externally
3. *Solanum surattense*- Fruit is boiled to soft and mashed to extract juice, filtered and olive oil is added in the ratio of 1:4 and applied
4. *Acalypha fruticosa*- can be used more in diet
5. *Cassia marginata*- Bark powder 17gm-35gm to be boiled with water and decoction extracted and should be taken internally. Bark powder mixed with water to make a thick paste and can be used externally.
6. *Vernonia anthelmintica*: With the seed powder, Pepper or sesame seed powder should be added in equal ratio and 4 gms should be taken internally morning once with hot water.
Moringa tinctoria: Leaves are grinded to paste mixd with

Table:3 Concepts of *Thirithodam* in the management of *Leucoderma* by the herbs

HERBS	SUVAI	THANMAI	PIRIVU	SAMAPADUTHUM KUTRAM (ALLEVIATING THODAM)
<i>Adhimathuram</i>	Sweet	<i>Seetham</i> (coolant)	Sweet	<i>Vatham</i>
<i>Azavanam</i>	Astringent	<i>Veppam</i> (Heat)	Pungent	<i>Kabam</i>
<i>Kandangathiri</i>	Pungent	<i>Veppam</i> (Heat)	Pungent	<i>Kabam</i>
<i>Sengonrai</i>	Bitter	<i>Veppam</i> (Heat)	Pungent	<i>Kabam</i>
<i>Kaattuseeragam</i>	Bitter	<i>Veppam</i> (Heat)	Pungent	<i>Kabam</i>
<i>Serangottai</i>	Bitter	<i>Veppam</i> (Heat)	Pungent	<i>Kabam</i>
<i>Thara</i>	Bitter Astringent	<i>Veppam</i> (Heat)	Pungent	<i>Kabam</i>
<i>Nuna</i>	Pungent	<i>Veppam</i> (Heat)	Pungent	<i>Kabam</i>
<i>Kattumalli</i>	Bitter	<i>Veppam</i> (Heat)	Pungent	<i>Kabam</i>

Table:4 Other Internal Medicines Uses In The Treatment of *Leucoderma*

MEDICINE	REFERENCE	DOSAGE	ADJUVANT
<i>Thaamira chendhuram processed in Thuvarai verkuzhithailam</i>	<i>Siddha maruthuvam sirappu</i>	$\frac{1}{2}$ -1 arisedai (32.5 to 65mg)	Ghee
<i>Thanga parpa urundai</i>	<i>Siddha maruthuvam sirappu</i>	1 (Goose berry sized)	—
<i>Ganthaga Rasayanam</i>	<i>Siddha vaithiya thirattu</i>	10-15 kunri(130mg)	—
<i>Serangottai ilagam</i>	<i>Siddha maruthuvam sirappu</i>	$\frac{1}{2}$ varagan (2.1mg)	—
<i>Nandhi mai</i>	<i>Siddha vaithiya thirattu</i>	<i>Thetranvithai alavu</i>	<i>Paakku alavu panai vellam</i> (palm jaggery)
<i>Navapasana sudar thailam</i>	<i>Siddha formulary of India, part-1</i>	5-10 drops	—
<i>Navapasana chendhuram</i>	<i>Gnanavettiyan 1500</i>	—	—
<i>Parangipattai Chooranam</i>	<i>Siddha vaithiya thirattu</i>	—	Curd

Herbs used in the treatment of Leucoderma



Glycyrrhiza glabra



Lawsonia inermis



Solanum surattense



Cassia marginata



Vernonia anthelmintica



Semecarpus anacardium



Fumaria parviflora



Morinda tinctoria



Jasminum grandiflorum

Most of the herbs used in the treatment of Leucoderma has the

- Taste- Bitter, Pungent, Sweet
 - *Vibagam (Thanmai) - Veppam (Hot)*
 - *Veeriyam (Potency) - Pungent, Sweet*
- These herbs were mostly used in alleviating the humours Kabam and vatham (as per the potency of the herbs).

DISCUSSION

Thousands of years plants and herbs have been used to treat and prevent illnesses around the world. The herbs are better chosen to treat illnesses because they are more reliable, environment friendly, easily, locally available. In this review paper, herbal single drug therapies for the management of leucoderma in *siddha* system of medicine are better discussed along with their common action, parts used, taste, potency and how they alleviate *Thoda kutram* of the disease. The practice of using herbal medicines is nowadays increasing due to its easy availability with less contra-indications.

CONCLUSION

Herbal medicine aims to return the body to a state of natural balance so that it can heal itself. In this article, the information's regarding single drug herbal therapy for leucoderma in *siddha* system of medicine are collected in one bunch. This review paper will be better used during therapeutic approach for leucoderma. Further research articles will be needed to prove the efficacy of these herbs towards leucoderma.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None declared.

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