

Wound healing activity of leech therapy on *Dhusta Virnam*: a case study

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Abstract

Leech therapy is one of the ancient and important para-surgical procedures described in *Siddha medicine* in the treatment of various diseases including *Dhusta Virnam*. *Dhusta Virnam* is characterized by appearance of corals colors / red color and bad smell from the wounds. There are a number of studies conducted to explore the effect of leech therapy on chronic wound. This is a case study where medicinal leech was used to treat patient with *Dhusta virnam*. The patient was 57 year old male, suffering from non-healing ulcer in right foot for four years. The wound developed following a snake bite and was becoming larger and smelly, exuding large amounts of fluid with severe pain. He had failed in multiple therapies. He was asked to obtain Full Blood Count Report to confirm normal hemoglobin range and the patient's wound was initially cleansed using normal saline 0.9% and a medium size leech was selected and purified using turmeric water. Following purification process the leech was applied on edge of the wound and kept until it was released spontaneously. Finally, the wound was dressed using gauzes and supportive bandage. The same treatment procedure was carried out every week until the wound completely cured. Improvements in the size, type of exudates, smell, appearance of the wound base, surrounding skin and wound edges were taken as assessment tools. Following the leech therapy considerable changes were observed in exudation; serous exudates was moderately present before treatment and was reduced into mild exudates after one month of treatment and wound became completely dry after 5 to 6 month treatment, heavy foul smell was reduced after one month of treatment and wounds were completely cured from wound size of 12 cm × 7 cm after one year of treatment. An appropriate wound healing environment was achieved by breaking the cycle of chronic inflammation, disinfecting and detoxifying the infected tissue, bacteriostatic activity and improving the blood circulation on affected area.

Keywords: Case study, leech therapy, *Dhusta Virnam*

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