

## Leech application (*jalauka*) on *Utthāna vātarakta*: literature survey

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### Abstract

*Vata Rakta* is a combination of two words *Vata* and *Rakta*. In *Vata Rakta*, aggravated *Vata* is obstructed by the deranged *Rakta*, and thus it further vitiates the *Rakta* due to the fluidity and flowing of the *Rakta*. The subtle and pervasive nature of *Vata*, they spread all over the body through the circulatory channels (*Srotas*) and localize in the joints and skin. *Vata Dushtam Raktam Yatra Roga Visheshah*, The disease characterized by the abnormality of *Rakta dhathu* due to morbidity of *vata* is called as *Vatarakta*. Types of *Vatarakta* are *Utthana Vatarakta* which is located in the *twak* (skin) and *mamsa* (muscle) and *gambheera Vatarakta* which is located in deeper *dhatus* and more severe in nature nodule formation occurs. Symptoms of *Utthana Vatarakta* are blackish, red or coppery skin, itching, burning sensation, pain, stretching, piercing pain, quivering and contraction. *Vatarakta* can be seen almost everywhere and it is one of the most prevalence diseases in Sri Lanka. No reliable western treatment procedure available. Western and Ayurvedic treatments are having several methods to cure this disease. But both therapies are very expensive, time consuming and likely to be recurrent. But, leech application therapy is cheap, short terms and no recurrence. Hence, Leech application alone with internal treatment will speed up the healing process. Because, removing vitiated blood with application of leeches is the key factor of fast healing. Several bloodletting methods can be found in classical Ayurvedic texts. Method of removing (vitiating) blood from the body using *Jalauka* is considered as most easy and convenient one, as well as long lasting relief. *Jalauka* (Leech) dwell in cold are sweet and born in water, hence it is ideal to remove blood vitiated by *pitta*.

**Keywords:** *Utthana Vatarakta*, Leech application, Bloodletting.