

Healing The Liver: An Ayurvedic Case Study on Alcoholic Cirrhosis Management

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ABSTRACT:

Cirrhosis is an advanced stage of liver fibrosis, which is characterized by development of regenerative nodules due to abnormal fibrogenesis caused by liver injuries. Its features include weakness, fatigue, muscle cramps, weight loss, anorexia, nausea, vomiting and upper abdominal discomfort which are similar to the features of *Yakritdalyudara*, as per Ayurveda. A 55 year old male patient visited the *Kayachikitsa* OPD with the chief complaints of indigestion, gaseous abdomen, heaviness in abdomen and pain in epigastric region. Patient was prescribed a combination of Ayurvedic herbomineral formulations including *Arogyavardhini vati*, *Punarnavadi mandoor*, Capsule Cytozen, Capsule Amlycure DS and *Punarnava Ark* for duration of 2 months. These ayurvedic medications prescribed to the patient showed significant improvement in USG findings. The features of liver suggestive of Liver cirrhosis like coarsened echotexture and nodular surface got significantly reduced to diffused parenchymal echotexture suggestive of Grade 1 fatty liver. The highly raised values of SGOT and SGPT also came down to normal within 2 months of treatment. Symptomatic treatment was also observed after the completion of treatment. This case study thereby highlights the effectiveness of Ayurvedic medications in the management of chronic liver disorders like liver cirrhosis. It clearly signifies the potency of Ayurvedic medications in the improvement of both clinical parameters as well as disease related symptoms.

KEYWORDS: Ayurvedic medications, Liver cirrhosis, *Yakritdalyudara*

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INTRODUCTION:

Cirrhosis is an advanced stage of liver fibrosis, which is characterized by development of regenerative nodules due to abnormal fibrogenesis caused by liver injuries.^[1] It is caused by various factors, especially excessive alcohol consumption over an extended period of time. When alcohol gets processed in the liver, it produces highly toxic chemicals. These chemicals can fatally injure the liver cells.^[2] Liver cirrhosis is a consequential conversion of alcohol into fatty acids which initially result in alcoholic fatty liver followed by hepatocytes destruction due to lipid vacuoles and proliferation of myofibroblasts and fibroblasts which finally results in the fibrosis of liver and micronodular cirrhosis.^[3]

The 5 and 10 year survival rates of liver cirrhosis patients are 84% and 68% respectively. According to WHO, about 8,00,000 patients die of hepatic cirrhosis each year worldwide.^[4] In 2021, there were an estimated 58.4 million incident cases and 1.43 million deaths related to cirrhosis and other chronic liver diseases. The age-standardized incidence rate was 724.31 per 1,00,000 population, while the age-standardized death rate was 16.64 per 1,00,000.^[5]

According to *Ayurveda*, liver cirrhosis can be correlated to the classical disease entity “*Yakritdalyudara*”. In *Charak Sambhita*, after describing the symptomatology of *Plibodara*, it has been mentioned that the causes, symptoms and treatment of *Yakritdalyudara* are same as that of *Plibodara*. The early symptom of liver cirrhosis is fatigue and later on, the symptoms may be severe and result from liver failure and portal hypertension. When symptoms are present, they are often non-specific and include weakness, fatigue, muscle cramps, weight loss, anorexia, nausea, vomiting and upper

abdominal discomfort which are similar to the features of *Yakritdalyudara*.^[6] Normally the treatment is too much time consuming, difficult and inadequate. Liver transplantation is the only best option available but it is difficult and costly affair. Conservative management may not be effective in many cases.^[7] In the present case study, Liver cirrhosis was treated with some ayurvedic herbomineral formulations which showed significant improvement in the patient’s sign and symptoms as well as normalized the abnormal biochemical values. Therefore, through this case study, an attempt has been made to share the successful efficacy of Ayurvedic medications in the management of liver cirrhosis.

CASE REPORT:

A 55 year old male patient visited the *Kayachikitsa* OPD of Ch. Brahm Prakash Ayurved Charak Sansthan on 16th July 2024 with the chief complaints of indigestion, gaseous abdomen, heaviness in abdomen since 45 days and pain in epigastric region since 20 days. Patient was prescribed a combination of Ayurvedic formulations for a time duration of 2 months from 16th July 2024 to 20th September 2024. After the completion of this treatment course, significant improvement was observed in the patient’s symptoms as well as USG and abnormal LFT findings.

History of present illness:

According to the patient, he was asymptomatic 45 days ago. Then he gradually developed complaint of indigestion, gaseous abdomen and feeling of heaviness in the abdomen. After few days, he also started having pain in epigastric region. He took allopathic medications for pain and gaseous abdomen but found relief only for limited time duration after which these symptoms aggravated again.

Eventually, the patient went for an USG of whole abdomen, whose findings were indicative of liver cirrhosis. He also went for a liver function test, which showed highly elevated levels of SGOT, SGPT and GGT enzymes. So with these complaints, patient visited the *Kayachikitsa* OPD of Ch. Brahm Prakash Ayurved Charak Sansthan for further management.

History of past illness:

Patient had no any history of Diabetes mellitus, Hypertension, Thyroid disease, seizures, hearing loss, motor weakness, fever, typhoid, tuberculosis or any other chronic disease.

Drug history:

Tab. Pantoprazole 40 mg S.O.S

Personal history-

Addiction- Alcohol [4-5 days in a week]

Tea, coffee- 3-4/day

Food habit- Vegetarian diet [including consumption of oily and spicy food like parathas in breakfast, increased intake of fatty foods like ghee, butter and full cream milk]

Patient had no relevant food allergy or drug allergy.

Clinical Findings:

The patient took medication on OPD basis. The general condition of the patient was fair.

The blood pressure was 130/80 mm Hg.

Pulse rate was 70 beats per minute and was full in volume and regular.

The bowel habit was constipated but there was no difficulty in micturition.

The body temperature was afebrile.

Sleep and appetite was normal.

On general examination, patient had no signs of pallor, icterus, clubbing, cyanosis, edema or lymphoedema.

The patient was well oriented with respect to time, place and person.

On systemic examination, no abnormal clinical findings for respiratory, cardiovascular and musculoskeletal systems were observed.

On Gastrointestinal examination, no scar mark was seen over abdomen during inspection.

On palpation, tenderness of Grade 1 was present in Right hypochondriac region.

On percussion, dullness was present over Right hypochondriac region.

On auscultation, bowel sounds were normal. No signs and symptoms of ascites were found.

The patient was very calm and supportive during the treatment.

Ashtavidha pariksha and Dashvidha pariksha [ten fold examination] was done for patient assessment. [Table 1 and Table 2]

Diagnostic Assessment:

The diagnosis was done on the basis of symptoms and findings of USG whole abdomen and liver function test.

USG whole abdomen [18/06/2024]

Liver shows coarsened echotexture with nodular surface.

Portal vein is mildly prominent in size.

Findings indicate Liver cirrhosis.

Liver function test [18/06/2024]

SGOT-110.18 U/L

SGPT- 149.5 U/L

GGT- 339.43 U/L

All other laboratory and biochemical investigations like CBC, KFT, Lipid profile, RBS and urine [R/M] were normal.

THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION:

A combination of Ayurvedic formulations was prescribed to the patient for 2 months from 16 July 2024 – 20 September 2024. [Table- 3]

Pathya – Plant based diet which is rich in fruits, vegetables, whole gram and healthy fat.

Patient was advised to maintain a healthy weight and exercise regularly

Apathya- Alcohol, Oily fried food, deep fried items, spicy food, bakery items, sweets, non- vegetarian diet, cold drinks, milk, milk products, rice

RESULTS:

The prescribed treatment showed significant improvement in the findings of USG whole abdomen as mentioned below- [

Table 4]. The treatment prescribed also showed significant reduction in the raised values of SGOT, SGPT and GGT values in the liver profile as mentioned below- [Table 5]. Significant improvement in the patient's symptoms was also observed after treatment. [Table 6].

Table 1 Ashtavidha pariksha

Nadi	70 beats per minute, <i>Sarpa gati</i>
Mutra	<i>Prakrit</i> [Day- 5-6, Night- 0-1]
Mala	<i>Vaikrit</i> [Sama, Baddha mala]
Jihwa	<i>Nirama</i>
Shabda	<i>Spashta</i>
Sparsha	<i>Samsheetoshna</i>
Drika	<i>Vaikrit</i> [Hypermetropia]
Aakriti	<i>Madhyama</i>

Table 2 Dashvidha pariksha

Prakriti	<i>Vataj-pittaj</i>
Vikriti	<i>Prakriti sam samveta</i>
Sara	<i>Twak sara</i>
Samhanana	<i>Madhyama</i>
Pramana	<i>Madhyama</i>
Satyama	<i>Madhyama</i>
Satva	<i>Madhyama</i>
Aahara Shakti	<i>Abhyavarana shakti- Madhyama</i> <i>Jarana shakti- Avara</i>
Vyayama Shakti	<i>Madhyama</i>
Vaya	<i>Madhyamavastha</i>

Table- 3: Ayurvedic prescription given to the patient

Drugs	Doses
Arogyavardhini vati	2 tablets [250 mg each] TDS
Punarnavadi mandoor	2 tablets [250 mg each] TDS
Capsule Cytozen	2 capsules [2040 mg each] BD
Capsule Amlycure DS	2 capsules [4840 mg each] TDS
Punarnava Ark	4 tsp [20 ml] BD

Table 4 Changes in ultrasound findings before and after treatment

Before Treatment	After Treatment
Liver showed coarsened echotexture with nodular surface	Liver shows diffusely increased parenchymal echotexture
Portal vein is mildly prominent in size	Portal vein is normal in course and caliber

Table 5 Changes in LFT findings before and after treatment

TEST	18/06/2024	02/08/2024	15/08/2024	20/09/2024
SGOT	110.18 U/L	91.90 U/L	60.1 U/L	31.7 U/L
SGPT	149.15 U/L	114.9 U/L	95 U/L	42 U/L
GGT	339.43 U/L	106.1 U/L	77.1 U/L	78.9 U/L

Table 6 Improvement observed in symptoms before and after treatment

Symptoms	Before treatment	After treatment
Udarschool [pain in epigastric region]	++	+
Vibandh [constipation]	+++	-
Aadhmaan [Gaseous abdomen]	+++	-

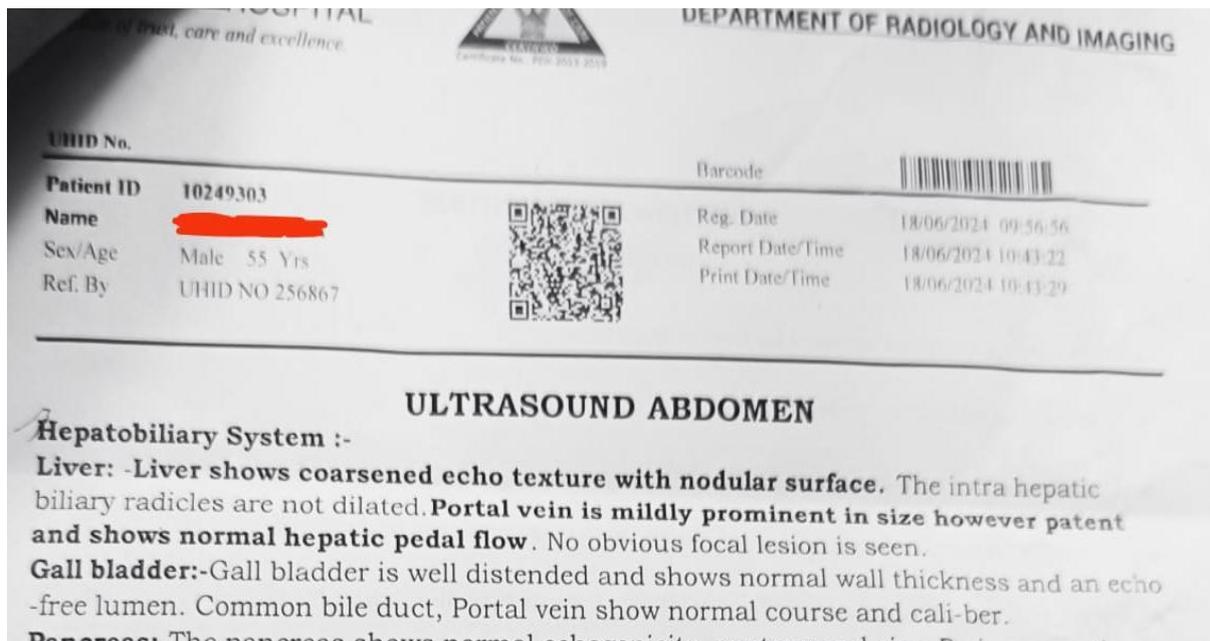


Figure- 1 Ultrasound findings before treatment

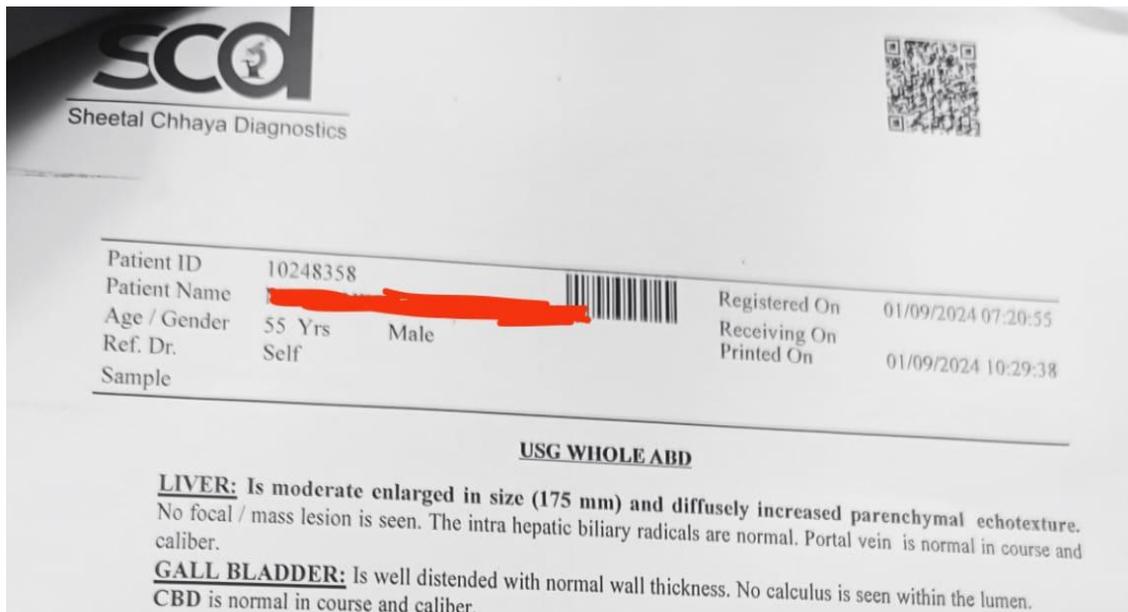


Figure- 2 Ultrasound findings after treatment

DISCUSSION:

Ayurvedic medications prescribed to the patient showed significant improvement in USG findings. The features of liver suggestive of Liver cirrhosis like coarsened echotexture and nodular surface got significantly reduced to diffused parenchymal echotexture suggestive of Grade 1 fatty liver.. It was observed that highly raised values of SGOT and SGPT came down to normal within 2 months of treatment. There was also a significant reduction observed in the highly raised value of GGT after treatment. Patient also showed remarkable improvement in the symptoms of pain in abdomen, gaseous abdomen, heaviness in abdomen and constipation.

Arogyavardhini vati contains *Tamra Bhasma* [incinerated copper], *Gugglu*, *Katuki*, *Triphala* which have *Lekhana*[weight-reducing], *Deepana* [improving digestion and metabolism], and *Medadoshabara*[correcting lipid metabolism and transportation] properties. Its chief ingredient is *Katuki* which is a rhizome root and is used as a bitter tonic for the treatment of liver disorders. It is cooling, laxative carminative,

digestive, hepatoprotective, antispasmodic and anti-inflammatory. Use of *Katuki* [*Picrorhiza kurroa*] is mentioned in ancient classical ayurvedic treatise, *Charaka Sambita* and *Sushruta Sambita* for the treatment of liver disorders like jaundice and fatty liver. It significantly enables the decrease of elevated liver fat deposition in cases of fatty liver syndrome.^[8]

Contents of *Punarnava mandoor* are *Kashaya*, *laghu*, *ruksha*, *sheeta*, *katu* and *pitta-kapha shamaka*. *Punarnava* [*Boerhavia diffusa*] is *anulomana*, *mutrala*, and has been proved as hepatoprotective, rejuvenative and antioxidant. *Mandura Bhasma* possesses significant hematinic and hepatoprotective activity. *Triphala*, an *ayurvedic rasayana*, is antianemic and anti-oxidant. It contains *Amalaki* [*Emblica officinalis*], that is *Rochana*, *Deepana*, and *Anulomana* having a role in this digestion, absorption and motility of digestive materials in the gut. It also has *Hridya* and *yakrituttejaka* properties. *Gomutra* is an important ingredient of the drug and has antimicrobial, antioxidant and antianemic properties.^[9]

Capsule Cytozen [manufactured by Charak Pharma Pvt Ltd.] contains 337.5 mg of

Kumari [Aloe barbadensis] leaf, *Kalmegh* [*Andrographis paniculata*] whole plant, *Punarnava* [*Boerhavia diffusa*] root, *Kasni* [*Cichorium intybus*] seed, *Katuki* [*Picrorhiza kurroa*] rhizome and *Sharfunkha* [*Tephrosia purpurea*] root, 112.5 mg of *Arogyavardhini rasa* and each of pericarp of *Triphala*, 67.5 mg of *Kakamachi* [*Solanum nigrum*] fruit and *Chitraka* [*Plumbago zeylanica*] root, and 56.25 mg of *Mandura Bhasma*. *Kumari* possesses *Deepana*, *pachana*, *bhedhana*, *vedanasthapana*, *stobhara*, *yakrituttejaka* property so used in *Agnimandhya*, *vibandh*, *yakritvikara* and *udarschool*. *Kalmegh* acts as *Deepana*, *yakrituttejaka*, *pittasaraka*, *raktshodbhak* and *shotbhara*, so used in *Yakrit vikara*, *agnimandhya* and *vibandh*. *Kasni* is a powerful hepatoprotective and nephroprotective drug which has been extensively used in Unani system of medicine.^[10] *Bhavprakash* has described *Sharfunkha* as 'Pleebashatru', which means it is used for diseases of spleen. He has also mentioned that *Sharfunkha* is useful in *Yakrit Vikar*, *pleehavikar*, *gulma*, *vrana* and *visha vikar* due to its *Tikta* and *Kashaya rasa*.^[11] *Kakamachi* is believed to have hepatoprotective properties, it helps protect the liver from damage and supports its healthy functioning. *Chitraka* root has been proved in significant reduction in the serum markers and showing regenerative changes, pointing towards its effectiveness as a hepatoprotective drug.

Capsule Amlycure D.S. [manufactured by Aimil Pharmaceuticals[India] Ltd.] contains key ingredients like *Bhringraj* [*Eclipta alba*], *Triphala*, *Arjuna* [*Terminalia arjuna*], *Punarnava* [*Boerhavia diffusa*], *Makoya* [*Solanum nigrum*], *Kalmegha* [*Andrographis paniculata*], *Ashwagandha* [*Withania somnifera*], *Darubaridra* [*Berberis aristata*], *Guduchi* [*Tinospora cordifolia*], *Yavakshara*, *Manjistha* [*Rubia cordifolia*] and *Tulsi* [*Ocimum sanctum*]. Previous studies show that these ingredients of capsule Amlycure D.S. help in the regeneration and

repair of hepatocytes by increasing the nucleic acid content- DNA, RNA and protein. It protects liver from toxins, boosts immunity, promotes and enrich hepatobiliary secretions thus accelerates fat digestion and retards fat deposits in liver tissues, thereby fights fatty liver condition. It accelerates repair and regeneration of liver cells from liver damage caused by excessive alcohol consumption by increasing the level of alcohol metabolizing enzymes.^[12] The hepatoprotective property in Amlycure DS is probably due to the presence of phytochemicals such as andrographolide and neoandrographolide from *Andrographis paniculata*, picroside and kutkoside from *Picrorrhiza kurroa*, phyllanthin from *Phyllanthus niruri*, glycyrrhizin from *Glycyrrhiza glabra* which are known to act as potent hepatoprotective agents. The above phytochemicals have proven antioxidant, antiviral, antifibrotic or anticarcinogenic properties and are future prospects for further development as hepatoprotective drugs.^[13]

CONCLUSION:

This case study highlights the effectiveness of Ayurvedic medications in the management of chronic liver disorders like liver cirrhosis. It clearly signifies the potency of Ayurvedic medications in the improvement of both clinical parameters as well as disease related symptoms, which proves to be an important factor in the improving the quality of life of the patients.

Consent of patient:

The written consent of the patient has been taken for publication and procedure without disclosing the identity of the patient.

Conflict of interest: The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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