



Chapter 2. Kuṣṭha Roga (Skin Disorders) in Ayurveda

1 Broad Definition

Kuṣṭha is the umbrella term for all chronic skin diseases produced by the union of **Doṣa + Āma** lodged in **Twachā** and **Rakta Dhātu**. Caraka says:

“*Sarvaṃ kuṣṭhaṃ doṣāś ca...*—all varieties share the same root: deranged doṣas obstructing skin channels.”

2 Classical Classification

Category	No. of Types	Signature Features	Examples (Modern Parallel)
Mahā Kuṣṭha “major, deep”	7	Penetrate beyond Māmsa into Meda/Asthī; severe deformity or systemic signs	Psoriasis (<i>Kiṭibha</i>), Leprosy multibacillary (<i>Kākaṇaka</i>), Lichen planus
Kṣudra Kuṣṭha “minor, superficial”	11	Restricted to skin surface; mild systemic impact	Eczema (<i>Vicharchikā</i>), Tinea (<i>Dadru</i>), Vitiligo (<i>Śvitra</i>), Acne (<i>Yauvana piḍakā</i>)
Visarpa	—	Fast-spreading, fiery heat	Herpes zoster, cellulitis
Śitapitta / Udarda	—	Rapid wheals, itching	Urticaria

All share the same tridoṣic foundation but differ in depth and doṣa dominance.

3 Nidāna (Causative Factors)

Nidāna Group	Examples	Primary Doṣa Aggravated
Ahāra (Diet)	Excess sour, fermented, incompatible combos (fish + milk)	Pitta + Kapha
Vihāra (Lifestyle)	Daytime sleep after heavy meals, sedentary job, night shift	Kapha + Vāta
Manasa (Mind)	Chronic anger, worry, suppressed emotions	Pitta + Vāta
Āgantu (External)	Chemical cosmetics, pollution, microbial invasion	Doṣa depends on toxin type

4 Samprāpti (Pathogenesis) - 5-Step Flow

- 1 Nidāna → Doṣa vitiation (KP, PV, VK combos)
- 2 Weak Agni → Āma formation in gut/liver
- 3 Āma + Doṣa circulate via Rakta Dhātu
- 4 Srotas block in skin; tissue layers inflamed
- 5 Manifestation as Mahā- or Kṣudra-kuṣṭha

If unchecked, pathology descends up to Meda/Asthī leading to deformity.

5 Doṣa Signatures Inside Kuṣṭha

Dominant Doṣa	Colour	Surface	Sensation	Typical Sub-type
Vāta	Grey, blackish	Dry, cracked	Intense itch	<i>Dadru</i> (dry ringworm)



Dominant Doṣa	Colour	Surface	Sensation	Typical Sub-type
Pitta	Red, coppery	Hot, oozing	Burning, pain	<i>Ekakuṣṭha</i> acute plaque
Kapha	Pale, whitish	Thick, oily	Dull heaviness	<i>Sitapitta</i> (urticaria)
Tri-doṣa	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	<i>Mahākuṣṭha</i> complex psoriasis

6 General Treatment Blueprint

Stage	Goal	Tools & Examples
1. Nidāna-Parivarjana	Stop triggers	- No cheese/meat with curd - Early dinner, avoid naps
2. Śodhana (Deep Purge)	Expel Doṣa-Āma mix	Kapha → <i>Vamana</i> Pitta → <i>Virechana</i> Vāta → <i>Sneha-Basti</i> Raktamokṣaṇa for stubborn patches
3. Śamana (Pacify)	Control residual Doṣa	Decoctions: <i>Sarivādi, Khadirāri, Mahā-Manjiṣṭhādi</i> Ghṛitas: <i>Tikta-ghṛita, Mahā-Tikta</i>
4. Bahi-Pariṣkara (Local Care)	Disinfect, cool, heal	Lepas: Neem-turmeric, Sandal-licorice, Bakuchi paste Dhāra: Neem-taila dhāra, Saffron-milk dhāra
5. Rasāyana (Rejuvenate)	Strengthen dhātus, avoid relapse	Āmla 3 g AM, Gudūcī satva 500 mg BID, Gotu kola oil massage

7 Condition-Specific Protocol Cards

7.1 Psoriasis - Kiṭibha / Eka-kuṣṭha (Vāta-Kapha)

- 3 d *Tikta ghṛita* snehapāna → *Vamana* → *Virechana* day-7
- External: Mahāmarichyādi oil AM sun-exposure 10 min
- Internal: Mahā-Tikta ghṛita 10 ml HS, Sarivādi kwātha 20 ml x2
- Diet: Barley, cumin, bitter gourd; avoid yogurt, beef, brinjal

7.2 Eczema - Vicharchikā (Vāta-Pitta)

- *Sneha-basti* 5-night course
- Chandana-ghṛita smear + moist wrap 20 min twice daily
- 500 mg Gandhaka rasāyana HS, 20 ml Gudūcī-sāriva decoction BID

7.3 Acne - Yauvana piḍakā (Kapha-Pitta)

- Single sitting *Virechana* with Avipatti 6 g
- Neem-lodhra scrub alt-days, warm vetiver steam 30 s
- Arogyavardhini 250 mg x 2, Triphala-Guggulu 500 mg x 2

7.4 Vitiligo - Śvitra (Pitta-Vāta)

- Monthly mild *Virechana* 6 g Avipatti
- Copper-water AM, 250 mg Bakuchi powder + honey daily
- External: Bakuchi taila 30 min sun touch, wash; follow with aloe-rose gel

8 Diet & Lifestyle Cheat-Sheet

Do's	Don'ts
Warm water, barley or red-rice, cooked bitter greens	Fish + milk, reheated oils, cheese with fruit



Do's

5 min sun salutations or brisk walk daily
Sesame-oil self-massage thrice weekly (except oozing lesions)
Mind calmers: Bhrāmarī pranayama, 10 pm lights-off

Don'ts

Day sleep after heavy meal
Excess night-time screen, late dinners
Chronic anger, spicy alcohol binges

9 Outcome Markers

- **Śodhana done right:** tongue clears, appetite sharpens, lesions lighten.
- **Śamana success:** itch < 30 %, oozing stops, sleep improves.
- **Rasāyana phase:** new skin forms, relapse intervals lengthen > 6 months.

10 Key Take-Aways

- **Kuṣṭha** is always tridoṣic but shows leading colours of one doṣa—treat that first.
- Sequence: **Cause removal → Deep cleanse → Pacify → Rejuvenate.**
- Permanent results need rasāyana nourishment until all seven dhātus regain strength.
- Regular follow-up every season prevents re-accumulation of Āma.

Clinical mantra: “Purge the sludge, pacify the fire, feed the tissues—then the skin remembers its own colour.”

Important: These are general guidelines, always consider consulting an Ayurveda Physicians before using any Ayurvedic medicine.