

Chapter 2. Kuṣṭha Roga (Skin Disorders) in Ayurveda

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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
Āgantū (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/Asthi leading to deformity.

5 Doṣa Signatures Inside Kuṣṭha

Dominant Doṣa	Colour	Surface	Sensation	Typical Sub-type
Vāta	Grey, blackish	Dry, cracked	Intense itch	Dadru (dry ringworm)
Pitta	Red, coppery	Hot, oozing	Burning, pain	Ekakuṣṭha acute plaque
Kapha	Pale, whitish	Thick, oily	Dull heaviness	Sitapitta (urticaria)
Tri-doṣa	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mahākuṣṭha complex psoriasis

6 General Treatment Blueprint

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

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

Warm water, barley or red-rice, cooked bitter greens
5 min sun salutations or brisk walk daily
Sesame-oil self-massage thrice weekly (except oozing lesions)
Mind calmers: Bhrāmārī pranayama, 10 pm lights-off

Don'ts

Fish + milk, reheated oils, cheese with fruit
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.

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