

Immune Thrombocytopenia Managed with Ayurveda: A Case Report

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ABSTRACT

Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP) is an autoimmune disorder that can be characterised by immune-mediated destruction of platelets that leads to increased risk of bleeding. Platelets are responsible for blood clotting. In this condition, the platelet count is low, which leads to easy bruising, red or purple spots (Petechiae), nasal or gum bleeding, heavy menstrual bleeding etc. According to Ayurvedic principles, Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP) can be correlated with Tiryakgata Raktapitta, a Tridoshic disorder with predominant involvement of Pitta Dosha. Due to the severity of this condition, it is considered under Ashta Mahagadas (eight major diseases) in Ayurveda texts. According to Ayurveda, Raktapitta develops when aggravated Pitta Dosha vitiates the blood (Rakta), increasing its quantity and causing it to flow abnormally through different body channels. Based on the direction of bleeding, Raktapitta is classified into three types: Urdhvaga, where bleeding occurs from the upper orifices such as the nose, mouth, ears, and eyes; Adhoga, where bleeding occurs from the lower passages including the anus, urinary tract, and genital tract; and Tiryakgata, in which vitiated blood spreads through the skin and subcutaneous tissues, producing hemorrhagic manifestations. In this study, we will discuss a case of Nirmal Kaur, a 52-year-old female from Sangrur, Punjab, who had Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP), which was managed by Ayurvedic formulations [1-4].

Keywords: Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP), Autoimmune Disorder, Ashta Mahagada, Tiryakgata Raktapitta, Low Platelets, Ayurvedic Management

Introduction

Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP) is an autoimmune disorder in which autoantibodies target platelets, leading to their premature destruction. Based on the duration of the disease, ITP is classified into acute and chronic forms. Acute ITP is typically a self-limiting condition that occurs most commonly in children and often develops following recovery from a viral infection or an upper respiratory tract infection [4]. According to Ayurvedic literature, Raktapitta is discussed after the chapter on Jwara (Fever) because it is considered a consequence of Santapa (excessive internal heat), one of the principal manifestations of fever. As Rakta (Blood) and Pitta have similar properties, Ayurvedic management focuses on balancing Pitta Dosha, enhancing immunity, supporting detoxification, and promoting Rasayana (rejuvenative) therapy. In this approach, herbs like Giloy, Ashwagandha, Durva, Papaya leaf extract, Yashtimadhu and many more.

Case Report

We report a case in which a 52-year-old female presented with multiple red spots over the body. She underwent a Complete Blood Count (CBC) to investigate the cause. The CBC revealed severe thrombocytopenia, with a platelet count of 15,000/ μ L. The patient was admitted to a local hospital in Sangrur, Punjab, for three days, where platelet transfusions were administered. Further, due to persistently low platelet count, she was referred to Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh. During this course of treatment in PGIMER, the platelet count had further declined to 3,000/ μ L. After that, the patient was admitted to the hospital. The patient received intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) therapy, following which the platelet count increased to 40,000/ μ L. A bone marrow examination was performed, and the patient was diagnosed with Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP). After six days of inpatient treatment, the patient was discharged on oral Wysolone (prednisolone) 50 mg daily. The corticosteroid therapy was continued for eight months, with the dose gradually tapered and eventually discontinued. Approximately one month after stopping the medication, the patient developed recurrent epistaxis and small red spots on the skin. The patient consulted

an allopathic doctor online and was advised to restart steroid treatment. However, on 02 December 2022, the platelet count had dropped to just 1,000/ μ L. Subsequently, on 05 December 2022, the patient visited Planet Ayurveda, Mohali, and consulted Dr. Vikram Chauhan for Ayurvedic management.

Diagnosis

On 4 December 2022, the platelet count of the patient was 41,000/ μ L when she started treatment from Planet Ayurveda. The following are the clinical findings of the patient after starting treatment from Planet Ayurveda:

S. No.	Time/Duration	Before Treatment Platelet Count	After Treatment Platelet Count
1.	First Month	41000 (04 December 2022)	189,000 (06 January 2023)
2.	Second Month		229000 (10 Feb 2023)
3.	Third Month		204000 (26 March 2023)

Timeline of the Treatment

The timeline of the treatment of the patient is described below:

S. No.	Date	Before Treatment	After Treatment
1.	5 Dec 2022	Red Spots, Nose Bleeding, and body pain; heavy menstrual bleeding, irritability	
2.	6 Jan 2023		Red Spots (1-2 only), Itching
3.	26 March 2023		Asymptomatic

Therapeutic Intervention:

The goal of Ayurvedic medicines for ITP aims to balance Pitta Dasha, increase platelet count, reduce risk of bleeding, improve body immunity, improve digestive fire, and detoxify the body. Here, the following medicines are given to the patient to that helps to get considerable results:

- **Kumar Kalyan Ras:** It is a classical formulation that contains ingredients such as Sindoor (purified mercurial preparation), Mukta (Pearl), Swarna (Gold), Abhraka (Purified Mica), Loha (Purified Iron), Swarnamakshika (Purified Chalcopyrite), and Kumari (Aloe vera) juice. It contains Rasayana (rejuvenative) and Balya (strength-promoting) properties. In the case of ITP, it supports Rakta Dhatu (blood tissue) and Majja Dhatu (bone marrow), helping maintain healthy hematopoiesis and immune balance. It also helps to promote tissue nourishment, enhances vitality, and supports overall strength during recovery. By improving the quality of Rakta Dhatu (blood tissue), it may help reduce symptoms associated with thrombocytopenia, such as easy bruising, recurrent bleeding episodes, and generalised weakness.
- **Swarn Vasant Malti Ras:** This classical formulation contains ingredients like Swarn Bhasma (Gold calx), Mukta Bhasma (Pearl calx), Shuddha Hingula, Shuddha Parad (Purified Mercury), Shuddha Gandhak (Purified Sulphur),

Kali Maricha (Piper nigrum), Kharpara (Rasaka), and is processed with Nimbu Swarasa (Lemon juice). It is used to promote Rakta Prasadana (purification and nourishment of blood) and enhance the body's adaptive capacity. In Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP), the formulation helps maintain the integrity of the blood and supports normal physiological processes involved in platelet homeostasis. Swarn Bhasma and Rasaka contribute to tissue rejuvenation, while Mukta Bhasma helps maintain Pitta balance, which is considered important in conditions associated with bleeding tendencies. Kali Maricha enhances the absorption of the formulation, ensuring better utilisation of its ingredients.

- **Mahamanjishthadi Kwath:** It contains Manjistha (Rubia cordifolia), Nagarmotha (Cyperus rotundus), Kuda (Holarrhena antidysenterica), Giloy (Tinospora cordifolia), Akarkara (Anacyclus pyrethrum), Sonth (Zingiber officinale), Bharangi (Clerodendrum serratum), along with other classical herbs. It is traditionally used to support healthy blood circulation and maintain the purity of Rakta Dhatu (Blood Tissue). In Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP), the formulation helps promote proper microcirculation and supports the physiological functions of blood-forming tissues. Manjistha acts as a renowned Rakta Shodhaka (blood purifier), while Giloy supports immune regulation and Nagarmotha helps maintain metabolic balance. Sonth and Akarkara enhance digestion and facilitate better absorption of nutrients essential for tissue nourishment. Collectively, these herbs help maintain healthy vascular integrity, support normal platelet homeostasis, and promote overall haematological wellness as part of a comprehensive Ayurvedic management approach.
- **Plato Plan Syrup:** Plato Plan Syrup, formulated with Erand Karkati (Carica papaya), Giloy (Tinospora cordifolia), Wheat Grass (Triticum aestivum), Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera), Amalaki (Embllica officinalis), Shigru (Moringa pterygosperma), and Jeevanti (Leptadenia reticulata), is designed to support healthy haematological function and tissue nourishment. In Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP), the formulation provides nutritional and rejuvenative support that helps maintain normal bone marrow function and healthy blood cell production. Carica papaya and Wheat Grass are traditionally valued for supporting platelet health, while Amalaki offers antioxidant protection against oxidative stress. Ashwagandha and Jeevanti help improve physical strength and reduce fatigue, whereas Shigru supplies essential phytonutrients that support overall recovery.
- **Hemo Plan Syrup:** Hemo Plan Syrup, containing Manjistha (Rubia cordifolia), Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus), Gorakhmundi (Sphaeranthus indicus), Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera), Draksha (Vitis vinifera), and Sariva (Hemidesmus indicus), is formulated to promote healthy blood tissue and restore overall vitality. In Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP), this formulation helps nourish Rasa and Rakta Dhatu (Nutrient plasma and blood tissue), supporting the body's natural regenerative processes. Shatavari and Draksha provide nutritional support that helps combat fatigue and weakness, while Sariva and Manjistha help maintain healthy blood quality and physiological balance. Ashwagandha and Gorakhmundi enhance physical

strength and support the body's adaptive response during recovery.

- **Spirulina Capsules:** Spirulina Capsules, prepared from the nutrient-rich blue-green microalga *Spirulina* (*Arthrospira platensis*), provide concentrated proteins, iron, essential amino acids, vitamins, minerals, and natural antioxidants that support overall haematological health. In Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP), Spirulina helps improve nutritional status and supports healthy bone marrow function, which is essential for normal blood cell production. Its antioxidant compounds help protect blood cells from oxidative stress, while its immunomodulatory properties assist in maintaining balanced immune responses. The rich micronutrient profile also helps reduce fatigue, weakness, and low energy levels commonly associated with thrombocytopenia.
- **Pitta Balance Capsules:** These capsules contain Jahar Mohra Pishti, Kaharava Pishti, Akik Pishti, Mukta Pishti, and Giloy Satva (*Tinospora cordifolia*) and are formulated to pacify aggravated Pitta Dosha, which is considered a major factor in Raktapitta, the Ayurvedic correlate of Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP). The mineral preparations help maintain the stability of Rakta Dhatu (blood tissue) and support normal vascular integrity, thereby helping to reduce the tendency for spontaneous bleeding, gum bleeding, and nosebleeds. Giloy Satva supports balanced immune function and promotes healthy tissue metabolism. The cooling (Sheeta) and Pitta-pacifying properties of the formulation help alleviate internal heat that may contribute to bleeding manifestations.
- **Kamdudha Ras (Moti Yukt):** It is prepared with Mukta Bhasma, Shankha Bhasma, Praval Bhasma, Varatika Bhasma, Shuddha Gairik, Giloy (*Tinospora cordifolia*), and Mukta Shukti Bhasma. It is a classical Ayurvedic formulation known for its Pitta-Shamaka and Rakta-Stambhaka (hemostatic) properties. In Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP), it helps support normal hemostasis by reducing the tendency for excessive bleeding and promoting the stability of blood vessels. The calcium-rich mineral preparations help strengthen tissues and maintain vascular integrity, while Shuddha Gairik is traditionally valued for controlling bleeding disorders. Giloy supports balanced immune activity and healthy tissue regeneration. Together, these ingredients help restore physiological equilibrium, reduce bleeding manifestations such as petechiae and mucosal bleeding, and provide supportive care for maintaining healthy platelet function as part of a comprehensive Ayurvedic management approach.
- **Gandhak Rasayan:** Gandhak Rasayan, prepared from repeatedly purified and processed Shuddha Gandhak (Purified Sulphur), is a classical Rasayana formulation valued for enhancing tissue regeneration and maintaining immune resilience. In Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP), it helps support the body's natural healing mechanisms by promoting healthy cellular metabolism and strengthening Rakta Dhatu (blood tissue). Its antioxidant and rejuvenative properties help protect blood cells from oxidative stress and support recovery during prolonged illness. The formulation also assists in maintaining healthy skin and mucosal integrity, which is beneficial in individuals prone to bruising

or minor bleeding due to low platelet counts.

- **Plato Plan Capsules:** Plato Plan Capsules, formulated with Erand Karkati (*Carica papaya*), Giloy (*Tinospora cordifolia*), Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*), Amalaki (*Embllica officinalis*), Shigru (*Moringa pterygosperma*), and Jeevanti (*Leptadenia reticulata*), provide comprehensive support for healthy hematopoietic function in Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP). *Carica papaya* is traditionally valued for supporting normal platelet production, while Amalaki and Moringa supply natural vitamins and phytonutrients essential for blood cell health. Jeevanti acts as a nourishing herb that promotes tissue recovery and improves physical endurance during prolonged illness. Ashwagandha helps enhance resilience against stress, which may influence immune balance, and Giloy supports physiological immune regulation.

Discussion

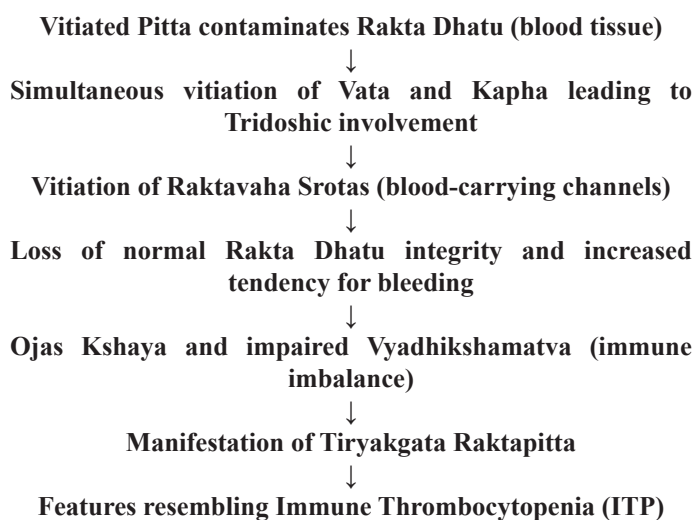
In 1735, the German physician Paul Gottlieb Werlhof described two young girls with epistaxis (nosebleeds) and purpura in his work *Disquisitio medica et philologica de variolis et anthracibus* (A Medical and Philological Dissertation on Smallpox and Carbuncles), naming the condition "Morbus haemorrhagicus maculosus." Later, Mueller-Eckhart noted that Brohm and Kraus (1883) and Denys (1883) were the first to establish the association between thrombocytopenia and Werlhof's clinical syndrome. In 1915, Frank proposed that the disease, termed "Die Essentielle Thrombopenia," resulted from toxic suppression of megakaryocytes by a splenic factor. In 1916, Kaznelson demonstrated the beneficial effect of splenectomy and suggested that thrombocytopenia was caused by increased platelet destruction in the spleen rather than impaired production. Although neither theory was confirmed for several decades, Dameshek and Miller (1946) observed increased numbers of megakaryocytes in the bone marrow of ITP patients, with most cells showing impaired platelet production. They also reported that platelet production improved following splenectomy, providing further insight into the disease mechanism [5].

According to Ayurveda, Raktapitta develops when Pitta Dosha becomes aggravated due to the excessive intake of hot (Ushna), pungent (Tikshna), sour (Amla), spicy (Katu), and salty (Lavana) foods, along with excessive heat exposure and unhealthy lifestyle habits. The aggravated Pitta contaminates Rakta Dhatu (blood tissue), leading to vitiation of Raktavaha Srotas (blood-carrying channels). With the involvement of Vata and Kapha, the condition progresses to Tiryakgata Raktapitta, characterised by impaired blood integrity and bleeding manifestations. The liver (Yakrit) and spleen (Pliha), considered the roots of Raktavaha Srotas (Channels for blood tissue), are primarily affected, resulting in bleeding from various body sites and features that closely resemble Immune Thrombocytopenia (ITP). The pathophysiology of Raktapitta is as follows:

Intake of Pitta-provoking Nidana

(Excessive intake of Ushna, Tikshna, Amla, Katu, Lavana Ahara, stress, irregular lifestyle, etc.)

↓
Aggravation of Pitta Dosha
↓



For the management of Tiryakgata Raktapitta (ITP) in this case, the patient was given the above-mentioned medicines. These Ayurvedic formulations help manage the condition by improving immune balance, reducing bleeding tendencies, minimising Ama (metabolic toxins) formation, and supporting healthy platelet counts. Mineral-based formulations like Swarn bhasma, etc., are considered effective when administered after proper purification (Shodhana), as they are traditionally believed to support bone marrow function and promote a balanced immune response more efficiently. Herbs like Ashwagandha, Crica papaya, Giloy and Manjishtha help in improving immunity, increasing platelet count and blood purification.

Conclusion

After the initiation of Ayurvedic treatment in December 2022, the patient's platelet count showed a steady improvement and returned to the normal range within one month. During the subsequent three months, platelet levels remained stable within normal limits, indicating sustained haematological recovery. Alongside the improvement in platelet count, the patient experienced complete resolution of clinical manifestations, including red spots on the skin, heavy menstrual bleeding, generalised body pain, severe weakness, and irritability. In

addition, the itching that had developed during prolonged corticosteroid therapy subsided after the transition to Ayurvedic management. The patient's overall clinical condition improved significantly, with restoration of physical strength, enhanced daily functioning, and sustained haematological stability throughout the follow-up period.

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