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“REVIEW ON PREMATURE WHITE AND GREY HAIR IN CHILDREN.”
SURESH MAHAJAN*¹, NAMRATA PATIL ²

 PG Scholar¹, Associate Professor²,
 Department of Kaumarbhritya

D.Y. Patil School of Ayurveda, Nerul, Navi Mumbai, M. S. India

 *Corresponding author: Email: mahajansuresh123@gmail.com; contact no.7718097706

ABSTRACT

Skin and hair colour contribute significantly to our overall visual appearance of person. The description of *kesha* and *palitya* is scattered in all the treatises of *ayurveda*. In *ayurveda* premature greying of hair is called as *akalapalitya*. The incidence of premature ageing along with *akala palitya* is on increase. These days the quality of hair products has degraded over the years. This review has been undertaken to the various causes of greying hair in children.

KEYWORDS:

Premature White Grey Hair, *Kasha*, *Palitya*

INTRODUCTION:

Hair (*Pili*) are filamentous, keratinized structures present over almost all the body surface and are

derivatives of the epidermis which assist in thermoregulation, provide some protection against injury, have sensory functions and sub serve various subtle roles in social communication. Hair is one of the vital parts of the body derived from ectoderm of skin, is protective appendages on the body and considered accessory structure of the integument along with sebaceous glands, sweat glands and nails. Hair is made of protein and grows out of follicles located within the surface of the skin. The skin is modified in different parts of the body to produce hair. Hair on the top of the head is an important feature of the individual's physical appearance. Many people are concerned about their hair style and about the density and color of the hair. As one ages, the melanin content in the

hair reduces and hair starts becoming gray or white. This is completely normal for an individual over the age of 40. Sometimes white hair develops in early age. To maintain the health of the hair is absolutely essential to create a picture of overall health. Just like face mirrors one's health, hair too reflects health and well-being. Premature graying may lead as an important cause of developing low self-esteem in children.

Palitya generally happens in old age and *pittaj prakriti purush*. Nowadays, premature greying of hair is a common cosmetic problem affecting young population.

Certain dietary habits, behavioral life style and psychological causes influence premature graying of hair. This article highlights the causes of premature graying of hair in children.

Ayurvedic perspective of hair:

The description of *kesha* and *palitya* is scattered in all the treatises of *ayurveda*. The hairs present over the scalp surface are called as *chikur*, *kuntal*, *baal*, *kacha*, *kesha*, *shiroruha*. *Acharya charaka* has enumerated total human hair is 29956. He further stated that the number of *kesha*, *shmashru* and *loma* are equal. *Acharya sushruta* believes that there are 4 oblique *dhamanias*, which are divided

further in many branches. As per this reference one can conclude that there are innumerable hair follicles. In *ashtang hrudaya sharira sthan* it has been mentioned that in intrauterine life at six months after the period of bone transformation (i.e. *asthi dhatu pachan*) the developing fetus starts developing hair (fine hair or lanugo hair) along with *snayu* (ligaments), *sira* (vessels), *bala* (strength), *varna* (colour), *nakha* (nail), *twacha* (skin). *Acharya charak in sharir sthan* states that during seventh month the mother feels heart burn due to production of hair (on the head) of the foetus.

Kesha and sharir dosh sambhanda

Vata dosha aashrayee is related to *aasthi dathu aashraya*. *Vata dosha* is responsible for *krushnavarnata* (black color to hair). vitiation of *kaphadosha* leads to obstruct nourishment pathway of hairs. Due to lack of nourishment hairs becomes gray. Vitiation of *pitta & rasa* leads into premature gray hairs.

CAUSES:

While there are many reasons for white hair in childhood, most can be treated and cured. A few of the most common causes of white hair in children are stated below.

- *Genetics: The most common cause of premature graying of hair in children is genetics. Genes is one factor for premature gray hairs.*
- Loss of pigmentation of hair is a symptom of several disorders, like *vitiligo* and *piebaldism*. Melanin is the pigment responsible for the colour of the skin and hair.
- Deficiency: A deficiency of Vitamin B12 in the body can also result in the premature graying of hair in children. Vitamin B12 is not found in enough quantities in a vegetarian diet, so children following a vegetarian diet are at a higher risk of developing this condition.
- Anaemia: Iron deficiency can result in anemia, which results in fatigue and whitening of the hair in children. Pernicious anemia can also cause premature graying of hair in children.
- *Menkes hair syndrome and Kwashiorkor* (protein malnutrition) can also cause premature greying of hair.
- Diet plays major role in development of any disorder.
- Environmental factors: Although the primary cause of premature hair greying (PHG) is considered to be genetic, certain environmental factors also play a role. Some external factors such as stress, exposure to pollution

and UV rays may also be responsible for gray and white hair at a young age. These external factors could cause oxidative stress leading to premature greying of hair

- Use of Synthetic Soaps and Shampoos: The synthetic soaps and shampoos that children use today can make their hair rough and even cause graying of hair. Different types of oils (chemical oils), shampoos, soaps and pharmaceutical promotions in the name of beauty products for promoting hair care actually contributes to worsen the condition.
- Intake of iodine: Ensure that iodine intake is adequate. It should be consume it in moderation – too much or too less of it can affect the thyroid gland and result in premature graying of hair.

DISCUSSION:

- Hair color is determined by pigment granules in hair follicles, wherein melanin synthesis is particularly crucial.
- Premature graying occurs in some children due to a variety of factors. The most common factors associated with grey hair in children are heredity and nutrition.
- The hair care products we use today are not what they used to be some

years ago. Use of baby shampoo for child, as it contains extracts of vitamins and minerals in it can be helpful. Also opt for herbal shampoos to wash baby's hair may help.

- Classical texts of *Ayurveda* describe daily regimen for the maintenance of healthy hair in tune with seasonal variations in terms of *Dinacharya* and *Rutucharya* which include procedures like *Nasya*, *Moordni taila*, *Snana* etc.
- The only effective treatment for greying of hair can be eating nutritious foods.

CONCLUSION

- To keep the healthy hair in a healthy state is beneficial at every stage of life.
- Hair greying or *Palitya* is a physiological phenomenon if it occurs after the mid-forties, but is considered a disease if it arises earlier. Varied factors like modern-day lifestyles, eating habits, pollutants, stress, decreased immunity, hormonal imbalance, faulty hair care etc.

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