

## ***Leucoderma***

Leucoderma, also known as vitiligo, is a distressing skin condition. The word literally means 'white skin'. There is a gradual loss of pigment melanin from the skin layers which results in white patches. These patches look ugly, especially in persons with dark complexions.

The condition does not cause any organic harm. It, however, brings about great psychological tension to the patient who is more embarrassed than the victim of any pain or discomfort. The condition thus, besides being a medical problem, also becomes a social stigma.

### ***Symptoms***

The problem usually starts with a small white spot and later on it develops into patches. These patches are pale in the beginning but become whiter and whiter as time passes due to loss of pigment. As spots enlarge, they merge into each other and, in course of time, form a very broad patch. In some cases, most of the skin of the body may be covered with white patches.

### ***Treatment***

In nature cure, the treatment of leucoderma consists of adoption of constitutional measures to cleanse the system of accumulated toxins. This enables the healing power within the body to assert itself, and produce normalcy. To begin with, the patient should undertake a fast on juices for about a week. IN this regimen, he or she should take fruit or vegetable juices, diluted with water on 50:50 basis every two or three hours from 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. The bowels should be cleansed daily with warm water during this period.

After the juice fast, the patient may adopt a restricted diet consisting of fresh fruits, raw or steamed vegetables and whole meal bread or chapattis. Curd and milk may be added to this diet after a few days. The patient may thereafter gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet of seeds, nuts and grains, vegetables and fruits. The large proportion of the diet should consist of raw foods. Seeds and beans such as alfalfa, mung and soyabeans can be sprouted. This diet may be supplemented with cold-pressed vegetable oils, honey and yeast. Juice fasting may be repeated at intervals of two months. The patient should avoid tea, coffee, alcoholic beverages and all condiments and highly flavored dishes. He or she should also avoid sugar, white flour products, denatured cereals like polished rice and pearled barley and tinned or bottled foods.

### ***Home Remedies***

Certain home remedies have been found useful in the treatment of leucoderma. The best known of such remedies is the use of seeds of psoralea, known as babchi in Hindi. Seeds should be steeped in the juice of ginger or cow's urine for three days. The fluids should be renewed every day. The seeds should then be rubbed with hands to remove their husks, dried in the shade and powdered. One gram of this powder should be taken every day with fresh milk for 40 days

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continuously. The ground seeds should also be applied to the white spots. Babchi seeds, combined with tamarind seeds, are also useful. Equal quantity of both the seeds should be steeped in water for three to four days. They should then be shelled and dried in the shade. They should be ground into paste and applied to the white patches for a week. If the application of this paste causes itching or the white spots become red and a fluid being to ooze out, it should be discontinued. If there is no itching or reddening, babchi seeds should be taken also for 40 days.

Another useful remedy for leucoderma is red clay found by the river side or on hill slopes. The clay should be mixed in ginger juice and applied over the white spots once a day. The copper contained in the clay seems to bring back skin pigmentation and ginger juice serves as a milk stimulant, facilitating increased blood flow to the spots. Drinking water kept overnight in a copper vessel also helps.

A paste made from the seeds of the radish is valuable in treating leucoderma. About 35 grams of these seeds should be powdered in vinegar and applied on the white patches. For better results, seeds should be finely pounded, mixed with a little white arsenic and soaked in vinegar at night. After two hours, when leaves appear, it should be rubbed on the leucoderma patches. The use of turmeric and mustard oil is also considered beneficial in the treatment of leucoderma. About 500 grams of turmeric should be pounded and soaked in eight kgs. of water at night. It should be heated in the morning till only one kg. of water is left. It should then be strained and mixed with 500 grams of mustard oil. This mixture should be heated till only the oil is left. It should be applied on white patches every morning and evening for a few months.

### **Reference**

Shri H.K. Bakhru. (1999). Natures Cure.