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Earliest details of dermatology by Ayurveda

Dear Editor,

I read the article entitled “History of dermatology: the study of skin diseases over the centuries”,¹ which is, astonishingly, the earliest descriptions of skin and its disorders detailed in the Ancient Indian Vedic texts, especially in Ayurvedic treatises have been unfound.^{2,3} Ayurveda, the Science of life, is the first treatise that contains numerous evidence of the origin of dermatology. *Sushruta* mentions seven layers of skin with a specific thickness and also dermatological disorders affecting each layer.⁴ (Table 1). The layers of *twak* are, *Avabhasini*, *Lohita*, *Shweta*, *Tamra*, *Vedini*, *Rohini*, and *Mamsadhara*.^{5,6}

Ayurveda designates Dermatological disorders as *Kushta*. *Kushta*, is the term assigned to the skin disorders in Ayurvedic texts, it includes various forms of pathologies of the integument system. The etiological factors for skin

disorders are classified as physical, physiological, hereditary, and psychological,⁷ and there is one more segment of etiology which basically talks about sinful acts of an individual resulting in the development of pathological manifestation in the skin, the veracity of this cause has yet not been researched. Grossly, the disorders are grouped into two as *Mahakushta* (Skin disorders with a major imbalance of dosha or bodily humor with a deeper level of pathological invasion) and *Kshudra kushta* (skin disorders with less degree of vitiation of *dosha*).^{8,9} The dreaded skin ailment, Leprosy, its etiopathogenesis, complications, and treatment modalities are described in detail in *Sushruta's* treatise.¹⁰ Descriptions of Leprosy can be traced from all the ancient manuscripts of Vedic and post Vedic era, and numerous indigenous treatment modalities and certain other treatment modalities of religious and spiritual importance are also been described.¹¹ Plenty of Ayurvedic practitioners are successfully treating skin disorders by adhering to the principles of Ayurveda as obtained through texts.

Table 1 Seven layers of skin with specific thickness.

Sl. n ^o	Layers of <i>Twak</i> (Skin)	Diseases affecting the layer
1	<i>Avabhasini</i>	<i>Sidhma</i> (Pityriasis Vesicular), <i>Padmakantaka</i> (Papilloma)
2	<i>Lohita</i>	<i>Tilakalaka</i> (Non elevated Mole), <i>Nyaccha</i> (Naevi), <i>Vyanga</i> (Freckle)
3	<i>Shweta</i>	<i>Ajagallika</i> (Molluscum Contagiosum), <i>Charmadala</i> (Atopic dermatitis), <i>Mashaka</i> (Raised Mole)
4	<i>Tamra</i>	<i>Kilasa kushta</i> (A form of Leucoderma)
5	<i>Vedini</i>	<i>Kushta</i> (Leprosy and other serious skin disorders), <i>Visarpa</i> (Erysipelas)
6	<i>Rohini</i>	<i>Granthi</i> (Cyst), <i>Apachi</i> (Cervical Lymphadenitis), <i>Arbuda</i> (Neoplasm), <i>Shleepadada</i> (Elephantiasis), <i>Galaganda</i> (Goitre)
7	<i>Mamsadhara</i>	<i>Bhagadara</i> (Fistula), <i>Vidradhi</i> (Abscess)

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Authors' contributions

Rashmi TM: Approval of the final version of the manuscript; drafting and editing of the manuscript.

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Conflicts of interest

None declared.

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On the History of dermatology: the study of skin diseases over the centuries - Response to the observations and comments by Mirzaei MR et al. and Rashmi TM et al^{☆☆}



Dear editor,

We are grateful for the comments of “Earliest details of Dermatology by Ayurveda”¹ on our publication “History of dermatology: the study of skin diseases over the centuries”². The information provided by the letter is interesting and complementary in one aspect, which demonstrates the rich history of dermatology throughout the centuries and in the most varied regions of the world.

Similarly, we are grateful for the comments by Mirzaei MR et al.³ regarding our publication. The information provided is correct and is an addition to the published information. The history of Dermatology is complex, very rich and there are always very important data to be informed.

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Authors' contributions

Iago Gonçalves Ferreira: Conception and/or design of the study; literature review and article selection; content analysis; results analysis; preliminary review and final drafting.

Magda Blessmann Weber: Conception and/or design of the study; literature review and article selection; content analysis; preliminary review and final drafting.

Renan Rangel Bonamigo: Conception and/or design of the study; literature review and article selection; content analysis; preliminary review and final drafting.

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