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## Influence of Certain Dietary Habits and Behaviors on Kushta Roga (Skin Diseases)

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### Abstract

The study was carried out in the Ayurveda National Hospital, Sri Lanka during the period of October 2017 to June 2018, to detect the effect of food habit of an individual on Kushta roga (skin diseases). The patients (n=50) who visited the hospital for the treatment of Kushta roga was selected randomly for the test group and age and number matching healthy individuals were selected for the control group. Data was collected from both study group and control group through a questionnaire which included the questions on demographic data and food habits. The result of the study confirmed that the Kushta roga was more prevalent in female gender around the age of 50 – 60 years. Also found that the behaviors such as indulgence of incompatible foods and drinks (too fatty foods, heavy foods, too much of artificial drinks) can cause to skin diseases. Further food habits such as irregular indulgence in hot or cold foods, expose to extreme heat after having heavy meal, having food before digestion of previous meal can also lead to skin diseases. Thus, the study establishes that there is a link between food behavior/dietary habits and Kushta roga. Therefore, it is much important to avoid unnecessary food habits to be free from skin diseases. Finally, the outcome of this study could be a platform for other researchers to continue further studies on dietary effect of Kushta roga.

**Key Words:** Skin, age, sex, Food habits, Kushta roga

### Introduction

Healthy and attractive skin plays a major role in most individuals' self-esteem and is a key component of the image they represent to the outside world. According to the hospital-based clinic studies, nearly 47.6% of the Sri Lankans are suffering from Skin diseases (Kushta roga)<sup>1</sup>. In Ayurveda skin is mentioned as one of the panchendriya. Ayurveda has included skin diseases under one common heading, Kushta and has pointed at its multifactorial etiology. Unwholesome diet and lifestyle have been implicated as chief factors for the onset, progression and recurrence of many skin diseases. They can

prevent or alter the pathogenesis and affect the prognosis of skin diseases in positive or negative manner. As Ayurveda always consider "Prevention is better than cure" it is better to identify etiopathogenesis of the skin diseases. Though, the kushta roga is more prevalent in Sri Lanka, the scientific studies on them are not up to satisfactory level. Thus, the current study was launched to fill the gap to a certain extent. In the study it was aimed to find the role of food habits on kushta roga, hence, to prevent and reduce the prevalence of Kushta roga in Sri Lanka.

### Methods and Methodology

The study was conducted at Ayurveda Teaching Hospital, Sri Lanka, during the period of October 2017 to June 2018. The target group was the patients who visited the hospital for the treatment of Kushta roga. A number of 50 subjects were selected for the study on random sample technique by checking the hospital register. Both male and female subjects between the ages 10 - 80 years were included. The dumb and deaf patients, the patients who were unwilling to participate for the study, the infants and children who were unable to response for the

questions, were excluded from the study. The data was collected by the principle investigator using a questionnaire which asked the demographic data, food habits and food relevant behaviors of the patients. The food habits/behaviors which were done at least once in 3 days was considered as a positive response. The data were analyzed using statistical analyzing package

### Result and Discussion

#### Sex distribution:

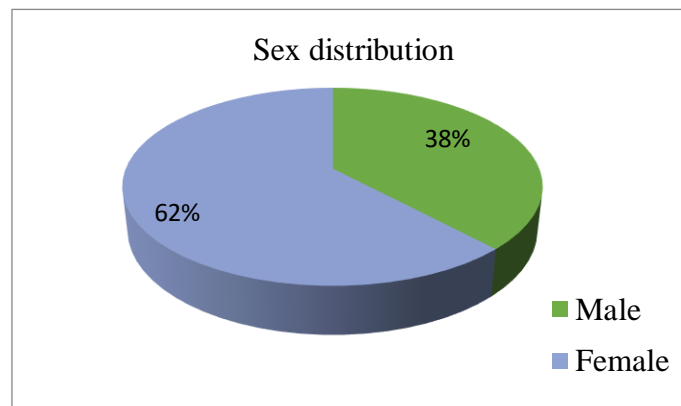


Figure 1 - Sex distribution of the study group (n=50)

According to the outcome of the study (figure 1), it was clear that 62% (31/50) of the patients was female and 38% (19/50) was male. Through the results it is clear that Kushta roga is more common in female gender.

#### Age distribution:

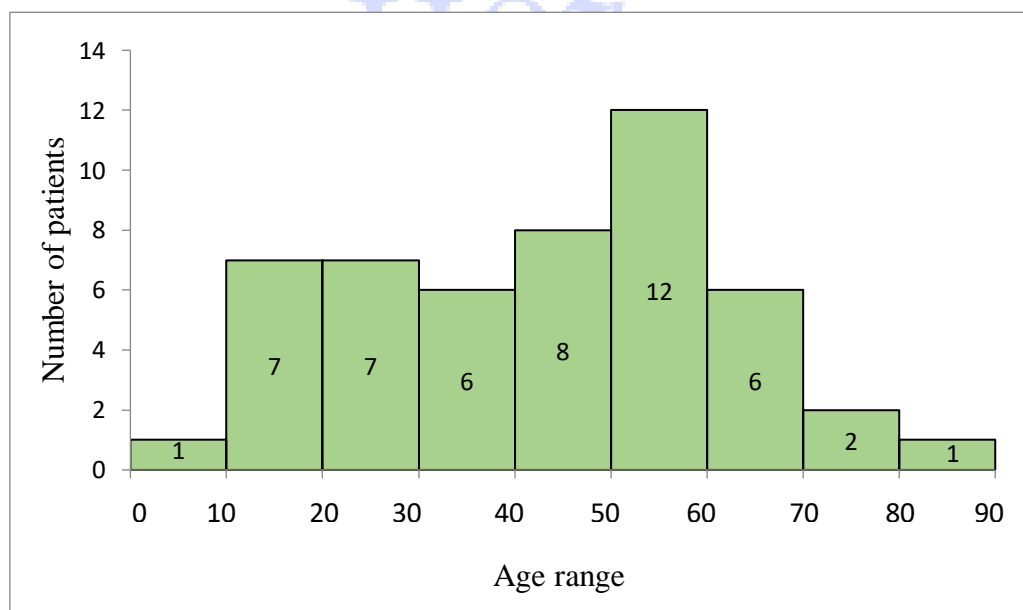


Figure 2 - Age distribution of the study group (n=50)

When considering the age distribution (figure 2), it is clear that the majority of the patients 24% (12/50) were within the age group of 50 – 60 years. Only 2% (1/50) of the patients was within the group of age (80 – 90) years and (10-20) years respectively. Thus, the Kushta roga is more common in the patients with age 50 – 60 years.

**Common behaviors and food habit which can cause skin diseases:**

**Table 1-** Common behaviors and food habits which lead to skin diseases

Type of habit	Test group (n=50)	Control group (n=50)
(1) Indulgence in incompatible foods and drinks (Intake of liquids, fatty, heavy diet)	46 %	16%
(2) Suppression of emesis and other natural urges	10 %	8%
(3) Doing too much of physical exercises	06 %	6%
(4) Exposure to extreme heat after taking heavy meals	34 %	16%
(5) Irregular indulgence in cold or hot foods	40 %	10%
(6) Intense exposure to heavy exercises, fear	06 %	6%
(7) Using cold water suddenly after being contact to heat	16 %	10%
(8) Taking food during indigestion	12 %	4%
(9) Taking food when previous meal is not properly digested	24 %	16%
(10) Sleep regularly in day time	36 %	32%

According to the table 1, it’s clear that the food habits like indulgence in incompatible foods and drinks (Intake of liquids, fatty, heavy diet), Exposure to extreme heat after taking heavy meals, Irregular indulgence in cold or hot foods has a statistically significant positive effect ( $p < 0.05$ ) on Kushta roga.

**Conclusion**

According to the result of the study kushta roga is more common in female with the age of 50-60 years. The behaviors/food habits such as Indulgence in incompatible foods and drinks (Intake of liquids, fatty, heavy diet), Exposure to extreme heat after taking heavy meals, Irregular indulgence in cold or hot foods, Taking foods when previous meal is not properly digested can have a statistically significant positive effect ( $p < 0.05$ ) on kushta roga/skin diseases when compare to the control group. Thus, it’s better to avoid mentioned habits to prevent and reduce kushta roga.

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