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Leech therapy at BHU gains popularity

Naveen Kumar, TNN Oct 22, 2010, 10.13pm IST

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VARANASI: A long queue of patients waiting for their turn at the leech therapy unit of the faculty of [ayurveda](#), [Banaras Hindu University](#), on Friday was a witness to the growing popularity of the therapy.

A number of persons could be seen busy getting registration done for the different sittings at the unit. They reflected the faith and interest in the therapy in the treatment of various ailments, some of them being chronic wounds.

"Clinically, the therapy has shown dramatic response in the treatment of various ailments including chronic wounds and other skin infections like eczema and psoriasis (skin disease marked by red scaly patches)," associate professor, department of kayachikitsa, BHU, OP Singh informed TOI on Friday. "On an average, we are witnessing registration of 10 to 15 patients for different sittings of leech therapy on each of the three days of OPD in a week. Patients are coming from all parts of the country including east [UP](#), Bihar, MP, Chhattisgarh and even from metropolitan cities like [New Delhi](#) and [Mumbai](#)," he said.

It may be mentioned here that the leech therapy was started at the faculty of ayurveda, BHU, in January 2006 and gained popularity soon after its inception in the region. The therapy requires a number of sittings (between five to 10 sittings) depending on the nature of the ailment and leeches are pasted along the affected parts to allow natural healing due to the blood sucking capability, removing impure blood from the body.

Saying that the therapy had also shown promising results in management of other conditions like alopecia (baldness), filaria and arthritis, Singh, who pioneered the start of therapy at BHU, emphasised after clinical investigations and validation, efforts were being made for completing biochemical analysis that would open the doors to treatment and management of other conditions in the next six months. "We are also looking for global use of the therapy like in the West where efforts are being made to use the technique in neuro surgery due to anti clotting properties of the saliva of leech," he added.

It is also worth mentioning that some blood tests including HIV, total leucocyte count (TLC), differential leucocyte count (DLC), blood sugar and other tests for bleeding disorder have been made mandatory under the therapy for ensuring better healing.