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Review Article

GHRITA YOGAS IN VISHAVAIIDYA JYOTSNIKA: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has eight branches, one among them is Agada Tantra. It deals with the management of various poisons. For the management of poisons various recipes have been mentioned, among them Ghrita kalpa is one dosage form. Ghrita (Ghee) plays an important role in the management of visha (poison). Once the visha (poison) enters into the hrudaya (heart) it destroys the life of the person. Ghrita (Ghee) protects the heart from the effect of visha (poison) by doing avarana (a protective layer) of it. Hridayavarana is explained in the treatise of Ayurveda- Charaka samhita. Honey, ghee, bone marrow, milk, red juice squeezed out of the meat of cow is given for the protection of heart.

KEY WORDS: Ghrita, visha, visha vaidya jyotsnika

INTRODUCTION

The substance that causes sadness to the world is called visha (poison). As the world becomes despaired at the sight of it, it was called visha¹ (poison). Poison is a substance which when introduced into or applied to the body is capable of injuring health or destroying life. It causes damage to tissues, illness or death to the organism². Ancient visha vaidyas (physicians who treated poisonous cases) treated poisonous cases by dhyana (meditation), mantra (chanting of hymns), oushada (medicine), etc. which they learned from their gurus. It has been a tradition of visha chikitsa that the knowledge was passed on through the

teacher to the pupil called as guru shishya sampradaya. Rare books were available during that time that dealt with the management of visha, and one among that is Vishavaidya Jyotsnika. Vishavaidya jyotsnika reconfirms its relevance as it narrates about the ancient tradition of visha vaidya sampradaya along with mantra chikitsa which was written in the local language Malayalam. The word meaning of vishavaidya jyotsnika is moonlight that gives the eternal happiness from heart³. This book deals with various yogas (formulations) for the management of poisons bites and stings. Among these formulations Ghrita kalpas hold an important place as they protect the heart from the ill effects of poison.

Table 1: Ghrita yogas in Visha Vaidya Jyotsnika

Sl. No	Name of the Formulation	Ingredients	Indications
1	Ekanayaka mooladi neiyu ⁴	Kashaya dravya (drugs for decoction) - Saptachakra (<i>Salacia chinensis</i>), Durva (<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>), Malati (<i>Jasminum grandiflorum</i>) leaves, lemon (<i>Citrus limon</i>) juice. Same drugs for kalka (paste) also	Vishaja vrana (ulcer due to poison) due to mandali sarpa damsha (viper snake bite)
2	Pankthiprasoonadi neiyu ⁵	Kashaya dravya (drugs for decoction) - Sahadevi (<i>Vernonia cinerea</i>), Akkukarni (<i>Ipomea reniformis</i>), Vishnukranti (<i>Evolvulus alsinoides</i>), Durva (<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>), Bhringaraja (<i>Eclipta alba</i>), Lakshmana (<i>Ipomea obscura</i>), Musali (<i>Curculigo orchoides</i>), Samanga (<i>Biophyllum sensitivum</i>), Bhadra (<i>Aerva lanata</i>), Indravalli (<i>Cardiospermum halicacabum</i>) Kalka dravyas (drugs for paste)- Kupilu (<i>Strychnos nux-vomica</i>) leaves, Haridra (<i>Curcuma longa</i>), Dineshavalli (Ventilago madraspatana), Tamboola patra (<i>Piper betal</i>), Yashtimadhu (<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>), Sariva (<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i>), Aghori (<i>Flacourtia indica</i>), root of Nili (<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>), Vacha (<i>Acorus calamus</i>), Chandana (<i>Santalum album</i>), Raktachandana (<i>Pterocarpus santalinus</i>)	Vrana (wound) shodhana and ropana (cleansing and healing of wound) Kalka of the ghrita is used for external application in mandali sarpa damsha (Viper bite)
3	Nilikadi ghrita ⁶	Nili leaves (<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>), Tanduliyaka (<i>Amaranthus amara</i>)	Gara visha (artificial poison)
4	Amalpori ghrita ⁷	Kashaya dravya (drugs for decoction)- Sarpagandha (<i>Rauwolfia serpentina</i>), Eswari moola (<i>Aristolochia indica</i>) Kalka (drugs for paste)- Trikatu paste (Paste of Black Pepper (<i>Piper nigrum</i>), Long Pepper (<i>Piper longum</i>) and the rhizomes of Ginger (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>))	All types of poison

5	Nili ghrita ⁸	Kashaya dravya (drugs for decoction)- Nili (<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>), Nimba (<i>Azadirachta indica</i>), Karanja (<i>Pongamia glabra</i>) Kalka dravya (drugs for paste)- Nili (<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>), Vacha (<i>Acorus calamus</i>), Vyosha (Paste of Black Pepper (<i>Piper nigrum</i>), Long Pepper (<i>Piper longum</i>) and the rhizomes of Ginger (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>)), Nisadwaya (<i>Curcuma longa</i> and <i>Coscinium fenestratum</i>), Yashtimadhu (<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>), Kutaja (<i>Holarrhena antidysenterica</i>), Saindhava (Rock salt), Aswagandha (<i>Withania somnifera</i>), Tagara (<i>Valeriana wallichii</i>), Chandana (<i>Santalum album</i>), Musta (<i>Cyperus rotundus</i>), Paata (<i>Cyclia peltata</i>), Eswara moola (<i>Aristolochia Indica</i>)	Sarpa (snake bite), Mooshika visha (Rat poison)
6	Brahmi ghrita ⁹	Kashaya dravya (drugs for decoction)- Brahmi (<i>Bacopa monnieri</i>) Kalka dravya (drugs for paste)- Lasuna (<i>Allium sativum</i>), Jiraka (<i>Cuminum cyminum</i>), Krishna jeeraka (<i>Carum carvi</i>), Saindhava (Rock salt), Eswarimoola (<i>Aristolochia Indica</i>), Pata (<i>Cyclia peltata</i>), Haridrayugma (<i>Curcuma longa</i> and <i>Coscinium fenestratum</i>), Vacha (<i>Acorus calamus</i>), Vyosha (Paste of Black Pepper (<i>Piper nigrum</i>), Long Pepper (<i>Piper longum</i>) and the rhizomes of Ginger (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>)), Yavasha (<i>Tragia involucrata</i>), Katuki (<i>Picrorhiza kurroa</i>), Ativisha (<i>Aconitum heterophyllum</i>), Pathya (<i>Terminalia chebula</i>), Hingu (<i>Ferula narthex</i>), Chandana (<i>Santalum album</i>)	All diseases due to visha (poison), shula (pain), dysphagia
7	Patadi ghrita ¹⁰	Kashaya dravya (drugs for decoction)- Paata (<i>Cyclia peltata</i>), Darvi (<i>Coccinium fenestratum</i>), Patola (<i>Tricosanthes dioica</i>), Parpataka (<i>Fumaria vaillantii</i>), Brahmi (<i>Bacopa monnieri</i>), Nimba (<i>Azadirachta indica</i>), Katuki (<i>Picrorhiza kurroa</i>), Yavasha (<i>Tragia involucrata</i>) Kalka dravya (drugs for paste)- Chandana (<i>Santalum album</i>), Musta (<i>Cyperus rotundus</i>), Brihati (<i>Solanum indicum</i>), Pippali (<i>Piper longum</i>), Kutaja (<i>Holarrhena antidysenterica</i>), Brahmi (<i>Bacopa monnieri</i>)	Mandali visha (Viper bite), Apasmara (epilepsy)
8	Amarimooladi ghrita ¹¹	Kashaya dravya (drugs for decoction)- Nili (<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>), Kalka dravya- root of Nili (<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>)	All types of visha especially paittika
9	Karalagamavalpori ghrita ¹²	Kashaya dravya (drugs for decoction)- Karalaka (<i>Aristolochia indica</i>), Sarpagandha (<i>Rauwolfia serpentina</i>) Kalka dravya (drugs for paste)- Shunti (<i>Zingiber officinalis</i>), Maricha (<i>Piper nigrum</i>), Pippali (<i>Piper longum</i>)	Mooshika visha (Rat poison)
10	Kottamkumizhadi ghritam ¹³	Kashaya dravya (drugs for decoction)- Kushta (<i>Saussurea lappa</i>), Gambari (<i>Gmelina arborea</i>) Kalka dravya (drugs for paste)- Madhuka (<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>), Draksha (<i>Vitis vinifera</i>), Gomutra (Cow's urine)	Visha (Poison)

DISCUSSION

The practice of Visha chikitsa (treatment of poisons) has its presence in Kerala since centuries. In the landscape of the state the snakebite was common and hence visha chikitsa flourished in this part of the world. A wide range of literature are available concerned with visha chikitsa reveals its truth¹⁴.

In this book ten ghrita yogas (formulations of ghee) are explained for the management of visha (poison). The ghrita preparations are not just mentioned for the management of visha but are also indicated in many other conditions. Like Patadi ghrita is indicated in conditions of apasmara (epilepsy), pandu (anaemia), kamala (jaundice), etc. Commonly used drugs for the ghrita preparations in these yogas are nili (*Indigofera tinctoria*), paata (*Cyclia peltata*), brahmi (*Bacopa moneiri*), katuki (*Picrorhiza kurroa*), chandana (*Santalum album*), eswarimoola (*Aristolochia Indica*), yashtimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), vacha (*Acorus calamus*), musta (*Cyperus rotundus*), kutaja (*Holarrhena antidysenterica*), karanja (*Pongamia glabra*), haridra (*Curcuma longa*), durva (*Cynodon dactylon*), etc.

Most of the drugs are having sheeta veerya (cold potency), kashaya tikta rasa (astringent and bitter taste) that helps to reduce the pitta dosha in case of mandali sarpa damsha (viper bite). Ghrita (Ghee) has madhura rasa (sweet taste), guru (heavy) and snigdha guna (unctuous property) and sheeta veerya (cold potency). These properties are opposite to the properties of poison and probably help in acting as antagonist to the poison.

In all types of poisons, administration of ghrita helps in relieving the visha gunas and thereby will be useful in the management of visha (poison).

CONCLUSION

Ghrita (ghee) plays a significant role in the management of visha. In all types of poisons use of ghee can be considered as the first line of treatment. Because of the penetrating action, poison weakens the heart; in order to protect it, ghee is administered or mixture of ghee and honey or anti-poisonous recipes mixed with ghee by this kapha gets increased in the heart¹⁵.

For the management of poison in vishavaidhya jyotsnika ten ghrita yogas are mentioned. A few yogas (formulations) mentioned are also indicated in other diseased conditions and not just in cases of poison. In all types of poisons, administration of ghrita (ghee) helps in relieving the visha gunas (properties of poison) and thereby will be useful in the management of visha (poison). As not much clinical documentation has been carried on these formulations, there remains a wide scope for research.

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