



Review Article

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A REVIEW ON PHARMACOLOGICAL PROPERTIES OF PANCH SAKAR CHURNA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ITS ROLE ON MALA BADDHATA

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ABSTRACT

Large number of population owing to their eating habits and lifestyle are chronic sufferers of Mala baddhata commonly known as constipation. Mala baddhata is explained in Ayurvedic text's as a purvarupa of many diseases. If left untreated it may lead to piles, fistula, fissure and even heart stroke. Anulomana, Bhedana, Rechana and virechana are the methods mentioned in samhitas to treat the condition and they can be correlated to emollients, bulk forming agents, laxatives etc. explained in modern texts. Many drugs have been explained for the treatment of the condition and Panch sakaar churna is one of the effective remedy for the same. It causes the patient to pass the stool easily without causing gripe which is the common side effect of laxatives. Here an effort is made to explain the pharmacological properties of pancha sakar churna and its role in Mala baddhata i.e constipation.

Keywords: Malabaddhata, constipation, panchasakar churna, bhedana, laxative.

INTRODUCTION

World's 11% of population are silent sufferers of constipation. Most of the time this condition remains untreated and leads to various ailments like piles, fissure, fistula and even heart stroke. Hence, it must be treated with utmost care. Laxatives are used in the treatment of constipation. Constipation is known by the name of Malabaddhata in ayurveda. It is treated by giving laxatives in modern medicine and according to ayurveda, treatment is provided by administering anulomana, bhedana, rechana and sramsana drugs.

TYPES OF LAXATIVES ACCORDING TO AYURVEDA

Anulomana

The drugs which enhance digestion process and act by breaking the stool to expel out are called as anulomana. The best drug for this is Haritaki (*Terminalia chebula*)¹.

Sramsana

The drugs which expel the faeces without digesting the 'aama' is called as sramsana. The best drug for this is Aaragvadha (*Cassia fistula*).

Bhedana

Bhedana means breaking. The drugs which break the hard, stone like stool and expels out are called as Bhedana. The best drug used for it is Kutaki (*Picrorhiza kurrooa*).

Rechana

The drugs which liquefy the stool and expel it out are called as rechana. The best drug used for it is Nishoth (*Operculina turpethum*).

In modern texts four types of laxatives are described viz. ²

Bulk forming

Dietary fibre like bran, psyllium, methyl cellulose etc. consists of unabsorbable cell wall and other constituents of vegetable food-cellulose, pectins, glycoproteins and other polysaccharides. It absorbs water in intestines, swells, increases water content of faeces softens it and facilitates colonic transit.

Stool softener

It includes liquid paraffin, docusates etc. it is an anionic detergent, softens the stools by net water accumulation in the lumen by an action on the intestinal mucosa. It emulsifies the colonic contents and increases penetration of water into faeces. Cramps and abdominal pain can occur and may cause nausea.

Stimulant purgatives

They include diphenylmethanes, anthraquinones and fixed oils. They are powerful purgatives often produce griping. They were thought to irritate the intestinal mucosa and thus stimulate motor activity. Though some of them do primarily increase motility by acting on mysentric plexus, the more important mechanism of action is accumulation of water and electrolytes in the lumen by altering absorptive and secretory activity of the mucosal cell.

Osmotic purgatives

They include magnesium salts like sulfate, hydroxide and sodium salts like sulfate, phosphate, sodium potassium tartrate and lactulose. Solutes that are not absorbed in the intestine retain water osmotically and distend the bowel increasing peristalsis indirectly.

COMPLICATIONS OF LAXATIVES

Some individuals are obsessed with using purgatives regularly. Chronic use of purgatives must be discouraged. Once the purgative habit is formed it is hard to break. Dangers of purgative abuse are:

1. Flaring of intestinal pathology, rupture of inflamed appendix.
2. Fluid and electrolyte imbalance, especially hypokalemia.
3. Steatorrhea, malabsorption syndrome.

4. Protein losing enteropathy.
5. Spastic colitis.

Hence the use of such laxatives must be avoided.

There are different laxatives used for the treatment of mala baddhata. One of the most commonly used drug for this condition is Pancha Sakar Churna³. As the name suggests it is a combination of five drugs all of which start with letter 'sa'.

The ingredients of churna and their ratio are:

- Shunthi (*Zingiber officinale*) [1 part]
- Saunf (*Anethum sowa*) [1 part]
- Swarni patri (*Cassia angustifolia*) [4 parts]
- Saindhava Lavana – Rock salt [1 part]
- Balaharitaki – Unripe fruits of *Terminalia chebula* [2 parts]

Table 1: Rasa panchak of ingredients of Panch Sakar Churna⁴

Drug name	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Karma
Shunthi	K	Guru, ruksha	Ushna	Madhur	KV vibandhnut
Saunf	M, K, T	Laghu, snigdha	Sheeta	Madhur	Anulomana, Asthapanopag
Swarna patri	K, T, M, Ka	Laghu, ruksha, teekshna	Ushna	Madhur	Vatanulomana, pitta shodhana, rechani, shodhani
Saindhav	L, M	laghu	Anushna	Madhur	Tridoshanashak, Pathya, vrishya, hridya, avidahi
Shivaya	Ka, 5 rasa alavana	Laghu, ruksha	Ushna	Madhur	Tridosha hara, anulomana

K=Katu (pungent), M=Madhur (sweet), T=Tikta, (Bitter), Ka=Kashaya (Astringent)

Based on the above table, Rasa panchak of panchsakaar churna can be stated as:

Rasa- Katu, Tikta, Madhur, Kashay Prdhaan (Shadrasatmak)

Guna- Laghu, Ruksha

Virya – Ushna (Hot)

Vipaka- Madhur

Karma – Anulomana, Vaata kapha nashak

ACTION OF PANCHSAKAAR CHURNA ON MALABADDHATA

Mala baddhata (Constipation) is caused mainly⁵ by vaata dushti and is classified as vaat pradhan and vaat kapha pradhan. Pancha sakaar churna has pacifying action on both the doshas. It is advisable to use anulomana dravyas for the treatment of malabaddhata.⁶

According to the modern science pharmacological action of panchasakaar churna can be explained as follows

Shunthi – It has antispasmodic property.⁷

Saunf- (Fennel Seeds) Fennel seeds, can act as a laxative when they are used as powder.

The roughage in it helps clear the bowels. It helps to maintain the proper peristaltic motion of the intestines leading to proper excretion through the stimulation of gastric juices⁸.

Suwarna Patri- Senna is a very strong laxative herb which may cause griping if used without other herbs. It is wise to use it in combination with warming, stimulating and antispasmodic herbs such as Ginger.

Senna is an anthranoid type stimulating laxative. The laxative effect is due to the action of sennosides and their active metabolite, rhein-anthrone, in the colon. There are two different mechanism of action:

1. An influence on the motility of the large intestine: The laxative effect is realized by the inhibition of water and electrolyte absorption from the large intestine, which increases the volume and pressure of the intestinal contents. This will stimulate colon motility resulting in propulsive contractions.
2. An influence on secretion processes: Stimulation of active chloride secretion increases water and electrolyte content of the intestine. These changes in active electrolyte transport are dependent on calcium in serosal surface. The laxative action of Senna is partially via stimulation of colonic fluid and electrolyte secretion, and this secretion is mediated by stimulation of endogenous prostaglandin E2 formation⁹.

Saindhav- It has anti gripe property.

Shiva- The natural laxative property of the fruit is helpful for relieving the symptoms of constipation. The dietary fibers in the extract of Harad are useful in regulating the bowel movement. This improved bowel movement will relieve constipation and the digestive elements help to move the food in the GI tract.¹⁰

CONCLUSION

Panchasakaar churna is an effective herbal formulation over constipation. It relieves constipation without causing any discomfort to the patient owing to its unique combination.

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