



Review Article

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CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON ANTI-TOXIC ACTION OF KSHARA AGADA: A REVIEW

Aravind D^{1*}, Gopendra Chandra Kamal¹, Sourav Ballav¹, Ashwini Kumar S Bharati²

¹PG Scholar, Department of Agada Tantra evum Vidhi Vaidhyaka, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan, Karnataka, India

²Professor, Department of Agada Tantra evum Vidhi Vaidhyaka, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan, Karnataka, India

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*Corresponding author

E-mail: draravindd226@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Agada Tantra is a specialized branch of Ayurveda which mainly deals with Visha (Poison) and its management. There are number of Agada Yogas (formulations) which are unique because of the potent ingredients which are faster in action. Kshara Agada is one among the several Agada Yogas which is explained in Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita. According to Acharaya Charaka, Kshara Agada is a formulation where Palasha Kshara is prepared and several other vishaghna drugs are added to it. It is indicated in several complications of Visha such as Sotha (inflammation), Gulma (bloating), Twak dosa (skin ailments), Pandu (anaemia) etc. The ingredients are having antioxidant, antibacterial and hepatoprotective action. The main objective of this article is to discuss the therapeutic and pharmacological properties of Kshara Agada as respect to toxicity.

Keywords: Kshara, Agada, Visha, Antioxidant, skin

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda literatures are vast treasures of various drug formulations. Agada yogas are those formulations which counteract the deleterious actions of visha or poison over the senses and organs.¹ Treating poisonous cases require formulations which are potent and have faster and specific actions. Agada yoga, by having the vishaghna gana² drugs as the major ingredients, meet these very requirements. Kshara agada³ is one of the formulation described by Acharya Charaka and Acharya Sushruta. It is indicated for the treatment of conditions manifested by poison such as inflammation, bloating, skin ailments, haemorrhoids, fistula-in-ano, liver diseases worm infestations, anaemia, digestive ailments, respiratory ailments, psychological disturbances. kshara agada is available in gutika (pills) and choorna (powder) form. The dose to be used is one kola pramana (6 mg).

This article is based on the textual review and the clinical experiences. Descriptions related to Kshara Agada were collected from Sushruta Samhita and Charaka Samhita. Relevant textual literature and scientific publications were referred.

The ingredients of kshara Agada according to Charaka Samhita along with the Rasa Panchaka⁴. (Table 1)

Method of preparation

Palasha (*Butea monosperma*) kshara is prepared and the powdered drugs are sprinkled and stirred while being cooked till the paste sticks to spoon. Pills are made from this paste and dried in shade.¹

Properties of Kshara⁵

Kshara is not very penetrating, nor very soft, it is mild, spreading in nature, white in colour, elevated when smeared, easy to remove and does not produce much secretions.

Antitoxic properties of Haridra⁶ – *Curcuma longa* has katu, tikta rasa; ruksha laghu guna; usna veerya; katu vipaka; kusthaghna (relieving skin disease) and vishaghna (anti poisonous) karma. It contains phytoconstituents like curcumin, curcuminoids etc. Haridra has pharmacological actions like anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, anti-bacterial, hepatoprotective, expectorant, anticancerous, anti-mutagenic, free-radical scavenging property.

Antitoxic properties of Surasmanjiri⁷ – Surasmanjiri has tikta, katu rasa; ruksha, laghu guna; usna veerya; kusthaghna, rucikara (appetizer), krimighna (anti-helminthic) karma. *Ocimum sanctum* contains ursolic acid, polyphenols, anthocyanin and eugenol. It has anti-inflammatory, anti-stress and anti-pyretic, anti-microbial, ant-viral action.

Antitoxic properties of Daruharidra⁸ - Daruharidra has tikta rasa; ruksha, laghu guna; usna veerya; katu vipaka; visahara and kusthaghna karma. *Berberis aristata* has alkaloid berberin. It is used as tonic, demulcent, diaphoretic and diuretic, in the treatment of skin disease, jaundice, and diarrhoea.

Antitoxic properties of Jatamansi⁹ - Jatamansi has tikta, kasaya, madhura rasa; sita veerya; katu vipaka; vishaghna and tvachya (skin promoting effect) karma. *Nardostachys jatamansi* has sesquiterpenes and coumarins as active principles. It has several actions such as anticonvulsant, antiparkinson's, tranquilizing, hepato-protective, neuroprotective, hypotensive and antidiabetic.

Antitoxic property of Hingu¹⁰ - Hingu has tikta, katu rasa; tiksna, lghu guna; usna veerya; katu vipaka; pacana (digesting action), rucikara, krimighna karma. *Ferula assafoetida* contains sesquiterpenes, coumarin. It is known to have anti-inflammatory, anti-viral, anti-mutagenic, antifungal actions. It is used in the treatment of asthma, gastro-intestinal disorders, intestinal parasites etc.

Table 1: Rasa panchaka of the ingredients of Kshara agada

| Dravya (Drug) | Rasa (Taste) | Guna (Property) | Veerya (Potency) | Vipaka (Metabolic Property) | Karma (Action) | Doshagnata |
|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Haridra | Katu Tikta | Ruksa Laghu | Usna | Katu | Kusthaghna Visaghna | Vata Kapha Samaka |
| Surasmanjari | Tikta Katu | Ruksa Laghu | Usna | Katu | Kusthaghna Rucikara Krimighna | Kapha Vata Samaka |
| Daru haridra | Tikta | Ruksa Laghu | Usna | Katu | Visahara Kusthaghna | Pitta Kapha Samaka |
| Jatamamsi | Tikta Kasaya Madhura | Snigdha Laghu | Sita | Katu | Visaghna Twachya | Tridosha Samaka |
| Hingu | Tikta Katu | Tiksna Laghu | Usna | Katu | Pacana Ruchya Krimighna | Vata Kapha Samaka |
| Sariva | Tikta Madhura | Guru Snigdha | Sita | Madhura | Kusthaghna Visaghna Rucikara | Tridosha Samaka |
| Madhuka | Kasaya Madhura | Guru Snigdha | Sita | Madhura | Balya, Sukrala | Vatapitta hara |
| Kushta | Tikta katu madhura | Laghu Ruksha | Usna | Katu | Kusthahara, hikka, kasahara | Vata Kapha hara |
| Shunti | Katu | Ruksha Tiksna | Usna | Madhura | Deepaniya, Kushtahara, shoolaghna | Vata Kapha hara |
| Pippali | Katu | Laghu Snigdha | Usna | Madhura | Deepana, kustahara, rasayana, shoolaghna | Vata Kapha hara |
| Maricha | Katu | Laghu Tiksna | Usna | Katu | Krimihara, kasahara | Kapha vata hara |
| Bahlka | Katu tikta | Snigdha | Usna | katu | Varnya Shonita-sthapana vranahara | Kapha vata hara |
| Palasha | Katu tikta kashaya | Laghu, Snigdha | Usna | Katu | Krimighna Deepaniya arshahara | Vata kaphahara |
| Laksha | Katu tikta | Laghu Snigdha | Usna | Katu | Kushtahara | Kapha Vata hara |

Antitoxic property of Sariva¹¹ - Sariva has tikta rasa; guru, snigdha guna; sita veerya; madhura vipaka; rucikara, kusthaghna, visaghna karma. *Hemidesmus indicus* contain rutin as active principle. The roots are used as antipyretic, anti-diarrheal, diuretic, diaphoretic and for leprosy.

Antitoxic property of Madhuka¹² - Madhuka has tikta, madhura rasa; guru, snigdha guna; sita veerya; madhura vipaka; balya (improving strength) and sukrala (increasing sperm count) karma. *Glycyrrhiza glabra* contains glycyrrhizin. Studies have indicated that it possesses antibacterial, antioxidant, antimalarial, antispasmodic, anti-inflammatory, anti-hyperglycaemic property.

Antitoxic property of Kushta¹³ - Kushta has tikta, katu madhura rasa; laghu, ruksha guna; usna veerya; katu vipaka; kusthahara, hikkahara (relieving hiccups), kasahara (relieving cough) karma. *Saussurea lappa* contains sesquiterpene lactones as major phyto-constituent. It exhibits anti-inflammatory, anti-ulcer, anti-cancer and hepato-protective activities.

Antitoxic property of Shunti¹⁴ - Shunti has katu rasa; ruksha, tiksna guna, usna veerya; madhura vipaka; deepaniya (appetizer), kusthahara and shoolaghna (relieving pain) karma. *Zingiber officinale* contains zingerol. It has immuno-modulatory,

anti-tumorigenic, anti-inflammatory, anti-apoptic, anti-hyperglycaemic actions.

Antitoxic property of Pippali¹⁵ -Pippali has katu rasa; laghu, snigdha guna; usna veerya, madhu vipaka; deepaniya, kusthahara, rasayana (anti- ageing), shoolaghna karma. *Piper longum* contains piperin as main phytoconstituent. The reported pharmacological properties are anticancer, antioxidant, hepatoprotective, anti-inflammatory, immunomodulatory activity, anti-microbial activity, anti-platelet activity, analgesic activity, adulticidal activity, antidepressant activity, antiameobic activity, antifungal activity, bioavailability enhancer and larvicidal activity.

Antitoxic property of Maricha¹⁶ - Maricha has katu rasa; tiksna guna; usna veerya; katu vipaka; krimihara, kasahara karma. *Piper nigrum* contains piperin as main phyto-constituent. It has ability to control worm infestations, cough and inflammations.

Antitoxic property of Bahlka¹⁷ - Bahlka has katu tikta rasa; snigdha guna; usna veerya; Katu vipaka; varnya (improves complexion), shonithasthan (stops bleeding) , vranahara (ulcer healing) karma . *Crocus sativus* is rich source of riboflavin and thiamine. It is a mild stimulant and is consider as promoter of immunity.

DISCUSSION

Kshara Agada contains 15 drugs. Most of these drugs are having katu, tikta rasa; usna veerya; katu vipaka; kusthaghna, visaghna, deepaniya and krimihara karmas. These drugs are very potent and reported to have actions such as anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory, hepato-protective, anti-mutagenic, anti-bacterial, anti-helminthic. Individually, some of these drugs have diuretic, diaphoretic actions which are useful in elimination of poison. The preparation is prepared in kshara having mild tiksna guna which makes it suitable for use in treatment of poison where fast action is required. The presence of pippali also contributes to bioavailability of the drug.

CONCLUSION

Kshara Agada described by Charaka and Sushruta, is similar except for few ingredients & indications and the method of preparation. However, most of the drugs are having visaghna, krimihara, deepaniya karmas. The use of Kshara Agada in cases such as skin disorders, liver disorders, ano-rectal disorders, allergic problems is also justified theoretically. The review is an attempt to provide collective knowledge on therapeutic, pharmacological and medicinal use of Kshara Agada. This would motivate researchers to further explore the pharmacological activities and clinicians to further establish the drug in day to day clinical practices.

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