



Review Article

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INDIGENOUS DRUGS IN OPHTHALMOLOGY: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Shalakya Tantra is one among the eight clinical specialties of Ayurveda which deals with management of eye diseases including all other disorders of head and neck. Medicinal indigenous plants have been used as traditional treatment for numerous human diseases for thousands of years in many parts of world. In rural areas of developing countries, Indigenous herbal materials continue to be used as the primary source of medicines. Eye is one of the sensitive organs of human body and is permanently exposed to different environmental agents. Various Indigenous Chakshushya Dravyas are described in Ayurvedic literature both in Bruhatrayi and Laghutrayi. Bhavprakash Nighantu is one among the three Samhitas of Laghutrayi. This review makes an effort to gather knowledge about some Chakshushya drugs described broadly in Bhavprakash Nighantu.

Keywords: Chakshushya Dravya, Eye Disorders, Bhavprakash Nighantu.

INTRODUCTION

Eye is the most delicate and beautiful sense organ of human body. It is knowledge of soul. If once vision is lost, it is lost forever. So, protecting our visual perception is one of the most important things. In the Ayurvedic system of medicine, as mentioned in ancient Indian books like Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Bhavprakash Nighantu, Ashtanghridayam, there are various plants which are used in ophthalmic conditions, either single or in compound formulations.

In Ayurveda, Shalakya Tantra (Ophthalmology) is the branch in developing phase. Chakshushya Dravyas is one of the most important topics in Shalakya Tantra. The meaning of word "Chakshu" is Darshanendriya and Chakshushya implies valuable

for eyesight. Hence, Chakshushya Dravyas are nothing but various herbs referenced in Ayurveda which are useful for beneficial for eyes. Chakshushya Dravyas are interesting as well as essential topic in Shalakya Tantra. The majority of the Herbs in ophthalmology are defined under the heading of a Netrya, Chakshushya. In this article primarily Chakshushya Dravyas which have been told by Bhavprakash are discussed. Various Indigenous Chakshushya Dravyas are described in Ayurvedic literature both in Bruhatrayi and Laghutrayi. Bhavprakash Nighantu is one among the three Samhitas of Laghutrayi¹. Considering the Doshas contribution on the basis of symptoms Chakshushya Dravyas can be used to treat the condition. It likewise improves visual quality, promotes clear vision and also improves ocular strength.

Table 1: Chakshushya Dravyas and their properties

Name	Latin Name	Rasa	Virya	Vipaka	Doshagnata
Amalaki	<i>Emblca officinalis</i>	Pancharasa (Lavanvarjit)	Sheeta	Madhur	Tridosahara
Bibhitaki	<i>Terminalia bellirica</i>	Kashaya	Ushna	Madhur	Tridosahara
Haritaki	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Pancharasa (Lavanvarjit)	Ushna	Madhur	Tridosahara
Daruharidra	<i>Berberis aristata</i>	Tikta, kashaya	Ushna	Katu	Kaphapittahara
Punarnava	<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i>	Madhur, Tikta, Kashaya	Ushna	Katu	Vatakaphashamak
Yashtimadhu	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>	Madhur	Sheeta	Madhur	Vatapittashamaka
Manjistha	<i>Rubia cordifolia</i>	Tikta, Kashaya, Madhur	Ushna	Katu	Kaphapittashamaka
Lodhra	<i>Symplocos racemosa</i>	Kashaya	Sheeta	Katu	Kaphapittashamaka
Gunja	<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Tikta, Kashaya	Ushna	Katu	Kaphavatashamaka
Jivanti	<i>Leptadenia reticulata</i>	Madhur	Sheeta	Madhur	Tridosahara
Kumari	<i>Aloe vera</i>	Tikta, Madhur	Sheeta	Tikta	Kaphapittahara
Shigru	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>	Katu, Tikta	Ushna	Katu	Kaphavataghana
Shatavari	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>	Madhur, Tikta	Sheeta	Madhur	Vatapittashamaka
Bhringaraj	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	Katu, Tikta	Ushana	Katu	Kaphavatashamaka
Lavanga	<i>Syzygium aromaticum</i>	Katu, Tikta	Sheeta	Katu	Kaphapittashamaka
Jiraka	<i>Cuminum cyminum</i>	Katu	Ushna	Katu	Kaphavatghna and pittakara
Kakamachi	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Tikta, Katu	Anushna	Katu	Tridosahara
Karpura	<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i>	Madhur, Tikta	Sheeta	Katu	Tridosahara
Nirgundi	<i>Vitex negundo</i>	Katu, Tikta, Kashaya	Ushna	Katu	Kaphavatashamaka
Raktachandan	<i>Pterocarpus santalinus</i>	Madhur, Tikta	Sheeta	Katu	Kaphapittashamaka

Haritaki

Haritaki has strong antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties that work very well on a variety of eye issues such as inflamed eye, dry eye, watery eyes and conjunctivitis.

Haritaki used in various combinations for chakrushya effect e.g.

Haritaki + Madhu - Achyotana for Netrya effect;
Haritaki Kashaya (Decoction) for Netra Prakshalana (eye wash) in Netra Abhishyanda.
Triphala + Madhu- acts as Netrabalya, Haritaki has Doshaghna effect on Dwitiyapatal²

Bibhitaki

Bibhitaki Phalamajja acts as a Shothaghana (Anti-inflammatory)³. So, it is used in inflammatory conditions like conjunctivitis.

Amalaki

In inflammatory conditions like Akshishotha Amalaki Swarasa (Juice) is used as an Akshi Prakshalana (Cleaning of eyes with Decoction).

Amalaki Phalamajja Kwatha (Decoction) is used for the treatment of eye pain.

Amalaki Churna soaks in water for whole night next morning it is used for Akshiprakshalana.⁴ Used in Blepharitis, Myopia. It is also used in Conjunctivitis, Diabetic Retinopathy, Glaucoma, Xerosis, Pterygium, Pinguecula, ARMD (Age Related Macular Degeneration) and other Retinal Degenerative Diseases.⁵

Punarnava

It is having Anti-inflammatory property. The root acts an analgesic medication that when rubbed in honey can be locally applied for conjunctivitis, blepharitis and cataract.

Kumari

Kumari have Tikta (Bitter), Madhur (Sweet) and Sheeta (Cold) Veerya (Nature) property so it acts as a Shothahar (Anti-inflammatory) and Netrya (Dravya god for eyes). Kumari Swarasa (Juice) and Kumarilepa (Paste) used in Netra abhishyanada (Conjunctivitis).⁶

Yashtimadhu

Yashtimadhu has Balya (Strength promoting activity) effect on Netragat Mamsa Dhatu Daurbalya (Weakness of Eyes) i.e. it acts as Netraposhak⁷ It is used in corneal opacities, cataract, and Subconjunctival hemorrhage.

Manjishtha

It is used in Rakta, Pitta and Vataja Vyadhi. Manjishthalepa is effective in Netragata Shoola (Pain), Shopha (Inflammation), and Kleda (Moistness).⁸

Gunja

There are two types of Gunja which are-

a) Shweta Gunja and b) Rakta Gunja.

Both of them explained in Bhavprakash and used to treat Netraroga.⁹ Bija Phanta used to treat Corneal Opacity.

Shatavari

Shatavari has Madhur (Sweet), Tikta (Bitter), Sheeta (Cold) Veerya and Rasayana Property so it acts as a Netrya (Beneficial for eyes). It is used in Drishtimandya¹⁰

Saindhav Lavana

It has a Tridoshaghna property, so it is useful in Netraroga. It is used in Shushkashipaka (Dry eye).

Bhringaraja

It is easily available everywhere. It has a property of Rasayana (Rejuvenation) and Kapha-Vatahar. So, it acts as a Chakrushya effects Bhringaraja Taila Nasya is used to treat Drishtimandya¹¹

Daruharidra

In Rasanjana form it is useful in Abhishyanda (Conjunctivitis).¹² Timira (Cataract), Mamsa Vridhi, Kandu (Itching), Kleda (Moistness), Pushp (Opacity), Vrana¹³. Darvi has Netrya (Beneficial for eyes) effect it used locally or orally with Madhu. Paste of this herb is applied over eyelids to reduce conjunctivitis.

Lodhra

Lodhra acts as a Kledaghna, Shothaghana (Anti-inflammatory) and Balya (Immunity Promoter) on Netra hence it is said to be Chakrushya (Beneficial for eyes).¹⁴ Lodhra + Mulethi, Lepa (Paste) is used in Netra abhishyanda, Netrashopha.

Raktachandana

Raktachandana has a property of Sheeta (Cold), Balya, Shothaghana and Grahi (Absorptive) so it is useful in Pittaja Netra Rogas so it has Netrya effect.¹⁵

Jiraka

Jiraka has a property of Ruksha (Dry), Katu (Bitter), Ushna (Hot) Virya and Kaphanashaka so it acts as a Netrya effect.

Nirgundi

It has a property of Shothaghana (Anti-inflammatory), Balya (Immunity Promoter) and Rasayana (Rejuvenation).

Jivanti

Jivanti extract mixed with Ghrita use in Night blindness.

Kakmachi, Karpura

Also has Shothaghana (Anti-inflammatory) and Rasayana (Rejuvenation) Properties.

Shigru

Shigru seeds are good for eyes. Shigru seeds and Patra (Leaves) having Anti-inflammatory properties.

DISCUSSION

Chakshushya which means strengthening the eyes; (Chakshu means Eye and Ayushya means Rasayana) so it is literally a Rasayana for the eyes. Acharya Charaka told, Chakshu is the chief site of Alochaka Pitta but special protection is required against the Kapha, because Kapha Dosha is opposite to Teja Mahabhoot in reference to their Guna. So Chakshushya Dravyas should be Kaphashamak and Pittavardhak, so Chakshushya Dravyas should be having property of balancing all the three Doshas especially keeping the Pitta Kapha Saamya.

The function of Chakshurendriya is done by Alochaka Pitta, so exposure to all Sheeta Virya Dravyas and conditions should be avoided because they will vitiate the Kapha. Ushna Virya Dravyas should be good for Chakshu though Drishti is Sheeta Satmya. Degenerative changes in different organs due to oxidative stress may be controlled by Rasayana drugs with proven antioxidant activities. Various Chakshushya Dravyas mentioned in Bhavprakash which are rich sources of macro and micronutrients like Sorbitol, Glucose, Fructose, Calcium, Zinc, Vit A, Vit C, Vit K, Vit B12, Vit D, Helps in maintaining normal function and structural integrity of the eye. So Chakshushya Dravyas, improves the functions, prevents the Age-related changes and helps in rejuvenating eye. In general, all these Drugs mainly have Antioxidant, Immunostimulant, Neuroprotective and Anti-inflammatory property. Above mentioned Chakshushya Dravyas can be used in various therapeutic processes. It is used in various Kriyakalpa like Pindi, Bidalaka, Tarpana, Putapaka, and Anjana.¹⁶

CONCLUSION

The concept of Chakshushya is a unique contribution to the field of Ophthalmology, where it is used in drugs and diet beneficial for eyes and its related diseases are incorporated. The Chakshushya Dravyas mentioned in Bhavprakash Nighantu has a gross area of actions which includes drugs having therapeutic properties.

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