



Review Article

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THERAPEUTIC APPLICATION OF SANDHANA KALPANA IN CHARAKA SAMHITA: A BIRD EYE VIEW

C. C. Divya^{1*}, P. P. Kirathamoorthy², A. K. Anoop³

¹ PG Scholar, Department of Samhita, Sanskrit and Siddhant, V P S V Ayurveda College, Kottakkal, Kerala, India

² Professor and HOD, Department of Samhita, Sanskrit and Siddhant, V P S V Ayurveda College, Kottakkal, Kerala, India

³ Assistant Professor, Department of Samhita, Sanskrit and Siddhant, V P S V Ayurveda College, Kottakkal, Kerala, India

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*Corresponding author

E-mail: ccdivya@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has different kinds of medicinal formulations. Sandhana kalpana is an important method of formulation in Ayurveda. All preparations resulting from fermentation procedure come under the heading Sandhana kalpana. These may be compared with liquid spirit. They have unique identity because of the self-generated alcohol in them which bring many added advantages. Purpose of this article is to understand the exact phase of treatment where these arishta asava preparations can be used. All the references of arishta asava in Charaka Samhita are compiled with their indications. From the analysis of these references, we can identify that prescription of arishta Asavas are confined to some peculiar conditions of patient or disease.

Keywords: Sandhana kalpana, arishta, asava, fermentation

INTRODUCTION

Fermentation process facilitates the chemical and biochemical reactions with breakage and reunion of the bonds in the preparation to form a new compound. It is the process of fermentation where dravadravya and Sandhana dravya are put together in a vessel and sealed for a specified time period to facilitate the process of fermentation. Asava and arishta are the two major products of this process. In asava the liquid which is to be fermented is obtained without undergoing heating process, like Swarasa and cold infusion. But in arishta the liquid to be fermented is obtained by heating process. The other fermentation products are Kanjika, Sukta etc.

Tinctures are alcoholic preparations containing the active principles of vegetable drugs. These are prepared by maceration or percolation or by dissolving the extracts in alcohol.

HISTORY OF ARISHTA KALPANA

Fermentation process is thought to be existed from Vedic period¹. Somarasa and sura mentioned in Vedas are products of fermentation. In Koutilyas Arthashastra two types of Sandhana kalpana preparations are mentioned which are derived from fruit juice and molasses. Some of these preparations are addressed with terminologies like Medaka, Prasanna, Asava and Arishta.

In the Post Vedic period addition of new techniques and development in the preparation of fermented products took place. Materials such as grape, sugarcane, juice of dates, bark of herbal trees etc. were added along with rice, barley and cereals and fruits. These formulations were beginning to use as medicines. The use of honey, flower of Madhuka (*Madhuca longifolia*), Dhataki (*Woodfordia fruticosa*) were also quoted in different preparations of alcoholic fermented drugs.

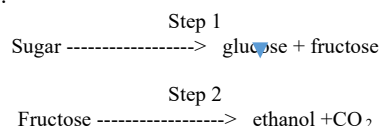
Charaka Samhita explains that the nine herbal sources- Phala (fruits), Dhanya (cereals), Mula (roots), Pushpa (flowers), Twak (bark), Sara (exudate), Kanda (branches), Patra (leaves), and Sharkara (sugar) for the preparation of fermented medicines, definition of fermentation, specification of the container, place to keep the basic drug, the time period for fermentation, subjective parameters to test the end point of the procedure and finished product.²

Preparation

The mixture containing decoction of drugs, jaggery and honey are used for preparation. The mixture is placed in a suitable container in proper place and season for a specific period of time. After fermentation the material is filtered and stored in a suitable container usually glass bottles. These have long expiry period or they may get better potency with time.

Fermentation

It is the incomplete oxidation of sugar in to ethanol and CO₂ brought about by the enzymes invertase and zymase secreted by yeast cells. These enzymes present in the yeast added to the sweetening agent, diluted in liquid preparation, convert sugar in to glucose and fructose at first level. Further they convert the fructose in to ethanol and carbon di oxide. Ethanol here is the self-generated alcohol. This self-generated alcohol act as self-preservative.



Importance of Sandhana kalpana

Arishtas and Asavas get their best potency and sharpness if they are stored properly. Arishta gets quickly absorbed and assimilated due to its tikshna (penetrating) property. So arishta and Asavas are widely used in current medical scenario due to its high therapeutic efficiency. These medicines can also be easily administered in pediatrics and geriatric patients. These medicines also stimulate the activity of digestive enzymes. Sweetening agents adding to the Arishtas make them palatable.

Benefits of Sandhana kalpana

Madya by its tikshna (penetrating) rasa, ushna virya (hot potency), Vikasi guna (spreading and laxity causing quality) and Prabhava (unexpected effect), mingle with gastric juice and travel through heart and blood vessels to brain. It causes a kind of intoxication or numbness in the sense organs and mind.

The arishta or medicated wine is effective in treating constipation, piles, assimilation-disorders, anemia, anorexia, fever and other diseases due to kapha. It is an effective appetizer also.³

ARISHTA REFERENCES IN CLASSICS

Kaphaja gulma

In Kaphaja gulma surgical management is indicated like kshara karma (cauterization with alkalies) and agnikarma (cauterization). After the shastra karma, if Agnimandya (loss of appetite) and Aruchi (loss of taste) is present, Asavas and Arishtas can be used. After this unctuous food should be taken. The main purpose of the Arishtas here is to make agni deepana (increase digestive power) and marga shuddhi (clear the pathway).⁴

Prameha

In Santarpanotha Prameha (Prameha due to over nourishment), where the dominance of kapha and pitta is present, recipes for producing dryness in the body are prescribed.⁵ Asavas like madhwasava, dantyasava and bhallatakasava are indicated in this context.

Kushta

Madhwasava, kanakabinduarishtam and thriphalasavam are the arishtas indicated in kushta.

Rajyakshma

The Rajyakshma patient shall take Prasanna, Varuni or Sidhu wine or simple medicated wines as per suitability after taking a meat-diet. Wine owing to its qualities of quickly acting, hot potency, cleansing effect and subtle action, churns up obstructions in the orifices of the body channels and soon dilates them. As a result of this re-establishment of circulation in the vessels, all the seven body- elements get nourished, and the wasting due to Rajyakshma soon gets cured.⁶

Shwayathu

If there is obstruction in the channels of circulation, if there is suppression of power of digestion and if there is anorexia arishtas like ganderady arishtam, ashtasata arishtam, punarnavady arishtam, thriphalady arishtam can be used.⁷

Udara

In Kaphaja udara, oleation, sudation and eliminative therapy is the treatment protocol. After this gradual diet schedule with pungent, kshara and kaphahara diet is followed. Palliative treatment is done in kaphodara patient by the oral intake of cow's urine, arishta, drugs powder, ayaskriti (medically processed iron) and sesame oil added with kshara (alkali obtained from ash of herbs).⁸ According to Vagbhata, arishta can be used in two conditions of kaphodara, if he is associated with Staimitya, Aruchi (loss of taste), Hrillasa (salivation) and Mandagni (decreased digestive power) and also in emaciated patients with kaphodara.⁹

Arshas

If an arshas patient have the dominance of aggravated vata, having unctuousness and having less digestive power, drugs like wine, buttermilk, a type of vinegar prepared of barley, arishta etc. can be used as anupana (after drink). They help in downward movement of flatus and stool. Arishta preparations are indicated in shushka arshas (nonbleeding piles) patients having Bhinna varchas (loose bowels). Arishta preparations mentioned in arshas are takrarishtam, abhayarishtam, dantyarishtam, phalarishtam and kanakarishtam.¹⁰

Grahani

Arishtas are indicated in Vatika, Kaphaja and Tridoshaja Grahani. In Vatika grahani, takrarishtam is indicated, in Kaphaja grahani madhukasavam, duralabhasavam, mulasavam, pindasavam and madhwarishtam are indicated. In tridoshaja grahani, panchakarma is the treatment, but for increasing the appetite ghrita, arishta, asava and ksharas are given¹¹.

Pandu

Goudarishtam, beejakarishtam and dhatriyarishtam are mentioned in Pandu chikitsa.

Vatashonitam

If vata is vitiated due to obstruction either by excessive aggravated meda or kapha, one should not apply unctuous drugs in the beginning. Instead kapha and meda suppressors with physical exercises, shodhana (purification), virechana (purgation), and intake of arishta (fermented preparation of medicinal herbs etc.) and butter milk with abhaya are indicated.¹²

CONCLUSION

We can summarize the broad usage of arishtas under following headings:

- To overcome loss of appetite and tastelessness as in arshas and grahani
- To remove the obstructions in the srotas as in Kaphaja gulma, Rajyakshma and Shwayathu
- To alleviate the kapha prakopa as in Prameha, Udara and Vatashonitam
- Arishta preparations help in increasing palatability of medicine.
- It helps in increasing the bioavailability of medicine.

In these days almost all the food and medicine are adulterer with many of preservatives. And also, we are facing the ill effects of these preservatives in the form of many dysfunctions in our body.

Arishta and asava are enriched with natural preservatives which will not cause any harmful effect if used wisely. Arishtas can be used with other formulations which will increase the potentiality of the combination. For Paediatric patients, arishtas are the best choice of medicine because of palatability. But care should be taken while using arishta because from the above description we have seen that arishta indication is peculiar to some special conditions of patient. Injudicious use may lead to some complications like gastric problems. More study has to be done to know where to avoid arishta preparations and to be more specific in its usage. So judicious use of arishtas will help the Ayurvedic pharmacology.

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