



## Review Article

www.ijrap.net

(ISSN Online:2229-3566, ISSN Print:2277-4343)



### A CLASSICAL REVIEW ON UTILITY OF SHATADHAUTA GHRITA IN THE TREATMENT OF VARIOUS DISORDERS IN AYURVEDA

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Received on: 21/9/24 Accepted on: 18/11/24

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DOI: 10.7897/2277-4343.156198

#### ABSTRACT

Ayurvedic literature highlights the external use of Shatadhauta Ghrita and Sahasradhauta Ghrita in managing a wide range of disease conditions, particularly those associated with an imbalance of Pitta dosha. However, no comprehensive review has been conducted on its practical utility. This study aims to bridge that gap, offering valuable insights for physicians and researchers. The study draws from Brihatrayi (Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya and Ashtanga Samgraha) along with supplementary medieval classical texts. Relevant published articles were reviewed through various search engines and databases like Google Scholar, Research Gate etc. Shatadhauta Ghrita, prepared with two methods, one involving heating and one without, is traditionally used not only as a standalone remedy, but also as a base for external formulations like lepa (paste). Research further supports its role as a permeation enhancer in topical drug delivery systems. This review confirms that Shatadhauta Ghrita is a simple yet effective Ayurvedic formulation, with applications across a wide range of pathological conditions. It can be easily incorporated into OPD and IPD settings by Ayurvedic practitioners, requiring minimal resources for preparation.

**Keywords:** Ayurveda, Shatadhauta, Sahasradhauta, Ghrita, Pharmaceuticals

#### INTRODUCTION

Shatadhauta Ghrita is a unique formulation of Ayurveda, which is prepared in accordance with the concept of Dravya-Karana or Dravya-Samskara - processing of a substance with an aim to endow it with specific properties, as explained in Charaka Samhita.

Explaining Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana (eight specific rules related to food intake), Acharya Charaka enlists eight factors which define the properties of the used substance: Prakriti (inherent nature of a substance), Karana (processing), Samyoga (combination), Rashi (quantity), Desha (habitat), Kala (time), Upayogasamstha (method of consumption), Upayoktr (one who consumes).<sup>1</sup>

About Karana (processing) Charaka Acharya states the following: "Karana is a refinement of natural product through which transformation of natural or inherent attributes of substance is made. This transformation is brought through contact with water and fire, cleaning/washing, churning, place of storage, time, adding aromatic substances, impregnation, storing for a specific period and also due to the effect of the container where it is stored."<sup>2</sup>

Commenting on the above Acharya Chakrapani adds: "During creation of a substance, the mahabhutas (gross elements) forming it endow the substance with certain inherent attributes or properties. The properties are modified during processing with water etc. which transforms or superimposes other properties in the substance by subduing its basic or natural properties."<sup>3</sup>

Method of preparation of Shatadhauta Ghrita and Sahasradhauta Ghrita implements one of these samskaras (processing method) that transform the properties of ghee when it is washed for hundred and thousand times respectively with normal water.

In this paper, the authors have sought to explore Ayurvedic literature on the therapeutic applications of Shatadhauta Ghrita and Sahasradhauta Ghrita as described in classical texts. Additionally, they have compiled and reviewed all relevant studies conducted on these formulations.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

The information on Shatadhauta and Sahasradhauta Ghrita was compiled from Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Samgraha, Ashtanga Hridaya along with its commentaries by Acharya Chakrapani, Dalhana, Arunadatta, Indu via printed books and e-Samhita online portal, supplemented by relevant references from medieval Ayurveda texts.

### Method of preparation of Dhauta Ghrita

The method of preparation described by the authors does not have direct references in the Brihatrayi texts. However, a few references can be found in the commentaries by Dalhana on the Sushruta Samhita and Indu on the Ashtanga Sangraha, as outlined below:

1. Dalhana gives following description 'śatavārān śītajalena dhautam phenilam ghr̥tam śatadhautaghr̥tam|' Shatadhauta Ghrita is a ghrita washed with cold water for 100 times until foam formation appears.<sup>4</sup>

2. Acharya Indu describes the following method:

a). 'śatadhautamanekaśo vilāpya śītajalaiḥ styānikṛtam|'<sup>5</sup>

b). 'sahasradhautam sarpiyadanekaśo'gnau vilāpya śītodake prakṣipya styānikriyate|'<sup>6</sup>

c) 'sahasradhautam sarpiyattāpitaṁ tāpitaṁ śītodakena śataśaḥ styānikriyate|'<sup>7</sup>

Shatadhauta means the ghrita that is processed by repeatedly heating and melting it over fire and then cooling it in cold water, a procedure performed hundreds of times to achieve a thick, soft, and smooth consistency.<sup>5-7</sup>

According to the textbook Vaidyaka Shabda Sindhu, two methods of preparation of Shatadhauta Ghrita are mentioned:<sup>8</sup>

1. Sa-agni / Santapya Vidhi – with fire, heating method:

In this method, ghrita is heated until it melts, then poured in cold water, and this process is repeated for a hundred times.

2. Nir-agni / Nirvapana Vidhi – without fire, pouring or washing method:

In this method, the ghrita is washed with water a hundred times. The process involves washing until the water becomes warm, then decanting it and adding fresh water for the next wash. This cycle is repeated for a total of one hundred times. A research study comparing the pharmaceutical observations of Shatadhauta Ghrita prepared using both the methods for ten cycles revealed distinct differences. The ghrita prepared using the heating method was whitish in color, whereas the ghrita prepared with the washing method appeared yellowish cream. Both preparations were found to be odorless and tasteless. The ghrita from the heating method was more solid and less granular compared to the washing method. Additionally, the yield from the Santapya vidhi was 96%, while the Nirvapana vidhi yielded 172%.<sup>9</sup>

### Mode of Administration

Classical Ayurveda Texts mainly mention external application of Shatadhauta Ghrita. Recent author, Pandit Taranath, have suggested that Shatadhauta Ghrita can also be used internally, with a recommended dosage of 1/4 teaspoon.<sup>10</sup>

### Practical utility

The results are as follows mentioning the usage of Shatadhauta and Sahasradhauta Ghrita in various conditions:

#### In Pregnancy

a). In cases where women in the fourth month of pregnancy experience potential vaginal bleeding, Shatadhauta Ghrita or Sahasradhauta Ghrita is applied below the umbilical region to help stabilize the foetus.<sup>11</sup>

b). In case of per vaginal bleeding in pregnancy, cooling measures should be employed, including Abhyanga (oil application on body) with Shatadhauta Ghrita followed by Avagaha (sweating induced by immersion in prewarmed liquid) in the water processed with drugs of cooling potency.<sup>12</sup>

c) In case of Garbhini vyapad (adverse event during pregnancy), such as pain in urinary bladder and vaginal canal or if per vaginal bleeding develops, then among other cooling measures, Sahasradhauta Ghrita should be applied all over below umbilicus.<sup>13</sup>

In case of Kushtha (dermatological disease) associated with Daha (burning sensation), external application of Tikta Ghrita (ghrita processed with the substances of bitter taste) or Shatadhauta Ghrita or Sahasradhauta Ghrita should be done.<sup>14,15</sup>

#### In Rajyakshma (consumption)

a) Associated with Daha (burning sensation) – Chandanadya taila or shatadhauta ghrita should be used as external application in the form of Abhyanga.<sup>16</sup>

b) Associated with Shira-shoola (headache), Parshva-shoola (pain in the flanks), Amsashoola (pain in the shoulder), Raktamokshana (blood-letting) is done followed by Abhyanga with Shatadhauta Ghrita.<sup>17</sup>

In case of Rakta arshas (bleeding piles), Pradeha (thick and hot external application of paste) with Durva ghrita (*Cynodon dactylon* (L.) Pers.) or Shatadhauta Ghrita or Sahasradhauta Ghrita should be administered, followed by fanning with cool air. This approach effectively and immediately arrests the bleeding.<sup>18</sup>

In case of Atisara (diarrhoea), when anus gets inflamed due to pitta dosha from frequent passage of faeces, pichu (cotton swab) dipped in Chandanadya taila or Shatadhauta ghrita should be used locally in Guda (anus) and Vankshana (groin) region.<sup>19,20</sup>

#### In Visarpa (erysipelas)

a). In Vata-Pitta predominant Visarpa - Kalka (paste) of Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus* Willd.) and Vidarikanda (*Pueraria tuberosa* (Roxb. ex Willd.) DC.), should be mixed with Shatadhauta Ghrita and used as pralepa (thin and cold external application of paste).<sup>21</sup>

b). In Vata-Pitta predominant Visarpa, external application of plain Shatadhauta Ghrita should be done.<sup>22</sup>

c) In Pitta predominant Visarpa - 'Nyagrodhadi lepa' is used as an external application of paste of tender and aerial roots of Nyagrodha (*Ficus benghalensis* L.), Kadali garbha (*Musa paradisiaca* L.) and Bisa granthi (Stalk knot of *Nelumbo nucifera* Gaertn.) mixed with Shatadhauta ghrita.<sup>23</sup>

d). In Agni Visarpa (Vata-Pitta predominant erysipelas) which is associated with Jwara (fever), Daha, etc; Pralepa with Shatadhauta Ghrita should be done locally.<sup>24</sup>

For managing Trishna (pathological thirst), it is recommended to apply Shatadhauta Ghrita externally over the entire body, followed by a cold-water bath and consumption of milk.<sup>25</sup>

In Rakta-Pittaja vrana (wound), Nirvapana (pouring) of Shatadhauta Ghrita should be done.<sup>26</sup>

In Jwara (fever) associated with Daha – external application of Sahasradhauta Ghrita<sup>27-29</sup> and Shatadhauta Ghrita<sup>30</sup> is advised.

Sushruta Acharya and Vagbhata Acharya mention Sthanika abhyanga (localized oil massage) or Pichu dharana with Shatadhauta Ghrita as a paschat karma (post operative procedure) for Jalaukavacharana (leech therapy).<sup>31,32</sup>

In case of Bhagna (fracture), Alepana (bandaging) of the affected part with the paste of Shatadhauta Ghrita mixed with Manjishtha (*Rubia cordifolia* L.), Madhuka (*Madhuca indica* J.F.Gmel.), Rakta Chandana (*Pterocarpus santalinus* L.f.) and Shali pishta (rice flour) is recommended.<sup>33</sup>

#### In case of Pitta predominant Vatarakta (gout)

a). Sthanik abhyanga with Shatadhauta Ghrita should be done.<sup>34</sup>

b). Parisheka (therapeutic streaming of medicated liquids) with dhanyamla (sour gruel) or application with Jivaniya Gana Dravya Siddha Ghrita (Ghee prepared with drugs of Jivaniya group of

drugs i.e., Jivanti, Kakoli, Kshirakakoli, Meda, Mahameda, Mudgaparni, Mashaparni, Jeevaka, Rshabhaka, Madhuka) or Shatadhauta Ghrita should be done.<sup>35</sup>

In case of Rakta abhishyanda (conjunctivitis), Paste of Nilotpala (*Nymphaea stellata* Willd.), Usheera (*Vetiveria zizanioides* Nash.), Daruharidra (*Berberis aristata* DC.), Yashtimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* L.), Musta (*Cyperus rotundus* L.) Lodhra (*Symplocos racemosa* Roxb.), Padmaka (*Prunus cerasoides* (Buch.-Ham. ex D.Don)) mixed with Dhauta Ghrita (Shatadhauta or Sahasradhauta) should be applied around the eyes.<sup>36</sup>

For treating Vishaja Vrana (ulcers caused by poison), Raktamokshana (blood-letting) should be performed. This should be followed by repeatedly applying a paste of drugs with cooling properties mixed with milk or Ikshu Rasa (juice of *Saccharum officinarum* L.) to the ulcer. Alternatively, local application of Shatadhauta Ghrita can also be utilized.<sup>37</sup>

For the management of Virechana atiyoga (excessive purgation), Abhyanga with Shatadhauta Ghrita, followed by Parisheka (pouring of medicated liquid) and Avagaha (immersing an affected part in medicated liquid) with drugs of Kashaya (astringent) and Madhura (sweet) Rasa (taste), and Shita Virya (cold in potency) should be selected.<sup>38</sup>

For post-operative care of Pakshma Rodha (trichiasis with entropion), a Vartmagata Vyadhi (disease affecting the eyelids), after suturing the eyelids, they should be covered with Kavalika (cotton bandage) soaked in a mixture of Shatadhauta Ghrita and Madhu (honey).<sup>39</sup>

In case of Arma (pterygium), which is a Shuklagata netra vyadhi (disease affecting sclera), where chedana (excision) is the line of treatment. In its post-operative management, along with other post-operative therapy, cooling measures are indicated with application of Shatadhauta Ghrita on murdhni (head) and pada (sole).<sup>40</sup>

In case of Pittaja and Raktaja Shiro abhitapa (headache), the treatment includes Snehana (oleation) then Sira vyadha (bloodletting) and kaya virechana (purgation) followed by Sinchana (sprinkling) and Pradeha (thick and hot external application of paste) of Shatadhauta Ghrita on face and head.<sup>41</sup>

#### Additional notes by commentators

In addition to the authors of the main Classical texts, commentators such as Dalhana in his 'Nibandhasagraha' commentary on Sushruta Samhita and Indu in his 'Shashilekha' commentary on Ashtanga Sangraha, have provided additional specifications regarding the use of Shatadhauta or Sahasradhauta Ghrita for certain conditions.

1. In the chapter Vrana-alepana-bandha vidhi, Dalhana advises Abhyanga with Shatadhauta Ghrita, to manage swelling in wounds caused by an imbalance of Pitta or Vata-Pitta doshas.<sup>42</sup>
2. Dalhana, in his commentary on Shashti Upakrama (Sixty therapeutic measures for wound management), recommends the use of Shatadhauta Ghrita for Abhyanga in case of Vrana caused due to Pitta, Rakta and Visha.<sup>43</sup>
3. Dalhana mentions the use of Shatadhauta Ghrita in the treatment of Vrana caused by poison. According to Sushruta Acharya, for Vishaja Vrana (wounds due to poison), the treatment involves removing putrefied tissues, performing Jalaukavacharana to eliminate blood, and evacuating doshas through emesis and purgation. Following these steps, the wound site should be irrigated with a decoction of Kshirivriksha (a group of five lactiferous trees), and a paste of cold, anti-poisonous

substances mixed with ghee should be applied. As per Dalhana, Shatadhauta Ghrita is recommended for this application.<sup>44</sup>

4. Dalhana specifies Abhyanga with Shatadhauta Ghrita in case of Raktaja adhimantha (glaucoma), Abhishyanda (conjunctivitis), Sira utpata (inflammation of eyes) and Sira harsha (advanced stage of sira utpata) following Kaya virechana (purgation) and Shirovirechana (Type of intranasal administration used for shodhanakarma).<sup>45</sup>

5. Indu recommends application of Shatadhauta Ghrita in case of Padadaha (burning sensation in the feet).<sup>46</sup>

6. In the Ashtanga Sangraha, it is stated that if Vishaja Vrana develops a puti gandha (foul odour), it should be treated as Pittaja Visarpa. According to Indu, this treatment includes the external application of Shatadhauta Ghrita.<sup>47</sup>

7. Arunadatta outlines the management of Khanda Oshtha (split lip) and Sadyo Vrana (accidental wounds) by following specific treatment modalities. The process begins with Snehana and Swedana (sudation) of the affected area, followed by Vilekhana (drying and sloughing). The wound is then closed with Kshoma Sutra (silk thread), followed by Abhyanga with Shatadhauta Ghrita and covered with Kavalika.<sup>48</sup>

## DISCUSSION

Shatadhauta Ghrita is a single drug formulation used widely in various pathological conditions with Pitta dosha predominance as mentioned in the utility. In addition to its therapeutic application detailed from the Brihatrayi, Yogaratnakara also specifies the use of Shatadhauta Ghrita in the management of Visarpa. Specifically, it is recommended to use Panchavalkaladi lepa in Agni Visarpa (septicaemia/pyaemia) and Shirishtwakadi lepa in management of Kardama Visarpa (erysipelas due to predominance of Pitta and Kapha dosha), with Shatadhauta Ghrita serving as the base.<sup>49</sup>

Bhaishajya Ratnavali and Chakradatta also endorse the external application of Shatadhauta Ghrita especially for Daha prashamana (to pacify burning sensation).<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, Acharya Sharangdhara highlights its use in Akshi tarpana (Therapeutic retention of melted medicated ghee over the eyes) for treating eye disorders.<sup>51</sup>

#### Research Update

In an experimental study to assess wound healing activity, Shatadhauta Ghrita and Panchavalkala Siddha Shatadhauta Ghrita showed mild wound healing activity with statistically insignificant difference between both the test drugs in excision wound model in comparison to reference standard which was taken as Betadine.<sup>52</sup>

In a study to develop and evaluate the ghee based Polyherbal Bhallatakadi Ghrita formulation with reference to 'Murcchana' and 'Shatadhauta' process, showed that the Homogeneous, smooth, non-granular and non-oily polyherbal formulation processed with 'Shatadhauta' is easier for topical application and will improve patient compliance. 'Shatadhauta' samskara increased shelf life of Polyherbal Bhallatakadi Ghrita formulation by almost 1.5 times for Indian environment (climatic zone III/IV) for accelerated stability conditions.<sup>53</sup>

#### Shatadhauta as Base in other formulations

A study by Pande Vishal *et al.* (2020), showed that Shatadhauta Ghrita may be used as a permeation enhancer in a topical drug delivery system for a poorly permeable drug like fluconazole to increase the permeation rate.<sup>54</sup>

Shatadhauta Ghrita was found to be a novel natural permeation enhancer to increase the permeation rate of famciclovir with combination of oleic acid and terpene as a surfactant and methyl paraben and propyl paraben used as a preservative. On microscopic characterization of optimized batch, showed that cream was stable as emulsion retaining its biphasic integrity and globule size did not increase to considerable extent the globule size is measured by motic microscope i.e., there is no change in globule size and other characteristic of famciclovir cream.<sup>55</sup>

A study by Shivprasad H. *et al.* (2016), was carried out to explore the *Shatadhauta Ghrita* as formulation base for the topical delivery of *Curcuma amada*. The study showed that the cream prepared by dispersing 0.2% *Curcuma amada* in Shatadhauta ghrita as base, had better inhibition of paw volumes in rat paw oedema model and showed better anti-inflammatory activity compared to marketed formulation containing synthetic drug (diclofenac).<sup>56</sup>

#### As Dressing in Surgical Procedures

In a case study of 30-year-old female patient, Shatadhauta Ghrita was applied 4 to 5 times a day in Yonigata sadyo vrana i.e., episiotomy wound site for 15 days and was found effective in reducing pain, swelling, discharge, edges and foul odour from the episiotomy wound site.<sup>57</sup>

In a study involving 15 patients with fissure-in-ano, the application of a pichu soaked in Shatadhauta Ghrita directly into the fissure for 7 days showed significant results.<sup>58</sup>

In a clinical trial on Bhagna involving 30 patients divided into trial and control groups, Manjisthadi Lepa was applied for 6 weeks, with immobilization using a plaster of Paris posterior slab. The trial group showed significant improvement ( $p < 0.001$ ) in the management of Bhagna.<sup>59</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

The review indicates that Shatadhauta Ghrita is a simple yet effective Ayurvedic formulation with extensive therapeutic applications. It is well-documented for its utility across a broad range of pathological conditions and can be effectively utilized by Ayurvedic physicians in both Out-Patient and In-Patient Department settings. The preparation methods for Shatadhauta and Sahasradhauta Ghrita, as described in Ayurvedic texts, are relatively simple and can be performed with minimal equipment. Therefore, Shatadhauta and Sahasradhauta Ghrita are suitable for regular use in clinical practice, either as standalone treatments as abhyanga, pichu dharana, etc. or serve as a base for external applications, such as lepa (paste), where a more pronounced Pitta-pacifying effect is desired compared to simple Ghrita.

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- Cite this article as:**  
Pavel Peresykin, Aditi Gandhi, Poornima A and Shrikanth P. A classical review on utility of Shatadhauta ghrita in the treatment of various disorders in Ayurveda. *Int. J. Res. Ayurveda Pharm*. 2024;15(6):88-93  
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7897/2277-4343.156198>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

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