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AGADA YOGAS IN THE DIAGNOSIS OF VISHA-A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Traditional *Visha Chikitsa*, a branch of ancient Indian medicine, holds a unique place in the realm of traditional healing systems. Rooted in ancient texts, *Visha Chikitsa* primarily deals with the diagnosis and treatment of poisoning, emphasizing the use of natural substances for therapeutic purposes. *Agada Yogas* recognizes the dynamic interplay between the body's constitution (*Prakriti*), the three doshas (*Vata, Pitta, Kapha*), and environmental factors, forming the basis for a comprehensive approach to poisoning.

Vishahari lehya and *Urithookki taila* are two such yogas which surprisingly helps in the diagnosis of poison and commencement of proper treatment. *Neelinyadi yoga* is another one still practiced by the traditional *visha vaidhyas* of Kerala with which we could locate the sthana of Gara visha inside the body. Conceptual understanding of these yogas could pave way for more studies in the field. It also addresses the need for standardization, documentation, and scientific validation whereby bridging the gap between tradition and modern science can ensure the seamless integration of Agada Yogas into mainstream healthcare practices.

Keywords: Visha, Vishahari lehya, Urithookki thaila, Neelinyadi yoga, Gara visha

INTRODUCTION

Agada Tantra being the sixth branch of *Ashtaanga Ayurveda* deals with the study of *Jangama visha* (animate), *Sthavara visha* (inanimate poisons), their symptoms of affliction and management. Acharya Vagbhata classified *visha* into two types namely *krithrima visha* (artificial poison) and *akrithrima visha* (natural poison). *Krithrima visha* is also called as *Gara visha* (unnatural or chemically prepared poison). *Jangama Visha* includes poisonous animals [1]. Among *jangama visha*, *Savisha bhouma sarpas* (poisonous snake found on earth) can be classified as *Darveekara* (Cobra), *Mandali* (Viper), *Rajila* (Krait), and their *visha* is considered to be fatal depending upon the nature of bite [2]. When *SarpaVisha* enters the body due to *damsa*, it vitiates *Raktha dhatu* followed by *Vatadidoshas* and finally reaches *Hrudaya*, thereby causing destruction of *Ojas* (essence of our body) [3].

There are more than 3500 species of snakes in the world among which 250 are venomous. In India 216 species are found, of which 52 are poisonous [4]. Snake bite is a common medical emergency, where timely treatment can reduce morbidity and mortality and save precious human lives [7]. Fatality can be attributed to their wide species variation, shortage of anti-snake venom (ASV), poor

compliance with treatment protocols, lack of public awareness and unavailability of a clear policy to deal with the problem. In India, mainly rural areas have high incidence of snake bite deaths because of the absence of access to hospitals and health care centers, in cases where proper treatment could have saved the lives. This situation has improved significantly after the introduction of ASV (anti snake venom) as a primary treatment through hospitals of tertiary levels. Still urbanization and deforestation serve as the cause for high incidence of bite cases and increased demand of ASV [5].

Visha apart from the bite was administered in multiple ways in ancient times, by mixing with food, drinks, cosmetics etc. for personal benefits. It's detection was based on the signs and symptoms produced. Hence, it was necessary to screen all the food materials and tools before use. In *Ayurveda* texts various methods of detection of these types of *visha* are mentioned like *Panchabhautika Pareeksha*, *lakshana pareeksha* etc.

In modern texts various analytical tools are mentioned for the same like *Chromatography*, *Mass Spectrometry*, *Spectrophotometry*, *Immunoassay* and *Radioimmuno Assay*. After analyzing different types of techniques used in *Ayurvedic* texts as well as modern literature it

can be concluded that detection of *Visha* is an important aspect in treatment of poisoning [6]. Traditional *vaidyas* in Kerala are effectively using some *agada yogas* for snake bite management. *Vishahaarileha* is one among

the magical remedies practiced by traditional *Vishavaidyas* of Kerala as a confirmatory test for *Sarpadamsa*.

Vishahari lehya

Ingredients (*Vishavaidhya Sara Samuchaya*)

S. No.	Ingredients	Botanical name	Family name	Rasa	Guna	Veerya	Vipaka
1	<i>Mrdanga phala</i>	<i>Luffa amara</i>	Curcubitaceae	<i>Thikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>
2	<i>Parada</i>	Mercury	-	<i>Shad rasa</i>	<i>Snigdha, Sara</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhura</i>
3	<i>Gandhaka</i>	Sulphur	-	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Sara</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>
4	<i>Nagavalli</i>	<i>Piper betle</i>	Piperaceae	<i>Thikta katu</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshan</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>
5	<i>Nimba thaila</i>	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Meliaceae	<i>Tiktha kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu Ruksha</i>	<i>seetha</i>	<i>Katu</i>

S. No.	Drugs	Karma	Doshagnatha
1	<i>Mrdanga phala</i>	<i>Kushtaghna Vishaghna Sothahara</i>	<i>Kaphapithasamaka</i>
2	<i>Parada</i>	<i>Tridosahara</i>	<i>Tridosahara</i>
3	<i>Gandhaka</i>	<i>Vishaghna Rasayana, Dipana, Pachana, Vatahara</i>	<i>Kaphavatahara</i>
4	<i>Nagavalli swarasa</i>	<i>Ruchya Balya Swarya</i>	<i>Kapha vata hara</i>
5	<i>Nimba thaila</i>	<i>Dipana Grahi Krmighna Vishaghna</i>	<i>Kapha pitha hara</i>

Method of preparation

1 *kudava* (192gm) paste of *Mrdanga phala*(*Luffa amara*) is taken and is mixed with 2 *prastha* (1080 ml) of *nagavalli swarasa*. This mixture is suspended in a cloth and the filtrate dripping is collected, measured and placed in a shallow wide mouthed bronze vessel. Equal amount of neem oil is added to it. *Shudha rasa* and finely powdered

gandhaka each is taken to 1/5th proportion of the combined mixture. These are added to the mixture and thoroughly triturated by hand till the water part evaporates. The resultant *lehya* will be of very thick colloid consistency. This would be preserved in an air tight glass vessel. As soon as the snake bites, this *lehya* can be administered [8].

Dose

1 *panathookkam* (2.5gm) of this *lehya* is smeared on a betel leaf and administered to the victim.

Indication

If the victim perceives *amla rasa*, he has been bitten by *Mandali Sarpa* (Viper). Similarly, *Katu Rasa* indicates *Daarvikara Sarpa* (Cobra), *Madhura rasa* indicates *Rajimantha Sarpa* (Krait). The perception of *Kashaya Rasa* indicates slight envenomation.

Caution- This preparation itself is toxic. Hence after administration ripe fruit of *Benincasa hispida* is to be used for the next 3-4 days [9].

Shelf life [10]

12 months

Urithookki Thailam

S. No.	Ingredients	Botanical name	Family name	Rasa	Guna	Veerya	Vipaka
1	<i>Ishwari</i>	<i>Aristolochia indica</i>	<i>Aristolochiaceae</i>	<i>Tiktha katu kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>
2	<i>Tila taila</i>	<i>Sesamum indicum</i>	<i>Pedaliaceae</i>	<i>Madhura Kashaya thiktha</i>	<i>Guru snigdha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhura</i>

S. No.	Drug	Karma	Doshagnatha
1	<i>Ishwari</i>	<i>Vishaghna Vranahara krimighna</i>	<i>Kapha vata hara</i>
2	<i>Tila thaila</i>	<i>Vatahara Balya Keshya sukrala</i>	<i>Vatahara</i>

Method of preparation

40 *pala* (1920 gm) of *Urithookki (ishwari)* is made into *kwatha* (decoction) with 40 *idangazhi* (30.72 litre) of water and reduced to 1/4th the quantity. To this *kwatha* 4 *naazhi* (768ml) of *tila thaila* (sesamum oil) is added and heated in *mruduvahni* (low flame). For *kalka* (paste), root of the same plant is added, and *thaila* is prepared. It is said that by this

administration all types of *vishavikara* will be pacified at once [11].

Anupana

Tambula patra (Betel leaf)

Indication

All types of poisoning.

This practice still persists in some traditional toxicologist's families of Kerala. The method of administration is same as *Vishahari lehya*.

As soon as a snake bite patient arrives, apply 2-3 drops of this oil in a betel leaf and the patient is asked to chew it. He is asked to narrate the taste which he experiences. The normal taste of *Urithookki taila* is *tiktha* (bitter). If the patient feels sweet taste it indicates that he will die soon. If *Katu rasa* (pungent taste) is felt, person is bitten by *Darvikara sarpa* (Cobra). If *Kashaya rasa* (astringent taste) is perceived, he is bitten by *Mandali sarpa* (viper). If *Amla rasa* (sour taste) is perceived he is bitten by *Raajila sarpa* (Krait) [12].

Diagnosis of Garavisha

A Poison produced by combination of multiple poisons (*Samyogaja visha*) is called *Gara Visha*. It is not instantly lethal owing to the delayed digestability of this Visha. According to Acharya Sushruta and Acharya Vagbhata, a poison that is created from animal waste (excreta), a mixture of drugs or *bhasmas* with opposing qualities, or a poison with low potency can all be categorised as *Garavisha*. It is frequently administered without the person's knowledge, therefore therapy can be challenging when symptoms doesn't manifest right-away or even develop slowly [13].

Garasthana nirnaya pareeksha

Leaves of *Neelini* (*Indigofera tinctoria*) should be triturated well in milk and this paste

is smeared all over abdomen. The area where the paste does not get dried up even after long time should be considered as the position of *gara visha* [14].

DISCUSSION

Detection of poison plays an important role in it's treatment. After ingestion of different types of poisons like *Sthavaravisha*, *Jangamavisha* and many other types of poisons, different sign and symptoms develop in humans, as well as birds and animals. For detection of different types of poisons many ancient methods and modern methods are described in Ayurveda texts and modern literature respectively. *Vishaharilehya*, *urithookkithailam*, *neelinyadhi yoga* are some used for the diagnosis of poison.

Mode of action of vishaharilehya and urithookkithailam

When visha enters the body there will be *dosha prakopa* in the body. In *Prayoga samuchaya pradhama paricchedam*, It is explained that how visha travels in the body. *Charma, Rakta, Mamsa, Medas, Asthi, Majja, Shukra* are the seven Dhatus (instead of *rasa* here *charma* is mentioned) which are present in sequence in all living beings. So *Vaidya* can detect the *Visha* when it reaches each dhatu analyzing different lakshanas. In some cases, *Visha* may not indicate its presence in the

body but some *Vishesha yogas* will help the *Vaidya* in this situation [15].

- *Madhurarasa* will be perceived in *RajilaVisha* due to kapha vitiation in rajila bite
- *Amla rasa* will be perceived in *MandaliVisha* due to Pitta vitiation.
- *Katu rasa* will be perceived in *DarveekaraVisha* due to Vata vitiation.
- *Thikta rasa* will be perceived in *AlpaVisha* (Slight vitiation of Doshas) [16]

In *urithooki thaila*, the main ingredient *Iswari* (*Aristolochia indica*) is *kashaya rasa* (astringent) *pradhana*, *laghuruksha* quality and *vishahara* (antidote) property. The main chemical constituent of *Iswari* is aristolochic acid. When the drug containing aristolochic acid is orally ingested it will be absorbed through the GIT into the blood stream and distributed throughout the body [17]. *Tila taila* (sesamum oil) has properties like *sookshma*, *vikasi*, *vyavayi*, *vishada*, and *sara* [18]. This will help the drug to move through minute channels of the body and reach the destination. Eugenol one of the principal constituent of betle leaf, has also been shown to possess anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, analgesic, anti-oxidant, antiviral and anticancer activity. Other identified activities

are anti-ulcerogenic potential with special effect on the central nervous system (CNS) encompassing control on seizure, Parkinson's disease, and antidepressant effects. Hydroxychavicol is the most important phenolic compound in betle leaf which is reported to possess anticarcinogenic, antinitrosation, antimutagenic effects. Besides this, it has a considerable potency to act as an anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antibacterial, anti-platelet and antithrombotic without impairing haemostatic function [19]. *Parada*(mercury) in *Vishaharilehya* has soothing effect on the human system and it corrects the imbalance of three Doshas (*Tridoshaghna*). It also has *rasayana* and *yogavahi* property. It serves to heighten the medicinal properties of other with which it is compounded [20].

For the diagnosis of *garavisha*, *neelinyadi yoga* is used. *Neelini*(*Indigofera tinctoria*) has anti oxidant and anti-toxic property [21]. The main symptom of *garavisha* is *agnimandhya*. Hence if *garavisha* is present, the paste of *neelinyadi* do not dry over that part, due to lack of *pitha dosha*.

CONCLUSION

Ayurvedic diagnosis of snake bite is totally different from other systems of medicine. It mainly focuses on the state of *dosha* which is caused by the *Visha*. The most difficult task

for a *Vishavaidya* is to fix the amount of envenomation that has taken place in the patient's body. Before starting the treatment, first a *vishavaidhya* has to make a proper diagnosis. This makes the treatment effective. *Vishahaarileha*, *urithookkithailam*, *neelinyadi yoga* etc. are some of the magical remedies which help Vaidya in this situation. If a *sarpa dashtarogi* approaches a *vaidhya*, the *yogas* like *vishaharilehya* and *urithookkithaila* can be administered, where further progression of treatment depends on the taste perceived by the patient. *Neelinyadi yoga* also can be used for the confirmation of *garavisha* based on the area of drying when pasted over abdomen. More researches need to be conducted in this area to validate the utility of these *agadayogas*.

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