VISHAGHNA PROPERTY OF MANJISHTHA (Rubia cordifolia Linn): A CRITICAL REVIEW

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Abstract: Background: Poisoning is the major health problem which is increasing worldwide including India due to utilization of chemical prepared medicine, heavy industrialization, environmental toxicity, aquatic toxicity. In Ayurveda the description of poisoning and its management including antidotes is available in detail. Aims & Object: Critical review of Vishaghna properties of Manjishtha along with its elaboration, evaluation and discussion. Material and Method: The text book of Ayurveda along with its respective commentaries has been review thoroughly. The text book of modern medicine and index medical journal has been also referred to review the material concern this topic. Result & Discussion: Acharya Charaka described ten antitoxic herbs including Manjishtha in Vishaghna mahakashaya. 37 antitoxic composition of Manjishtha having antitoxic efficacy has been found in Vrahatrayi, Laghutrayi. Manjishtha will be help to destroy the poison by arresting the Visha vegas and detoxification of blood by its properties like Guru Guna and Tikta, Kashaya, Madhura Rasa. Conclusion: Manjishtha and its Ayurvedic kalpas are useful as a antidote in the treatment of poisoning.

Keywords: Antidote. Manjishtha, Prativisha, Poison, Rubia cordifolia Linn, Visha,

Introduction

Poison is a substance (solid, liquid or gaseous) which if introduced in the living body or brought into contact with any part thereof will produce ill-health or death by its constitutional or local effects or both. The toxic exposure may be acute, chronic and cumulative are increasing day by day due to manufactures and utilization of number of chemicals in various form including medicine, increased industrialization and increased eco toxicity. According to the Centers of Disease Control (CDC), in 2008 over 41000 people died as a result of poisoning and poisoning became the leading cause of injury death for the first time since at least 1980.

The poisoning death rate nearly tripled over the past 30 years.^[2] The *visha* (poison) and its toxicity is not new to us as the reference are founds since Vedic period. *Agadtantra* is the branch of *Ashtanga Ayurveda* which is devoted for poison (*Visha*), its types, action, manifestation and management along with antidotes (*Prativisha*). This subject *Ayurvedic* toxicology also in title by *Agada* means *Prativisha* and *Tantra* means technology. In *Ayurveda* there are

so many vishaghna dravyas are described. Acharya Charaka has mentioned the Vishaghna mahakashaya having ten herbs including Manjishtha. In this article critical review of vishaghna property of Manjiahtha will be elaborate, evaluate and discussed along with scientific justification.

Aims and Objects

- 1. Critical review of *Vishaghna* properties as per *Ayurveda*.
- 2. To elaborate, evaluate and discussion of *Vishaghna* property of *Manjishtha*.

Material and Method

The text book of *Ayurveda* along with its respective commentaries has been review thoroughly. The text book of modern medicine and index medical journal has been also referred to review to material consent this topic.

Conceptual study Visha (Poison) and its properties

Acharya Charaka stated that the substance which causes toxicity by producing

Vishada (depression) is called as *Visha*.^[3] As per modern medicine, a poison is a substance which, when administered, inhaled or ingested, is capable of acting deleteriously on the human body.^[4]

Acharya Susruta has mentioned the ten properties of Visha, these are- Ruksha (rough), Ushna (hot), Tikshna (irritant), Sukshma (minute), Aashu (quick-acting), Vyavayi (quickly absorbed), Vikashi (slackening), Vishada (nonslimy), Laghu (light) and Apaki (indigestible).^[5] Acharva Charaka has also mentioned ten properties of Visha. These properties are similar to Susruta except Apaki (indigestible). Instead of Apaki he has mentioned Anirdeshya Rasa (indistinct taste).[6] Acharya Sarngadhara has mentioned the eight properties of Visha, these are- Vyavayi (quickly absorbed), Vikashi (slackening), Sukshma (minute), chedi (cuts / breaks), Madavaha (ruttishness), Agneya (hot), Jivitahar (destroy life), Yogavahi (promoting).[7]

Mode of action of Visha

Visha causes roughness due to aggravation of Vata, hotness due to aggravation of Pitta along with blood, irritant effects the mind and disjoins the vital spots, due to minuteness it enters into body and damages the organs of the body, quick-acting nature of poison kills instantaneously, due to Vyavayi property it is absorbed and circulated all over the body, Vikasi property damages Doshas, Dhatus and Malas, non-sliminess due to does not stick anywhere, due to lightness property difficult to treat, not digested due to difficult to eliminate and as such troubles for long. [8]

Action of poison

As per modern medical science the poison enacted on local site, systemic or both. It also enacted as a corrosive, irritant, neurotic, asphyxiants, miscellaneous.^[9,10]

Prativisha (Antidote)

Atharvaveda mentioned Prativisha in the form of Tabuva and Tastu the medicinal herbs which destroy the effect of snake poison. [11] Acharya Chakrapani stated in Ayurveda Dipika that the substance by which poison will be destroy

or used to counteract the poison is called as *Prativisha*.^[12,13] *Acharya Dalhana* stated in *Nibandha Sangraha* that the substance by which poison will be disappeared and the medicine which will be used for poison is called *Agada*.^[14,15] Antidotes are remedies which counteract or neutralize the effect of poison without causing appreciable harm to the body.^[16]

Types of antidote

On the basis of mechanism of action of antidotes, these are classified into mechanical, chemical, physiological.^[17]

Mechanism of action of antidotes

The physiological antidotes can be act by forming a non-toxic complex, by metabolic conversion, by prevention of toxic metabolite formation, by changing the physio-chemical nature of toxicant and repairing a defect or enhancing a function that corrects the effects of poison.^[18]

Mode of action Vishaghna Dravyas

Acharya Charaka stated that some drugs act by virtue of their own nature (Dravya prabhava), some other drugs by virtue of their qualities (Guna prabhava), and some drugs by virtue of their nature as well as qualities (Dravya Guna prabhava).[19] Some antidotes are act on poison by their properties like guru, shita, snigdha, manda, pichchila, sandra, mradu, sthira, shlakshna, which will be acted by increases ojas, strengthens heart, protects the dhatus, alleviate Vata Pitta, arrest the Vishavegas (spread of poison in the *Dhatus*), detoxify blood. Some antidotes are act on poison by their Rasa like Madhura Rasa causes increases Ojas Dhatus, strengthens the heart and alleviates Vata - Pitta, Tikta Rasa is the main Rasa which alleviate Pitta Dosha and Kashaya Rasa causes arrest the Vishavegas (spread of poison in the Dhatus). Some antidotes are act on poison by their Vipaka like Madhura Vipaka alleviate Pitta Dosha, strengthens Dhatus and Ojas. Some antidotes are act on poison by their Virya like Shita Virva causes increase Oja and Dhatus, alleviate Vata - Pitta Doshas, and arrest the spread of poison. Some antidotes are act on poison by their *Prabhava* like antitoxic effects.^[20]

Vishaghna Mahakashaya

Acharya Charak include ten herbs in Vishaghna Mahakashaya has follow- Haridra (Curcuma longa Linn.), Manjishtha (Rubia cordifolia Linn.), Suvaha (Operculina turpethum), Sukshma Ela (Elettaria cardamomum), Palindi (Leucas cephalotes), Chandana (Santalum album Linn.), Kataka (Strychnos potatorum Linn.), Shirisha (Albizzia lebbeck Benth.), Sinduvara (Vitex nigundo Linn.), Shleshmataka (Cordia dichotoma Forst. f.). [21]

Manjishtha has Guru Guna and Shleshmataka has Snigdha, Guru, Pichchila Gunas and Snigdha, Guru, Pichchila Gunas increases ojas, strengthens heart, protects the dhatus, alleviate Vata Pitta, arrest the Visha vegas (spread of poison in the Dhatus), detoxify blood. Manjishtha, Sukshma Ela, Chandana, Kataka, Shirisha has Madhura Rasa and Madhura Rasa increases Ojas Dhatus, strengthens the heart and alleviates Vata – Pitta. Haridra, Manjishtha, Suvaha, Palindi, Chandana, Kataka, Shirisha, Sinduvara,

Table 1. Properties of Vishaghna Dravyas (Sharma P.V., Dravyaguna vijnana, 2005)

Sr. No.	Dravya name	Guna	Rasa	Vipaka	Virya
1.	Haridra ^[22]	Ruksha, Laghu	Tikta, Katu	Katu	Ushna
2.	Manjishtha ^[23]	Guru, Ruksha	Tikta, Kashaya, Madhura	Katu	Ushna
3.	Suvaha ^[24]	Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna	Tikta, Katu	Katu	Ushna
4.	Sukshma Ela [25]	Laghu , Ruksha	Katu, Madhura	Madhura	Shita
5.	Palindi [26]	Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna	Tikta, Katu	Katu	Ushna
6.	Chandana [27]	Laghu, Ruksha	Tikta, Madhura	Katu	Shita
7.	Kataka ^[28]	Laghu, Vishada	Madhura, Kashaya, Tikta	Madhura	Shita
8.	Shirisha [29]	Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna	Kashaya, Tikta, Madhura	Katu	Ushna
9.	Sinduvara [30]	Laghu, Ruksha	Katu, Tikta	Katu	Ushna
10.	Shleshmataka [31]	Snigdha, Guru, Pichchila	Kashaya, Tikta	Katu	Shita

Table 2 - Physical properties of Manjishtha (Rubia cordifolia Linn) as per various Nighantu

Nighantu	Guna	Rasa	Veerya
Bhav Prakash Nighantu ^[34]	Guru	Madhura, Tikta, Kashaya	Ushna
Raj Nighantu ^[36]	Guru	Madhura, Kashaya	Ushna
Kaiyadeva Nighantuh ^[37]	Guru	Kashaya, Tikta, Madhura	Ushna
Gunaratnamala ^[38]	Guru	Madhura, Tikta Kashaya	Ushna
Dhanvantari Nighantu ^[39]	Guru	Madhura, Kashaya	Ushna
Priya Nighantu ^[40]	-	Tikta, Kashaya	Ushna

Shleshmataka has Tikta Rasa and Tikta Rasa is the main Rasa which alleviate Pitta Dosha. Manjishtha, Kataka, Shirisha, Shleshmataka has Kashaya Rasa and Kashaya Rasa arrest the Vishavegas (spread of poison in the Dhatus). Sukshma Ela, Kataka has Madhura Vipaka and Madhura Vipaka alleviates Pitta Dosha and Strengthens Dhatus and Ojas. Sukshma Ela, Chandana, Kataka, Shleshmataka has Shita Virya and Shita Virya increase Oja and Dhatus, alleviates Vata — Pitta Doshas and arrests the

spread of poison. Haridra, Shleshmataka has Vishaghna Prabhava.

Properties of Manjishtha

The root is sweet, bitter, acrid; heating, alexiteric, anti dysenteric, antipyretic, analgesic, anthelmintic; improves the voice and the complexion, cure 'Kapha', inflammations, diseases of uterus, the vagina, the eye, the ear, the blood, cures leucoderma, erysipelas, ulcers, urinary discharges, jaundice, piles. **The leaves** are sweet and oleaginous, increase appetite, cure 'Vata' and

Karma	B.P.N Hritakyadi varga/190-191 ^[34]	M. D Vividh- aushadhi varge ^[35]	Raj.N Pipalyadi varga: 194 ^[36]	Kaiy.N Aushadhivarga/ 1426-1427 ^[37]	Grm Haritakyadi varga ^[38]	Dha.N Guduch yadi varga/ 19 ^[39]	Pri.N Pipalyadi varga/ 76 ^[40]
Vishhar	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
Shleshmahar	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
Varnya	+	+	-	-	+	-	+
Svarya	+	-	-	-	+	-	-

Table 3. Therapeutic action of Manjishtha (Rubia cordifolia Linn) as per Ayurveda

B.P.N. = Bhavprakash Nighantu; M. D. = Madhava Dravyagunah; Raj.N. = Raj Nighantu; Kaiy.N. = Kaiyadeva Nighantuh; Grm. = Gunaratnamala; Dha.N. = Dhanvantari Nighantu; Pri.N. = Priya Nighantu

biliousness. **The fruit** cures diseases of the spleen.^[32]

Pharmacological activities

Anti-oxidant, Anti-inflammatory, Antimicrobial, Anti-malignant, Ca-channel, blocking activity, Anti-convulsant and behavioral activity, Anti-platelet aggregation activity, Antibacterial, Haemostatic, Anti-tumor, Antiviral^[33]

Almost all the Nighantu has mentioned the Vishhar and Shleshmahar properties of Manjishtha except Madhava Dravyaguna. Manjishtha act as Varnya as per Bhavaprakash Nighantu, Madhava Dravyaguna, Gunaratnamala, Priya Nighantu and Manjishtha act as Svarya as per Bhavaprakash Nighantu, and Gunaratnamala. (SeeTable 3)

Manjishtha are indicated in treatment of Vrana and Prameha as per almost Nighantukar except Madhava Dravyaguna. It is also indicated for Kushtha and Visarpa as per all the Nighantukar except Raj Nighantu and Dhanvantari Nighantu. It is also indicated for Akshiroga as per all the Nighantukar except Madhava Dravyaguna and Priya Nighantu. It

is also indicated for *Shoth* as per all the *Nighantukar* except *Raj Nighantu*, *Dhanvantari Nighantu* and *Priya Nighantu*. It is also indicated for *Raktatisar*, *Karnaroga* and *yoniroga* by *Bhavaprakasha Nighantu*, *Kaiydeva Nighantu* and *Gunaratnamala*. Only *Raj Nighantu* has mentioned the indication of *Manjishtha* in *Jwara* and *Kaiydeva Nighantu* has mentioned the *Manjishtha* for *Arsha*. (SeeTable 4

All the above *Ayurvedic Kalpa* mentioned having *Manjishtha* is chief ingredient along with other medicinal herbs. Though these kalpa having different *rogadhikara* and scattered through *Vrahatrayi*, *Laghutrayi* and *Yoga Ratnakara* but common things as that *Visha* is one of indications. (See Table 5)

Discussion

The toxin and toxicity of poison and its antidotes has been found since *Vedic* period. There are so many specific, nonspecific antidotes has described in *Vrahatrayi*, *Laghutrayi*. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned the *Vishaghna gana* one of the *Mahakashaya* as an antidotes including *Manjishtha*. Almost all the *Nighantus* has

Table 4	1. The	raneutic	utilization	of Man	iishtha	(Ruhia	cordifol	ia Linn	as ner Av	urveda
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Karma	B.P.N Hritakyadi varga/190- 191 ^[34]	M. D Vividh- aushadhi varge ^[35]	Raj.N Pipalyadi varga: 194 ^[36]	Kaiy.N Aushadhi varga/1426- 1427 ^[37]	Grm Haritakyadi varga ^[38]	Dha.N Guduchyadi varga/ 19 ^[39]	Pri.N Pipalyadi varga/ 76 ^[40]
Vrana	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
Prameha	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
Kushtha	+	+	-	+	+	-	+
Visarpa	+	+	-	+	+	-	+
Akshiroga	+	-	+	+	+	+	-
Shoth	+	+	-	+	+	-	-
Raktatisar	+	-	-	+	+	-	-
Karnaroga	+	-	-	+	+	-	-
Yoniroga	+	-	-	+	+	-	-
Jwara	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Arsha	-	-	-	+	-	-	-

B.P.N. = Bhavprakash Nighantu; **M. D.** = Madhava Dravyagunah; **Raj.N.** = Raj Nighantu; **Kaiy.N.** = Kaiyadeva Nighantuh; **Grm.** = Gunaratnamala; **Dha.N.** = Dhanvantari Nighantu; **Pri.N.** = Priya Nighantu

Table 5. Vishaghna Ayurvedic preparation (Yog) of Manjishtha (Rubia cordifolia Linn)

S.N.	Ayurvedic preparation (Yog)	Indication in poison	Dose
1.	Kalyanak ghrit [41]	Visha chikitsa(General poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
2.	Siddharthak agad [342]	Visha chikitsa (General poison)	2 masha (2 gram)
3.	Rajniadi churna ^[43]	Shashti vish veg chikitsa (inanimate poison)	1 karsha (12 gram)
4.	Mahagandhhasti agad ^[44]	Vish chikitsa (General poison)	2 masha (2 gram)
5.	Pippalyadi pishti ^[45]	Pakvashyagat vish chikitsa (intestinal poison)	1 karsha (12 gram)
6.	Manjishthadi pan ^[46]	Mandli sarp dashta chikitsa (snake poison)	2 masha (2 gram)
7.	Mahagad ^[47]	Vish vegahar chikitsa (animate poison)	2 masha (2 gram)
8.	Rishabhagad ^[48]	Sarpa-keeta vish chikitsa (snake-insect poison)	2 masha (2 gram)
9.	Ksharagad ^[49]	Vish chikitsa (General poison)	2 masha (2 gram)
10.	Kalyanak sarpi ^[50]	Vish chikitsa (General poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
11.	Snuka kshiradi lehya ^[51]	Ajit mushak dashta chikitsa (rat poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
12.	Priyangvadi Lepa ^[52]	Luta visha chikitsa (spider poison)	Tribhaga angula pramana (0.62cm)
13.	Kalyanak ghrit [53]	Visha chikitsa (General poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
14.	Siddharthak ghrit ^[54]	Visha chikitsa (General poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
15.	Siddharthak agad [55]	Vishonmad chikitsa (insanity due to poison)	2 masha (2 gram)
16.	Kalyanak ghrit [56]	Visha chikitsa (General poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
17.	Manjishthadi churnapan [57]	Krishna sarpa dashta chikitsa (snake poison)	2 masha (2 gram)
18.	Kashmaryadi pan ^[58]	Mandali sarpa dashta chikitsa (snake poison)	2 masha (2 gram)
19.	Pathyadi lepa ^[59]	Vrashchika dansha chikitsa (scorpion poison)	Tribhaga angula pramana (0.62cm)
20.	Champak agad [60]	Luta visha chikitsa (spider poison)	2 masha (2 gram)
21.	Agardhumadi lepa ^[61]	Mushak vish chikitsa (rat poison)	Tribhaga angula pramana (0.62cm)
22.	Paniya Kalyanaka ghrta [62]	Visha chikitsa (general poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
23.	Kasisa ghrta ^[63]	Luta visha chikitsa (spider poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
24.	Jatyadi taila ^[64]	Vrana chikitsa (poisonous wound)	1 Pala (48 ml)
25.	Mahacaitasa ghrta ^[65]	Visha chikitsa (general poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
26.	Jatyadi taila ^[66]	Visha vrana chikitsa (poisonous wound)	1 Pala (48 ml)
27.	Mrtyupasachedi ghrta ^[67]	Visha chikitsa (general poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
28.	Rajaniyugmadi lepa ^[68]	Luta vish chikitsa (spider poison)	Tribhaga angula pramana (0.62cm)
29.	Siddharthakadi yoga ^[69]	Vishonmada chikitsa (insanity due to poison)	1 karsha (12 gram)
30.	Kalyanaka ghrta ^[70]	Visha chikitsa (general poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
31.	Jatyadi taila ^[71]	Visha vrana & keet dashta chikitsa (PW & IP)*	1 Pala (48 ml)
32.	Langali ghrta ^[72]	Keet-Luta visha (insec-spider & gen. poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
33.	Vrahatsinduradhya taila ^[73]	Visha chikitsa (general poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
34.	Visha taila ^[74]	Keet-Luta visha (insec-spider & general poison)	1 Pala (48 ml)
1 * * 1	a 1 11 1. [75]	Aakhu visha chikitsa (rat poison)	1 karsha (12 gram)
35.	Grahadhumadi yoga ^[75]	rania visia emitisa (rat person)	
	Rajanidvayadi lepa ^[76]	Luta visha chikitsa (spider poison)	Tribhaga angula pramana (0.62cm)

^{*} poisonous wound &insect poison (PW & IP)

mentioned the *Vishahar* property of *Manjishtha* except *Madhava Dravyaguna*. *Manjishtha* having guru guna and madhura rasa which will be help to strengthen the dhatus, oja and vital organ (heart) and it alleviates *Vata – Pitta*, arrest the *Vishavegas*. The *Tikta Rasa* of *Manjishtha* also alleviates *Pitta Dosha* and *Kashaya rasa* of *Manjishtha* help to arrest the *Vishavegas*. Acharya Charak has also mention that the Madhura rasa and Tikta rasa has the capacity to counteract the poisons.^[78] There are almost 37 *yogas* of *Manjishtha* has found as an indication of poison (*Visha*) along with other utilization and all there 37 *yogas* having *Manjishtha* is a chief ingredient.

Conclusion

Ayurveda has also known the importance of antidotes to counteract the poisons. *Manjishtha* is most important antidotes as its description as a *Vishaghna* property is found almost all the text book of *Ayurveda* including *Vrahatrayi*, *Laghutrayi*.

Key Message:

Manjishtha is an important herb to prevent or treats the most of the diseases. It is specially described as a vishaghna (antitoxic) drug as it having vishhara property. Acharya Charaka and most of the Nighantukara has described about the vishaghna property of Manjishtha. The acute, sub acute or chronic toxicity are increasing day by day and the antidote for most of poison has not known till. In this condition here is time to known and re evaluate the efficacy of Manjishtha.

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