



A REVIEW ON KUSHTHAGHNA MAHAKASHAYA

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ABSTRACT

Skin diseases are being regarded as a major health issue as it leads to discomfort and significant morbidity. In *Ayurveda*, skin diseases have been comprehended under the heading of *Kushtha*. *Kushtha* is further classified as *Mahakushtha* and *Kshudrakushtha*. In *Charaka Samhita*, *Acharya Charaka* has described a group of ten medicines for skin diseases under *Kushthaghna mahakashaya*. In the *Kushthaghna Mahakashyaya*, the majority of the drugs were noted to have *Rasayana* (rejuvenation) properties. So, these drugs help to lessen the aid in the management of chronic skin problems. In this paper, drugs of *Kushthaghna Mahakashaya* have been reviewed on scientific lines through published work and it is observed that the drugs have various related activity.

Keywords: *Kushthaghna Mahakashaya*, *Kushtha*, *Doshas*, *Dushyas*.

INTRODUCTION

The skin, the largest and most metabolically active organ in the body, serves as a barrier against mechanical, thermal, and physical injury as well as harmful

substances. It lessens the negative effects of UV radiation and stops the body's moisture from evaporating. It also produces vitamin D and acts as a friction sur-

face for gripping.¹ In addition to these functions, the depiction of the skin also refers to the notion of health, well-being, beauty and youth, which are associated with a person's self-esteem and mental health. Skin disease patients often experience emotional and social betrayal in society. In Ayurvedic classics, all skin disorders come under the name of *Kushtha* (skin diseases). The word *Kushtha* (skin diseases) is derived from the word *Kush-Katana*,² which means deformity of the skin, variation in skin color and loss of integrity of the skin. *Acharya Charaka* has described fifty *Mahakashyas* also known as *Dashemanis*, in the fourth chapter of the *Sutrasthan* of *Charaka Samhita*.

Kushthaghna Mahakasha is one of them which contains a group of ten drugs which are used in *Kushtha Roga*.³ The main aim of this article is to study the scientific basis of *Kushthaghna Mahakashaya* in skin diseases and to study the properties and therapeutics of drugs of *Kushthaghna Mahakashaya*.

Constituent's Herbs of *Mahakashaya*:

Literatures related to *Kushthaghna Mahakasha* were collected from classical Ayurvedic literatures, textbooks and from various scientific journals. The available commentaries of Ayurvedic *Samhitas* have also referred to collect relevant matter.

Table no. 1 Ingredients of *Kushthaghna Mahakashaya*⁴⁻¹³

| S. No | Classical name | Local/Hindi name | Botanical Name | Family | Part used. |
|-------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| 01. | <i>Khadir</i> | <i>Katha</i> | <i>Acacia catechu</i> Willd. | Mimosoidaeae | Root, Heartwood, Flowers |
| 02. | <i>Abhaya</i> | <i>Hare</i> | <i>Terminalia chebula</i> Retz. | Combretaceae | Fruit |
| 03. | <i>Amalka</i> | <i>Amla</i> | <i>Embellica officinalis</i> Gaertn. | Euphorbiaceae | Fruit, Seeds |
| 04. | <i>Haridra</i> | <i>Haldi</i> | <i>Curcuma longa</i> Linn. | Zingiberaceae | Rhizome |
| 05. | <i>Arushkara</i> | <i>Bhallatak</i> | <i>Semecarpus anacardium</i> Linn. | Anacardaceae | Nuts, Oil, Flowers |
| 06. | <i>Saptaparna</i> | <i>Chitvan</i> | <i>Alstonia scholaris</i> R.Br. | Apocynaceae | Bark, Latex, Flower |
| 07. | <i>Aaragwadha</i> | <i>Amaltasa</i> | <i>Casia fistula</i> Linn. | Fabaceae | Fruit-Pulp, Rootbark, leaves |
| 08. | <i>Karvira</i> | <i>Kaner</i> | <i>Nerium indicum</i> Mill. | Apocynaceae | Leaves, Root |
| 09. | <i>Vidanga</i> | <i>Vaividanga</i> | <i>Embelia ribes</i> Burm.f. | Myrsinaceae | Fruit, root |
| 10. | <i>Jatipravala</i> | <i>Chameli</i> | <i>Jasminum officinale</i> Linn. | Oleaceae | Leaves, Flower, Root |

Table No. 2 Pharmacodynamic properties of *Kushthaghna Mahakashaya* ingredients

| S. No | Ingredients | Rasa | Guna | Veerya | Vipaka | Doshagnata |
|-------|-----------------|--|----------------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| 01. | <i>Khadira</i> | <i>Tikta, Kashaya</i> | <i>Laghu, Ruksha</i> | <i>Sheeta</i> | <i>Katu</i> | <i>Kapha Pitta Shamak Prabhav-Kushthaghna</i> |
| 02. | <i>Haritaki</i> | <i>Pancha Rasa Alavana, Kashaya Ras Pradhana</i> | <i>Laghu, Ruksha</i> | <i>Ushna</i> | <i>Madhur</i> | <i>Tridhoshara</i> |
| 03. | <i>Aamlaki</i> | <i>Pancha Rasa Alavana, Amla Ras Pradhana</i> | <i>Guru, Ruksya</i> | <i>Sheeta</i> | <i>Madhur</i> | <i>Tridhoshara</i> |
| 04. | <i>Haridra</i> | <i>Tikta, Katu</i> | <i>Ruksha</i> | <i>Ushna</i> | <i>Katu</i> | <i>Kaphavat Shamak</i> |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| 05. | <i>Bhallatak</i> | <i>Katu, Tikta, Kashaya</i> | <i>Laghu, Tikshna, Snigdha</i> | <i>Ushana</i> | <i>Madhur</i> | <i>KaphaVata Shamaka</i> |
| 06. | <i>Saptaparna</i> | <i>Kashaya, Tikta</i> | <i>Snigdha, Sara</i> | <i>Ushna</i> | <i>Katu</i> | <i>Kaphavata Shamak</i> |
| 07. | <i>Aaragwadha</i> | <i>Madhur, Tikta</i> | <i>Guru</i> | <i>Ushna</i> | <i>Madhur</i> | <i>VataPitta Shamak</i> |
| 08. | <i>Karweer</i> | <i>Katu, Tikta, Kashaya</i> | <i>Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna</i> | <i>Ushna</i> | <i>Katu</i> | <i>KaphaVata Shamak</i> |
| 09. | <i>Vidanga</i> | <i>Katu, Tikta</i> | <i>Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna</i> | <i>Ushna</i> | <i>Katu</i> | <i>Kaphavaat Shamak Prabhava: Krimighna</i> |
| 10. | <i>Jaati</i> | <i>Tikta, Kashaya</i> | <i>Laghu, Mridu, Snigdha</i> | <i>Ushna</i> | <i>Katu</i> | <i>Tridosha Shamak</i> |

Table no. 3 Medicinal Properties of *Kushthagfina Mahakashaya* Ingredients as per Ayurvedic Literature:

| Drug | Uses | Pharmacological Properties |
|-------------------|---|--|
| <i>Khadir</i> | Skin disease (<i>Agrya Prakarna, Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana 25/40</i>), Vitiligo (<i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 7/166</i>), Pox (<i>Vrinda Madhav 56/30</i>), <i>Rasayana (Ashtangahridaya Uttartantra 39/153)</i> , Filaria (<i>Gada Nigraha 4/2/42</i>), Intrinsic haemorrhage (<i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 4/70</i>) | Antioxidant ¹⁴ Antidiabetic ¹⁵ Antihypertensive ¹⁶ Antimicrobial ¹⁷ Hepatoprotective ¹⁸ Wound healing ¹⁹ Immunomodulatory ²⁰ . |
| <i>Abhaya</i> | <i>Vata-kapha</i> disorder (<i>Ashtangahridaya Uttartantra 40/48</i>), Piles (<i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 14/67</i>), intrinsic haemorrhage (<i>Gada Nigraha 2/8/63</i>), Oedema (<i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 12/27</i>), Skin disease (<i>Ashtangahridaya Chikitsasthana 19/47</i> and <i>Vrinda Madhav 51/42</i>) | Antioxidant ²¹ Wound healing ²² Antidiabetic ²³ Hypolipidemic ²⁴ Antibacterial ²⁵ Antifungal ²⁶ Anti-inflammatory ²⁷ Immunomodulatory ²⁸ Purgative ²⁹ Hepatoprotective ³⁰ Anticarcinogenic ³¹ |
| <i>Amalaka</i> | Piles (<i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 14/148-52</i>), Worms (<i>Sushruta Samhita Uttartantra 54/31</i>), Anaemia (<i>Sushruta Samhita Uttartantra 44/8</i>), Skin disease (<i>Rajamartanda 8/1</i>), Vitiligo (<i>Vrinda Madhav 51/34</i>), Pox (<i>Bhaav Prakash. Chikitsasthana 60/50</i>), <i>Vyanga (Ashtangahridaya Uttartantra 37/24)</i> , <i>Rasayana (Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 1/2/8)</i> | Antioxidant ³² Antidiabetic ³³ Immunomodulatory ³⁴ Adoptogenic ³⁵ Hypolipidemic ³⁶ Protective role for skin ³⁷ Hepatoprotective ³⁸ Chemoprotective role ³⁹ Antivenom effect ⁴⁰ |
| <i>Haldi</i> | Skin disease (<i>Sushruta Samhita Chikitsasthana 9/45</i>), Pox (<i>Chakrapani Dutta 54/9</i>), Erysipelas (<i>Vrinda Madhav 57/97</i>) | Anti-inflammatory ⁴¹⁻⁴² Immunomodulatory ⁴³ Hepatoprotective ⁴⁴ Antimicrobial ⁴⁵ Antiallergic ⁴⁶ Anti-carcinogenic ⁴⁷ Protective role in skin diseases ⁴⁸ |
| <i>Arushkara</i> | <i>Kushtha (Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 7/82</i> and <i>Sushruta Samhita Chikitsasthana 9/6</i>), Vitiligo (<i>Ashtangahridaya Chikitsasthana 20/11</i>), Piles (<i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 14/70</i>), <i>Rasayana (Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 1/2/13-19)</i> , Alopecia (<i>Ashtangahridaya Uttartantra 28/30</i>) | Immunomodulatory ⁴⁹ Anti-inflammatory ⁵⁰ Antimicrobial ⁵¹ Anticarcinogenic ⁵² |
| <i>Saptaparni</i> | Bronchial asthma (<i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 17/114</i>), <i>Prameha (Sushruta Samhita Chikitsasthana 11/9)</i> , Skin disease (<i>Charaka Samhita. Chikitsasthana 7/97-99</i>), Caries (<i>Ashtangahridaya Uttartantra.22/20</i>) | Antioxidant ⁵³ Immunomodulatory ⁵⁴ Antimicrobial ⁵⁵ Wound healing ⁵⁶ Anticarcinogenic ⁵⁷ Hepatoprotective ⁵⁸ |

| | | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| <i>Aaragvadha</i> | Fever (<i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana.3/232</i>), Jaundice (<i>Ashtangahridaya Chikitsasthana 16/41</i>), <i>Kushtha</i> (<i>Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana 3/17</i> and <i>Ashtangahridaya Chikitsasthana 19/13</i>), Wounds (<i>Sushruta Samhita Chikitsasthana 8/30</i>), Erysipelas (<i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 21/89-92</i>) | Laxative ⁵⁹ Hypoglycaemic ⁶⁰ Anti-inflammatory ⁶¹ Wound healing ⁶² Antimicrobial ⁶³ . |
| <i>Karvir</i> | Skin disease (<i>Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana.3/17</i> , <i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 7/97-99</i> and <i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 7/105-7</i>), <i>Sidhma</i> (<i>Vrinda Madhav 51/127</i>), <i>Kitibha</i> (<i>Vrinda Madhav 51/127</i>), Baldness (<i>Ashtangahridaya Uttartantra 24/29</i>), Eczema (<i>Chakrapani Dutta 50/49</i>), <i>Upadamsa</i> (<i>Sushruta Samhita Chikitsasthana 19/39</i>) | Antioxidant ⁶⁴ Antiulcer ⁶⁵ Antibacterial ⁶⁶ Anti-inflammatory ⁶⁷ Analgesic ⁶⁸ |
| <i>Vidanga</i> | Skin disease (<i>Sushruta Samhita Chikitsasthana 9/52-53</i> and <i>Sharangdhar Samhita 12/33</i>), <i>Rasayana</i> (<i>Sushruta Samhita Chikitsasthana 27/7</i> and <i>Sushruta Samhita Chikitsasthana 27/8</i> and <i>Ashtangahridaya Uttartantra 39/151-52</i>) | Wound healing ⁶⁹ Anthelmintic ⁷⁰ Antimicrobial ⁷¹ |
| <i>Jatipravala</i> | Wound (<i>Sushruta Samhita Chikitsasthana 19/14</i>), Foetid ear (<i>Vrinda Madhav 59/41</i>), Stomatitis (<i>Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 26/198</i>), Freckles (<i>Gada Nigraha 3/5/149</i>) | Antibacterial ⁷² Anti-viral ⁷³ Analgesic & antispasmodic |

Table no. 4 Major Secondary metabolites of *Kushthagna Mahakashaya* Ingredients:

| Drugs | Major Secondary metabolites |
|--------------------|--|
| <i>Khadir</i> | Catechin, Catechu tannic acid |
| <i>Abhaya</i> | Tannin, Chebulagic acid, carbohydrates, gum |
| <i>Amalaka</i> | Tannin, Vit. C, fat, Carbohydrates |
| <i>Haldi</i> | Curcumin, Vit.A, Carbohydrates |
| <i>Arushkara</i> | Semecarpol, Bhilwanol |
| <i>Saptaparni</i> | Ditamine, echitamine, Echitanine |
| <i>Aaragvadha</i> | Anthraquinone, Gluten, Tannins |
| <i>Karvir</i> | Scopoletin, Scopolin, karabin, oil, wax |
| <i>Vidanga</i> | Embelin, christembine, volatile oil, tannin, Fixed oil |
| <i>Jatipravala</i> | Salicylic acid, Jasminine |

DISCUSSION

From ayurvedic literatures, it is observed that the majority of *Kushthagna Mahakashaya* medications have a bitter taste, and it is quite evident that bitter drugs are excellent blood purifier hence these drugs are beneficial in treating skin diseases. It was found that *Acacia catechu* Willd; *Curcuma longa* Linn; *Semecarpus anacardium* Linn; *Alstonia scholaris* R. Br and *Embelia ribes* Burm.f showed good anti- microbial activities and *Terminalia chebula* Retz; *Nerium indicum* Mill. *Casia fistula* Linn. and *Jasminum officinale* Linn. exhibited anti-bacterial activities. Moreover, *Casia fistula* Linn and *Terminalia chebula* Retz reported with antifungal activities. From literature it

was found that *Embellica officinalis* Gaertn and *Curcuma longa* Linn have protective role in skin care and *Acacia catechu* Willd; *Terminalia chebula* Retz; *Embellica officinalis* Gaertn; *Curcuma longa* Linn; *Semecarpus anacardium* Linn; *Alstonia scholaris* R. Br and *Embelia ribes* Burm.f have antioxidant activities.

CONCLUSION

Kushthaghna Mahakashaya contains 10 drugs. These drugs possess various medicinal properties and hence used in the treatment of various disorders especially skin disorders. These are also good sources of various biologically active phytoconstituents. These phytoconstituents are used directly as therapeutic agents as

well as raw materials for the synthesis of pharmacologically active compounds. The goal of this review is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the therapeutic, pharmacological, and medicinal uses of *Kushthaghna Mahakashaya* and its constituent drugs. As the demand for Ayurvedic goods is increasing dramatically due to its less side effects when compared to other medical systems, this collective knowledge on these medications will inspire researchers and provide a path to future examination of the pharmacological activities of these substances.

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