

A REVIEW ARTICLE ON *GANDHAKA KALPAS* IN *RASASAstra*

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ABSTRACT

Gandhaka, an important drug in *Rasasastra*, is included under the group of *Uparasa* in ancient *Ayurvedic* literatures. *Gandhaka*, owing to its varied use in mercurial processing and also due to its wide therapeutic applications holds great importance in *Rasasastra*. *Gandhaka kalpas* are unique formulations containing *gandhaka* as the main ingredient. These *kalpas* find its use from giving *roga samana* to imparting *rasayanatwa* to the body. This article throws light on the diverse formulations of *gandhaka kalpas* along with its dosage, therapeutic usage and other aspects mentioned in *Ayurvedic Rasasastra* texts.

Keywords: *Gandhaka kalpa*, *Gandhaka*, *Rasasastra*

INTRODUCTION

Gandhaka is an important drug in *Rasasastra* and is being used since ancient times by Ayurvedic practitioners. *Gandhaka* comes under the classification of *uparasa* and is next in importance to *parada*. It is considered a potent *rasayana* when purified and has a variety of therapeutic applications. *Gandhaka kalpas* are unique formulations of *gandhaka* having *ro-gasamana* as well as *rasayana* effects. There are diverse formulations of *gandhaka kalpas* and are noted for its simplicity of formulation and the wide realm of its therapeutic activities. However, an insight into these formulations has become a need of the hour for the Ayurvedic practitioners to use this more effectively and to make it as a drug of practice. This review is aimed at creating an accurate and clear understanding of *gandhaka kalpas*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A literary search on *gandhaka kalpas* was done on Ayurvedic *Rasasastra* texts. Of the reviewed literature, texts like Ayurveda Prakasha, Rasa Kamadhenu, Brihat rasarajasundara and Rasa Tarangini have been the sources for literature review. The literature from these sources was arranged in the chronological order for analysis. Each *kalpas* were identified, critically analysed and summarised based on its composition, dosage and duration along with their therapeutic effects.

LITERATURE REVIEW

GANDHAKA KALPA

Gandhaka kalpas are formulations of *gandhaka* containing *gandhaka* as the main ingredient along with other ingredients. Texts like Rasatarangini, Rasa

Kamadhenu, Ayurveda Prakasha, Brihat Rasarajasundara give references about *gandhaka kalpa*. *Gandhaka Kalpas*¹ differs in their formulations to the period of usage, thus giving various therapeutic effects. *Kalpa* is that which is capable of performance by its own potency. '*kalpate swakriyayai samartho bhavathyatra*'. *Gandhaka kalpas* are defined as formulations that are *rasayanapraya*. '*Gandhaka kalpah iti rasayanapraya: prayoga: kalpa ityuchyate*'. Based on the method of preparation, these are either made as *choorna*, *putapakwa* or *drava dravya bhavita*.

GANDHAKA KALPAS IN RASA LITERATURE

Ancient *Rasa* literature enumerates *gandhaka kalpas* differing in the number of formulations mentioned. The references regarding these are found in texts like Ayurveda Prakasha, Rasa kamadhenu, Brihat rasarajasundara and Rasatarangini. A *gandhaka kalpa* needs to be understood from its formulation, dose, duration and vehicle of administration along with the regimen to be followed:

Table 1: *Gandhaka kalpa* in Ayurveda prakasha²

Number	<i>Gandhaka kalpa</i>	Dose and duration	<i>Anupana</i>	Uses	<i>Pathya Apathya</i>
1.	<i>Shudha gandhaka, Triphala choorna, bhringaraja swarasa</i>	1 <i>sana</i> (3g)	honey	Improves vision, Longevity	
2.	<i>Shudhagandhaka</i> with Milk	1 <i>nishka</i> (3g) 1 month 6 months	Milk	Improves potency and strength Alleviates all diseases, longevity	
3.	5 <i>pala shudha gandhaka</i> done <i>bhavana</i> in 15 <i>pala bhringaraja rasa</i> , with <i>haritaki choorna</i>	2 months	Honey, Ghee	Gives youthfulness	
4.	<i>Shudha gandhaka</i> with <i>taila</i>	1 <i>karsha</i> (12g) 21 days		Cures <i>paama</i>	Advised hot water bath daily
5.	<i>Shudha gandhaka choorna</i> with <i>choorna</i> of <i>pippali</i> and <i>hareetaki</i> in equal amounts			Improves vision, complexion, potency	
6.	<i>Gandhaka druti</i> with 1 <i>valla</i> (375 mg) <i>rasa sindura</i>	3 bindu In betel leaf		<i>Pandu, kasa, kshaya, swasa, pachana, dipana</i>	
7.	<i>Gandhaka rasayana</i>	1 <i>karsha</i> (12 g)		<i>Dhatukshaya, meha, soola, 18 kushta</i>	<i>Jangala mamsa (pathya)</i>

Table 2: According to *Rasa kamadhenu*³

1.	<i>Sudha gandhaka choorna</i>	1 <i>nishka</i> (3 g)	<i>Tila taila</i>	Cures <i>pama</i>	<i>Pathya</i> -Milk, <i>Sali</i>
2.	½ <i>pala sudha gandhaka</i> with milk	7 days		<i>Kandu, pama, Vicharchika</i>	<i>Pathya</i> - <i>Ksheera</i>

Table 3: According to *Brihat Rasarajasundara*⁴

1.	5 <i>pala shudha gandhaka</i> ground in 15 <i>pala Bhringaraja rasa</i> , with <i>abhaya churna</i>	2 months	Ghee, honey	imparts youthfulness	
2.	<i>Sudha gandhaka churna</i>	1 <i>karsha</i> (12 g) 21 days	<i>Tila taila</i>	<i>Savrana pamadi</i>	<i>Pathya</i> - <i>Usnambu snana</i>

3.	<i>Sudha gandhaka churna</i> with <i>pippali, haritaki churna</i>			<i>Pushti, virya, kanti vardhaka</i>	
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Table 4: According to Rasatarangini⁵

1.	<i>Shudha gandhaka</i> ground in <i>bhringara- raja rasa</i> with <i>triphala choorna</i>	3 months	Honey, ghee	Cures chronic dis- eases, Improves vision	<i>Pathya-Shashtika</i> rice with milk, sugar; <i>Sita virya dravyas</i>
2.	<i>Shudha gandhaka, amlaki churna</i> given 7 <i>bhavana</i> each in <i>dhatri rasa</i> and <i>salmali rasa</i> .	30 months	Cow's Milk, Sugar, honey	Increase virility even in aged persons	
3.	<i>Shudha gandhaka</i>	½ <i>masha</i> (500 mg) 1 month Or 6 months	Warm milk	Increases potency (1 month) Improves vision and enhance body complexion	
4.	<i>Shudha gandhaka</i> with <i>tila taila</i>	½ <i>masha</i> (500 mg) 21 days		Cures <i>pama</i> , Enhance bodily complexion	Daily <i>sechana</i> of <i>pama</i> with hot water to be done
5.	<i>Sudha gandhaka churna</i> with <i>pippali churna</i> and <i>haritaki churna</i>	2 <i>masha</i> (2 g) for 3 months	Honey, ghee	Improves complexion, Enhance strength, potency, vision	
6.	<i>Shudha gandhaka churna</i> <i>Shoditha gandhaka</i> with <i>maricha churna, sarsapa taila</i> and <i>apamarga swarasa</i>	½ <i>masha</i> (500 mg) External application for 14 days	honey <i>Lepa</i> dried by sitting in sun and then take bath in <i>khadira, haridra yukta jala</i>	Cures <i>Kshudra kushta</i>	
7.	<i>Shudha gandhaka</i> done <i>bhavana</i> 3 times in cow's milk, then 8 times <i>bhavana</i> in each in <i>triphala kashaya, Chaturjata kashaya</i> and <i>swarasas</i> of <i>guduchi, bhringaraja, ardraka</i> . Finally add equal amount powdered sugar	1 <i>masha</i> (1g) daily 1 month use		<i>Dhatu kshaya janya roga, koshta gata roga, prameha, siroroga, sula, kushta</i>	<i>Apathya- Kshara, amla, lavana, kopa, vyavaya, dwidala</i>
8.	<i>Sudha gandhaka</i> done <i>bhavana</i> in <i>bhringaraja rasa</i> 3 times along with <i>haritaki churna</i> .	1 <i>masha</i> (1g) daily for 2 months	Honey, ghee	<i>Tarunyata</i> , increase virility	
9.	<i>Kajjali, sudha guggulu, triphala churna</i> ground in <i>eranda taila</i>	1 month		<i>Vata, pitta kapha janya rogas</i> , improves vision, strength, complexion	
10.	<i>Shudha gandhaka, triphala choorna,</i>	1 month		Improves vision and	

<i>bhringaraja chorna</i>	6 months	strength Cures <i>vali, palita</i>
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DISCUSSION

Gandhaka is *madhura rasa*, *usna virya*, *katu vipaka*, also it is *deepana*, *pachana*, *ama shoshana*. *Gandhaka* has potent *rasayana* activity; it is *garahara*, *vishahara*, *kushtahara* and *kapha vatahara*. On analysing the various *gandhaka kalpas*; *hareetaki choorna*, *pippali choorna*, *triphala* and *bhringaraja swarasa* are seen in most of the formulations. *Hareetaki* is mainly *kashaya rasa*, *madhura paka*, *deepana*, *pachana*, *vayasthapana*, *kushta vaivaranyahara* and *kapha vatahara* in nature. *Bhringaraja* is *katu tikta rasa*, *usna virya*, *katu vipaka* and *kapha vata samana*. It is *balya*, *rasayana*, *amahara* and *twachya* also. *Triphala* cure eye and skin diseases, promote wound healing, cures *kapha rakta vikaras*. *Pippali* is *vata kaphahara*, *snigdha*, *vrisya* and *madhura vipaka*.

On analysing the *gandhaka kalpas* in chronological order from the sources; in Ayurveda praksha, it is evident that these are carefully formulated for the correction of *agni* ranging from a *koshta* level to a *dhatu* level. These can also be used in the treatment of diseases from the derangement of seven *dhatu*s; from *rasa* to *shukra*.

In *Rasa kamadhenu*, the *kalpa* of *gandhaka* with *tila taila* is same as seen in Ayurveda prakasha, while the dose of *gandhaka kalpa* with milk is said as $\frac{1}{2}$ *pala* (24 g), which is higher than that in Ayurveda praksha (3 g), but the duration is less than the latter.

In *Brihat rasarajasundara*, all the three *kalpas* were identified the same as that mentioned in the earlier text Ayurveda prakasha ie, the *bhringaraja bhavitha gandhaka kalpa*, with *tila taila* and with *choorna* of *pippali* and *haritaki*. These *kalpas* are mainly aimed at acting on conditions affecting skin and also imparting complexion.

Rasa Tarangini, the 20th century text describes the *kalpas* which are seen in the earlier texts with the exception of *dhatri rasa* and *salmali rasa bhavitha gandhaka* with *amalaki choorna*. This *kalpa* has the maximum duration of administration (30 months) than all other *kalpas* seen in literature. This formulation is

specifically indicated for increasing virility, thereby acting from *rasa dhatu* to *shukra dhatu*.

Studies have proven the anti-oxidant and immunomodulatory activity of *triphala*⁶; antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activity of *pippali*⁷, sulphur is said to have an elective affinity to skin. The ingredients added in the formulation are also having *rasayana* effects along with *dosha* alleviating properties, thus accounting for the *rasayanatwa* and *roga samanatwa* of these formulations. Thus all the properties of *rasayana* ie; longevity, health, youthfulness, complexion, strength to the sense organs can be achieved through these formulations.

CONCLUSION

In the current era, promotion of health and prevention of diseases is of high significance. This can be achieved with the proper administration of *Gandhaka kalpas* which have both *roga samana* and *rasayana* effects. These are formulations which can be used in the correction of both *jataragni* and *dhatwagni*, thereby finding its use in the treatment of diseases from the vitiation of *rasa dhatu* to *shukra dhatu*. There are a number of *gandhaka kalpas* which best suit the health needs of the present day. Hence an understanding regarding the *gandhaka kalpas* and popularising its use in clinical practise by Ayurvedic practitioners is much needed. Also there is a scope for significant researches in this domain, thereby validating the efficacy of *gandhaka kalpas*.

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