

Review Article

Critical review on *Bhaishajya Kaala* (time of drug administration) in Ayurveda

Ashwini V. Junjarwad, Pavan B. Savalgi¹, Mahesh Kumar Vyas²

Reader, Department of Basic Principles, ¹Reader, Rasa Shastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, Ashwini Ayurvedic Medical College and Research Center, Tumkur, Karnataka, ²Associate Professor, Department of Basic Principles, Institute for Post Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Gujarat Ayurved University, Jamnagar, Gujarat, India

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Abstract

Bhaishajya Kaala (time of drug administration) is an important principle to be considered while treating a disease. Still hardly a handful of physicians are seen, who account for this. To highlight its imperial role in *Chikitsa*, there is an immense necessity to analyze this concept, which is the need of the hour. *Bhaishajya Kaala* is mainly explained in relation with *Bala* of *Roga*, *Rogi*, particular *Dosha*, *Dooshya*, and various other factors. The comprehensive understanding of this concept involves so many questions as, why there is a difference in the number of *Aushdha Kaala*? What is the logic behind their indications as well as contraindications? The present paper focuses on the above points to find out the convincing answers.

Key words: *Bhaishajya Kaala*, *Bhojana Kaala*, *Roga*, *Rogi Bala*

Introduction

Ayurveda, the most ancient medical science, has great concern regarding the health as well as the ailments of all the creatures living on the planet earth, was preached in the form of *Trisutras*, namely, *Hetu* (causative factor), *Linga* (signs and symptoms), and *Aushadha* (treatment). The last part of this trio has been given equal importance as the former two. *Aushadha Sutra* hides many more concepts in its womb as a part of *Chikitsa* (Treatment). *Charaka* says the medicine, which is opposite of *Dosha*, *Dooshya*, and *Nidan* (causative factor) or to all of the three will undoubtedly curb the disorder, irrespective of specific features either mentioned or not mentioned.^[1] The above statement is followed by another, which says “while treating a disease success can be achieved only when there is proper combination of *Desha* (region), *Kaala* (time), *Pramana* (dosage), *Satmya* (wholesomeness), *Asatmya* (unwholesomeness), *Pathya* (useful), and *Apathya* (harmful).^[2] Among these seven most important factors, *Kaala* acquires second position, which reflects the importance of *Kaala* in *Chikitsa*. Here again *Kaala* means:

1. *Shad Aveksha Kaala* (Six observatory aspects of time)
2. *Dasha Bhashajya Kaala* (Ten types of times for the administration of medicine)

Address for correspondence: Dr. Ashwini V. Junjarwad, Department of Basic Principles, Ashwini Ayurvedic Medical College and Research Center, Tumkur - 572 105, Karnataka, India.
E-mail: ashwinisavlagi@yahoo.com

Shad Aveksha Kaala

Consists of *Dina*, *Rogi*, *Aushadha*, *Vyadhi*, *Jeerna Laxana* and *Ritu*.^[3]

Dina (Different parts of the day)

It indicates particular part of the day, for example, *Vamana Dravya* (emetics) is to be given in the early morning, that is, *Purvahna*.

Rogi (Patient)

After assessing the strength of the patient, time of administration for medicine should be selected. If the patient is having good strength, then medicine can be given in empty stomach early in the morning. If the patient is weak, then medicine should be administered along with wholesome food.

Aushadha

Based on the *Aushadha*, ten *Kaala* have been told. They are *Bhukthadau* (before meals), *Madhye* (in the middle of the meals), *Pratahapaschat* (after the morning meals), *Sayampashchat* (after the evening meals), *Muhurmuhu* (frequently), *Samudga* (both before and after meals), *Bhakta Samyukta* (mixed with food), *Grasa* (with each morsel), and *Grasantara* (between two morsels).

Vyadhi (disease)

Based on the *Vyadhi* also the *Kaala* is classified. For example: In *Jwara* (fever) every 6th day the medicine has to be changed like *Peya* (liquids), *Kashaya* (decoctions), *Ksheera* (milk preparations), *Sarpi* (preparations of ghee), *Virechana* (purgation), respectively, depending on the condition.

Jeerna linga (stage of the digestion of the food)

The *Jeerna Lakshanas* should be assessed before administering the medicine. Symptoms like hunger, appearance of *Vega* (natural urges), expulsion of *Mala* (waste products), clear belching etc., indicate *Jeerna Lakshana*.

Ritu (nature of the season)

Based on the *Ritu*, *Kaala* should be assessed by *Chaya* (increase of *Dosha*), *Prakopadi* (excessive increase of *Dosha*) *Lakshanas* told for each *Dosha*.

Bhaishajya Kaala

Definition

Proper time for administration of *Aushadha* is known as *Bhaishajya Kaala*.

'Aushadha Kaalah – Aushadha Sevanasya Sam aye'^[4]

Tarka Sangraha tells that everything is dependent on *Kaala*^[5] The same statement can be extended in the context *Bhaishajya Kaala* too. *Kaala* is the *Nimitta Karana* (reason) of all types of *Kaarya* (action), hence *Aushadha* employed in a proper *Kaala* will result in expected *kaarya*.

Bhaishajya Kaala, *Aushadha Kaala*, *Bhaishajya grahana Kaala*, *Aushadha Avacharana Kaala*, *Agada Kaala*, and *Aushadhavekshana Kaala* are the various synonyms used to indicate time of administration.

Number of Bhaishajya Kaala

There are three different opinions regarding the numbers among *Acharyas*

1. 10 – *Charak*,^[6] *Sushruta*,^[6] *Ashtanga Hridaya*.^[7]
2. 11 – *Ashtanga Sangraha*.^[8]
3. 5 – *Sharangadhara*.^[9]

Description of Individual Bhaishajya Kaala

Niranna (Abhakta)

Abhakta means administration of *Aushadha* alone.^[8]

Abhakta, *Ananna*, *Nirbhukta*, *Suryodaye Jate* are used as synonyms. The first three indicate the *Kaala* in relation to food while the last indicates *Kaala* in relation to *Dina*.

Chakrapani says *Abhakta* means, it should be before food in the morning^[10] Food should be administered only after the medicine is completely digested. *Hemadri* clarifies that medicine should be administered in the *Kapha Udreka Gata Kaala*^[11] *Kapha Kaala* is one-third part of the day, and later half of this one-third part is *Kapha Udreka Gata Kaala*. *Indu* says it should be after one *Yaama* after sunrise.^[12] The medicine is administered in the empty stomach when the *Koshtha* is devoid of *Kapha Utklesha*. Because if there is *Kapha Utklesha*, the medicine will not come in contact with *Agni* (digestive fire), and will not be digested properly and effect will be either delayed or reduced. Hence, medicine is administered only after the *Kapha Udreka* is over.

Indications

The action of the medicine administered during this *Kaala* is enhanced due to the empty stomach. Hence, the physician

should see the strength of disease and patient. If both are strong this *Kaala* should be selected. With this idea the following indications are told:

1. Disease and diseased both having good strength.
2. *Pancha Vidha Kashaya Kalpanas* (five basic formulations): They are heavy and need strong *Agni* to digest them.
3. *Lekhanartha* (scraping) and *Utklishta Kapha Pitta*: The *Apatarpana* is the line of treatment in both the conditions. *Abhakta Kaala* provides a suitable time for the administration of both.
4. *Kapha Udreka Avastha Gata Kaala*.^[13]

Contraindications

It is contraindicated in children, aged, etc., who cannot withstand the potency of the medicine, administered in this *Kaala*.^[10] It will kill the person like the weak one is killed by the strong one. Thus the simile indicates if one administered medicine without considering the above fact, will produce complications like *Glani* and even death.^[14]

Pragbhakta

Mode of administration

The medicine is administered just before the intake of food.^[12] *Prakbhojana*, *Annadau*, *Pragbhakta*, *Bhojanagre*, *Bhuktadau*, *Poorvabhaktasya* are used synonymously to indicate this *Kaala*.

Indications

Apana Vata Vikruti Gudagata (situated in anus) *Vata*.^[15]

Aged, children, *Bhiru* (panic), *Krishangana* (emaciated), weak^[16]

For strengthening lower part of the body, diseases of lower half of the body, obesity.^[17]

Benefits

Medicine will be digested very quickly without hampering the strength of the person. There will be no regurgitation of medicine as it is covered by food.^[17] It destroys the *Doshas* situated in *Amashaya* (stomach).

Madhya Bhakta

Administration of medicine in between the food is *Madhyabhakt*.^[17] The synonyms *Madhye Bhaktam*, *Madhye*, *Madhya Bhaktam*, *Madhya Bhojana* give the same meaning.

Mode of administration

Classics have clearly mentioned that medicine should be administered in between food, that is, first person is asked to consume half part of the food. This food initiates the process of digestion. The *Pachaka Pitta* and *Samana Vata* are stimulated by the food taken, followed by this medicine is administered, so that it can act over the *Samana Vata*, in turn *Pachaka Pitta*. Then again food is consumed, which covers the medicine and prevents regurgitation of the medicine.

Indications

Samana Vata Vikruti,^[14] *Koshtagata Vyadhis*.^[16] *Paittika Vyadhis*. *Agni Udeeranartha in Mandagni*.

Madhya Bhakta Aushadhi due to its quality of not spreading (*Avisari Bhava*)^[18] subsides the diseases of *Madhya Shareera*, that is, the medicine administered during this *Kaala* acts on *Samana Vata*. Once this *Samana Vata* is corrected,

Agni or *Pachaka* starts functioning properly. The *Pachaka Pitta* nourishes all the *Pittas*. If *Pachaka Pitta* is corrected all the other *Pittas* will also function normally. Hence, it is indicated in *Paittika Vyadhis*. The main function of the *Koshtha* is digestion and metabolism. Once the *Samana Vata* and *Pachaka Pitta* are functioning normally, the function of *Koshtha* gets corrected. Hence it is indicated in *Koshtha Gata Vyadhis*.

Pashchatbhakta

Synonyms

Pratah Ashasya, Pashchat, Adhobhaktam, Ante, Adhaha.

Mode of administration

Medicine is administered after food, to subside various diseases related to the upper part of the body, as well as to give strength^[19]

This *Kaala* is divided in two.^[14]

1. *Pratah Bhojana Kaala* – indicated for *Vyana Vata Vikruti*
2. *Sayam Bhojana Kaala* – indicated for *Udaan Vata Vikruti*

Indications

1. *Vyana Vata Vikrut*.^[14]
2. For strengthening upper part of the body^[14]
3. Diseases of chest, throat, and head.
4. Diseases of upper half of the body.

Its main indication is *Vyana Vata Vikruti*. The time *Pratah* is specifically told because the site of *Vyana Vata* is *Hridaya* (heart) and the *Hridaya* is open during morning. Hence, the medicine administered during morning reaches the *Hridaya*. It should be administered after food because the *Vyana Vata* is activated after the formation of *rasa* so that it can be carried all over the body. Hence, the food is administered first and the medicine is administered later.

Sayampashchat

This comes under *Adhobhakta*. The mode of administration is defined as the administration of medicine after dinner.

Indication

Udana Vata Vikruti^[14]

During night the *Hridaya* gets closed. The *Vyana Vata* becomes inactive, which is taken over by *Udana Vata*. Thus the medicine is administered after dinner.

Udana moves in *Nasa, Gala* and *Urah* etc., in the diseases of *Jatrurdhwa Vikara* this *Kaala* can be selected.

Antarabhakta

Synonyms

Bhaktayormadhye, Antarabhaktam and *Antarbhaktam* are used synonymously.

The administration of food in between two meals is called *Antarabhakta*.^[16] means after digestion of food taken in afternoon, *Aushadha* is administered. Once *Aushadha* is digested, evening meals is taken. Similar thing is followed in case of night and morning food.

In this *Kaala Ahaara* and *Aushadha Jeerna Lakshana* play an important role. The first *Antarabhakta* is during daytime where as next is one *Yama* followed by the digestion of evening food as opined by *Indu*, which is same as that of *Nishi* (night).

Indications

Hridya, Deepaka (kindling digestive fire), *Deeptagni Purush* suffering from *Vyan Vayu*. As it acts over *Udana*, which is seated in *Hridaya*, it gives strength to the *Manas* (mind).^[20]

Jejjat includes this *Kaala* under *Madhyabhakta*, which is for *Samana Vata* unlike *Vyan Vata* as told by others.^[21] *Chakrapani* asserts that *Antarabhakta* means *Aushadha* mixed with *Anna* (food), but this is considered as *Sabhakta* according to other *Acharyas*.

Sabhakta

Sabhaktam means, administration of *Aushadha* along with food. The mixing is done either with prepared food or during preparation of food.^[22] *Bhakta Samyuktam, Sannam*, and *Samabhaktam* are identical to each other.

Indications

Aruchi,^[16] children,^[23] weak, *Stree* (ladies), *Vridhdha, Sukumara* (mild),^[22] *Ksheena*. To protect *Bala* and *Sarvaangagata Rogas*.^[22]

In *Mandagni* (loss of appetite), *Aruchi* – food is processed with *Aushadha* and given. As the *Teekshnata*, strong odour, bad taste of *Aushadha* are reduced, it is used for administration in women, children, aged, persons with less strength, and one who hates *Aushadha*.

Indication for this *Kaala* is not mentioned for any *Dosha*, but indicated in *Sarvanga* (complete body) *Roga* and *Kshata Ksheena* (emaciated). *Aushadha* along with *Ahara* will be digested and *Rasa* is formed, which will be circulated all over the body with the help of *Vyana Vata*.^[24]

Grasa – Grasantarah

Grasa means *Aushadha* mixed along with each bolus of food,^[25] also known as *Sagras* and *Grase-Grase*.

Grasantara means administration of *Aushadha* in between each bolus of food and is known as *Kavalantare*.^[26]

Indications

1. This is indicated in *Prana Vata Dushti*^[27] and *Vajeeakaranartha* (increasing vigor), *Agni Sandeepanartha*.^[25]
2. *Grasa*: can be used where the form of medicine is *Churna* (powder), *Vataka* (tablet), *Loha* (confections).^[25]
3. *Grasantara*: this is used when one wants to administer the *Vamaneeya Dhumapana*.

Annapravesh (deglutition) is the function of *Prana Vata*.^[28] The *Aushadha* administered with each *Grasa* will come in contact with *Prana Vata* in *Mukha* (oral cavity), *Kantha* (throat), *Urah* (chest), etc., leading to the continuous contact with *Prana* and conditions related to that could be easily treated.

Churna should be administered in this *Kaala* to increase *Agni*, it may be due to *Rukshata* (dryness).^[25]

Samudga

Samudga refers to the administration of *Aushadha* both before and after food.^[29]

Samudga word refers to *Samputaka*, which means a box like structure.

Indications

Hikka Roga (hiccough), *Kampa* (tremors), *Akshepa* (convulsions),

Urdhva Kayagata Vikaras,^[29] Pravishruta (spread) Dosha-Urdhwa, and Adha Visruta Dosha^[30] When the form of medicine is Pana (liquid), Navana (administered through nostrils), Avaleha (confections).^[31]

No specific Dosha is indicated for this Kaala instead some conditions like Kampa, Akshepaka, Hikka are mentioned where Doshas are situated in both Urdhwa (upper) and Adho (lower) Shareera. Aushadha administered in this Kaala will be having its effect on Apana, Vyana as well as on Udana Vata.

Dalhana stresses on the word 'Peeyate' stating that Aushadha should be in liquid form so that food will be put in a nutshell.^[32]

Muhurmuhu

The word Muhurmuhu means again and again, Aushadha is repeatedly taken with or without food.^[33]

Indications

Shwasa (dyspnoea), Kasa (cough). Trishna (thirst), Hikka, Chhardi (vomiting), Visha (poison), Swarabhanga (hoarseness of voice).^[33]

This Kaala can be broadly divided in two:

1. Abhakta Muhurmuhu
2. Sabhakta Muhurmuhu

The indication of with or without food may chosen by considering Bala of the patient. This Kaala is indicated in Shwasa, Kasa, Trishna, Hikka, Chhardi and Visha where continuous Vegas are produced. Hence Aushadha is administered repeatedly so that it can maintain its effect throughout.

Nishi

Synonyms

Swapnakale, Ratre

Administration of Aushadha at night is called Nishi.^[34]

Indication

Urdhwajatrugata Vikara (diseases above the neck).^[25]

Aushadha should be administered at the time of sleep. According to Ayurveda one should go to sleep after the digestion of the evening food. Hence medicine should be administered after the digestion of evening food. Thus this becomes second Antara Bhakta according to Indu, and it is indicated in Urdhwa Jatru Gata Vikaras. Urdhwajatru is the site of Prana Vata. Thus medicine administered in this Kaala acts over Prana Vata.

Discussion

Vagbhat also explained ten Aushadha Kaala including the Nishi. Hemadri commenting on the same called these Kaala as Shamana Aushadha Kaala. In the present paper also, this aspect has been highlighted. The relation between Kaala and Aushadha is well established in our classics by all the Acharyas. This relation has been neglected now a days, specially while administering the medicine. Such negligence may be one of the reasons for not getting the desired effect from the therapy, as the Aushadha Dravya fails to show its complete effect.

Hence to utilize the Aushadha to its optimum level, Bhaishajya Kaalas have been quoted depending on the predominance of the Doshas, seat of the disease, frequency of attack, etc.

The advantages of Bhaishajya Kaala are wide spread, but they are mainly elucidated in relation with Shamana Aushadhi. Hence they are found to be of limited exploit, in case of emergency conditions, Shodhana (purificatory) therapy and medicine administered other than oral route.

Conclusion

Bhaishajya Kaala are the essential tools for administration of Aushadha, negligence may lead to the grave deficit in the treatment. Evaluation of Vaya, Jeernalinga, Ritu, Vyadhi Doosha, Desha plays a pivotal role in deciding Bhaishajya Kaala. Vata Dosha has given prime importance in the context of Bhaishajya Kaala, though Pitta and Kapha are considered at some places. The order of Kaalas is different in all Samhitas (classical treatises) without showing any logical reasoning behind this. Bhaishajya Kaala can only be used for Shamanaushadhi and cannot be followed in Atayayika Avastha (emergency conditions).

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भैषज्य काल पर महत्वपूर्ण समीक्षा

अश्विनी वी. जुंजरवड़, पवन बी. सावलगी, महेशकुमार व्यास

आयुर्वेदीय शास्त्रों में काल का विशेष महत्व बताया गया है। काल के द्वारा सर्वत्र परिणाम परिवर्तित हो जाते हैं, यह सर्वविदित है। औषध के सेवन काल के अनुसार ही उसके दोष, धातु, मलों पर प्रभाव होता है। अतः औषध का व्याधि शमन में क्या परिवर्तन दृष्टिगोचर होता है, इस तथ्य की पुष्टि इस अनुसंधान के माध्यम से की गयी है। आचार्य चरक, सुश्रुत, वाग्भट्ट एवं शार्ङ्गधर के मतानुसार जो विभिन्न औषध सेवन काल बताये गये हैं, उनका वैज्ञानिक रीति से विश्लेषण किया गया है।