

**MEDHYA DRAVYA IN AYURVEDA – A CRITICAL REVIEW**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Ayurveda* has two main aims - one is to maintain health and the second is to cure disease. The branch of *Rasayana* or rejuvenation is one of the eight specialized branches of *Ayurveda* that primarily deals with the maintenance of health. *Rasayana* is defined as any herb, food, or activity which confers youthfulness and cures diseases. If taken in a proper way, the *Rasayana* prevents early aging and keeps you young and active both physically and mentally. *Medhya Rasayanas* are group of medicinal plants described in *Ayurveda* with multi-fold benefits, specifically to improve memory and intellect by *Prabhava* (specific action). *Medha* means intellect and/or retention and *Rasayana* means therapeutic procedure or preparation that on regular practice will boost nourishment, health, memory, intellect, immunity and hence longevity. *Medhya Rasayana* is a group of 4 medicinal plants that can be used singly or in combinations. This paper will highlight the present update on *Medhya Rasayana ausadhi*.

**Keywords:** *Ayurveda* , *Medhya*, *Rasayana*

**INTRODUCTION**

The branch *Rasayana* is one of the most important branches among Astanga *Ayurveda*; *Rasayana* prevents early aging and keeps you young and active both physically and mentally. *Medhya Rasayanas* are group of medicinal plants described in *Ayurveda* with multi-fold benefits, specifically to improve memory and intellect by *Prabhava* (specific action). *Medha* means intellect and/or retention and *Rasayana* means therapeutic procedure or preparation that on regular practice will boost nourishment, health, memory, intellect, immunity and hence longevity. *Medhya Rasayana* is a group of 4 medicinal plants, they are *Mandukaparni* (*Centella asiatica* Linn.), *Yastimadhu* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* Linn.), *Guduchi* (*Tinospora cordifolia* (Wild) Miers) and *Shankhapushpi* (*Convolvulus pleuricaulis* Chois)<sup>1</sup>, specially

mentioned with wide range of applications on different systems. Yet in practice few more handful drugs used with same aim are mentioned elsewhere in the *Ayurveda* classical textbooks. They are *Aindri* (*Bacopa monniera*), *Jyothishmati* (*Celastrus paniculata*), *Kushmanda* (*Benincasa hispida*), *Vacha* (*Acorus calamus*) and *Jatamamsi* (*Nardostachys jatamansi*). *Medhya Rasayana* is used either in polyherbal preparations or alone.

**Characteristics of drugs having the *Medhya Rasayana* property**

1. ***Mandukaparni*** (*Centella asiatica* Linn. Family – Umbelliferae):

This Plant is described in *Tikta skandh*, *Prajastapana* and *Vayasthapana mahakashaya* of *Charak Samhita* and *Tikta varga* of *Shusruta Samhita*. The Synonyms

are *Manduki*, *Twastri*, *Divya*, *Mahausadhi*.  
*Dosha karma – Kapha-Pitta shamak*<sup>2</sup>.

2. **Yastimadhu** (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* Linn.,  
Family – Fabaceae):

This plant is described in *Kanthy*,  
*Jivaniya*, *Sandhaniya*, *Varnya*, *Sonitastha-*  
*pana*, *Kandughna*, *Chardinigrahana*, *Sne-*  
*hopaga*, *Vamanopaga*, *Asthapanopaga*,  
*Mutravirajaniya Mahakasaya* of *Charak*  
*Samhita* and *Kakolyadi*, *Sarivadi*, *Anjanadi*,  
*Brhatyadi*, *Ambasthadi*, *Utpaladi Gana*, of  
*Shusruta Samhita*. The Synonyms are *Yas-*  
*timadhuk*, *Klitaka*. *Dosha karma – Vata-*  
*pitta shamak*<sup>3</sup>.

3. **Guduchi** (*Tinospora cordifolia* Willd.  
Miers, Family – Menispermaceae):

This plant is described in *Vayahstha-*  
*pana*, *Dahaprashamana*, *Trishna-nigraha*,  
*Stanya*, *sodhana*, *Triptighna Mahakasaya* of  
*Charak Samhita* and *Guducyadi*, *Patoladi*,  
*Araghavadadi*, *Kakolyadi*, *Valli panchamula*  
of *Shusruta Samhita*. The Synonyms are  
*Amrita*, *Madhuparni*, *Chinnamula*, *Cakra-*  
*lakshanika*, *Amrita-valli*, *Chinna*, *Chin-*  
*nodhbhava*, *Vatsadani*, *Jivanti*, *Tantrika*,  
*Soma*, *Somavalli*, *Kundali*, *Dheera*, *Vi-*  
*shalya*, *Rasayani*, *Candrasahya*, *Vayastha*,  
*Mandali*, *Deva-nirmita*, *Dosha karma – Tri-*  
*dosha shamak*<sup>4</sup>.

4. **Shankhapushpi** (*Convolvulus*  
*pleuricaulis* Chois. Family – Convolvula-  
ceae):

The Synonyms are *Ksheerpushpi*,  
*Mangalyakusuma*. *Dosha karma – Vata-*  
*pitta shamak*<sup>5</sup>.

5. **Aindri** (*Bacopa monniera* Linn. Family  
– Scrophulariaceae):

This Plant is described in *Balya*,  
*Prajasthapana mahakasaya* of *Charak Sam-*  
*hita*. *Dosha karma – Kapha-Vata shamak*

6. **Jyothishmati** (*Celastrus panniculata*  
Willd. Family – Celastraceae):

This Plant is described in *Shirovire-*  
*cana* of *Charak Samhita* and *Adhobhaghara*  
and *Shirovirecana* of *Shusruta Samhita*. The  
Synonyms are *Katabhi*, *Jyotishka*, *Kanguni*,  
*Paravatpadi*, *Pinya*, *Lata*, *Kakundani*, *Mal-*  
*kangani*. *Dosha karma – Vata-kapha sha-*  
*mak*<sup>6</sup>.

7. **Kushmanda** (*Benincasa hispida* Thunb.  
Cogn. Family – Cucurbitaceae):

This Plant is described in *Sakavarga*  
of *Bhavaprakash Nighantu*. The Synonyms  
are *Puspaphala*, *Pitapushpa*, *Brihatphala*.  
*Dosha karma – Pitta shamak*<sup>7</sup>.

8. **Vacha** (*Acorus calamus* Linn., Family –  
Araceae):

This Plant is described in *Virechan*,  
*Lekhniya*, *Arshoghna*, *Triptighna*, *Astha-*  
*panopaga*, *Sitaprashamana*, *Sangya-sthapana*,  
*Tikta Skandh*, *Sirovirechana Charak Sam-*  
*hita* and *Pippalyadi*, *Vachadi*, *Mustadi*,  
*Urdha- bhagkar* of *Shusruta Samhita*. The  
Synonyms are *Vacha*, *Uragandha*,  
*Sadhgrantha*, *Golomi*, *Satparvika*, *Khudra-*  
*patri*, *Mangalya*, *Jatila*, *Ugra* and *Lomasha*,  
*Dosha karma – Kapha-Vata shamak*<sup>8</sup>.

9. **Jatamansi** (*Nardostachys jatamansi*  
DC., Family – Valerianaceae):

This Plant is described in *Sangya-*  
*sthapana mahakasaya* of *Charak Samhita*.  
The Synonyms are *Bhutjata*, *Jatila*, *Tapas-*  
*vini* and *Mansi*. *Dosha karma – TriDosha*  
*shamak*<sup>9</sup>.

**Table 1: Properties of different Medhya ausadhi**

Drug	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka
<i>Mandukaparni</i>	<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu</i>	<i>Sita</i>	<i>Madhur</i>
<i>Yastimadhu</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Guru, Snigdha</i>	<i>Sita</i>	<i>Madhur</i>
<i>Guduchi</i>	<i>Tikta, Kasaya</i>	<i>Guru, Snigdha</i>	<i>Usna</i>	<i>Madhur</i>
<i>Shankhapushpi</i>	<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Snigdha, Picchil</i>	<i>Sita</i>	<i>Madhur</i>
<i>Aindri</i>	<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu</i>	<i>Usna</i>	<i>Katu</i>
<i>Jyothishmati</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Tikshna</i>	<i>Usna</i>	<i>Katu</i>
<i>Kushmanda</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Laghu, Snigdha</i>	<i>Sita</i>	<i>Madhur</i>
<i>Vacha</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Tikshna</i>	<i>Usna</i>	<i>Katu</i>
<i>Jatamamsi</i>	<i>Tikta, Kasaya Madhur</i>	<i>Laghu, Snigdha</i>	<i>Sita</i>	<i>Katu</i>

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Dravyas those increases the Medha is known as 'Medhya'. Although this function is related with Mana, and due to Nadisansthan is the visistha adisthana of presence of Mana; this Medhya Karma is related with Nadisansthan. Nadisansthan are connected with Brain that's why the Medhya dravya also known as brain tonic.

The medhya karma is considered as Prabhava jayna because some medhya dravya are sita virya, madhura rasa and madhur vipaka e.g. Yastimadhu; and some are tikta rasa and usna virya e.g. Guduchi. These medhya dravya have more medya karma present rather than a samanya dravya, so medhya karma is prabhava janya<sup>10</sup>.

Graham shakti (power of aquieition), Dharan shakti (power of retention) and Smriti (power of recollection) all three are included in Medha. Pitta is ashu and tikshna so it is helpful in vishaya graham and Smriti, that's why Medha is included in prakrit karma of Pitta<sup>11</sup>. Vata is also necessary for association of ideas in the process of smriti. Kapha provides Dhriti (Dharan) and stability that's why Sthirita and Dhriti are included in prakrit karma of Kapha<sup>12</sup>. Due to all these reasons the usna virya and sita

virya draya should be mehya. But usna virya dravya mainly for vishaya graham and Smriti rather than sita virya for Dharan shakti.

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