

MEDHYA RASAYANA: A CRITICAL REVIEW**Dr. Neha Soni^{1*} and Dr. Pravin Joshi²**

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Article Received on
01 June 2020,

Revised on 22 June 2020,
Accepted on 13 July 2020,

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20208-18130

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has main two aims – to conserve the health of a healthy individual and to treat a diseased person. To meet first goal of Ayurveda, Rasayana chikitsa has a significant role to play. Rasayana chikitsa is also a part of Ashtanga Ayurveda that itself presents its importance. Rasayana are drug or medicine or food which when used in right quantity and at right time promotes restoration and rejuvenation. It accelerates formation of new Dhatus and retards ageing. In this way it comprehences vital energy of our body and boosts immunity. Rasayana are not good for body but also for mind. Medhya Rasayana are medicinal plants described in Ayurveda with multiple benefits specifically with regards to improve memory,

grasping and intellect. Acharya charak has given a vivid explanation on four Medhya Rasayana viz. sankhapushpi kalka, Swarasa of mandukparni, Yashtimadhu along with milk and Guduchi kwatha. This article is an attempt to highlight present update on Medhya Rasayana.

KEYWORDS: Medhya Rasayana.**INTRODUCTION**

Dravya which boosts brilliance or intellect are called as medhya dravya. Intellect is related to nervous system is place of mind, so all medhya dravya acts primarily on nervous system. Acharya Charak has explained four dravyas under medhya Rasayana^[1].

1. Mandukparni (*Centella asiatica* Linn)
2. Yasthimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* Linn)

3. Shankhapushpi (*Convolvulus pluricaulis* Linn)
4. Guduchi (*Tinospora codifolia* Willd Miers)

Acharya Susruta has explained medhya dravya under Medha Ayushkamiya Rasayana Adhayay.^[1] Medhya Rasayana explained by Acharya Susruta other than that explained by Acharya charak are following.^[2]

1. Swate avalguja
2. Chitraka mola
3. Manduk parni
4. Bramhi
5. Vacha

Acharya P. V. Sharma has also explained other medhya dravya. These are following^[3]

1. Endri
2. Jyotishmati
3. Kushmanda
4. Vacha
5. Jatamanshi

In current time, above all above described are designated and used as a Rasayana dravya.

Brief Explanation of Medhya Rasayana

- **Mandukparni:** Acharya Charak has explained this drug under Tikta Skandha, Prajasthapana and Vayashapana. Acharya Susruta has placed this drug under Tikta Varga. Synonyms are manduki, Divya, Twastri and Mahausadhi⁴. Leaves of mandukparni possess glycoside Asiaticoside and alkaloid named Hydrocortyline ($C_{22}H_{32}O_8N$). These chemical are responsible for neuroprotective and antioxidant properties exhibited by mandukparni.^[5]
- **Shankhpushpi:** Synonyms of Shankhpushpi are Mangalya kuma, Ksheerpushpi. Shankhpushpi. It possesses alkaloids like Kaempferol, arecoline, convolvine and Shankhpushpin.^[6] The constituent convolvine is responsible for blocking M_2 and M_4 cholinergic muscuranic receptors. It boosts effect of arecoline, a muscarinic memory enhancer that ameliorates cognitive defects in Alzheimer's disease.^[7]
- **Guduchi:** Guduchi has been described under Vayahsthapana, Dahaprashamana, Trishna-nigrahan, Stanya sodhana, Triptighna Mahakasaya of Charak Samhita and Guduchyadi,

Araghvadadi, Kakolyadi, Patoladi, Valli panchamula of Susruta Samhita. Synonyms are Madhuparni, Chinnamula, Cakralakshanika, Amrita-valli, Chinna, Amrita, Vatsadani, jivanti, Tantrika, Kundalini, Vayastha etc.^[8] Major constituent of guduchi is berberine which reduces A beta levels by modulating APP (amyloid precursors) processing in human neuroglioma cells without toxicity.^[9]

- **Yashtimadhu:** Yashtimadhu has been described under Kanthya, Sandhaniya, Varnya, Kandughna, Vamanopaga, Jivniya, Asthapanopaga, Mutravirajaniya Mahakasaya of Charak Samhita and Kakolyadi, Sarivadi, Brhatyadi, Ambasthadi, Anjanadi, Utpaladi Gana of Susruta Samhita.^[10] Major constituent found in Yashtimadhu is glabridin which is useful in improving brain function. Chemically it is a flavonoid polyphenol which is proven to attenuate cerebral injuries in stroke as it is neuroprotective.^[11]

List of Medhya Rasayana

Dravya	Botanical name	Family	Dosh Karma
Mandukparni	<i>Centella asiatica</i> Linn	Umbelliferae	Kapha-pitta Shamak
Yasthimadhu	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i> Linn.	Fabaceae	Vata-pitta Shamak
Guduchi	<i>Tinospora Cordifolia</i> Wild.	Menispermaceae	Tridosha Shamak
Shankhpushpi	<i>Convolvulus pleuricaulis</i> Chois	Convolvulaceae	Kapa-vata Shamak

Properties of Medhya Rasayana

Dravya	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka
Mandukparni	Tikta	Laghu	Shita	Madhur
Yasthimadhu	Madhur	Guru, Snigdha	Shita	Madhur
Guduchi	Tikta, Kashaya	Guru, Snigdha	Ushna	Madhur
Shankhpushpi	Tikta	Snigdha, Picchil	Shita	Madhur

Other Medhya Dravya^[3]

1. Jyotishmati – *Celastrus panniculata* Wild. Family – Celastraceae

Jyotishmati is described under Shirovirechnopaga Mahakashaya in Charak Samhita and Shirovirechan, Adhobhagagara in Susruta Samhita. Synonyms are Kakandaki, Malkangani, Kaguni, Katbhi Parvatpadi. Properties of Jyotishmati are Katu, Tikta in Rasa, Tikshna in Guna, Ushna in Virya and Katu in Vipaka. Dosh Karma is Kapha-vata Samak.

2. Vacha – *Acorus calamus* Linn, Family - Araceae

Vacha is described in Lekhniya, Arshoghna, Virechan, Triptighna, Asthapanopaga, Sangya-sthapana, Tikta Skandh and Sirovirechnana Mahakasaya in Charak Samhita and Pipalyadi, Mustadi and Vachadi and Adhobhaghara in Susruta Samhita. Properties of Vacha are Katu,

Tikta in Rasa, Laghu Tikshna in Guna, Ushna in Virya and Katu Vipaka. Dosha Karma of Vacha is Kapha-vata Shamak.

3. **Jatamansi – *Nordostachys jatamansi* DC., Family – Valerianaceae**

Jatamansi is described in Sangyasthapana mahakashaya of Charak Samhita. Synonyms are Bhutjata, Jatila, Tapasvini, Nalda and mansi. Properties of Jatamansi are Tikta, Kasaya, Madhur in Rasa and Laghu, Snigdha in Guda, Sita in Virya and Katu in Vipaka. Dosha Karma of Jatamansi is Tridosh Samak.

4. **Endri – *Bacopa monniera* Linn. Family – Scrophulariaceae**

Endri is described in Balya and prajaisthapana Mahakashaya in Charak Samhita. Properties of Endri of Tikta in Rasa, Laghu in Guna, Usna in Virya, Katu in vipaka. Dosh karma is Kapha-vata shamak.

5. **Kushmanda – *Benincasa hispida* Thunb. Family – Cucurbitaceae**

Kushmanda is described in Shaka varga of Bhav prakash Nighantu. Synonyms are Puspaphala, Pitapushpa, Brihatphala. Dosh karma of Kushmanda is Pitta samak.

DISCUSSION

All drugs or medicine which boosts intellect power are called as Medhya Rasayana. All the above discussed medhya drug are madhur vipaka and shita virya (except guduchi). Medhya Karma is considered predominantly as Prabhava janya because some medhya dravya are shita virya, madhura rasa and madhurs vipaka e.g. Yasthimadhu but some are tikta rasa and ushna virya e.g. Guduchi. These Medhya dravya have more medhya karma present rather than a samanya dravya inspite of having common gunas, so medhya karma is predominantly prabhav janya.

Medhya can be catagorised into 3 catagories.^[3]

- (a) Grahan shakti (Power of Aquesion)
- (b) Dharana shakti (Power of retention)
- (c) Smaran shakti (Power of re-collection)

All medhya dravya exhibits combination of above three properties. Due to Ashukari and Tikshna pre-dominant gunas, pitta stimulate satva (Mana) and is help for perception of knowledge and as it stimulate post experiences it is helpful in memory intellect, as is also one of the natural function of pitta dosha. Vata dosha is also helpful in process of memory by

performing association of ideas. Kapha dosha as has stable properties helps in retention of knowledge and memories. Due to above fact it is clear that both kaphaja and pittaja dravya are Medhya. Ushna virya dravya are mainly boost intellect whereas shita virya dravya mainly boosts memory.

CONCLUSION

1. Medhya dravya like Mandukparni, Yastimadhu, Guduchi and Shankhpushpi can be used as single drug or in combinations to effectively boost memory and recall power, brilliance and intellect.
2. Medhya karma is predominantly prabhava janya because some medhya dravya are shita virya, madhura rasa but some are tikta rasa, ushna virya and moreover medhya dravya exhibits effects rather than their chemical composition.
3. Medhya karma is shown mainly by kaphaja and pittaja dravya.
4. Ushna virya dravya are mainly boost intellect whereas shita virya dravya mainly boosts memory. In other word we can say that ushna virya dravya boosts grahan and smaran shakti whereas shita virya dravya boosts dharana shakti.

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