

## CASSIA ABSUS: A BOON TO KAPHAJA ABHISHYANDA W.S.R. TO ALLERGIC CONJUNCTIVITIS

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### ABSTRACT

Eye is an important sense organ, because its loss of function leads to serious disability of man by keeping him in the darkness. Life without eyesight is miserable and valueless. Hence it is very important to protect vision from serious diseases. According to *Ayurveda*, many factors affect the functions of eyes, reducing their efficiency and causing discomfort. The diseases of eyes are caused by the vitiation of *tridoshas*. *Tridoshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*) functions normally in their respective channels and places, when they are in balanced condition. *Kaphaja Abhishyanda* is considered as root cause of all most all the eye diseases by all the *Acharyas* and can be correlated with “Allergic Conjunctivitis”. Though it is not a big life threatening issue, however it runs longtime, if left untreated. The allopathic physicians used to treat the disease with some different kind of antibiotics, corticosteroids and many more, which is only symptomatic, not curative. So the proper solution is still awaited. *Chaksu* or *Chaksusya* (good for improving the eye sight), the name given to the herb by the *Nighantu granthas* as it is applied as collyrium in eye disorders. As the herb is predominant of *Kashaya* and *Tikta rasa*, it is *Kapha Pitta shamaka* (reduces the vitiated *Kapha* and *Pitta*). Here an attempt is made to find the safe and curative remedy for *Kaphaja Abhishyanda*.

**Key words:** Cassia absus, *Kaphaja Abhishyanda*, Allergic Conjunctivitis, Treatment

### INTRODUCTION

The term *Abhishyanda* is used extensively in *Ayurveda* literature in different contexts. In *Sushruta Samhita*, it is mentioned that *Abhishyanda* is the root cause of all the eye diseases.<sup>1</sup> *Acharya Sushruta* has explained the disease *Netra Abhishyanda* as one of the “*Aupasargika Rogas*.”<sup>2</sup> He explains the contagious nature of the disease. It can spread from person to person by sharing the articles like cloths, bedding, cosmetics items and garlands. Close contact with an infected person can also leads to the spread of the infection.

Clinical picture of *Kaphaja Abhishyanda* nearly simulate with the term of “Al-

lergic Conjunctivitis” mentioned in modern terminologies.<sup>3</sup> In the current era human beings are highly exposed to pollution and this introduces contaminants to environment that causes instability, disorder and harm to the ecosystem. Ultimately this entire polluted environment leads to decreased immunity in human body and causing allergic reaction in human body easily and it ends in a single word- Allergy.

Allergic conjunctivitis is the most common type of eye allergy and is widely experienced by global population. It has an equal distribution more or less throughout the world,

without any exception to the developed and under developed countries. Having a prevalence rate of 5-22% in general population and a recurrence rate of 41- 62%.<sup>4</sup>

### NEED OF THE STUDY

Eye is an important sense organ, because its loss of function leads to serious disability of man by keeping him in the darkness. Life without eyesight is miserable and valueless. Hence it is very important to protect vision from serious diseases.<sup>5</sup>

Allergic Conjunctivitis is one of such conditions in which all the patients do not respond equally to available anti allergic drugs. None of the anti - allergic drugs available in the market can cure the Allergic Conjunctivitis completely in all the patients. After stopping the treatment there may be chances to re-occur the symptoms of Allergic conjunctivitis. More over these drugs are to be used for longer period to keep the condition under control.

Hence there is a drug known as *Chak-su-* Cassia absus commended by our *Acharyas* with a scope to search for a better remedy with an *Ayurvedic* preparations for a condition like Allergic Conjunctivitis.

**DISEASE REVIEW-** The word *Abhishyanda* is derived from the root “*Syanda*” which is prefixed by “*Abhi*” *Upasarga* and suffixed by “*Ghan*” *Pratyaya*. It means “*Ativridhi*” and “*Sravana*”<sup>6</sup>

- *Abhi* - going towards/ great/ excessive
- *Shyanda* – tremor/ shaking/ to move to cause

So *Abhishyanda* means “towards shaking”. Other meanings of *Abhishyanda* are oozing/ flowing/ trickling. *Abhishyanda* is considered as root cause of all most all the eye diseases by all the *Acharyas*<sup>7</sup>. If it is not treated in time it leads to severe complications like *Adhimantha* and *Hatadhimantha* (Glaucoma)<sup>8</sup>. *Abhishyanda* is one among the seventeen types of *Sarvasara Netra Rogas* explained in the classics. It is of four type’s viz. *Vataja*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja* and *Raktaja*. The symptomatology of *Kaphaja Abhishyanda* is itching and grittiness of the eye, foreign body sensation of eyes, watering, congestion, eye lid oedema, scanty & ropy discharge from eyes, heaviness

of eyes, etc. can be correlated with Allergic Conjunctivitis.

### Definition:

Where is *Syandana* in whole *Urdva Jatru Srotas*, it leads to *Kledana* in *Dosha, Dhātu* and *Mala* and resulting in profuse discharge from all around or all parts of the eye. So *Abhishyanda* means an excessive discharge from the eyes.<sup>9</sup>

Conjunctivitis refers to any inflammatory condition of the membrane that lines the eyelids and covers the exposed surface of the sclera.<sup>10</sup> It is the most common cause of red eye. The term conjunctivitis encompasses a broad group of condition presenting as inflammation of the conjunctiva.<sup>11</sup> The inflammation can be acute and chronic in presentation and infectious or non-infectious in origin. Ocular allergies in its many forms are one of the major causes of chronic conjunctivitis.<sup>12</sup>

***Nidana of Kaphaja Abhishyanda***<sup>13</sup>: Diving into water immediately after exposure to heat, Excessive looking at distant objects, Sleeping during day/awakening at night, Excessive weeping, Anger / grief, Excessive use of sour, gruel and vinegar, Suppression of natural urges, Suppressing tears, Concentrating on minute objects.

### ***Samprapti of Kaphaja Abhishyanda:***

According to *Sushruta*, due to *Achakshushya Ahara* and *Vihara*, the deranged *Doshas* when move towards upper part of body through various *Sira*, they get accumulate in the eyes as a whole and dreadful diseases in specific parts of eye<sup>14</sup>.

### ***Poorvarupa of Kaphaja Abhishyanda:***

*Acharya* has mentioned some *poorvarupa* of *abhishyanda* like *Avila* (dirty / muddiness of the eye), *Samrambha* (slight congestion, pain and oedema), *Ashru* (watering), *Kandu* (itching), *Upadeha* (stickiness), *Guruta* (heaviness), *Osha* (burning sensation), *Toda* (pricking pain), *Raga* (redness), *Shoola* in *Vartma Kosha* (pain at outer and inner canthus of the eye), *Shooka Poorna Netra* (foreign body sensation), *Vihanyamana Roopa* (visual disturbance), *Kriyahani* (hampered functions of any part of the eye).<sup>15</sup>

***Rupa of Kaphaja Abhishyanda***<sup>16</sup>: *Ushnaabhinanda* (burning sensation), *Muhu evam pic-*

*chila Srava* (mucopurulent discharge from eyes), *Shoola* (severe pain), *Shopha* (lids are swollen and hard), *Gurtavam* (heaviness of eyes) and *Kandu* (itching). Other sign & symptoms are Feeling of Foreign Body sensation, Photophobia; Conjunctiva is red, swollen and covered by thick grayish – yellow membrane and difficulty in keeping the eyes open.

#### **Treatment of Kaphaja Abhishyanda:**

The line of treatment of *Abhishyanda* can be managed by *Sthanik Chikitsa* (Local treatment) by applying Collirium.<sup>17</sup>

#### **Drug Review**

Botanical Name- *Cassia absus* Linn.

Family- *Caesalpiniaceae*<sup>18</sup>

#### **Sanskrit Synonyms of Chaksu seeds**

*Kulutthika, Kulali, Vanya Kuluttha, Aranya Kulatthika*<sup>19</sup>

The synonyms indicate about the morphology of the plant along with its habitat i.e. it resembles the wild variety of *kuluttha* plant and is available in the forests.

*Chaksu* is known as an Indian medicinal plant and has been used among the people of India for umpteen numbers of medicinal properties. It is an erect and annual herb mainly used for its medicinal properties. Though this plant has a foreign origin, it is found throughout most of India, commonly in open habitats and wasteland, ascending up to 1500 meter in the Himalayas.<sup>20</sup> In India, people of different regions use this plant for treating diseases.

This plant is commonly known as '*Chaksu*'; in Hindi, Bengali, Punjabi and Urdu and '*Chakshushya*' in Sanskrit. The flowers of *Chaksu* are yellow or reddish-yellow in color and borne in narrow leaf-opposed. Fruits of *Chaksu* are compressed, thin, linear oblong, and are clothed with bristly hairs, elastically dehiscent. *Chaksu* bears flowers during August to February depending on locality. It is sticky plant that attains a height of about 1-2 foot. Leaves are combined, leaflets are four in number.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Chemical Constituents**<sup>22</sup>

The seed of this herb contains various oils, alkaloids and minerals like calcium, phosphorous, iron and zinc. Besides these it

also contains vitamins like thiamine and riboflavin.

#### **Major chemical Constituents**

Leaves- Quercetin, Rutin

Root- Chaksine & Isochaksine

Seed- Beta Sitosterol, Hydnocarpin, Apigenin, Raffinose.

#### **Medicinal Properties of Chakshu plant**<sup>23</sup>:

*Rasa* (Taste) –*Kashaya* – astringent, *Tikta* – bitter and *Katu* – Pungent

*Veerya* (Potency) – *Sheeta* – Cold in nature

*Guna* (Qualities) – *Laghu* – light to digest, *Rooksha* – Dry in nature

*Vipaka- Katu* – After digestion it undergoes into pungent taste

*Prabhava* (Special effects) – *Chakshushya* (good for improving the eye sight)

**Effect on Tridosha-** As the herb is predominant of *Kashaya* and *Tikta rasa*, it is *Kapha Pitta*

*shamaka* (reduces the vitiated *Kapha* and *Pitta*)

#### **Uses of Chakshu plant**<sup>24</sup>:

- Externally used as paste for wound healing, skin diseases like *Dadru* (ringworm)
- Used internally in the form of *kashaya* (decoction) to treat diseases like *Grahani* (irritable bowel syndrome), *raktatisara* (diarrhea with blood)
- Used internally in powder form to treat *ashmari* (renal stones), *mootrakrichha* (difficulty in micturition).
- Used internally in the form of *kashaya* (decoction) to stop internal bleeding.
- Used internally in the form of *kashaya* to treat *sthavara* and *jangama visha* (poison of plant and animal origin).
- *Chaksu* seeds or its soaked seed powder, in a dose of 1 – 2 grams is administered for the treatment of hypertension.
- In the Gold Coast, the roots are ground with Mako pepper and boiled in water. The liquor is then drunk with palm wine to cure constipation.
- Seeds are found efficacious in cases of ringworm and form one of the ingredients of aphrodisiacs like *Methi ladu* and *Vakerio ladu*.

**How to use it in Allergic Conjunctivitis** - The seeds are attenuant and astringent. They are used as a collyrium to strengthen the sight; in purulent ophthalmia and conjunctivitis. *Cakshu* seeds are put in a cloth-pouch and steamed in cow dung juice. Then they are dehusked and powdered. This powder is used as collyrium in night time alleviates inflammation of eyes.<sup>25</sup>

**Mode of action**<sup>26</sup> -

**On The Basis of Rasa:** Function of *Katu Rasa* is *Kapha Shamak*, *Kandu Nasak*, *Chakshu Virechana*, *Abhishyanda Nasak*, *Sroto Vishodhana* which alleviates itching, lid and conjunctival swelling and *Guruta*. *Tikta rasa* has *Kandu Dahashamaka*, *Lekhana* properties, alleviates *Abhishyanda* and itching.

**On the Basis of Guna:** *Laghu Guna* is *Lan-gana* and *Shrotoshodhaka*, which alleviates *kapha*. *Ruksha Guna* is also having *kapha Shamaka* property.

**On The Basis of Veerya:** *Sheeta Veerya* drug act as *Kapha-pitta shamaka*

**On The Basis Of Vipaka:** *Katu Vipaka* is said to be *Kapha Shamaka* and gives soothing effect on the tissues of eye.

## DISCUSSION

Allergic Conjunctivitis is one of the outcomes of this changing lifestyle, food habits and polluted environment. It is the commonest defect affecting the eyes leading to functional disturbances and can even account to impairment of vision if cornea is involved. It has been observed that the persons who do household work, cleaning of dust and other professionals requiring field work, working in polluted atmosphere have more chances of developing Allergic Conjunctivitis at an early age. *Cakshu* is a drug for local application as it is easy to carry and can apply easily and is capable of pacifying the symptoms like *Raga*, *Kandu*, *Guruta*, *Akshishopha* and *Muhurmuhur Srava*, which are the main symptoms of *Kaphaja Abhishyanda* – Allergic Conjunctivitis.

## CONCLUSION

*Abhishynda* is one of the most common disease affecting man is facing in present

days. Management of the Allergic Conjunctivitis in modern ophthalmology has considerable side effects and also is not cost effective. Collyrium is the preferred mode of application when considering the dose maintenance, easy and safe administration. It is safe, economical and procedure is easy to perform. Hence it can be concluded that *Chaksu* can be considered as very useful and effective Ayurvedic medicine in the management of *Kaphaja Abhishyanda*.

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