

## CONCEPT OF MAHAVISHA-UPVISHA SHODHAN IN AGADTANTRA

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### ABSTRACT

Ayurveda science of life deals with the study of not only treatment, but also prevention of disease, *Agadtantra* one of the parts of “*Ashtangayurveda*” deals with the study of toxins. *Aacharyas* of *Ayurveda* are much vigilant for drug collection, manufacturing and administration even while using poison (*Visha*) and sub-poison (*Upvisha*) for medicinal use. This article helps to describe methods of purification of *Visha* and *Upvisha* mentioned in *Ayurvedic* text, which will help to understand purification of *Vishadravya* to avoid fatal effect and it will also help to increase the faith of patient over *Ayurveda*. By the process of purification *dravya* which having medicine importance but due to fatal effect not used commonly, come to practice more commonly.

**Keywords:** *Toxins, Visha, Upvisha, Shodhan, Agadtantra, Ashtangayurved.*

### INTRODUCTION

In *Ayurveda*, plants are primary source of medicine, number of compounds have been isolated from medicinal plants and bring in use for mankind. However, most of these medicines have been withdrawn because of their toxicity or adverse effect. Various poisons plants, like *Bhanga* (*Cannabis sativa* linn) *Ahiphen* (*Papaver somnifera* linn), *Vatsnabha* (*Aconitus ferox*), *Kupilu* (*Strichnos nuxcomica* linn), *Dhatur* (*Dhatura metel* linn), and minerals like *Parad* (mercury), Arsenic have been used in *Ayurveda* as different plants having phytochemical area still use in crude form or after *Shodhan* process. *Charak* also explains the importance of *Shodhana* while using plants as medicines and of used improperly is a fatal poison.

In *Rasashastra*, *Shodhan* process is a part of *Samaskara* of drug, which is used to alter quality of

drugs, hence in *Rasashastra*, *Shodhan* means not a process of purification but also involves the detoxification and enhancing the efficacy of drugs. *Shodhan* process described for various drugs depending on the *Guna* (nature) and *Dharma* (Properties) of the drug.

In *Agadtantra*, one of the parts of *Ashtangayurveda* has specific importance regarding study of poisons, which helps to prevent persons from effect of poison. Also, these poisonous plants mainly called, *Visha* and *Upvish*. Using as medicinal use must be used after process of purification (*Shodhana*), which helps to prevent the fatal effect of *vishadravya* and have important medicinal use, so it is important to understand the process of *Shodhana* of *Visha* and *Upvisha* mentioned in *Ayurvedic* text.

## Aim and Objectives of Study

The Objective of present study is to review the knowledge about, *Shodhana* process of many poisonous plants (*Visha-Upvisha*) having there in medicinal use.

## Review of Literature

Literary review is foremost step before dealing with any kind of scientific or informative study. It clears the concept about materials and methods used in study. In this critical review literature regarding the concept of *shodhan* of *Visha* and *Upvisha* has been carried out. In context of *Agadtantra*, *Agad* means antitoxic substance, *Agadtantra* basically deals with the study of toxic substances characters, there effects on body and remedial measures used to avoid the effect of poison on human body. *Shodhan* of *Vishadravya* is also an important procedure which makes the toxic drug useful for there therapeutic use.

According to *Bhavprakash Nighantu* and *Rasatarngini Visha dravya* mainly classified in to two categories called *Mahavisha* and *Upvisha* according to there strength. There *Shodhan* process mentioned in *Bhavprakash Nighantu* in *Dhatvadvarga Adhyay*. *Rasatarngini* in "*Vishopvishavijyaniya Adhyay*" also describe about types of *Shodhan* and therapeutic uses of poison. Importance of *Vishadravya* also mentioned in various Ayurvedic texts.

Different process like *Mardan*, *Peshan* etc. done on the materials with indicated *dravyas* to remove various impurities is called as *Shodhan*. Concept of *shodhan* process was in practice since time of *Charaka Samhita*, *Aharya Charak* mentioned that, any poison if proceed or used properly is a potential medicine and any medicine if used improperly, is a fatal poison. *Rasashastra* explains processing of drugs by the name of *Samskara*, *Shodhan* process is one of such process used for *samskara* of drugs. In *Rasashastra* the *Shodhan* process is not only purification but also involves detoxification and enhancing the efficacy of drugs. Various procedures of *Shodhan* is used for purification of drugs like *Swedan*, *Mardan*, *Prakshalan* (washing), *Dhalana*, *Nirvapan*, *Bharjana*, *Bhavana* (Levigation), *Nimajjana* (Dipping). So, using above various methods of *Shodhan* process

mentioned in Ayurvedic text *Vish dravya* are purified and made useful for their therapeutic uses.

## Material and Methods

All Traditional text like *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita* was studied. According to *Rastaragini* and *Bhavprakash* poisonous plants classified into *Mahavisha & Upavisha* on basic of there potency in present day, Out of *Mahavisha Vatsnabha & Upvishba* like *Arka*, *Karveer*, *Gunja*, *Snuhi*, *Kuchala*, *Jaypala*, *Dhatura*, *Bhallataka*, *Vijaya*, *Ahiphena*, *langali* are used for therapeutic purpose.

### Shodhan Of Mahavisha Dravya

*Vastanabha*, *Aconitum ferox*

The roots of *Vatsnabh* were cut into small pieces and tied in *pottali* it can be detoxified by placing it in cow's milk or goat milk in *Dolayantra* for 3-6hrs. After that, pieces of *Vatsnabh* is washed with warm water and used for therapeutic purpose.

### Shodhan Of Upvisha Dravya (Sub-Poisonous Drug)

1) *Ahiphen*, *Papaver somniferum* linn (Except Seeds)

Dissolved in water then filtered with cloth after that mixed with *Godughda* (cow's milk) heated in mild heat, this paste triturated with *Ginger Juice* for 7-21 times dried under shade.

2) *Bhallataka*, *Semicarpus anacardium* linn (Seed)

1<sup>st</sup> Method: Top portion of *Bhallataka* fruits should be removed with knife and mixed with brick powder and are kept in a *pottali* (bag) and tied its mouth with thread, this is rubbed gently by hands when brick powder became wet with oil and skin of *Bhallataka* is unwrapped washed with hot water to obtain *shuddha Bhallataka*.

2<sup>nd</sup> Method: After removing top part of seeds cuts in two parts are placed in *Pottalli*, *Swedana* is done by filling it with coconut water for 1-2 hours in *Dolayantra* (Swing Apparatus).

3) *Bhanga*, *Cannabis sativa* linn (Except Seed)

1<sup>st</sup> Method: Leaves are tied in a cloth and soaked with water the procedure must continue until greenish color discharge stop from leaves. After that, leaves were dried under the shed, thereafter, fried in *Gogruth* (cow's ghee) on mild fire and use for therapeutic purpose.

2<sup>nd</sup> Method: *Swedana* (fomentation)- In *Godugdha* (Cow's milk) for 3 hours with mild fire then wash with water after getting it dried fried in *Goghrit*.

3<sup>rd</sup> Method: *Bhanga* leaves to be fomented in Decoction of *babbul tvak* (Bark of *Acacia catechu*) for 25 – 30 minutes with moderate heat and then subjected to drying under direct sunlight further they are triturated with *Godugdha* (cow's milk) dried and use.

4) *Dhatura*, *Dhatura Metal* Linn

1<sup>st</sup> Method: Seeds are kept in *potalli* it should be *Swedana* (Fomented) in *Dolayantra* by adding *Godugdha* (cow's milk) or *Gomutra* (Cow's urine) for 3 hours then after seeds should be washed with warm water and dried in sun, seeds are used after removing seed coat.

2<sup>nd</sup> Method: Seeds should be kept in *Dolayantra* and *Swedan* is done using cow's urine for 3 hours after that triturated in *khalvayantra* and filtered through cloth.

5) *Gunja*, *Abrus precatorius* linn (Seed)

Seeds are tied in two layered cloth kept suspended in (cow's milk) *Godugdha* or *Gomutra* (Cow's urine) or *kanji* anyone of these for *Swedan* taken in *Dolayantra* the suspension is boiled with *Gunja* seeds are taken out washed in hot water dried and preserved.

6) *Jaipala*, *Croton tiglium*

1<sup>st</sup> Method: Remove the physical impurities of seeds washed with water and then dried in a shade the outer covering of seeds is removed, after that, cotyledons are separated carefully to remove the radicle with the help of knife. Seeds are tied in *potalli* and subjected to *Swedana* for 3 hours and 3 times in *Dolayantra* using *Godugadh* (cow's milk).

2<sup>nd</sup> method: Without seed coat and radical *Jaipala* seeds are taken and mixed with 8<sup>th</sup> part of *suhaga* (Borax) after tied in a *potalli* subjected to *Swedana* for 6 hours in *Dolayantra* by using *Godugdha* (Cow's milk).

7) *Karveera*, *Nerium indicum*

Roots of *Karveera* are purified by *Swedana* process In *Dolayantra* using *Godugdha* (Cow's milk) for 3 hours after *Shodhana* the roots are washed with water and dried.

8) *Langli*, *Glosiosa superoba* Linn

1<sup>st</sup> Method: Fresh *Langli* roots and seeds are immersed in *Gomutra* (cow's urine) for 24 hour and wash with lukewarm water by this process it is detoxified.

2<sup>nd</sup> Method: Cut small pieces of *Langli* should be kept in sour buttermilk for seven days in earthen pot and then dried in sun, after that collected in glass jar and used.

9) *Snuhi*, *Euphorbia nerrifolia* Linn

The milk of *Snuhi* is collected and mixed with the juice of *Imli* (Tamarind) put it in to a vessel and let them dry in direct sunlight, after proper drying it should be used.

10) *Kuchala*, *Strychnus nuxvomica*

1<sup>ST</sup> Method: *Kuchala* seeds shall be immersed in *Gomtra* (cow's urine) for seven nights, fresh *Gomutra* is to be replaced every night. Thereafter, it is removed and washed with water. Seeds shall be further detoxified by *Swedana* boiling with *Godugdha* (cow's milk) in *Dolayantra* for 3 hour the seed coat and embryo are removed the cotyledons shall be in *Goghrit* (cow's ghee) and powdered cell.

2<sup>nd</sup> Method: The seeds are fried in cow's ghee by slow heating separate the outer covering of seeds and warm separate the outer covering of seeds and warm cotyledons are finely powdered and used.

3<sup>rd</sup> Method: Ripped seeds of *Kuchala* are immersed in *Kanji* (Butter milk) for 3 days after 3 days the outer shell should be peel off, dried in sunlight powdered and used.

## DISCUSSION

From the above descriptions, the science of Ayurveda is careful about fatality of any drug hence they already mentioned the precautions, do's and don't about the use of medicinal use of drugs. It is matter of discussion and research that after purification how many dreadful qualities of poison are diminished to make it useful therapeutically. Poisons are highly potent and fast acting drugs; they can be used as a catalyst enhance the drug with which it is used. But before using poison they should be purified to reduce its fatality. Aconitine is the main toxic constituent in *Vatsanabha*. Though there are different media for

*Shodhana* mentioned for *vatsnabha*, the recent researches proved that the % of removal of Aconitine is more in cow's urine. Since cow's urine is easily available and cost effective, this method can be adopted for *Shodhana* of *Vatsnabha*. Strychnine and Brucine are toxic agents in *nuxvomica*. *Shodhana* on *Kupilu* proved the reduction of this toxic content after the procedure changes of the Rf value in raw and purified *Bhallataka* reveals the chemical changes after *Shodhana* procedure. So, these poisonous plants should be added to compound formulation only after proper purification. In *Ayurveda*, there are lots of media used for *Shodhana*. Cow's urine and cow's milk are common media for *Shodhana* of *Vishadravya* (poisonous plants). The specific method for individual drug differs for *Bhallataka*. The brick powder is one of the important media for *Shodhana*. The oil present in the fruit is highly irritant hypothesis that the oily part of the fruit is toxic, and its degree of removal is proportional to its safety margin.

## CONCLUSION

From this study it may be concluded that drug contains toxic alkaloids which may be purified by above method and after *Shodhana* (purification) used for various therapeutic purposes. As we know poison can be converted into excellent medicine if processed and administered properly but if hand inaccurately it may become dangerous. *Ayurveda* emphasize the use of *Visha* and *Upvisha* in various formulations as well as used as single drugs which suggest its importance in medical practice. It is good to admit *Shodhan* process mentioned in ancient text with modern technology to assess its safety and efficacy. *Bhavana dravya* also plays an important role in making drug without side effect.

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