



CONCEPT OF RAKSHOGNA DHOOPANA - THE ROLE OF APARAJITA DHOOPA CHOORNA AS A STERILIZATION AGENT IN NEW NORMAL PANDEMIC SCENARIO- AN OVERVIEW

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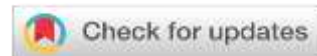
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ABSTRACT

The concept of sterilization and disinfection has become a part and parcel of our daily routine habits. The use of facial masks and disinfection have been necessary to survive an infection from Pandemics. The concept of *Rakshogna dhoopana* mentioned in Ancient Ayurvedic texts can be highlighted in this context. *Dhoopana* or Ayurveda fumigation technique has become pivotal at this time. The use of *Aparajita dhoopa choorna Dhoopana* as a sterilization method has called out nationwide attention during this pandemic period. The *Dhoopana* procedure has an Aesthetic, Spiritual, Psychological, and medical significance in Indian culture from the ancient period onwards. Different types of *Dhoopana* with different drug combinations are mentioned by Acharyas both for Therapeutic as well as sterilization and disinfecting purposes.

Keywords: *Aparajita Dhoopa Choornam*, Fumigation, Pandemic, *Rakshogna Dhoopana*, Sterilization.

INTRODUCTION

Rakshognadhooopana (protective fumigation) is an ancient Ayurvedic concept of sterilization. It has been

practiced since *Samhita kaalas*. In *Vedic* literature period also *Yajnas* and *Homas* are performed to

purify and mitigate various negative energies. The *Homa sthanas* are said to be the most auspicious and sacred places to enter. Ayurveda Acharyas have mentioned the concept of *Rakshogna Dhoopana* in various *Aupasargika rogas*¹(Contagious Diseases). The concept of post-operative sterilization has been followed over the period. The sterilization of *Bheshajagaras* (Pharmacies), *Suthikagara* (Labor room), *Kumaragara* (Children's ward), *Vranithagara* (Ward for the wounded), etc. has also been mentioned. According to *Susrutha Rakshogna dhoopana* is done as a post-operative measure after *Pradhana karma*². In the concept of *Sastra payana*³ also the dipping of *Sastras* in the respective liquids not only increases the efficacy of the *Sastras* but also sterilizes them. Fumigation of *Vranithagara* for ten days twice a day is mentioned⁴. In *Susrutha Shareera*, *Dhoopana* is indicated for *Garbha sangha* and *Apara sanga*. Further description of *Dhoopana* is mentioned in *Karna roga*, *Yoni roga*, *Hikka*, *Unmadha*, *Grahahadha*, *Apasmara*, etc. Different *Dhoopanas* for different *Grahas* which affect the children are mentioned. According to *Charaka*, disinfection of clothes beds, etc, should be done to prevent microbes. Three types of *Dhoopana* in *Apasmara* and five types of *Dhoopana* in *Arshas* are mentioned. According to *Astanga samhraha Rasnadi*⁵ *dhoopana* is mentioned for *Alasakaroga*. Different *Dhupas* for *Apara sanga*, *Jwara*, *Grahahadha* and *Unmada Apasmara* are also mentioned. According to *Astanga hrudhaya* also in diseases like *Jwara*, *Grahahadha*, *Visha*, *Unmada*, and *Apasmara* the *Dhoopas* which have therapeutics uses also mentioned. *Kashyapa* has mentioned *Dhoopana* as a separate chapter in *Kalpasthanas*, *Dhoomakalpa adhyaya*. Therapeutical preparation of around forty-one types of drugs was mentioned here.

NIRUKTHI OF DHOOPANA

“*Dhupayithva sandhukshayathi vahnimithi*”⁶ When varthi is ignited with fire gives its odor containing smoke.

HISTORY OF RAKSHOGNA-DHOOPANA IN AYURVEDA⁷

According to *Kashyapa*, when born children of sages were tortured by *Rakshasas* then all the great sages possessing oblation, recitation, and penance went to the shelter of fire., Then satisfied *agni* said that accept and use these fumigations given by me, there will no fear from *Rakshasa* bhutas and *Pishachas*.

TYPES OF DHOOPANA⁸

Dhoopana, *Anudhoopana*, and *Pratidhoopana* are the 3 types mentioned by *Kashyapa*

Dhoopana – Normal fumigation done for the specific purpose of disinfection.

Anudhoopana-The subsequent fumigation is done to enhance the effect of *Dhoopana*.

Pratidhoopana –The anti-fumigation procedure done to prevent the reappearance of the disease.

Another classification based on *Yoni* is *Sthavara* and *Jangama*.

COMMON MICROBES PRESENT IN AIR¹¹

Microbes that are suspended in the air are called Bioaerosols. These are pathogenic and usually depend upon physical and chemical properties of the atmosphere such as temperature, humidity, solar radiation, wind, precipitation, and air pressure for their existence. Bioaerosols include bacterial, fungi, viruses, etc.

The Spanish Flu and Covid-19 are both airborne viral outbreaks that became pandemics and felt the mark in history. Studies on possible effects of environmental factors on air-borne transmission of SAARS- COV-2 suggests that higher temperature greater or equal to 38°C, wind turbulence, and UV radiation slow down the transmission of the virus

APARAJITHA DHOOPANA CHOORNAM⁹

Aparajita dhupa churna is mentioned by *Vagbata* in *Astanga hrudhaya chikitsa sthana* – *Jwara chikitsa*.

“*Pura dhyma vacha sarja nimba arka agaru dharubhi*

Dhupo jwaraeshu sarvaeshu karyou ayam aparajitham”

Vagbhata has mentioned this in the context of *Vishama Jwara*. (Viral fever) which is caused by a virus.

DETAILS OF THE INGREDIENTS OF APARAJITA DHOOPA CHOORNA

There are eight drugs present in *Aparajita Dhupa choorna*. They are *Pura (Commiphora wightii)*, *Dhyama (Actinopteris radiata)*, *Vacha (Acoras calamus)*, *Sarjarasa (Shorea robusta)*, *Nimba (Azadiracta indica)*, *Arka (Calotropics procera)* and

*Dharu (Cedrus deodara)*¹⁰. 10 gms of *Aparajita dhupa choorna* is prepared out of approx..1.428gms of powdered form of each drug. It is coarsely powdered in form and is dark brown in color. It has a favorable odor.

Table 1: Ingredients & microbial properties.

#	Ingredients	Scientific Name	Parts Used	Antimicrobial Property
1	<i>Pura</i>	<i>Commiphora wightii</i>	Resin	Anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial
2	<i>Dhyama</i>	<i>Actinopectorous dicotoma</i>	Whole plant	Anti-helminthic, anti-leprotic, and febrifuge
3	<i>Vacha</i>	<i>Acorous calamus</i>	Rhizhome	Anti-helminthic, anti-inflammatory, anti-pyretic insecticidal
4	<i>Sarja</i>	<i>Shorea robusta</i>	Bark, leaves, fruits, resin	Anti-helminthic, Analgesic
5	<i>Nimba</i>	<i>Azadirecta indica</i>	Leaves	Insecticidal, anti-helminthic, anti-septic
6	<i>Arka</i>	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	Whole plant	Anti-helminthic. Expectorant, depurative
7	<i>Agaru</i>	<i>Aquilloria agallocha</i>	resinous wood	antileprotic, anti-inflammatory, deodrant
8	<i>Dharu</i>	<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	wood, essential oil	anti -microbic

STUDIES PROVING THE EFFICACY OF APARAJITA DHOOPANA

Various studies have been conducted to prove the Efficacy of *Aparajita dhoopana churnam* in disinfecting the microbes. One such study is done by Kerala-based ayurveda pharmacy in association with ISM department Kerala as reported by The Hindu Newspaper Kochi Edition on June 16, 2020. *Dhoopana* was done in migrant labor camps with *Aparajita dhoopa churna* during the lockdown period. The results say that it is highly effective against microorganisms, especially bacteria and fungi. The study was conducted for nine days, and it was found that the bacterial concentration has reduced from 8020 colonies forming unit to 60 cfu, and fungi reduced from 835 cfu to 9 cfu on the third day of the fumigation. Further analyzing the microbial studies, it is inferred that this formulation is found to be effective in destroying both gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria. This formulation

has been found to be effective against bacteria like candida albicans which are most likely to affect HIV patients. The standardized GMP packing of *Dhoopa churnam* is now available at all leading pharmacies all over India.

METHOD OF DHOOPANA PROCEDURE

Things needed

1. 10 gm of *Aparajita dhupa churnam*
2. Hot burned charcoal
3. Earthenware pot

The hot burnt charcoal is put in an earthenware pot and put 50g *Aparajitha dhupa churna* into it. The volatile oils generated from the ingredients have anti-microbial effects mixed with fumes and thus destroy the bioaerosols present in the atmosphere. It acts for around 24-72 hours and has to be repeated every 24-48 hours for efficacy.

MODE OF ACTION

The ingredient drugs of *Aparajita dhoopa churna* are mostly *Agni* and *Vayu Maha bhutapradhana* drugs. The gunas present are *Laghu*, *Ushna*, *Ruksha*, and *Vishada* in nature. Hence these drugs are easily

combustable and produce volatile oils. These volatile oils have strong antimicrobial properties. Hence this destroys the bioaerosols present in the atmosphere.

DISCUSSION

The benefits of *Aparajita Dhoopana* are as follows

- It can be used as a disinfectant agent.
- It is used to fumigate homes, offices, damp areas, etc.
- Fumigation can be done during the rainy season also to prevent fungal growth and prevents disease outbreaks which are more at this time.
- It acts on bacteria, viruses, and fungi.
- It is a safe method of disinfection.
- It can be used in all fever conditions especially in *Vishama Jwara* (viral fever) as per classical reference.
- It is a very cost-effective method of fumigation.
- It also kills mosquitoes and other disease-spreading agents.

CONCLUSION

Aparajita dhoopa churna is a time-tested formulation for the *Rakshogna Dhoopana* in Epidermic Diseases, It consists of drugs like *Guggulu*, *Vacha Nimba*, etc which have strong antimicrobial action. The proven facts of the antimicrobial action of this choorna are highly appreciable in present-day pandemics. Vagbatta has mentioned this *choorna* in the *Vishama Jwara* context but is also applicable in all *Janapadodwamsa vyadhies*¹² (Epidemics) proves that the ayurvedic herbs are highly potent in destroying the disease spreading organisms also. It is cost-effective and safer to use than modern sterilization methods. To conclude the role of *Aparajita dhupa choorna* in present-day pandemics has proved to be a wonderful contribution by the ayurvedic medical field to the modern-day new normal life.

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