UNDERSTANDING SAPTHAVIDHA KASHAYA KALPANA
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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a life science which explains about the different dosage forms. There has been a development over the concept of drug dosage form in the modern texts of Ayurveda to increase palatability and also for easy absorption of the drug. Ayurvedic pharmacology gives fundamental importance to the various pharmacological activities of the drugs. It unravels multiple attributes of a single drug through different dosage forms and definite processing techniques. A better dosage form will lower the dose and provide optimum benefit. Ayurvedic pharmaceutics gives an important role in processing of drugs. Acharya Harita mentioned Saptavidha Kashaya wherein seven different types of reductive kashaya (decoction) are said to produce different pharmacological actions from Dhatu tarpana to Shoshana. A pharmacological evaluation of these different dosage forms and a rational understanding of their probable mode of action are necessary.

Keywords: Dosage form, Sapthavidha kashaya

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is attracting global attention due to its holistic approach in the treatment of disease and with minimal adverse drug reaction. These are explained in classics for the purpose of making it compatible without losing its potency or efficiency of the drugs. It has been explained based on considering all the aspects like Desa (land/soil), Kala (time), Bala (strength) etc. The importance of various dosage forms is to make it compatible, palatable and easy absorption. In order to do this the potency of a drug can also be increased or decreased. It is also used to increase the shelf life of the particular preparation. Kalpana (formulations) is a method/ process of preparation of medicines by using either a single drug or a combination of several drugs. It can also be known as a science which explains about the various methods of processing of drugs, which helps in enhancing its potency and rendering the drugs fit to be used by improving the palatability. Pharmacological activities can be understood, analyzed and can be applied clinically through particular dosage form and definite processing techniques. A better dosage form will lower the dose and provide optimum benefit. Ayurvedic pharmaceutics gives an important role in processing of drugs. In Charaka Samhita, samskaras (fortifications) are adopted to a drug to potentify its qualities and for better therapeutic activity. Among the various dosage forms mentioned in Ayurveda, Sapthavidha Kashaya Kalpana is one, here
the *dravya* is mixed with water in specific proportion and reduced to a specific quantity. Different authors have given difference of opinion about the quantity of water to be added and quantum of reduction. Acharya Harita mentions 7 types of *Kashaya* (*Saptavidha Kashaya*) and each has been named according to the action attributed to the preparation.

**DEFINITION OF KASHAYA**

*Kashaya* is one among the *Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana*. In Ayurvedic classics; prime importance is given for the preparation of medicine. Boiling the *dravya* in water for a definite period of time and reducing it to specific quantity is called *kashaya*.¹

The word *Kashaya* means²

‘Ka’: denotes *kaya* (*ishareera*), (body)

’Sha’: denotes functions.

‘Ya’: denotes regulation or *Yantra* (control or to sustain).

Literally, the word *Kashaya* means that which brings about normalcy to the body by maintaining equilibrium of physiological factors by removing pathology.

**SYNONYMS**³,⁴

*Kashaya, Kwatha, Shrita, Niryuha*

*Kwatha* forms the basis for majority of the preparation like *Arishta, Rasakriya, Ghrita, Taila* etc. These are mainly to increase the shelf life of the prepared medicine, because all the five basic formulations have a shelf life with maximum of 24 hrs.

**NIRUKTI**

1. *Kashaya*³, ⁵, ⁶: Generally *kashaya* is referred to *kashaya rasa*.

2. *Kwatha*: The word *Kwatha* refers to decoction, wherein the drug is boiled in water and reduced to a specific quantity.

3. *Shrita*:³ Shrita is a synonym of *Kashaya* wherein the drug soaked in the water, boiled on fire and then filtered.

4. *Niryuha*:³ *Niryuha* is a synonym of *kashaya* which is specifically prepared with *shimi dhanya* (cereals and pulses).

**HISTORICAL REVIEW OF KASHAYAS**⁹: During *vedic* period there were very minimal description about the method of preparation. Indirect references are available of using *dravya* and *jala* in combination to prepare *kashaya*. In *Samhita* period, classification and method of preparation is mentioned.

*Acharya charaka* (*su.* ⁴th chapter) was first to mention about *Panchavidha khashaya kalpana*, but he has given the name *Shrita* for *kashaya*, wherein he describes the boiling of *dravya* in the *mandaagni* is *Shrita*.¹

*Acharya Sushruta* (*su.* 44) considers six types of *kashaya kalpanas* – *Ksheera* (milk), *Swarasa*, *Kalpana* (formulations), *Shrita, Sheeta* (cold) and *Churna* (powder).¹⁰

In *Sharangadhara* (chap1): method of preparation of *kashaya* (decoction) is mentioned and includes *kashaya* under *panchavidha khashayas*.¹¹

*Acharya Kashyapa* has also mentioned it under ⁷ types of *khashaya* (decoction). *Churna* (powder), *Sheeta khashaya, Swaras*, *Abhishava* (fermented preparation), *Phanta, kalka* (paste) and *Kwatha* (decoction).

*Acharya Harita* has classified *khashayas* into ⁷ types depending on the quantum of reduction and the *karma* exhibited by that particular *kwatha*.¹²
General Method of Preparation of Kashaya

According to Acharya Sharangadhara, Kwatha or kashaya is prepared by boiling 1pala of powdered drug in 16 parts of water on Mandaagni reducing it to 1/8th.

Vagbhata described 1 part of drug in 8 parts of water reduce to 1/4th.

Acharya Sushrutha gives a detailed explanation of preparation of kashaya and specifies the part of dravya i.e. tvak (bark), patra (leaves), phala (fruit), mula (root) that are properly dried in the sun, cut into pieces or pounded and to this 8 or 16 parts of water is added, boiled and reduced to 1/4th.

Dalhana explains the preparation of kashaya (decoction) while commenting on the preparation of Rasakriya where eight or sixteen parts of water is added to one part of dravya, boiled and reduced to 1/8th or 1/6th.

Adhamalla also explains about Padavashesha kashaya (reduction to 1/4th) and suggests that such kashayas should be used only in visha chikista and not everywhere.

Arunadatta explains the method of preparation of kashaya, while commenting on the preparation of niruha aushadhi wherein padavasheshas kashaya (reduction to 1/4th) is mentioned.

Chakrapanidatta\(^1\) opines that kashaya is prepared by adding 4, 8 or 16 parts of water and reducing it to one fourth Chakrapanidatta commenting on this states that generally the dravya become ghanasatva when approximately 3/4th parts of water gets evaporated. Hence Padavashesha Kashaya is to be prepared unless specified.

Ksharapani suggest 4, 8 and 16 parts of water for Mrudu, kathina and kathiniti-kathina dravyas respectively. Method of preparation of kashaya according to different authors

<table>
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<tr>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>1:16 1/8(^{th})</th>
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PRECAUTIONS\(^1\(^3\)\)

Acharya Sharangadhara explains that while preparing kwatha,

- Powder must be coarse.

- One should not cover the lid as it becomes heavy for digestion.

- Should not boil again once taken off the fire. Should consume within 24hrs of preparation.
Acharya Harita describes\(^\text{12}\):
- Stirring is avoided during the preparation.
- Prepared kashaya should not be reheated.

**UTTAMA KWATHA LAKSHANA\(^\text{12}\)**

Acharya Harita mentioned, kashaya (decoction) which has the varna (colour) and gandha (odour) similar to that of the dravyas used for its preparation and which is clear without any ghanatva or picchilata is considered to be uttama (best in quality).

**HEENA KWATHA LAKSHANA\(^\text{12}\)**

Acharya Harita says kashaya which has become Krishna, Neela, Raktavaranyukta, which has become turbid, picchila, which is dadvah, kunapagandha, visragnadhayukta etc. such a kashaya has to be discarded as it will not be able to reduce the disease condition.

**TIME OF ADMINISTRATION**

Generally when the time of administration of kashaya is not told, the kashaya should be taken in the morning.

**POSOLOGY\(^\text{13}\)**

1. Pala (48ml)
2. 2 pala (98ml)

**Uttamamatra-** 1 Pala (48ml)

**Madhyamatra-** 3 karsha (36ml)

**Avaramatra -** ½ pala (24ml)

**Shelf life:** 24hrs

Method of preparation, Utility and Bhesaja kala of Saptavidha kashaya.\(^\text{12}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF KASHAYA</th>
<th>REDUCED TO</th>
<th>KARMA</th>
<th>BHESHAJAKALA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tarpana (Nourishment)</td>
<td>Samamsha (just boiled)</td>
<td>Dhatutarpna</td>
<td>Kalye- prabhate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pachana (Digestive)</td>
<td>Ardhavasheshi (1/2)</td>
<td>Doshapachana</td>
<td>Nishasu (2(^{nd})yama)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kledana (Anointing)</td>
<td>Chaturanga (1/4)</td>
<td>Hridayakledana</td>
<td>Kalye- prabhate</td>
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### Pharmacological Activities Related to Sapthavidha Kashaya

#### Tarpana Kashaya \(^{12,11,5}\)

It is the first reductive kashaya. Tarpana kashaya does Dhatu tarpana and is to be administered in the early morning. Tarpana acts at the level of rasa dhatu and may be structural, functional or qualitative nourishment respective to the dhatu. Tarapana is brought about by utilizing dravyas which are having Pruthvi and Apmahabhuta pradhanyata. Among the rasa panchakas, Madhura rasa, Guru guna, Madhura vipaka and Sheeta Virya are attributed with tarapana properties.

#### Pachana Kashaya \(^{12,1,7}\)

It is the second reductive kashaya. It does Dosha pachana and is to be administered in the second yama of night. Pachana karma is defined as that activity which digests amadosha by increasing the agni bala irrespective of the involvement of dosha, dathu and mala. But it does not increase the agni. Pachana can be brought about by utilizing dravyas which have vayu and agnimahabhuta pradhanyata.

#### Kledana Kashaya \(^{7,15}\)

It is the third reductive kashaya. It is specially indicated for Hridaya kledana. Hridaya kledana is required where rasadi upashoshana is there. Since hridaya is the mulasthan for Rasavaha and Pranavaha srotas, Kledana karma can be brought about by dravyas which are having Prithvi and Apmahabhuta pradhanyata. Among the rasapanchakas, Amla-Lavanarasas, Guru-Snigdha - drava gunas, Madhura Vipaka and Sheeta Virya dravyas posses Kledana property. Kledana karma can be specifically attributed to snigdha and Drava guna, which have the special property of increasing the kledabhava or ardrata in the shareera.

#### Shamana Kashaya \(^{12,7,1}\)

It is the fourth reductive kashaya. Among the rasa panchakas, Madhura-Amla-Lavana-Tikta-Kashaya rasas, Mandaguna, Sheeta and Ushna virya and Madhura vipaka are attributed with Shamana karma. Shamana karma is advocated when the doshas are in their pakwavastha and not in Amavastha. Shamana karma can be adopted in all disorders when the doshas are alpa vridda, and which need not be expelled out of the body.

In the context of Jwara, Acharaya charaka has specially indicated the use of shamam kashaya after six days of langhana in jwara when the doshas have attained the state of niramavastha, to pacify the doshas. This kashaya is indicated for roga shamana and is administered in early half of the day.

#### Deepana Kashaya \(^{11,12}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shamana (Pacifying)</th>
<th>Deepana (Digestive)</th>
<th>Shodhana (purifying)</th>
<th>Vishoshi (Drying)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashtavashesa (1/8)</td>
<td>Dashamsha (1/10)</td>
<td>Dvadashamsha (1/12)</td>
<td>Shodashamsha (1/16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogashana</td>
<td>Agni deepana</td>
<td>Malashodhana</td>
<td>Shoshana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purvahna</td>
<td>Aparahna</td>
<td>Suryodayat purva</td>
<td>Nishithe (3rd yama)</td>
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</table>
It is the fifth reductive kashaya, here the drug is boiled in water on a low flame till the water content is reduced to one tenth, and it is said to do agni deepana and advised to consume in the afternoon. Deepana karma is defined as that activity which stimulates the digestive fire but does not help in amapachana. It is also termed as Jarana or Jaranaya.

Where there is agnimandhya, the vayu mahabhuta present in deepana dravya stimulates the agni and does deepana karya.

**SHODHANA KASHAYA**

Shodhana kashaya is the sixth reductive kashaya, wherein the drug and water are boiled together on mandagni till the water content is reduced to one twelfth. Shodhana kashaya does Mala shodhana and is to be administered before sunrise.

To undergo shodhana karma one has to use the dravyas having Pruthvi and Apmahabhuta pradhanyata. Among the rasapanchaka, Amla–Lavana–Katu–Tikta–Kashaya rasas, guru–ushana–Tikshna–Sara guna, Ushnavirya and Madhura katu vipaka are attributed with Shodhana property.

**VISHOSHI KASHAYA**

Vishoshi kashaya is the last reductive kashaya among the saptavidha kashaya. The drug and water are taken and boiled on a low flame and reduced to one sixteenth, Vishoshi kashaya is indicated for shoshana karma and is to be administered in the third yama of night.

**CONCLUSION**

These Kashaya Kalpanas which have been mentioned in Ayurveda are mainly aimed at isolation of suitable active principles through modulation of both temperature and concentration. Kashaya Kalpana satisfies most of the criteria for absorption of the drug.

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