Review Article

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A Review on *Kushthaghna Mahakashaya*

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ABSTRACT:

The broad term used in Ayurveda for all types of skin disorders is *Kushtha*, depending on the severity of the disease *Kushtha* is further classified as *Mahakushtha* and *Kshudrakushtha*. According to the Acharyas, *Kushtha* arises due to the vitiation of seven factors, of which three are *doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha)* and four are *Dushyas* (*Tvaka*, *Mamasa*, *Shonita* and *laseeka*). *Acharyas* have classified eighteen types of *Kushtha* on the basis of the predominance of seven factors, out of which seven are *Mahakushtha* and eleven are *Kushdrakushtha*. The Ayurvedic classics attach great importance to *Kushtha* which is evident from the fact that the treatment of *Kushtha* is described in the third chapter of *Charaka Samhita* where external therapeutics for the disease are explained. In the fourth chapter of *Sutrasthan* of *Charaka Samhita*, *Acharya Charaka* has described a group of ten medicines for skin diseases under *Kushthaghna mahakashaya*. Most skin diseases have a close link to psychological stress, and stress is responsible for the onset and worsening of several skin problems. *Rasayan* (rejuvenation) qualities were recorded in the majority of the medications in the *Kushthaghna Mahakashyaya.* As a result, these medications aid in lowering the adverse effects of stress and thus aid in the management of chronic skin problems. In this paper drugs of *Kushthaghna mahakashaya* has been reviewed on scientific lines through published work and it is observed that the drugs have various related activity.

Keywords: *Kushtha, Kushthaghna mahakashaya, doshas, Dushyas*

INTRODUCTION

The skin is the largest organ of the body as well as a metabolically active organ that provides a protective barrier against mechanical, thermal and physical injury and against hazardous substances, prevents the loss of moisture in the body, and reduces the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation. It also provides a friction surface to grip and synthesizes Vitamin D etc.[1] In addition to these functions, the depiction of the skin also refers to the notion of health, well-being, beauty and youth, which are associated with a person's self-esteem and mental health. Patients suffering from skin diseases often experience emotional and social betrayal in society. In Ayurvedic classics all skin disorders

come under the name of *kushtha* (skin diseases). The word *kushtha* (skin diseases) is derived from the word *kush-katana* ,[2] which means deformity of the skin, variation in skin color and loss of integrity of the skin. *Acharya Charaka* has described fifty *Mahakashyas* also known as *Dashemanis*, in the fourth chapter of the *Sutrasthan* of *Charaka Samhita*. *Kushthaghna Mahakasha* is one of them which contains a group of ten drugs which are used in *kushtha roga* .[3] The main aim of this article is to study the scientific basis of *Kushthaghna Mahakashaya* in skin diseases and to study the properties and therapeutics of drugs of *Kushthaghna Mahakashaya*.

MATERIAL & METHODS

Material related to *Kushthaghna Mahakasha* is collected from classical Ayurvedic literatures, textbooks and from various scientific published journals. The available commentaries of Ayurvedic *samhitas* has also referred to collect relevant matter.

Review of Literature

Table no. 1: Botanical details of all the Plants of *Kushtaghna Mahakashaya* [4-13]

Table no. 2: Ayurvedic properties & *doshik* action of the drugs of *Kushtaghna Mahakashaya*

Table no. 3: Medicinal Use of Drugs of *Kusthagna Mahakashaya*

Table no.4: Chemical constituents

Pharmacological Activities

Several pharmacological-activities are reported on these plants and it is also observed that they have potent medicinal efficacies against various skin disorders. Beside their anti-dermatosis properties, they also exhibit significant related activities.

Table no. 5: Pharmacological Activities Reported

DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of various ayurvedic literature it is observed that the most of the drugs of *Kushtghna Mahakasaya* are bitter in taste and it is quite evident that bitter drugs are very good blood purifier hence these drugs are effective in skin diseases as it is shown in table no. 3. The drugs of *Kushtghna Mahakasaya* were also reviewed on scientific lines through published research work and it is noticed that *Acacia catechu* Willd*; Curcuma longa* Linn; *Semecarpus anacardium* Linn; *Alstonia scholaris* R.Br and *Embelia ribes* Burm.f have anti- microbial activities, *Terminalia chebula* Retz; *Nerium indicum* Mill. *Casia fistula* Linn. and *Jasminum officinale* Linn. have anti-bacterial activities, *Casia fistula* Linn and *Terminalia chebula* Retz have antifungal activities, *Embellica officinalis* Gaertn and *Curcuma longa* Linn have protective role in skin and *Acacia catechu* Willd; *Terminalia chebula* Retz; *Embellica officinalis* Gaertn; *Curcuma longa* Linn; *Semecarpus anacardium* Linn; *Alstonia scholaris* R.Br and *Embelia ribes* Burm.f have anti-oxidant activities.

CONCLUSION

Kushtha is described as the most chronic disease in ayurvedic literature and mentioned under *mahagada*. In the fourth chapter of *Sutrasthan of Charaka Samhita*, *Acharya Charaka* has described a group of ten medicines under *Kushthaghan Mahakasaya* and many other *Acharayas* also indicate the same drugs for the *kushtha* roga. The findings of several research studies prove that the medicines mentioned under *Kushthagan Mahakashaya* contain several potent phytoconstituents that exhibit anti-dermatosis and related properties. Along with anti-dermatosis properties, these plants also have many other activities and can be used for other ailments as well.

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Table no. 1: Botanical details of all the Plants of *Kushtaghna Mahakashaya* [4-13]

Classical name	Local/ Hindi name	Botanical Name	Family	Part used
Khadir	Katha	*Acacia catechu* Willd.	Mimosoidaeae	Root, Heart-wood, Flowers
Abhaya	*Hare*	*Terminalia chebula* Retz.	Combretaceae	Fruit
Amalka	*Amla*	*Embellica officinalis* Gaertn.	Euphorbiaceae	Fruit, Seeds
Haridra	*Haldi*	*Curcuma longa* Linn.	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome
Arushkara	*Bhallatak*	*Semecarpus anacardium* Linn.	Anacardaceae	Nuts, Oil, Flowers
Saptaparna	*Chitvan*	*Alstonia scholaris* R.Br.	Apocynaceae	Bark, Latex, Flower
Aaragwadha	*Amaltasa*	*Casia fistula* Linn.	Fabaceae	Fruit-Pulp, Root- bark, leaves
Karvira	*Kaner*	*Nerium indicum* Mill.	Apocynaceae	Leaves, Root
Vidanga	*Vaividanga*	*Embelia ribes* Burm.f.	Myrsinaceae	Fruit, root
Jatipravala	*Chameli*	*Jasminum officinale* Linn.	Oleaceae	Leaves, Flower, Root

Table no. 2: Ayurvedic properties & *doshik* action of the drugs of *Kushtaghna Mahakashaya*

Drugs	***Rasa***	***Guna***	***Veerya***	***Vipaka***	Action and use	Reference
Khadir	*Kashaya, Tikta*	*Laghu, Ruksha*	*Sheeta*	*Katu*	*Kapha-pitta shamak*	4
Abhaya	*Kashaya, Madhur, Amla, Katu, Tikta*	*Ruksha, Laghu*	*Ushna*	*Madhura*	*Tridosha shamak*	5
Amalka	*Kashaya, Madhur, Amla, Katu, Tikta*	*Guru, Sheeta, ruksha*	*Sheeta*	*Madhura*	*Tridosh shamak*	6
Haridra	*Tikta, Katu*	*Laghu, Ruksha*	*Ushna*	*Katu*	*Kapha-vata shamak*	7
Arushkara	*Katu, Tikta, Kashaya*	*Laghu, Tikshna, Snigdh*	*Ushna*	*Madhura*	*Kapha-vata shamak*	8
Saptaparni	*Tikta, Kashaya*	*Laghu, Snigdha*	*Ushna*	*Katu*	*Kapha-pitta shamak*	9
Aaragvadha	*Madhur*	*Mridu, Guru, Snigdha*	*Sheet*	*Madhura*	*Pitta- kapha shamak*	10
Karvira	*Katu, Tikta*	*Laghu, Ruksha, tikshna*	*Ushna*	*Katu*	*Kapha- vata shamak*	11
Vidanga	*Kashaya, Katu*	*Laghu, Ruksha, tikshna*	*Ushna*	*Katu*	*Kapha-vata shamak*	12
Jatipravala	*Kashaya, Tikta*	*Laghu, Snigdha*	*Ushna*	*Katu*	*Tridosh shamak*	13

Table no. 3: Medicinal Use of Drugs of *Kusthagna Mahakashaya*[2-3]

Drug	Uses
Khadir	Skin disease (Agrya prakarna, Charaka samhita sutrasthana.25), Vitiligo (Charaka samhita chikitsasthana. 7/166), Pox (Vrinda madhav.56/30), Rasayana (Ashtangahridaya uttartantra. 39/153), Filaria (Gada nigraha. 4/2/42), Intrinsic haemorrhage (Charaka samhitachikitsasthana.4/70)
Abhaya	Vata-kapha disorder (Ashtangahridaya uttartantra.40/48), Piles (Charaka samhita chikitsasthana.14/67), intrinsic haemorrhage (Gada nigraha.2/8/63), Oedema (Charaka samhita chikitsasthana.12/27), Skin disease (Ashtangahridaya. chikitsasthana. 19/47 and Vrinda madhav.51/42)
Amalka	Piles (Charaka samhita chikitsasthana.14/148-52), Worms (Sushruta samhita uttartantra.54/31), Anaemia (Sushruta samhita uttartantra.44/8), Skin disease (Rajamartanda.8/1), Vitiligo (Vrinda madhav.51/34), Pox (Bhaav prakash. chikitsasthana.60/50), Vyanga (Ashtangahridaya uttartantra.37/24), Rasayana (Charaka samhita chikitsasthana.1/2/8)
Haldi	Skin disease (Sushruta samhita.chiktsasthana.9.45), Pox (Chakrapani datta.54/9), Erysipelas (Vrinda madhav.57/97)
Arushkara	Kushtha (Charaka samhita.chikitsasthana.7/82 and Sushruta samhita.chiktsasthana. 9/6), Vitiligo (Ashtangahridaya chikitsasthana.20/11), Piles (Charaka samhita.chikitsasthana.14/70), Rasayana (Charaka samhita.chikitsasthana.1/2/13-19), Alopecia (Ashtangahridaya.uttartantra.28/30)
Saptaparni	Bronchial asthma (Charaka samhita chikitsasthana.17/114), Prameha (Sushruta samhita chiktsasthana.11/9), Skin disease (Charaka samhita.chikitsasthana.7/97-99), Caries (Ashtangahridaya uttartantra.22/20)
Aaragvadha	Fever (Charaka samhita chikitsasthana.3/232), Jaundice (Ashtangahridaya chikitsasthana.16/41), Kushtha (Charaka samhita.sutrasthana.3/17and Ashtangahridayachikitsasthana.19/13), Wounds (Sushruta samhita chiktsasthana.8/30), Erysipelas (Charaka samhitachikitsasthana.21/89-92)
Karvir	Skin disease (Charaka samhitasutrasthana.3/17, Charaka samhita chikitsasthana.7/97-99 and Charaka samhita.chikitsasthana.7/105-7), *Sidhma* (VM.51.127), *Kitibha* (Vrinda madhav.51/127), Baldness (Ashtangahridaya uttartantra .24/29), Eczema (Chakrapani datta.50.49), *Upadamsa* (Sushruta samhita.chiktsasthana.19/39)
Vidanga	Skin disease (Sushruta samhita chiktsasthana. 9/52-53 and Sharangdhar samhita .12.33), Rasayana (Sushruta samhita chiktsasthana.27/7 and Sushruta samhita chiktsasthana.27.8 and Ashtangahridaya uttartantra.39/151-52)
Jatipravala	Wound (Sushruta samhita chiktsasthana.19/14), Foetid ear (Vrinda madhav .59/41), Stomatitis(Charaka samhita chikitsasthana.26/198), Freckles (Gada nigraha.3/5/149)

Table no.4: Chemical constituents

Drugs	Chemical Composition
Khadir[4]	Catechin, Catechu tannic acid[4]
Abhaya	Tannin, Chebulagic acid, carbohydrates, gum[5]
Amalaka	Tannin, Vit. C, fat, Carbohydrates[6]
Haridra	Curcumin, Vit.A, Carbohydrates[7]
Arushkara	Semecarpol, Bhilwanol[8]
Saptaparni	Ditamine, echitamine, Echitanine[9]
Aragvadha	Anthraquinone, Gluten, Tannins[10]
Karivira	Scopoletin, Scopolin, karabin, oil, wax[11]
Vidanga	Embelin, christembine, volatile oil, tannin, Fixed oil[12]
Jatipravala	Salicylic acid, Jasminine[13]

Table no. 5: Pharmacological Activities Reported

Plants	Pharmacological activities
Acacia catechu	Antioxidant[14], Antidiabetic[15], Antihypertensive[16], Anti-microbial [17-21], Hepatoprotective[22], Wound healing[23], Immunomodulatory[24].
Terminalia chebula	Antioxidant[25-27], Wound healing[28-31], Antidiabetic[32-34], Hypolipidemic[35-36], Antibacterial[37-41], Antifungal[42], Antiviral[43,44], Adaptogenic[45], Anti-inflammatory[46,47], Immunomodulatory[48,49].
Embellica officinalis	Antioxidant[50,51], Antidiabetic[52,53], Immunomodulatory[54,55], Adaptogenic[56], Hypolipidemic[57,58], Cardioprotective role[59], Protective role for skin[60], Hepatoprotective[61], Chemoprotective role[62].
Curcuma longa	Anti-inflammatory effect[63-65], Immunomodulatory effect[66-68], Hepatoprotective effect[69,71], Antidiabetic effect[72,73], Antimicrobial effect[74-77], Antioxidant effect[78-81], Antiallergic effect[82], Anti-carcinogenic property[83-88], Cardioprotective role[89-91], Protective role in skin diseases[92-94], Protective role in Alzheimer's disease[95].
Semecarpus anacardium	Antioxidant[96], Immunomodulatory[97,98], Hypolipidemic[99], Anti-inflammatory[100], Anti-arthritic[101], Antimicrobial[102], Anti-carcinogenic[103,104], Spermicidal[105].
Alstonia scholaris	Antioxidant[106], Immunomodulatory[107], Antidiabetic[108,109], Antimicrobial[110,111], Wound healing[112], Anticarcinogenic[113-115], Hepatoprotective[116], Antistress[117].
Nerium indicum	Antioxidant[118], Antihyperlipidemic[119], Antiulcer[120], Antibacterial[121], Anti-inflammatory[122], Analgesic[123], Hepatoprotective[124].
Embelia ribes	Antidiabetic effect[125-127], Antioxidant effect[128,129], Cardioprotective effect[130], Wound healing property[131], Anthelmintic activity[132-134], Antimicrobial effect[135-139], Antispermatozoal activity[140,141], Anticonvulsant activity[142].
Jasminum officinale	Used in aromatherapy[146], Antibacterial[143], Antifertility[144], Anti-viral[145], Analgesic & antispasmodic[146].
Casia fistula	Antifungal[147], Antibacterial[147] Antioxidant[148]