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The Role of *Aragwadha* (*Cassia fistula* Linn.) Against *Vata Rakta* (Gout) - A Review

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ABSTRACT:

The doctrine of *Tridosha* forms the cornerstone of *Ayurveda*, the oldest & pioneer healthcare / medical system in the world. The only difference between health and illness is the balance or imbalance among *Tridosha*. As per *Ayurvedic* literature, most of diseases arise of some imbalance of *Jatharagni* (Metabolism Process). *Vata Rakta* / Gout is no exception, presenting with simultaneous imbalance among *Vata*, *Rakta*, and *Agni*. As per *Ayurvedic* therapeutic guidelines, this disease is to be dealt with through *Shaman & Shodhan* modalities. Gout is a prominent metabolic disorder, also featuring in the metabolic syndrome. Though much under rated, *Aragwadha* being mildly laxative/*Mridu Virechak*, anti-dermatitis/*Kandughna*, anti-inflammatory /*Jwarahar* poses a huge potential as anti-Gout agent. These properties have been established by various modern researches as well.

Keywords :- *Ayurveda*, *Jatharagni*, *Vata Rakta*, *Virechan*

INTRODUCTION

In the present worldwide scenario, the exponential change towards adopting the modernization in the existing lifestyle has undoubtedly contributed in the origin of various disease conditions, changing the symptomatology of various pre-existing disorders. Nowadays, there is rise in the percentage of occurrence of various metabolic disorders, which have gripped the population worldwide and among them the *Vatarakta* (gout) is the blazing health issue among the public. The condition expresses abruptly and is a nagging one. The *Ayurveda* has its own established concepts and principles and *Tridoshas* are one of them. The

biological and physiological functions of the *Sharir* (body) are controlled by *Tridoshas*. The *Ayurvedic Samhitas* consider *Vata Dosha* as the most significant among the three *Doshas*. It is mentioned in the *Ayurvedic* texts that *Vata* regulates, activates of *Pitta* and *Kapha* along with *Dhatu* (*Pittah Pangu Kaphah Pangu Pangavo Mal Dhatavaah*)^[1], due to its characteristic features like spreading, quick action, vigor, capability to vitiate other *doshas*, autonomy, and the power to create the maximum number of diseases^[2]. Simultaneously, the role of *Rakat* has also been highlighted in *Ayurvedic* texts^[3]. *Vatarakta* is a disorder where there is involvement of



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Vata and Rakta both ^[4]. There is a vicious cycle between the aggravated *Vata* and aggravated *Rakta*. *VataRakta* is also known as-*Khudaroga*, *Vata-balasa*, *Vatashra* & *Adhya Vata* ^[5]. This pathological state is known as *Vatashonitam* or *Vatarakta*. *Vatarakta* is described in detail in *Charak Samhita* and other *Samhitas*. In *Sushrut Samhita*, *Vatarakta* is described in *Vata Vyadhi* chapter. In *Vatarakta*, mainly small joints of feet and hands are affected ^[6]. On the basis of etiology and symptomatology gout bears similarity to *Vatarakta*.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Gout is a metabolic arthritis with an abnormality of uric acid metabolism that results in hyperuricemia, deposition of monosodium urate crystal in joints soft tissue and renal tubules, causing the clinical / laboratory picture ^[7]. *Vatrakta* is caused by vitiated *Vata Dosha* as well as *Rakta Dhatu*. Aggravated *Vata* is blocked by Vitiated *Rakta*, which leads to further Aggravation of *Vata Dosha*, thus leading to *Vatrakat*. Vitiated *Vata* having reached the joints of extremities obstruct the way of the *Rakat* and vitiate *Rakat* obstructs the way of *Vata*, thus causes the unbearable pain and leads to death.

As per the *Dosha* predominance, *Vata Rakta* can be of the following types-

1. *Vata* Predominant
2. *Pitta* Predominant
3. *Kapha* Predominant
4. *Rakta* Predominant

Location wise, *Vata Rakta* can be *Uttana* (superficial) or *Gambheera* / deep seated ^[8].

Aragwadhaa

There is a wide range of plants described in Ayurvedic texts *Aragwadha* (*Cassia fistula* Linn.) is name for *Cassia fistula* from Leguminosae family and in Sanskrit word, means which eliminate the disease (disease killer). Beautiful yellow flowers fetch it the title of the Golden Shower (*Rajvriksha*). Legume is the usable part, ranging from 6 inches to 12 inches in length and half to one inch in diameter. The ripe legume is brownish black in colour, containing multiple chambers with a seed each, covered in a viscous pulp. It is widespread in India and has various medicinal properties. It is about 10-20 m height. Flowers are in bright yellow colour; petals are 2 inches wide, the flowers are pendula's racemes 20 to 40 cm long. The flowers contain equal sized five yellow petals. The leaves are pinnate 15 to 60 cm long with three to eight pairs of

leaflets. The leaflet is about 7to 21 cm long and 4 to 9 cm broad. The *Aragwadha* has a legume about 30 to 60 cm long, 1.5 to 2.5 cm broad ^[9]. The ripe legume shady brown colour, many are aligned seeded in chamber, seeds are flat covered in a pulp ^[10]. The plant is rich in phenolic antioxidants such as anthraquinones, flavonoids and flavan-3-ol derivatives. **Cassia fistula** the results shows positive for alkaloids, terpenoids, reducing sugars, saponins, tannins, carbonyl, phlobatanin, and steroids ^[11]. **Cassia fistula's** laxative actions come from a group of well documented compounds called anthraquinone. The seeds contain approximately 2% anthraquinones, 24% crude protein, 4.5% crude fat, 6.5% crude fiber, and 50% carbohydrates. The stem bark contains two flavanol glycosides and a xanthone glycosides ^[12]. The leaves have been documented with 15.88% crude protein, 6.65% crude fat, 20% crude fiber, and 39.86% carbohydrates. In addition, the plant also contain fistulic acid, rhein, rheinglucoside, galactomannan, sennosides A and B, tannin, phlobaphenes, oxyanthraquinone substances, emodin, chrysophanic acid, fistuacacidin, barbaloin, lupeol, beta-sitosterol, and hexacosanol ^{[13],[14]}. The anti-inflammatory property of aqueous extract of leaves and fruits of **Cassia fistula** was reported ^[15]. One more study reported about anti-inflammatory and antipyretic activity of *Cassia fistula* in rats by using its ethanolic extract ^[16]. The *Ayurvedic* texts have explained the use of *Aragwadha* in *Vatrakat* at various places e.g *Aragwadha's* (*Cassia fistula* Linn) *Ayurvedic* formulations for *Vatarakta*, *Drakshadi kwatha* ^[17], *Aragvadhadi Kashaya* ^[18] ·*Vataghna yoga* ^[19] . Various *Samhitas* acknowledge its efficacy against fevers, inflammations, skin disorders, Diabetes, fistulae, heart diseases, dysuria, ENT disorders and so on.

Raspanchaka

- Attributes- Heavy, unctuous, soft
- Taste- Sweet
- Post Digestion Taste- Sweet
- Potency- Cooling
- *Tridosha* Effector –*Pitta-kapha Shamak* ^[20]

Modern research has established many of its potential therapeutics as follows-

1. Leaf extract of *Cassia fistula* is anti-inflammatory and analgesic ^[21]
2. A rich source of antioxidants ^{[22],[23]}
3. Skin Glow Enhancer

4. Fatigue Buster ^[24]
5. Hepato-protective
6. Reduces anxiety

RESULTS

Metabolic disorders are by and large refractory to conventional treatments and the quest for more fitting protocols are never ending. Gout, being a disorder from the purine protein metabolism is one such condition. The acuteness and severity of pain is uncommon for an arthritis. Western painkillers offer limited, short-lived relief. The backdrop welcomes newer anti gout concepts. *Aragwadha* is an apt candidate herb in such a scenario. *Charaka* in *Kalpa Sthana*, mentioned as a mild herb free from complications even for the kids. The laxative properties are admitted by all the *Acharyas* and even by the western pharmacological research. *Virechanam Pittaharanaamam* ^[25] is declaration by *Charaka* regarding the efficacy of laxative actions being anti *Pitta*; *Pitta* is the main *Dosha* directly related to the acuteness, inflammation, ulcerations and severity of Gout. This herb will definitely prove to be the wonderful remedy for the sufferers.

DISCUSSION

Aragwadha is the best *Mridu Virechan* ^[26] (mild laxative). This property comes handy when laxation is required for a longer duration as the detoxification is at *Dhatu* level, unlike *GIT* level which could be corrected faster. A continuous use of laxatives tend to create complications like dehydration. Involvement of skin i.e inflammatory lesion is a common feature in Gout, and almost every *Samhita* has documented role of *Aragwadha* in dermatological ailments. As per *Ayurvedic* principles *Virechan* i.e laxation tend to remove *Pitta* followed by *Kapha* which help to control *Pitta*, *Kapha*, thus removing obstruction of *Vata Dosha* which ultimately results in suppression of pain. The basic aim of treatment is *Vatshaman* and *Rakat Prasadana*, which is being very well provided by *Aragwadha* due to its *Tikta*, *Madhur*, *Kashaya Rasa*, *Madhur Vipak*, *Tridoshshamak*, *Raktashodhak*, *Dahaprashmana*, *Pittashamak*, *Samshodhak*, *Shoolaprasamana* and *Shothahar Karam*.

CONCLUSION

Aragwadha, owing to its properties, can be a significant anti-gout agent. *Pitta Kapha* removal through its *Virechak* effect and pro-skin effect due to its *Prabhava*, so it can be conceived that *Aragwadha* presents a potential anti -gout

remedy and should be tried out more and more.

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