



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 6 · Issue 2

Mar-Apr 2021

Journal of
**Ayurveda and Integrated
Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



Charaka
Publications

Indexed

Concept of Oushadha Samyoga in Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT

Ayurvedic medicines have an exceptional way of pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics. The pharmacological actions of Ayurvedic drugs were explained through *Rasa, Guna, Virya, Vipaka, Prabhava* etc. Ayurveda is well known for both single and polyherbal formulation, among them polyherbal formulations have prime role because of its multiple pharmacological actions. Various basic concepts of Ayurveda such as *Samyoga, Samskara, Rasapanchaka, Anupana* etc were playing behind the formation of polyherbal formulation. The concept of *Samyoga*, is the essential norm behind the formation of Polyherbal preparations. Thus, literary review mainly intended to know the role of *Samyoga* in the preparation of various Ayurvedic polyherbal preparations and to highlight their importance of *Oushadha Samyoga* (multidrug/ polyherbal formulation) in the present era.

Key words: *Samyoga, Oushadha Samyoga, Drug combination, Ayurveda.*

INTRODUCTION

Based on the origin of source the Ayurvedic medicine can broadly be classified into two *Kashtoushadi* (Herbal medicine) and *Rasoushadi* (Mineral origin), among them, *Kashtoushadi* conquered more popularity throughout the world because of its minimum side effects and wide range of Pharmacological application. The *Kashtoushadi* can be employed mainly in two ways such as a single drug and polyherbal formulation. Polyherbal formulations are the unique contribution of Ayurveda. The action of polyherbal formulations depends upon various factors such as *Samyoga* (combination), *Samskara* (processing), *Matra* (quantity), *Desha* (place), *Kala*

(time), *Rasapanchaka* etc. among them the core principle behind the polyherbal formulations is the concept of *Samyoga*. *Samyoga* is an important tool in the hand of the physician, to make modifications in *Panchaboutika* composition of drugs under controlled conditions. In the 26th chapter of *Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana*, *Acharya Charaka* stated that there is no substance on this earth without the medicinal property but needed to employ appropriate *Yukti* (rationale) according to the need of the situation. In this *Yukti*, *Samyoga* is having a key role to play as it is the only component by which one can make modifications in the *Panchaboutika* combinations of a *Dravya* (substance). So it is necessary to know the concept of *Samyoga* to comprehend the basic concepts in the preparation of multi drug formulations. The physician and the pharmacist should have the appropriate knowledge on *Samyoga*, which gives maximum benefits to the patient.

Ayurveda is well recognized for its polyherbal formulations. In such formulations, multiple drugs are united in an exact ratio to get the anticipated outcome. All formulations are fortified by the combination of a number of drugs according to the state of the patient and disease. The best among the physicians is one who knows the application for external as well as internal actions, combination, and

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Submission Date: 12/03/2021

Accepted Date: 07/04/2021

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

Published by Maharshi Charaka
Ayurveda Organization, Vijayapur,
Karnataka (Regd) under the license CC-
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rational administration of these drugs.^[1] The drug can be used multi-dimensional with the support of *Samyoga*. The drug cannot be used as it is and it entails some modifications to get the desired effect. So to make such modifications *Samyoga* is mandatory.

CONCEPT OF SAMYOGA

The word *samyoga* is formed by the *Upasarga Sam*, *Yuj Dhatu* and *Khanj Pratyaya*^[2] and have the meaning such as conjunction, union, combination, intimate union. *Acharya Charaka* defined *Samyoga* as the Combination or union of different substances.^[3] In the context of *Ashta Ahara Vidhi* (eight dietetic rules) *Acharya Charaka* defined *Samyoga* is the combination of two or more *Dravyas*. Such combination results in the manifestation of some new entities, which cannot be manifested in individual substances.^[4] *Satva* (mind), *Atma* (soul), and *Sharira* (body) these are the *Tridanda* (three pillar) of life and the whole universe depends on their combination.^[5] *Ayu* (life) is the combination of *Sharira*, *Indriya* (sense organs), *Satva* and *Atma*. This definition of *Ayu* itself highlights the importance of *Samyoga*.^[6] In the formation of *Garbha* (fetus), the proper union of *Shukra* (sperm) *Shonita* (ovum) is necessary.^[7] Perception is the main source of knowledge and for perception, the proper combination *Atma*, *Mana*, *Indriya*, and *Indriyarth* (objects of sense organs) is necessary.^[8] *Asatmendriyarth* *Samyoga* (the unwholesome combination of soul, senses, and objects) is one of the main causes of disease.^[9] *Acharya Charaka* has included *Samyoga* in *Paradi Guna*, which are called as *Chikitsaupayogi Guna*.^[3] This indicates the importance of *Samyoga* in the treatment field. In the definition of *Karma* (Action), *Acharya Charaka* stated that *Karma* present in the matter is the cause of combination and separation.^[10] In the extensive literature of *Charaka Samhita*, used the term *Samyoga* in the meaning of combination and the concept of *Samyoga* is important in the interpretation of drugs.

Types

In the context of *Paraadi Guna*, *Acharya Chakrapani* described three types of *Samyoga*^[3]

- ***Eka Karmaja*** - in this combination domination of one *Dravya* will subside the others
- ***Dvandva Karmaja*** - in this combination union of both the *Dravyas* will take part in the effect e.g. Two goats are fighting together
- ***Sarva Karmaja*** - in this combination all the *Dravyas* will take part in the effect. e.g. Addition of grain in a pot having many such grains, they are in combination with each other.

Concept of Oushadha Samyoga (Drug combination)

Ayurveda is rich with polyherbal formulations and they are in various forms like *Kashaya* (decoction), *Choorna* (powder), *Asava*, *Arishta*, *Taila* (oil) etc. based on the method of preparation. While formulating a poly herbal formulation. The drugs should not be incompatible each other or else may create some unsafe outcome on the body. Drug combinations generally proposed to act in a synergistic way may help to eliminate the side effects or act as a catalyst. In the context of *Oushadha Samyoga*, the potency of formulation depends upon the suitable selection and combination of selected drugs, the drugs can be used multidimensional by proper *Samyoga* of numerous *Oushadha*. Multidrug formulations are communal in *Ayurveda*, many ingredients in different forms are processed together to get maximum therapeutic effects or to reduce the side effects or to make it more suitable to patient. *Acharya Charaka* stated that by *Samyoga* one becomes capable to use toxic substance as medicine and *Samyoga* not done properly or improper way the medicine can act as toxic.^[11] Based on the *Samyoga* there are 57 *Rasa Samyoga* (taste combinations) and 63 *Rasa Vikalpa*.^[12] By applying *Samyoga* the drug can be used with different combinations according to the condition of the patient and disease. *Acharya Charaka* stated that *Asava*, one kind of polyherbal formulation are innumerable because of the *Samyoga* and *Samskara* of different *Dravyas*. They exhibit their effect based on their respective combination and method of preparation. Based on the combination of *Dravyas* *Asava* are classified into 84 types.^[13] *Tila Taila* (sesame oil) is the base for all *Taila* preparations, can

use both internally and externally. *Acharya Charaka* explained that *Tila Taila* said to be the *Sarvarogahara* (cure all ailments) if it is undergone proper *Samyoga* and *Samskara*.^[14] In the preparation of *Leha* (linctus) the properties of *Leha* based on the *Samyoga*, *Samskara* and *Dravya Mana*.^[15] Ghee, though having similar qualities as that of *Kapha Dosha* can alleviate the same after doing proper *Samyoga* and *Samskara*.^[16] The drugs should be potentiated by the proper *Samyoga* and *Samskara* and such drugs can perform strong actions in *Alpa Matra* (less quantity) also.^[17] All these statement makes clear that *Oushadha Samyoga Jnana* (knowledge on drug combination) is an essential pre requisite factor of a physician.

In *Siddhithana*, *Acharya Drudhabala* had elaborated the qualities of *Bheshaja* such as *Alpamatram* (good effect within minimum time), *Mahavegam* (quick in action), *Bahudosha Haram* (pacify the vitiated *Dosha*), *Sukham* (easy to take), *Laghupakam* (Light in digestion), *Sukhasvadam* (palatable), *Prinanam* (pleasing), *Vyadhinashanam* (curative of a particular disease), *Na atiglanikaram* (not causing tiredness), *Gandavarnarasopetam* (most agreeable taste smell and color).^[18] To achieve all these qualities *Samyoga* is an important tool.

Among four qualities of *Bheshaja* (medicine), *Aneka Vidha Kalpana* (Various pharmaceutical forms) is most important, here the other three qualities i.e., *Bahuta* (availability in abundance), *Yogyatva* (suitability) and *Sampat*^[19] may degrade or decrease, but by making *Samyoga* various formulations can be formed from a single drug (*Bahuta*). The drug can be made effective according to the different diseases or stages of same disease (*Yogyatva*) and the potency can be increased by giving *Bhavana* (trituration) of the same drug, in short to increase the quality of *Bheshaja*, *Samyoga* can be employed effectively by the physician.

Other than the polyherbal preparation in pharmaceutical preparations, the *Samyoga* can be understood in the terms of *Bhavana* given to drugs. *Bhavana* is one among the *Samskara*. It is a unique and distinct pharmaceutical procedure in which

powdered drug or mixture of drugs is completely made wet in the liquid media and ground till the complete absorption of the liquid into the powder. In the preparation of *Amlaka Rasayana Bhavana* of *Amlaka* with *Amlaka Svarasa*.^[20] In the preparation of *Shilajatu Vataka* in *Pandu Roga Chikitsa* - should be done the *Bhavana* of *Shilajatu* for 10, 20 or 30 times in the *Kwatha* prepared with *Kuṭaja*, *Haritaki*, *Vibhitaki*, *Amla*, *Nimba*, *Paṭola*, *Musta* and *Nagara*.^[21] The dynamism of drugs can be increased by impregnation with some expressed juice of drugs. Therefore, drugs should be impregnated with their own expressed juice or the expressed juice of some other drugs having similar potency.

The concept of *Prakshepaka Dravyas* (additives) can also be understood in the context of *Oushadha Samyoga*, they are the additives, apart from the main ingredients some other *Dravyas* added into formulations particularly into *Avaleha*, *Asava*, *Arishta* etc. preparations which added in a minor quantity other than the main drug and are distinct to each *Kalpana* act as a synergize and also aid to pharmacological action, bestows palatability, aroma. They affirm and augment the absorption of the drug by their bio enhancing property, act as a preservative. Honey, jaggery, rock salt, sugar, cumin seed etc. are the main *Prakshepaka Dravyas* usually added to the Ayurvedic formulations. The selection and quantity of *Prakshepaka Dravya* depends upon physicians *Yukti*.

The concept *Anupana* (Adjuvants) can also be incorporated with the concept of *Samyoga*. *Anupana* is also known as *Sahapana* indicates the substance or drink which is taken with or after the medicine or food. It can be considered as an essential part of *Oushadha* and also come in the category of *Oushadha Samyoga*. Potency of drug is enhanced when administered with suitable *Anupana* and have the capacity to reduce the ailment by augmenting the action of medicine. It carries the medicine to its target. Different *Anupana* were mentioned for different formulations. It is used as an adjuvant to increase the effect of the drug or impart flavor and palatability. In modern pharmacology the terms like Adjuvant, carrier, vehicle all the meanings of these

words implicate that substance administrated along with medicine similar to the concept of *Anupana*. The main *Anupana* are cold water, hot water, ghee, milk, honey, buttermilk, sugar, jaggery,^[22] etc. *Anupana* is usually selected on the basis of drug, patient, disease etc. *Narayana Choorna*, a multi-drug formulation indicated in different ailments with different *Anupana*, in *Ajirna* with *Ushnajala*, for *Aanaha* with *Sura*, for *Vataroga* with *Prasanna*, in *Udara* with *Takra*.^[23]

The common actions of *Anupana* to bring about refreshment, pleasure, increase energy, nourishment, give satisfaction etc.^[24] In Ayurveda most of the drugs used in the combination with ghee, honey, milk etc. such adjuvant also provides some synergistic effects. *Ghrita* providing lipid medium and helps to absorb the properties of drugs mixed with it. High lipid solubility leads to a larger volume of distribution and better CNS penetration absorption is favoured when the drug is in lipophilic form, by mixing with ghee the lipophilic nature of these substance helps in proper absorption.^[25] The combinations with milk, ghee and honey impart taste and flavor and make it palatable Ghee and honey have *Yogavahi* (which carries the qualities of substance with which it is associated in the combination) property. For example, the drug *Vacha* commonly used in the combination with ghee and honey, Drug *Vacha* have immune modulatory activity, honey and ghee also have immune potentiating property, because of these properties *Vacha* with honey and ghee used in children to boost up the immune system.^[26]

Taleesapatraadi Vataka one of the Ayurveda formulation explained in the context of *Grahani Chikitsa*. It indicated in various ailments with different ingredients for e.g., if a patient with *Vidgraha* (constipation), *Abhaya* should be used in the place of *Nagara*. Here according to the condition of the patient combining drugs are different.^[27]

Modern scientific community accepts only two types of combinations such as Physical combination (mixture) and Chemical combination (compound). In Ayurvedic formulations *Churnas* and *Gutikas* are the

examples of mixtures. While *Asava* and *Lehyas* etc., are the examples of compounds.

In modern pharmaceuticals the terms such as drug synergism, drug antagonism, additives etc. can be understood in the context of *Oushadha Samyoga*. Drug synergism can be defined as the interaction between two or more drugs that causes the total result of the drugs to be greater than the sum of the single effects of each drug. Plants of varying potency when combined may preferably yield a greater result, as compared to single use of the plant and also the sum of their single effect. This phenomenon of positive herb-herb interaction is known as drug synergism. Drug antagonism can be defined as an interaction between two or more drugs that have opposite effects on the body. Drug antagonism may reduce the efficacy of one or more of the drugs. The dynamic phytochemical component of single plants has been well recognized and they generally present in small amount and inadequate to attain the specific therapeutic effect. Additive effects can be termed as the sum of the effects of the chemicals involved in the reaction. They impart color, taste, aroma to that formulation.

DISCUSSION

Drug and diet are the integral part of prevention and treatment of the disease, the *Samyoga* can be applied in the context of drug in the terms of *Oushadha Samyoga* and can understand it through the various aspects of Poly herbal formulation. In Ayurvedic medicines we can observe the combined use of *Pippali* and *Haridra*. The combined use of piperine and curcumin have synergistic effects, the medicinal properties of curcumin has poor bio availability due to its rapid metabolism. In the combined use of piperine and curcumin, shows that piperine enhances the serum concentration, extent absorption and bio availability of curcumin in rats and man probably due to increased absorption and reduced metabolism,^[28] this combination can be taken as an example of *Eka Karmaja Samyoga* because combination of *Pippali* helps in the bioavailability of curcumin from *Haridra*.

The combined (*Samyoga*) use of *Haritaki* with *Saindhava Lavana* in *Kaphaja Kasa* is much more efficient than the single use. It is also found both are having capacity to subside the *Kaphaja Kasa* independently up to some extent when both are used in the *Samyoga* form, the effect of the drug is found to be increased in comparison to the effect produced when the drugs are used single. When *Haritaki* taken with *Samyoga* of *Lavana* it removes *Kapha Dosha*, it is taken along with *Sharkara* it eliminates *Pitta Dosha*.^[29] found highly significant in *Kasa Cikitsa* this can be taken as an example for *Dvandva Karmaja Samyoga*. All the multidrug herbal preparations used in Ayurveda can be taken as examples for the *Sarva Karmaja Samyoga*. In this way the three types of *Samyoga* can be understood through the *Oushadha Samyoga*.

Intake of *Yashtimadhu* with milk act on Blood brain barrier and easy penetration into brain. Oral administration of *Yashtimadhu* with milk improves the memory. Co administration of milk enhances the nootropic action of *Yashtimadhu*.^[30] Combination of Rhizome of *Acorus calamus*, *Curcuma aromatica* and *Zingiber officinale*. Powdered sample of each drug and mixture treated with ghee and milk separately, also treated the drugs with ghee and milk together. Estimated the total phenolic compound, radicle scavenging activity and Anti-oxidant activity. milk treated herbal samples showed a high level of phenolic compounds and antioxidant activity when compared to ghee treated samples and aqueous extracts of the respective herbal sample.^[31] The above said research papers shows the synergistic effects of *Oushadha Samyoga*.

In the present days of globalization, many of the valuable drugs mentioned in Ayurveda classics are becoming rarely the available or unavailable due to increased borrowing of crude drugs, so availability, of the drugs is going on decreasing. In such conditions, the available drugs can be utilized multidimensional only with the help of proper *Samyoga*.

In *Oushadha Samyoga* the alteration or changes takes place in the *Panchaboutika* level. Due to this changes

we can make innumerable *Oushadha Kalpana* (medicinal formulations), use of these *Kalpana* will be different according to the patient, season, disease condition, place etc. By making *Samyoga* the desired effect can be achieved that not present in the original *Dravya*. Including the *Samyoga* as a *Paraadi Guna* highlighted its role in *Chikitsa Siddhi*. The *Samyoga Guna* also hold a position and the *Guna* should be known by physician and pharmacist.

The concept of *Samskara* is adjoining with the concept of *Samyoga*. In polyherbal formulations both *Samyoga* and *Samskara* go hand in hand, together are capable to bring changes in the physical, chemical and pharmaceutical level. In many places the word *Samyoga* used in adherence with *Samskara*, *Samskara* involves the union of one substance with another, but the substance which is used as *Samskaraka Dravya* is not dominantly observed. In the same way *Samyoga* also show close relationship with *Yukti Guna* of physician, they hold mutual association. The *Yukti* always plays an essential role while doing the *Oushadha Samyoga*. Proper selection of drugs in to a particular formulation is always depends upon the *Yukti* of the physician. In the preparation of multi drugs formulation, the *Yukti* of *Vaidya* (physician) is necessary, so it can be said that the success in the treatment mainly depends upon the proper *Samyoga* of various drugs by a *Yuktinja Vaidya*.

Acharya Charaka in *Vimanasthana* 1st chapter under the context of *Ashta Ahara Vidhi Vishesha Ayatana*, *Karana* is defined as, processing is the refinement of natural products which transformation of natural or inherent attribute of substance is done. This transformation is affected through *Agni Sannikarsha*, *Toya Sannikarsha* etc., here the word *Sannikarsha* can be understood as *Samyoga*, while preparing the formulations like *Kashaya*, *Lehya* etc. they come in contact with *Toya* and *Agni*, which imparts changes in both physical and chemical level. The physical changes include changes in colour, aroma, taste etc. changes at chemical level includes both in physico-chemical and phyto-chemical level. It becomes necessary to understand the concept of *Samyoga* and basic principles behind the preparation of polyherbal

formulations, then only one can use it more effectively to form different formulations from a single drug as per the requirement. *Oushadha Samyoga*, *Anupana* all act in a synergistic way but *Samyoga Viruddha* act as antagonistic way.

CONCLUSION

Every basic concepts of Ayurveda, have its own clinical implementation. *Samyoga* is one of such unique contribution of *Ayurveda* and implemented in the context of *Oushadha Samyoga* (polyherbal/ multidrug formulations). Such drug combinations may result in synergistic, antagonistic or additive effect. Accepting proper drug combinations and avoiding improper drug combination results in the attainment of better therapeutic effect. The *Chikitsasiddhi* is completely depends upon the proper use of polyherbal formulation by a *Yuktijna Vaidya*.

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How to cite this article: Dr. Athira P, Dr. Leena P. Nair, Dr. Haroon Irshad. Concept of Oushadha Samyoga in Ayurveda. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2021;2:114-120.

Source of Support: Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.

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