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Vettumaran Gulika - An Ayurvedic Review

Hemant Pundlikrao Charde¹, Mukeshkumar Arjunrao Rathod², Pranam Suresh Kharche³

¹Professor, Department of Dravyaguna, Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya Pusad, Maharashtra, India.

²Associate Professor, Department of Shalakya tantra, ASPM Ayurved College Hospital and Research Institute, Buldana, Maharashtra, India.

³Associate Professor, Department of Dravyaguna, ASPM Ayurved College Hospital and Research Institute, Buldana Maharashtra, India.

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is oldest science, this system of medicine started since Vedic period or even earlier. It emphasizes on maintenance of health and cure diseases. For achievement of these goals, medicines especially *Rasaushadhies* have an important role. *Vettumaran Gulika* is a most widely used herbo mineral formulation in Kerala used in fever, Gas trouble, emesis, dysuria with different vehicles. The study aimed to review literature of Kerala most used *Vettumaran Gulika* an ayurvedic formulation. It is mentioned in *Sahasrayogam*, an important hand book on Ayurveda.

Key words: *Vettumaran Gulika*, *Sahasrayogam*, fever

INTRODUCTION

Rasasastra, the ancient alchemical science which deals with the pharmaceutical processes such as preparations of *Bhasmas*, *Pistis*, *Kharaliya Rasayanas*, *Druti*, *Kupipakva Rasayanas*, *Parpati*, *Pottali* etc. This branch of Ayurveda is originated with the twin aim of attaining *Deha Siddhi* and *Loha Siddhi*. However, in the due course of time, this science became more oriented towards *Deha Siddhi* and for therapeutic purpose. Apart from their therapeutic efficacy in minute doses,^[1] *Rasaushadhies* were found very effective for the preservation and promotion of positive health and prevention of diseases, which is

the primary aim of Ayurveda.

The ancient Ayurvedic Physicians of Kerala have developed many herbal and herbo-mineral combinations and are being used for treating in various clinical conditions that are in fact time tested and proven its efficacy. *Vettumaran Gulika*^[2] is a Herbo-mineral formulation described in *Sahasrayogam*, considered the most important handbook of Ayurvedic practitioners of Kerala. The term '*Vettu*' means febrile fits, '*Maran*' denotes to remove or cure and '*Gulika*' means pills. It shows that the pills that are able to cure fever with shivering named as '*Vettumaran*'. Ingredients of *Gulika* are *Ponkaram* (*Tankana*), *Mulagu* (*Maricha*), *Nabhi* (*Vatsanabha*), *Chatilinga* (*Hingula*), *Omam* (*Ajamoda*) and *Aadrak Swaras*.

Tankana^[3,4]

Tankana is a bluish-white colour crystalline mineral included in *Kshara Varga* and *Dravaka Gana* by *Rasasastra* scholars.

Chemical Composition : Na₂B₄O₇·10H₂O

Synonyms of *Tankana* : *Tankana*, *Tanka*, *Tankana*, *Kshara*, *Ranga Kshara*, *Lohadravi*, *Saubhagya*,

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Pranam Suresh Kharche

Associate Professor, Department of Dravyaguna, ASPM Ayurved College Hospital and Research Institute, Buldana Maharashtra, India.

E-mail: drpsk25@gmail.com

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Dravaka, Dhatu Dravaka, Dravi, Pachana, Subhaga, Malatijat

Vernacular Name :

- Hindi - Suhaga, Tankana, Khara
- Telugu - Veligaramu
- Tamil - Verigaram
- Malyalam - Ponkaram
- English - Borax
- Chemical name - Sodium pyroborate

Shodhana of Tankana: Nirjalikarana (de-watering) by crushing into powder and frying in pans or wide earthen plates till the frying sounds ceases and the water is evaporated.

Properties of Shuddha Tankana:

Rasa - Katu

Guna - Tikshna, Ruksha

Virya - Ushna

Karma - Kaphavishleshana, Pittakrut, Hridya, Vishapaham, Agnidiptikara, Balya, Vrananashana, Stripushpajanana, Mudhagarbhpravartaka

Indication - Vatavyadhi, Kasa, Shvasa, Adhmana.

Effects of Impure Tankana: Tankana will cause vomiting & giddiness if taken without doing Shodhana.

Hingula^[5,6,7]

Introduction - The oldest text of Rasasastra 'Rasendramangla' described at first about 'Hingula' (6-8th Cent.). Rasagarbham, Rasodbhavam, Rasa Sthanam, Rasa Gandhakasambhutam these synonyms make clear the ingredients of Hingula.

Chemical Composition: It is composed of 13.8% sulphur and 86.2% of mercury. Mercuric Sulphide is the scientific term used and HgS is its chemical formula.

Synonyms of Hingula:

1. **Names based on Appearance -** Kapishirshaka, Chitranga, Chinapishta, Churna Parada, Makshi

Vanga, Daitya Raktaka, Manohara, Markata Shirsa, Rakta, Raktakaya, Rakta Parada, Shukatundaka, Supittaka, Suranaga, Hansapada, Hansandhri, Hansaka, Hingulu, Hinguli, Hingula, Kuruvinda.

2. **Names based on Guna & Karma -** Charmanuranjana, Maraka, Maniraga, Ranjaka, Ranjana, Lohaghna, Ratna Ragakari, Raga Dravya, Vishesa, Barbara, Sagara, Charmara, Charmaragandhika, Charmarabandhanam, Charmaravardhana, Uru Charmaka.
3. **Names based on Constituents -** Rasagandha Sambhuta, Rasa Garbha, Rasasthana, Siddhi Parada, Rakta Parada, Rasodbhava, Rasa.
4. **Names based on Habitat -** Mleccha, Darada, Chinapista

Vernacular Name

- Sanskrit: Hingula
- Hindi: Hingul
- Marathi: Hingula
- Gujarati: Hingalok, Hingalo
- English: Cinnabar
- Scientific: Red Sulphide of Mercury
- Latin: Sulphatum hydrargirium

Varieties of Hingula: Mainly 3 varieties of Hingula are mentioned by most of the authors i.e., Charmara, Shukatunda and Hansapada.

Grahya Hingula: Most of the Acharyas opined that the Hamsapada variety is best among the others, which can be identified by its colour as red as Japa Kusuma or Pravala along with white streaks, here and there.

Shodhana of Hingula: Hingula is purified if it is boiled in Dola Yantra with Nimbu Swarasa (lemon juice) or in Jayanti Patra Swarasa or in Gomutra (cow urine) or in Kanji. Hingula is purified if subjected to Bhavana for seven times with Ardraka Swarasa or Lakucha Swarasa or any Amla Varga Dravya Swarasa or Aja

Dugdha or one *Bhavana* of *Nimbu Swarasa* for *Hingulottha Parada*.

Properties of *Shuddha Hingula*:

Rasa: Regarding *Rasa* of *Hingula* there is controversy among various authors.

Madhura, Tikta, Katu, and Kashaya Rasa.

Guna: *Ushna-Guna*

Dosa Prabhava: *Tridoshaghna.*

Karma: *Dipana, Rasayana, Vajikara, Agnivaradhana, Divya, Netramayaghna.*

Vyadhi Prabhava: *Jwaraghna, Kusthaghna, Hrdroga, Amavata, Kamalahara*

Toxicity of *Hingula*: Following diseases caused by improper administration of *Hingula*. *Andhyata, Akulata, Kanthashosa, Kustha, Klaibya, Hritspandana, Kshinata* etc.

Antidote for *Hingula* Toxicity - The evil effect of taking *Ashuddha Hingula* are removed in the same way as prescribed in the case of evil effect of *Ashuddha Parada*.

Vatsanabha

Botanical Name: *Aconitum Chasmanthum* Stapf. ex Holmes

Family: Ranunculaceae

Vernacular Names

- Assamese - Mithavish, Bish
- Bihari - Dakar
- Bengali - Kathavish
- English - Aconite Monk's hood, aconite, wolf's bane, Leopard's bane, Devil's helmet, blue rocket.
- Gujarati - *Vachhanaag, Basanaag*
- Hindi - *Bachanag, Mitha Vish, Mitha Teliya, Teliya Vish*
- Kannada - *Basanalli, Vatsanabha, Vatsanabhi, Vachanaga*
- Malayalam - *Vatsanabhi*

- Marathi - *Bachnaga*
- Oriya - *Tahara, Mahura, Mithvisa*
- Punjabi - *Mitha Visha, Mithatelia Mohari, Shyammohari*
- Tamil - *Vasanaavi, Vatsanabhi, Nabhi, Vasanaabhi*
- Telugu - *Vatsanaabhi, Naabhi*

Synonyms^[8] - *Amrutam, Ugra Visha, Garalam, Nagam, Nabhi, Pranaharam, Maranam, Mahoushadham, Stokakam, Sthavaradyam*

Distribution : In India *Vatsanabha* occurs in subalpine and alpine zones of the western Himalayas, in high plateaus between 2000-4000 m, from *Gadhaval* to Sikkim region.

Botanical Description^[8] : *Vatsanabha* is an erect, perennial herb growing to 60-120cm height. Leaves are numerous in number and petioles in the lower part of stem up to 7.5cm long. Inflorescence is long, narrow, stiff, dense, 30cm long and often leafy below. Flowers are blue or white. Fruits are oblong, truncate and 10 -16cm long. Seeds are brown, ovoid and 3-5 cm long. Roots are in paired, tuberous, 2.5 - 3.7 cm long, 12-18mm thick, dark brown to blackish brown in coloured, smooth or wrinkled and hard when dry, white within the cambium.

Part used: Dried tuberous roots of *Aconitum Chasmanthum* Stapf. Ex Holmes (Fam. Ranunculaceae) is used as *Vatsanabha* in Ayurvedic pharmaceuticals.

Collection: Roots of *Aconitum Chasmanthum* Stapf. Are generally collected late in September.

Properties of *Vatsanabha*:^[9,10]

Rasa - *Madhura*

Guna - *Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna, Vyavayi, Vikasi*

Veerya - *Ushna*

Vipaka - *Katu*

Doshaghната - *Vatakaphahar*

Properties: *Madavaham, Pranadayi, Rasayan, Yogavahi, Sannipatahrut, Agnimandyahara, Balyam, Pittsamshodhana, Grahi, Jangama Vishahara.*

Indications: *Kushtha, Shotha, Shvasa, Kasa, Pleehodara, Jvara, Kantharuk, Madhumeha, Vatastra, Bhagandara, Gulma, Pandu, Arsha, Amavata, Timiram, Nishaandhata, Abhishyandha, Netrashotha, Karnashotha, Karnashula, Shirashula, Grudhrasi, Kativedana.*

Chemical Constituents:^[8] Root: pseudoaconitine (a toxic alkaloid), indactonitine, chasmaconitine, bikhaconitine and chasmanthine

Adulterants:^[8] Because of its similar pharmacological action, the plant is sometimes used as an adulterant of aconite (*Aconitum*_sp.). *Delphinium denudatum* wall. (Ranunculaceae) also known as *Nirvisha* in Sanskrit used as adulterants in aconite.

Shodhana: There are several methods for purification. Some of them are;

Aconite roots cut into pieces and soaked in cow's urine for three days by changing cow's urine every day. Afterwards the pieces are shade dried. Purification may do by means of boiling (*Svedana*) the aconite roots in cow's urine for 3-6 hours in *Dola Yantra*. Aconite may purify in similar fashion either by using *Triphala Kvatha* or by using *Aja Kshira* (goat milk) or cow's milk if goat milk is not available. Aconite tubers may keep in the buffalo excreta and boiled for 3 hours. Some consider that even boiling aconite in ordinary water for 3 hours may purify it.

Toxic Effect: According to *Susruta – Grivastambha* (torticollis) and *Pita Vit-Mutra-Netratva* (deep yellowish discolouration of stools, urine and conjunctiva)

Antidote: Different antidotes have mentioned for *Vatsanabha Vishaktata*. Cow's ghee considered as one of the best antidotes for *Visha*.^[11] *Tankan* (Borax) considered as the main antidote.

Contraindication:^[11] *Visa* contraindicated for – *Krodhi* (angry), *Pitta* predominant, *Kliba* (impotent), Kings or Royal employees, when feeling hungry or thirsty, giddiness, sun stroke, after walking for long distances, diseases where *Vatsanbhi* is contraindicated, pregnant, children, old age, emaciated individuals, *Marma Rogas* etc.

Pathyapathya:^[11]

Pathya - *Goghrita, Shalidhanya, Shitajala, Jangalamasa, Sharkara, Madhu, Kshira.*

Apathya - Diets rich in pungent, sour and salt tastes, oil, sleep during daytime, exposure to fire and heat (sun light).

Ajamoda

Latin Name: *Apium leptophyllum* (Pers.) F. V. M. ex Benth.

Family: Umbelliferae

Synonyms:^[12] *Karavi, Kharasva, Brahma Kusha, Dipyaka, Bastameda, Uragandha Hasti Mayuraka, Valli, Gandha Dala*

Vernacular Names:^[13]

- Sanskrit - *Deepyaka*
- Assamese - *Bonjamani*, Bonajain, Yamani, Ajowan
- Bengali - *Randhuni, Banyamani*
- Gujrati - *Bodi Ajamo, Ajamo*
- Hindi - *Ajmuda, Ajmod*
- Kannada - *Oma, Ajavana, Omakki*
- Kashmiri - *Fakhazur, Banjuan*
- Malayalam - *Ayamodakum, Oman*
- Marathi - *Ajmoda, Oova*
- Oriya - *Banajuani*
- Punjabi - *Valjawain, Ajmod*
- Tamil - *Omam*
- Telugu - *Naranji vamu*
- Urdu - *Ajmod*

Botanical Description:^[13] It is cultivated in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka. Collected by thrashing plants on a mat and dried in shade or in drying sheds.

Features of whole plant: It is biennial herb. Leaves - radical and pinnate with large deeply lobed segments. Flowers - in white umbels having 5-6 rays. Fruits - 1.5 to 2 mm, ridges narrow, vittae broad

Major Chemical Constituents:

Seed - anthoxanthins, graveobioside, luteolin, apioseglycosider, myristic acid, aprumetin umbelliferene, chrysoeriol.

Essential oil - d-limonene, d-selinene, apigravin, sedanolide and seanomic acid anhydride.

Leaves and tubers - apiin, luteolin

Part Used: Fruit

Pharmacodynamics:^[12]

Rasa - Katu, Tikta

Guna - Laghu Ruksha

Virya - Ushna

Vipaka - Katu

Karma - Vidahee, Kaphavatajit, Deepana, Ruchikrut, Krumijit, Shulaghna

Important Formulations: Ajamodarka, Ajamodadi Churna, Astachurna

Therapeutic Uses:^[13] Aruchi, Aadhmana, Gulma, Hikka, Chardi, Krumiroga, Shula

Maricha

Latin Name: *Piper nigrum* Linn.

Family: Piperaceae

Synonyms:^[14] Sakanga, Krishna, Vellaja, Dharmapattana, Ushna, etc.

Vernacular Names^[15]

- Hindi - Kali mirchi, Gol mircha
- English - Pepper
- Gujarati - Kalamarich, Kalomirich
- Marathi - Miri
- Telugu - Mirilyalu, Savyamu
- Bengali - Golamarich, Aalaamorich, Kalomarich.
- Tamil - Milagoo
- Kannada - Karemanesu, Menasinaballii (Mensinballi), Menasina, Menu, Menasina-kallu (Menasin kallu).

- Malayaalam – Nalla muluku, Kurumilagu
- Punjabi – Kali marich
- Urdu – Kalimirch, Filfil Siyah

Botanical Description:^[15] It is distributed over the hills of southwestern India. Cultivated in Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Assam.

Features of whole plant: Black piper is a branching and climbing perennial shrub having stout branches, trailing and rooting at the nodes. It shows following features – Leaves – entire, cordate, base acute. Flowers – minute, borne in spikes, usually dioecious. Fruits – globose or ovoid, bright when ripe and blackish brown when dried. Seeds – globose. Flowering in rainy season and fruits in autumn

Major Chemical Constituents: Piperene, Piperethine, Piperolein A & B, Feruperine, Dihydro feruperine, citronellol, Cryptone, Dihydrocarveol, α -pinene, β -pinene, Piperonal, Camphene, β -caryophyllene, β -alanine, pipercoline acid, carotene, ascorbic acid, piperide etc

Part Used: Fruit

Pharmacodynamics^[14]

Rasa - Katu

Guna - Ruksha, Tikshna

Virya - Ushna

Vipaka - Katu

Doshaghnata - Kaphavatahara

Karma - Deepana, Pachana, Shulahara, Krimighna, Shwasahara

Upayoga - Shwasa, Agnimandya Etc.

Important Formulations: Marichadi Gulika, Marichadi Taila, Trikatu Churna

Ardra

Botanical Name: *Zinziber officinale*

Family: Zingiberaceae

Synonyms:^[16] Nagara, Sringavera, Katubhadra,

Vernacular Names:^[17]

- Assamese - Kulekhara
- Bengali - Ada
- English - Ginger
- Gujrati - Adu
- Hindi - Adarakha
- Kannada - Alla, Hasishunti
- Malayalam - Inchi
- Marathi - Ardrak, Ale
- Punjabi - Adi, Adrak
- Tamil - Injee, Allam, lakottai, Inji
- Telugu - Allamu, Allam

Constituents:^[18]

Volatile Oil containing Cineole zingiberol, and sesquiterpene like zingiberene, bisobolene and sesquiphellandrene, gingerosol in the oleo-resin.

Part used: Rhizome

Pharmacodynamics:^[16]

Rasa - Katu

Guna - Tikshna, Ruksha, Guru

Virya - Ushna

Vipika - Madhura

Karma - Vatahara, Kaphahara,

Properties: Rochana, Deepana, Bhedana, Svarya, Hridya, Vrishya

Dose:^[17] 2 to 3ml of the drug in juice form with honey

Indications: Kushtha, Shotha, Shvasa, Kasa, Adhman, Jvara, Raktapitta, Vibhanda, Pandu, Arsha, Amavata, Agnimandya, Vrana, Hikka, Slipada, Hrdroga, Atisara.

Important Formulations: Rasnapanchaka Kashayam, Nagaradi Churnam, Ashtachurnam

DISCUSSION

In South India many of the preparations are made from the *Yogas* mentioned in *Sahasrayoga*.

Vettumaran Gulika is a herbo mineral formulation described in *Sahasrayogam*, considered to the most important handbook of Ayurvedic practitioners of Kerala. The herbo mineral formulation widely used by the Ayurvedic Physicians of Kerala and Tamilnadu for treating various clinical conditions like fever *Gulika* is used in clinical practice in various conditions with different *Anupana* (vehicle) in with shivering, rheumatism, vomiting, retention of urine, intestinal colic.^[19] The *Vettumaran* patients. In *Jwara* and *Amavatha* it is given with *Ardraka Swarasa* (juice of fresh *Zingiber officinale* Rosc.). In *Vatakshobha Gulika* administered with *Jeerakwatha* (decoction of *Cuminum cyminum* Linn.). In *Chardi* it is given with *Kachura Kwatha* (*Kaempferia galanga* Linn.). In *Mutraghata*, *Narikel Jala* (tender Coconut milk) given with *Gulika*. In *Shoola* it administered along with *Ajamodakwatha* (*Trachyspermum Ammi* (Linn.) and in *Gulma* it is given with *Lasuna Swarasa* (juice of *Allium Sativum* Linn.). It is widely used in *Jwara* according to pharmacodynamics of this compound it is best *Aampachak* and *Jwaraghna*.

CONCLUSION

From above literature it is concluded that content of *Vettumaran Gulika* is used for various therapeutic potentials. It contains a number of phytoconstituents and amino acids. There is very less clinical trial done on *Vettumaran Gulika*. The literatures showed that that *Vettumaran Gulika* is very safe and effective for medicinal uses.

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