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Critical review on *Haritaki* w.s.r. to *Sthaulya* (Obesity)

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ABSTRACT

Obesity is a major risk factor for a number of chronic diseases, including Diabetes, Cardiovascular disease & Cancer etc. In 2013, the American Medical Association (AMA) declared Obesity a disease that requires a range of interventions to advance treatment & prevention. So, it is the need of the hour to develop better treatment protocol to treat & prevent the condition. *Ayurveda* has the potential in the prevention, management & improvement of the quality of life in obese patient. *Haritaki* having properties like *Kaphaghna*, *Medoghna*, *Deepana*, *Pachana*, *Ruksha*, *Laghu Guna*, *Katu*, *Tikta Rasa* and *Ushna Veerya*, it does the *Sthaulya Samprapti Vighatana*. Various studies also suggested that *Haritaki* possesses an antiobesity and hypolipidemic effects based on *Kaphanashak* and *Medoghna* properties and presence of its biologically active components like saponins, phytosterols, chebulinic acid and corilagin. Therefore, *Haritaki* can be useful as an adjuvant therapy for Obesity.

Key words: Overweight, Obesity, BMI, *Haritaki*, *Sthaulya*

INTRODUCTION

Haritaki is a marvelous *Ayurvedic* drug prized as “king of medicine” and used since ancient time for therapeutic purposes. It has been widely used in the traditional Indian medicine system of *Ayurveda* because of its wide spectrum of pharmacological actions that contains biologically active chemicals.^[1]

Obesity is a major risk factor for a number of chronic diseases, including Diabetes, Cardiovascular disease & Cancer etc. In 2013, the American Medical Association

(AMA) declared Obesity a disease that requires a range of interventions to advance treatment & prevention.^[2] So, it is the need of the hour to develop better treatment protocol to treat & prevent the condition. *Ayurveda* has the potential in the prevention, management & improvement of the quality of life in obese patient.

HARITAKI

हरीतकी पञ्चरसाऽलवणा तुवरा परम् ।

रूक्षोष्णा दीपनी मेध्या स्वादुपाका रसायनी ।

चक्षुष्या लघुरायुष्या बृंहणी चानुलोमिनी । |B.P.

Raw *Haritaki*

Latin name : *Terminalia chebula* Retz.

Family : *Combretaceae*

Synonyms : *Abhaya*, *Pathya*, *Kayastha*, *Putana*, *Amruta*, *Haimavati*, *Avyatha*, *Chetaki*, *Shreyasi*, *Shiva*, *Vayastha*, *Vijaya*, *Jivanti*, *Rohini*.^[3]

Varieties : *Vijaya*, *Rohini*, *Putana*, *Amrita*, *Abhaya*, *Jivanti*, *Chetaki*.^[4]

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Properties^[5]

Rasa (taste): Madhura, Amla, Tikta, Katu, Kashaya

Guna (property): Laghu, Ruksha

Veerya (potency) : Ushna

Vipaka (digestive stage) : Madhura

Doshagnata : Tridoshashamak

Karma^[6]

Vedanasthapana, Vrana shodhana Vranaropana, Dipana, Pachana, Krimighna Kushthaghna, Medhya, Chakshushya, Brimhaniya, Anulomana, Rasayana.

Rogagnata^[7]

Useful in Shotha, Shoola, Arsha, Hridroga, Kasa, Shwasa, Udavarta, Vibandha, Visham Jwara, Ashmari, Kamla, Gulma, Udar Rog, Kushtha, Krimi, Swarbheda, Grahani, Aadhman etc.

Pharmacological activity^[8]

Antioxidant and free radical scavenging activity, Hypolipidemic and hypocholesterolemia activity, Gastrointestinal motility improving, Purgative property and Immunomodulatory activity etc.

Research review of Haritaki**1. Hypolipidemic activity^[9]**

High amount of saponins, phytosterols, chebulinic acid and corilagin present in *Haritaki* is responsible for the hypolipidemic effect.

2. Anti inflammatory activity^[10]

Gallic acid derived from the extracts of several plants especially *T. chebula* was showed to exert anti-inflammatory activity via the downregulation of the NF-kB pathway in the development of inflammatory diseases.

3. Anti diabetic effect^[11]

Terminalia chebula methanolic extract (TCE) containing 2.7% chebulic acid shows preventive effects against the formation of advanced glycation end products (AGEs) and endothelial cell dysfunction.

4. Anti bacterial activity^[12]

Gallic acid and its ethyl ester isolated from ethanolic extract of *Terminalia chebula* shows antimicrobial activity against methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*. It has also growth inhibitory action against *Salmonella typhi* and intestinal bacteria. The extracts of *Terminalia* proves to be an effective anti-bacterial agent by forming the inhibitory zone against *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *P. fluorescens*, *Bacillus bronchiseptica*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Salmonella epidermidis*, *B. cereus*, *B.pumilis*, *Shigella boydii* and *Escherichia coli*.

5. Antiviral activity^[13]

Terminalia chebula fruits afforded four immunodeficiency virus type 1 (HIV-1) integrate inhibitors, gallic acid and three galloy glucoses. Their galloyl moiety plays a major role for inhibition against the 3'-processing of HIV-1 integrase of the compounds.

6. Gastroprotective activity^[14]

The gastroprotective and antisecretory mechanisms of chebulinic acid isolated from myrobalan fruit exhibited through Chebulinic acid which significantly decreases free acidity, total acidity, and upregulated mucin secretion, and inhibits H + K⁺- ATPase activity.

7. Antioxidant activity^[15]

Chebulinic acid has an antioxidant effect and exhibits free radical scavenging activity and ferric-reducing antioxidant activity.

Review on Sthaulya (Obesity)

Obesity is a medical condition in which excess body fat has accumulated to an extent that it may have a negative effect on health. A body mass index (BMI) over 25 is taken into account overweight, and over 30 is obese.^[16]

The analysis of Ayurvedic classics reveals that *Sthaulya* is a *Santarpanjanya Vikara*. Consumption of *Guru*, *Snigdha*, *Madhura Rasa Aahara* along with lack of exercise and sedentary lifestyle results in excessive nourishment of *Medas* and derangement of *Agni* leads to *Aama* production which disturbs *Medodhatwagni* and block proper formation of other *Dhatu*s. Thus

improperly formed *Medodhatu* accumulates in the body leading to flabbiness of hips, abdomen and breast has been categorized as *Atisthauya Roga*.^[17]

Since, *Haritaki* is having properties like *Kaphaghna*, *Medoghna*, *Deepana*, *Pachana*, *Ruksha*, *Laghu Guna*, *Katu*, *Tikta Rasa* and *Ushna Veerya*, it does the *Sthaulya Samprapti Vighatana*. Several researches also proved the positive effect of *Haritaki* on weight control, lipid control and glycemic control because of its biologically active component like saponins, phytosterols, chebulinic acid and corilagin. Hence addition of *Harad* in daily diet not only improves digestion but also plays a key role in reducing Obesity.

Review of Haritaki w.s.r. to Sthaulya

In Ayurvedic classics, *Haritaki* has described as follows:

- *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned *Haritaki* as *Pathya* for *Atisthauya* in *Sutrasthana*.
- *Acharya Sushruta* said that *Haritaki* is useful in *Santarpanjanya Roga*
- *Dhanvantari Nighantu* described that *Haritaki* has *Lekhan* and *Vatanuloman* property and is useful in *Santarpanjanya Rog*.
- *Bhava Prakash*, *Yog Ratnakar*, *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* and some other *Nighantu* mentioned *Haritaki* in so many *Sthaulyanashak Yog*.

DISCUSSION

According to *Ayurvedic* classics *Sthaulya* is *Vata Kapha* predominant metabolic disorder. Excessive accumulation of *Kapha* and *Meda* with other factors eventually leads to *Sthaulya*. *Haritaki* on the basis of its pharmacological properties is useful in Obesity (*Sthaulya*).

The drug *Haritaki* possesses *Katu*, *Tikta Rasa* and cause *Upashoshana* of *Kleda* and *Meda*. Due to *Teekshna*, *Laghu*, *Gunas*, and *Ushna Veerya*, they help in clearing the *Srotas*, also acts on *Kapha* and *Vayu* to break the *Sthaulya Samprapti*. *Katu*, *Tikta Rasa* present in *Haritaki* and *Shunthi* improve *Jatharagni* and correct digestion and metabolism. High amount of saponins,

phytosterols, chebulinic acid and corilagin present in *Haritaki* is responsible for the hypolipidemic effect.

CONCLUSION

Acharyas described *Haritaki* as *Pathya* for *Sthaulya* and also one of the important ingredients in several *Sthaulyanashak Yog* on the basis of its pharmacological properties. Due to chemical constituents specially saponins, phytosterols, chebulinic, corilagin and properties like *Katu*, *Tikta Rasa* and *Ushna Veerya*, *Haritaki* improves *Jatharagni*, correct digestion and metabolism. Hence addition of *Haritaki* in daily diet not only improves digestion but also plays a key role in reducing Obesity.

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