



Agraya Dravyas: The Foremost Medicinal Substances in Ayurvedic Science

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Agraya Dravya refers to the most foremost or superior substances in Ayurveda, chosen based on their highest therapeutic potential and nutritional benefits. These substances are classified as the best in their respective categories such as grains, dairy products, medicinal herbs as documented in classical Ayurvedic texts like Charak Samhita and Sushrut Samhita. The concept of Agraya Dravya helps practitioners select the most effective substances for treatment and overall health. This paper explores the significance, classification, and application of Agraya Dravya highlighting its role in maintaining health and treating diseases.

Keywords: Agraya Dravya, Foremost substances, Charak Samhita

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Introduction

In *Ayurveda*, concept of *Agraya Dravya* holds significant importance as it identifies best or foremost substances for achieving specific therapeutic effects. Term “*Agraya*” translates to “foremost” or “chief” & “*Dravya* means “substance” or “herb”. These are substances or herbal drugs singled out for their exceptional efficacy in treating specific diseases, balancing *Doshas*, or promoting overall health & well-being.

Systematic identification & prioritization of *Agraya Dravyas* demonstrate scientific foundation of *Ayurveda* in offering precise treatments. Furthermore, they serve as guiding tools for *Ayurvedic* practitioners, ensuring optimal therapeutic outcomes. Modern research continues to validate their efficacy, highlighting their relevance & application in integrative medicine. Understanding & utilizing *Agraya Dravyas* is an essential part of applying *Ayurvedic* princ. to achieve holistic health & treat specific dise. with precision & effectiveness.

Nirukti

Agraya word is derived by adding *Ghanpratyā* in *Agre Bhavam*, *Agra Pradhanam*. It denotes the best one on other hand it denotes the *Shreshtha Dravya* that pacify the diseases.

Definition

When two medications have the same action, the one with the best *Pathya* (Wholesome) and the one with the best *Apathya* (unwholesome) is referred to as *Agraya Aushadh*.^[1] Example *Vritikar* means sustaining daily life are *Jala*, *Anna*, *Ahaara*, *Vihaar*, *Swapna*, *Brahmacharya* from all these *Anna* i.e., food is best, so food is *Agraya* (best) for *Vritikar*.

Agraya Dravya in different classical texts

In *Ayurvedic* classical texts *Agraya Dravya* are mentioned.

1. In *Charak Samhita Sutra Sthana* chapter 25, 152 *Agraya Dravyas* are mentioned.^[2]
2. Some single drugs mentioned for single diseases like *Shirish- Vishagha*, *Khadir- Kusthaghna* Some single drugs in context are mentioned for more than one diseases like *Pushkarmool - Hikka*, *Shwas*, *Kasa*, *Parshwashoolhar* etc. *Agravya Dravyas* for *Panchkarma* are also mentioned e.g. *Trivritta - Sukhvirechan*.

Charak also mentioned *Agraya Aushadh* for preve. aspect like *Ekra Abhyas - Daurbalyakar* etc.

3. In *Ashtanga Hridya Uttar Sthana Vagbhatta* has mentioned 55 *Agraya Dravya*.

4. *Vagbhatta* in *Ashtanga Sangraha Sutra Sthana* has mentioned 155 *Agraya Aushadh*.

Importance & Need of Aushadh Dravya

1) Easiness: It is simpler to utilize a best one drug for a specific ailment than to use numerous medications to create a formulation. It takes a long time to create the formulation. *Agraya Aushadh* can be use instantly.

2) Faster Action & Effectiveness: These substances provide quicker relief compared to other general herbal medicines.

3) Efficient in Small Doses: Due to their potency, even small amounts can produce significant therapeutic effects.

4) Benchmark in treatment: They serve as gold standard in their respective categories, ensuring the best results in therapy.

5) Precision in Dosha Balance: Each *Agraya Dravya* is highly specific in pacifying particular *Dosha* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*) or balan. body systems.

6) Holistic Health Benefits: Many *Agraya Dravyas* support not just disease treatment but also rejuvenation, strength, and longevity (e.g. *Rasayana* like *Amalaki*).

7) Minimal side effect: When used in proper dosage and combination, these substances offer maximum benefits with minimal or no side effects.

8) Cost effective: A compound formulation, which contains numerous medications, is more expensive than a single drug.

9) Identification: *Agraya Dravya* which are typically single drugs or combinations of two or three drugs, are easy to detect whereas when a formulation is given to a doctor, it can be challenging to determine whether formulation is pure and real.

Materials and Methods

The methodology followed was scrutinizing of Available classical data from *Charak Samhita* and comparing it with modern relevant information.

Results

The following results were drawn from the available data.

Table 1: Agraya Dravya in Charak Samhita [3,4,5]

Dravya	Latin name	Family name	Synonym	Varieties	Karma
Anna (Godhuma)	Triticum aestivum	Poaceae	Bahudugdha, Arupa, Sumana, Mleccha Bhojan, Yavaka,	1)Maha Godhuma 2)Madhuli, Madhulika 3)Nandimukhi	Vritikaranam
Udaka			Jala, Toya, Salil, Ambu, Vari, Neer	Antariksha Jala- Dhara (Rain water), Kaara (Formed from Hail stones), Thaushara (Fog), Haima (Snow)	Asvashakranama
Sura			Surendra, Surejya, Suresta	Prasanna,Kadambari, Jagala,Medaka,Sura Beeja	Shramharanam
Ksheeram			Dugdha, Sthanya, Balajeevan, Payas	Godugdha, Mahisha Dugdha, Ontani Dugdha, Ashwa Dugdha, Bakari Dugdha, Bheda Dugdha, Hasthi Dugdha, Stree Dugdha	Jeevniyanama
Mansam				Praseh, Jangham,Bhushaya, Vishikar, Anupa, Pratuda, Jalaj, Jalchar	Brihiniyanama
Rasa					Tarpaniyanama
Lavan				Saindhava, Sauvarchala, Vida, Samudra, Audhbida.	Anadravya ruchikaranama
Amalam				Amla panchak- Jambir, Amlavetasa,Matulunga,Naranga, Nimbuka	Hridyanama
Kukutta	Gallus domesticus	Phasianidae			Balyanama
Nakrreto	Crocodylus niloticus	Crocodylidae			Vrishyanama
Madhu			Kshaudra	Charak (4)-Makshika, Bhramara, Ksaudra, Pauttika Sushurut (8)-Pauttikum, Bhramra, Ksaudram, Makshikam,Chatram, Arghyam, Auddalakam, Dalam	Shleshampittprashamnanama
Sarpi			Ghrita	Gosarpi, Maheshsarpi, Ajasarpi, Ushtrasarpi, Avisarpi, Strisarpi, Hastisarpi,	Vaatpittprashamananam
Taila				Eranda taila,Sarshapa taila, Priyal Taila,Atsi Taila, Kusumbh Taila	Vaatshleshampishamananam
Vaman			Pracchadan		Shleshamharanam
Virechan			Praskandan, Prasekadan		Pittharanama
Basti				Charak- Anuvasan, Niruhan Sushurut- Anuvasan, Niruhan, Uttar	Vaatharanama
Swed				Sagni(13), Niragni(10)	Mardavkaranama
Vayayama					Stheryakaranama
Kshara				Paniya, Pratisarniya	Punsatvaghatinama
Tinduka	Diospyros malabarica	Ebenaceae	Sohurjaka, Virala,Kalasara		Annadravyaruchikaranama
Aam Kapitham	Limonia acidissima	Rutaceae	Kapipriya,Gandhaphala, Dadhittha, Dantashadha		Akanthyanama
Aavikam sarpi	Ovis aries	Bovidae			Hridyanama
Ajaksheeram	Capra aegagrus	Bovidae			Shoshghan Stanya satmaya sangrahi raktPittprashamnanama
Aviksheeram					Shleshampittajanana
Maahishksheeram					Svapnjananama

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Dravya	Latin name	Family name	Synonym	Varieties	Karma
Mandakdadhy					Abhishyandkaranama
Gvedhuk	Coix lacryma	Poaceae	Ashrubeeja, Gojihva, Varshika, Toyap arni		Karshaniyanama
Udyalakanam	Paspalum scrobiculat um	Graminaceae	Vanakodrava		Virukshniyanama
Ikshu	Saccharum offinarum	Gramineae	Guda moola, Deergachada, Bhoori rasa	Bh.P-13 types	Mutrajananama
Yava	Hordeum vulgare	Poaceae			Purishjananama
Jambvam	Syzium cumini	Myrtaceae	Mahaphala, phalendra	Raja jambu, Ksudra Jambu, Bhumi Jambu, Gulab Jamun	Vaatjananama
Shushkulya					Shleshampittjananama
Kulatha	Dolichos biflorus	Fabaceae			Amalpittajanana
Masha	Vigna mungo	Fabaceae			Shleshampittjananama
Madanphalam	Randia spinosa	Rubiaceae	Gala, Golaphala, Pindeetaka		Vamanasthapananuvasanupogi nama
Trivrit	Operculina turpethum	Convolvulaceae	Nishoth, Tribhandi, Rechani, Tri-putta	Aruna Syama	Sukhvirechananama
Chaturangulo	Cassia fistula	Leguminosae	Rajavruksha, Kritamala, Deerghphala		Mriduvirechananama
Snuhi	Euphorbia nerifolia	Euphorbiaceae	Snuk, Sudha, Sehund	Ch-Alpa kantaka, Bahu Kantaka	Tikshanvirechanama
Pratyakpushpa	Achyranthu s aspera	Amaranthaceae	Apamarg, Shikhari, Adhah shalya, khara manjari	Shweta, Rakta	Shirovirechananama
Vidanga	Embelia ribes	Myrsinaceae	Chitra Tandula, Jantuhantri, Amogha	Embelia Tsjeriam	Krimighanama
Shirisho	Albizzia Lebbeck	Leguminosae	Shukapriya, Bhandi, Kapi tana	Kala Shirish- Albizzia odorotissima Shweta Shirish- Albizia procera	Vishghananama
Khadir	Acacia catechu	Mimosaceae	Raktsara, Gayatri, Dantadhavana	Swetakhadir-Acacia catechu Durgandhkhair-Acacia farnesiana	Kusthghananama
Rasana	Pluchea lanceolate	Compositae	Elaparni, Surabhi, Sugandha		Vaatharanama
Amalaki	Emblica officinalis	Euphorbiaceae	Vrushya, Tishyaphala, Amrutphala	Vanya, Gramya	Vayasthapananama
Haritaki	Terminalia chebula	Combretaceae	Abhaya, pathya, hemvati, Rohini, Jeevanti	Vijya, Rohini, Putana, Amruta, Abhaya, Jivanti	Pathyanama
Erandmoolam	Ricinus communis	Euphorbiaceae	Vardhamana, Aamanda, Panchangula	R.N-Sthula Eranda, BP-Shveta, Rakta.	Vrishyavaatharanama
Pippalimoolam	Piper longum	Piperaceae	Kana, Magadhi, Krushna, Kola	1)Pippali- Piper longum 2)Gaja Pippali- Scindapsis officinalis 3)Simhali- Piper retrofractum 4)Vana Pippali- Piper sylvaticum	Dipaniypachaniy anahaprashamnama

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Dravya	Latin name	Family name	Synonym	Varieties	Karma
Chitrakmoolam	Plumbago Zeylanica	Plumbaginaceae	Agni, Vyala, Vyala,Dahana	1)Safed Pushp-Piper Zylanica 2)Lal Pushp-Plumbago rosea 3)Neel Pushp- Plumbago capensis	Dipaniyapachani Gudshoth Arshshoolharanama
Pushkarmoolam	Inula racemosa	Compositae	Padmapatra,Kashmir, Kustha Bhedh		Hikka Shvash Kas Parshavshoolharanama
Mustam	Cyperus rotundus	Cyperaceae	Varid, Krodeshta, Hima	Bhadra Musta-Cyperus rotundus Nagaramusta- Cyperus scariosus Jala Musta- Cyperus esculentus	SangrahiK Dipaniya Pachaniyanama
Udichya					Nirvapan Dipniya Pachaniya Chardi Atisaarharanama
Ananta	Hemidesmus Indicus	Asclerpediaceae	Gopvalli, Anantmool	Shweta, Krishna (Cryptolepis buchanana & Ichnocarpus frutescens, Jambhupatra sariva	SangrahiK Raktpitprashamnanama
Amrita	Tinospora cordifolia	Menispermaceae	Guduchi,Madhuparni,Ku ndali, Chinnaruha	Tinospora crispa, Tinospora sinensis, Tinospora malabarica,	Samgrahik Vaathara Dipniya Shleshm Shonit Vibandh Prashmnanama
Bilvam	Aegle marmelos	Rutaceae	Shandilya, Shailusha, Shriphala	Vanya, Gramya	SangrahiK Dipniya Vaatkaph Prashamnanama
Ativisha	Aconitum heterophyllum	Ranunculaceae	Shuklakanda,Bhangura, Ghunavallabha,Aruna	Aconitum palmatum(Aruna variety), Aconitum kasmiricum(Krsna variety)	Dipniya Pachniya SangrahiK Sarvdoshaharanama
Utpalkumud	Nelumbo nucifera	Nelumbaceae	Padma, Sahasrapatra,Mahotpala ,Rajeeva, Ambhoruha	Nymphaea alba-Shvetotpala Nymphaea stellate-Neelotpala Nymphaea rubra-Raktotpala	SangrahiK raktpittprashamnanama
Durlabha	Fagonia cretica	Zygophyllaceae	Dhanvayas, Samudranta, Ananta, Gandhari		Pittshleshmashmananama
Gandhpriyangu	Callicarpa macrophylla	Verbenaceae	Phalapriyangu, Gndhaphali	Prunus mahaleb, Algaia roxburghiana,Clicarpa tomentosa	Shonitpitta atiyogprashmananama
Kutajtvak	Holarrhena antidysenterica	Apocynaceae	Girimallika, Kalinga,Indravriksha,Va tsaka	Acc to charak-1 1)Pum Kutaja-Holarrhena antidysenterica 2)Stri Kutaja- Wrightia tinctoria	Shlesham Pitta RaktasangrahiK Opshoshnama
Prishanparni	Uraria Picta	Fabaceae	Chitraparni, Kostruka puchika, Simhapuchi, Guha		SangrahiK Vaathar Dipniy Vrishyanama
Vidarigandha	Desmodium gangeticum	Leguminosae	Vidarigandha, Anshumati, Shalaparni		Vrishya Sarvdoshharanama
Bala	Sida cordifolia	Malvaceae	Kharayashtika, Vatyalika	Atibala- Abutilon indicum Nagbala-Grewia hirsute Mahabala- Sida rhombifolia Rajbala- Sida veronicaefolia	SangrahiK Baly Vaathananama
Gokshura	Tribulus terrestris	Zygophyllaceae	Shvadamshttra, Trikantaka,Sv dukantaka, Ikshugandhika	Brihat gokshura-Pedaliu murex	Mutkrich Anilharanama
Hinguniryas	Ferula narthex	Umbelliferae	Sahasravedhi, Jatuk, Bahleeka, Ramatha		Chedniya Dipniy Anulomik Vaatkaphprashamnanama
Amalvetaso	Garcinia pedunculata	Guttiferae	Aragwadha, Rajavruksha, Chaturangula, Suvarnaka		Bhedniy Dipniy Anulomik Vaatshleshmharanama
Yaavshook	Hordeum vulgare	Graminae	Jau, Yava, Taukya	1)Jau- Saffed shook yukt 2)Atiyava- Shook rahit 3)Taukya- Shook rahit, small green in colour.	Sransniypachniy arshoghnanama
Takrabhyaso			Mattha, Ghola,Takra	Ghola, Mathita, Udasvit, Takra, Chachika	Grehanidoshas Shoph Arshoghnanama

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Dravya	Latin name	Family name	Synonym	Varieties	Karma
Kravyanmansraabhyaso					Grehanidoshas Shosharshoghnnama
Ksheerghritaabhyaso					Rasayananam
Samghritsaktuprashabhyaso					Vrishy Oudarvathanama
Tailgandhushbhyaso					Dantbal Ruchikaranama
Chandanam	Santalum album	Santalaceae	Shrikhanda, Gandhasara, Chandradhyuti	D.N- Shwet, Rakta, Kuchandana, Barbarikam	Durgandhar Dahnirvapanlepananama
Rasnaguruni	Pluchea lanceolata	Compositae	Elaparni, Yukta, Sugandha		Shee Tapnayn Pralepnanama
Lamajjakosheeram	Andropogon jwarancusa	Graminae	Nalada, Ishtakaapathaka, Sunala		Daha Tvagdosh Sveda Apnayan Pralepnanama
Kushtam	Saussurea lappa	Compositae	Utpala, Vapya, Kasmira		Vaathar Abhyang Upnaho Upyoginama
Madhukam	Glycyrrhiza glabra	Leguminosae	Yastimaddhu, Klitaka		Chakshu Vrishy Keshy Kanthy Varnyaviranjniy Ropniyanama
Vaayu			Prajapati, Aditi, vishwaroop	5 types- Prana, Apana,Samana,Udana, Vyana	Praansangya Pradaanhetunaam
Agni				1.Jtharagni, 5 Bhutagni, 7 Dhatuvagni	Sthambhan Sheet Shul Odvepn Prashmnanaam
Jala			Udak, Paniya	Antariksha Jala-1) Dhara (Rain water) Kaara (Formed from Hail stones) Thaushara (Fog), Haima (Snow)	Sthambhaniyaanam
Mridbhrst lostrnirvapitmudkam					Lostrnirvapitmudkam
Atimatraaashnam					Aam Doshhetunaam
Yathagnyabhyvhar					Agnisandukshnanam
Yathasatmyam					Chestabha Vharo Sevyanama
Kaalbhajanm					Aarogyakranam
Triptiaahara					Gunanam
Vegsandharanam					Arogyakranama
Madya					Som Nsyajannanama
Madyakshepo					Dhi Dhriti Smritiharanam
Gurubhojanam					Durvipaka Karanama
Ekashanbhojanam					Sukhparinamkranam
Strishvtiprasang					Shoshkaranam
Shukr vegnigreh					Shandyakranam
Praghaat					Manashrdha Jannama
AnshanAyusho					Hras Karanam
Pramitashanam					Karshniyanama
Ajiranadhyashan					Grehni Dushnaama
Vishamashan					Agniveshmyakranama
Virudhviryashnam					Nindi Tvyadhikaranama
Prasham					Pathyanama
Aayas					Sarvpathyanam
Mithyayogo					Vyadhikranaam
Rajsvlabhigamnama					Alakshmimukhnam
Bhramcharya					Ayushyanama
Pardarabhigaman					Nayushanam
Sankalpo					Vrishyanama

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Dravya	Latin name	Family name	Synonym	Varieties	Karma
Dormansyam					Avrishyanama
Aythabalmarambh					Praanopradinam
Vishado					Rogvardhnanam
Snaanam					Shramharanam
Harsh					Prinanaam
Nirvriti					Pushtikaranama
Pushti					Svapankaranam
Atisvapan				Ch-7 Drista, Shruta, Anubhuta, Prarthita, Kalpita, Bhavika, Doshaja	Tandrakranama
Sarvasabhyaso				6 Rasa- Madhur, Amla, Lawan, Katu, Tikta, Kshaya	Balkranama
Ekrasaabhyaso					Dorbalyakranam
Garbhshalya				4) Kilah, Pratikhurah, Vijakah, Parighah	Aaharyanama
Ajirna				4) Amajirna, Vidagdhajirna, Vishtabdhajirna, Rasasesha Ajirna	Udharyanama
Balomridu					Bheshajiyanam
Vridho					Yapyanam
Garbhini					Varjiyanama
Tikshanoshadhvyavaya					
Vyayam					
Somnsyam					Garbhdharnama
Sanipato					Duschikitsyanama
Aamo				1) Visuchika 2) Alsak	Visham chikitsyanama
Jvaro			Vikar, Rog, Vyadhi		Roganama
Kusth				Charak-7, 18 or Asankhya Sushurut- 18	Deergh Roganama
Rajyakshma			Jwara, Krodha, Roga		Rogsamuhanama
Prameho				10 Kaphaj, 6 Pittaj 4 Vataj	Anushanginama
Jaloka				12 types 6 Nirvish, 6 Svish	Anushastranama
Basti				Ch-2) Anuvasan, Niruh Su-3) Anuvasan, Niruh, Uttar basti	Tantranama
Himo					Shadhbhumina
Marubhumi				Jangal (Vata), Anup (Kaphaj), Sadharan	Arogya Deshanama
Anup					Ahitdeshanama
Nirdeshkaritva					Aturgunanam
Bhishak					Chikitsanganama
Nastik					Varjyanama
Lolyam					Kleshkranama
Anirdeshkarit					Aristanama
Vaidyasamuh					Nisanshya Karanam
Yogo					Vaidyagunanama
Vigyaan					Oshdhinama
Shastra sahit tark					Sadhnanam
Sampratipati					Kalgyan Prayojnanama
Avyavsaya					Kal Atipati Hetunama
Dristkarm					Nisanshyakranam

Dravya	Latin name	Family name	Synonym	Varieties	Karma
Asmarthta					Bhyakranama
Tadvidyasambhasha					Budhivardhnanam
Aacharya					Shastra Dhigam Hetunama
Ayurvedo					Amritanama
Sadavachan					Ustheyanam
Asad Grehanam					Sarvhitanaama
Sarvsanyasa					Sukhanamiti

Discussion

On Analyzing the *Agraya* from the text with their latin name, family, synonyms, varieties, *Karma* enlisted in the table no. 1 it can be inferred that the 26 no. of components mentioned in classics of *Agraya* are of *Ahar Varga*, 61 are of *Aushadh Varga*, 29 are of *Vihar* (lifestyle), 24 are related to *Manas* and *Mansika Chikitsa*, 10 are related to *Panchkarma* and related *Panchkarma* procedures, 8 are of *Vyadhi* (diseases). So, a total of 152 *Dravya* of different regimens of *Agraya* were analyzed and a comparison was drawn of contemporary text in relation to current scenario in *Ayurveda*.

Conclusion

Agraya Dravya represents the finest and most effective substances in *Ayurveda*, carefully selected based on their superior therapeutic and nutritional benefits. These substances serve as benchmarks for treatment, diet and health maintenance, offering optimal results in disease management and overall well-being. The classification of *Agraya Dravya*, as documented in classical *Ayurvedic* texts like *Charak Samhita* and *Sushurut Samhita*, provides valuable guidance for practitioners in choosing the most effective remedies.

In modern times, understanding and utilizing *Agraya Dravya* can help integrate *Ayurvedic* wisdom into contemporary healthcare, promoting natural and holistic approaches to healing. Further research and scientific validation of these substances can enhance their application in medicine and nutrition, making *Ayurveda* more relevant in today's world.

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