

# REVIEW OF FORMULATIONS CONTAINING UPAVISHAS IN RASA SHASTRA

<sup>1</sup> Archa S. <sup>2</sup> Vyshak M.

<sup>1</sup> P.G Scholar, <sup>2</sup> Associate Professor

<sup>1</sup>Department of Rasa Shastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, <sup>2</sup> Department of Kriya Shareera

<sup>1</sup>Government Ayurveda College, Trivandrum, Kerala,

<sup>2</sup>Dharma Ayurveda Medical College, Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu.

## Abstract

*Rasa shastra* is a branch of *Ayurveda* that deals with herbs, metals, minerals and poisonous drugs for various Pharmaceutical processes as well as therapeutic purposes. *Upavishas* are the group of drugs that are less toxic among poisonous drugs and produces certain toxic symptoms on consumption. This work aims to review *Rasa shastra* formulations containing *upavisha* drugs and to analyse which are the frequently used *upavishas* and their therapeutic utilities.

**Key words :** *Upavisha, Visha.*

## INTRODUCTION

*Ayurveda* is the science of life which mainly aims at preventive and curative aspects of a disease. *Rasa shastra* is a branch of *Ayurveda* which mainly deals with processing of metals, minerals and toxic herbs and its therapeutic utility. *Ayurvedic* medicines, especially those involving metals, minerals, and toxic herbs shows some harmful effects on internal administration. It may be due to improper purification or overdose. So it is important to have an awareness regarding the poisonous drugs, especially regarding purification and dose. It is quoted that "All substances are poisons; there is none which is not a poison. The right dose differentiates a poison from a remedy." Paracelsus (1493-1541).

In *Ayurvedic* classics and texts, Poisons are classified into two as *Mahavisha* and *Upavisha* based on their toxicity and potency. *Upavisha* are the group of drugs, which are less toxic in nature and not life threatening and toxicity symptoms can be controlled by therapeutic measures. The following drugs are widely regarded as *upavisha* drugs.

1. *Kupeelu (Strychnos nuxvomica)*
2. *Bhallathaka (Semecarpus anacardium)*
3. *Ahiphena (Papaver somniferum)*
4. *Jayapala (Croton tiglium)*
5. *Dhathura (Datura metel)*
6. *Bhanga (Cannabis sativa)*
7. *Arka (Euphorbia nerifolia)*
9. *Langali (Gloriosa superba)*
10. *Aswamara (Nerium indicum)*
11. *Gunja (Abrus precatorius)*

*Rasarnava* appears to be the first text that mentions *Visha – Upavisha* classification. It is found that there is a difference in opinion among different authors regarding the inclusion of drugs in *Upavisha* group. *Rasarnava* mentioned five drugs in *upavisha* group, *Rasaratna samuchaya* and *Rasendra Chinthamani* included seven drugs and in later texts like *Ayurveda prakasha* and *Yogaratnakara* 9 drugs and while in *Rasa tarangini* it has gone up to eleven.

## Aims and Objectives

This study aims to review the *Rasa yogas* containing *upavishas*.

## Materials and Methods

1) Review of Rasa formulations containing Upavishas from Rasaratna samuchaya, Rasa tarangini and Rasendrasara Samgraham.

2) Formulations containing Rasa drugs were selected and information regarding other Ingredients, Bhavana Dravyas, Indication were collected and analysed.

After analysing the Rasa shastra classical texts like Rasaratna samuchaya, Rasa tarangini and Rasendra Sara Sangraham 84, 43 and 140 formulations, containing upavishas were found respectively.

Table No:1 showing Name of Upavisha, Number of Formulations in Rasaratna samuchaya, Rasa tarangini, Rasendra sara samgraham

SL No:	NAME OF UPAVISHA	RASA RATNA SAMUCHAYA	RASA TARANGINI	RASENDRASARA SANGRAHAM	Total
1.	Kupeelu	9	8	5	22
2.	Bhallathaka	11	2	9	22
3.	Ahiphena	1	5	5	11
4.	Jayapala	11	2	38	51
5.	Dathura	10	7	37	54
6.	Bhanga	7	7	28	42
7.	Arka	18	1	25	44
8.	Snuhi	20	2	23	45
9.	Langali	8	0	3	11
10.	Karaveera	0	0	3	3
11.	Gunja	9	2	3	14
	Total	84	43	140	267

## OBSERVATION

After analysing the *yogas* the following facts were understood:

1) *Dathura, Jayapala, Bhang, Arka* and *Snuhi* are the most commonly used *upavishas* in *Rasa yogas*

2) *Karaveera* is the *upavisha* that is used only in a few *Rasa yogas*.

3) *Snuhi Ksheera* and *Arka Ksheera* are mainly used as *bhavana dravyas*.

4) *Parada, Gandhaka, Harithalam, Manashila, Tankana, Abhraka* are the commonly used *Rasa drugs* in *upavisha* containing formulations.

5) *Kupeelu* containing formulations are mainly indicated for *Agnimandhya, Vatarakta, Krimi, all types of Jwara, Deepana, Pachana, Rasayana, Rasarasayana, Vatavyadhi etc.*

6) *Ahiphena* containing formulations are mainly indicated for *Atisara, visuchika, Grahani, Shotha, Jwaraatisara, Anidra.*

7) *Jayapala* containing formulations are mainly indicated for *Vata shoola, kshaya, kasa, swasa, Virechana, Jalodara, Vishamjwara, Virechanam, Yakrit and pliharoga.*

8) *Dhathura* containing formulations are mainly indicated for *Pithathisaaram, Swasam, Kasam, Teevraathisaram, Grahani, Sannipatha Jwaram, Jwaram, Pralapa, Agnimandya, Unmada.*

9) *Bhanga* containing formulations are mainly indicated for *Ama dosha, Krimi, Vajeekarana, Sannipata, Jwara, swayathu, Grahani.*

10) *Gunja* containing formulations are mainly indicated for *Urustambham, Kushtham, Deepanam, Vajeekarana.*

11) *Bhallathaka* containing formulations are mainly indicated for all types of *Kustha, Kaphaja gulma, Pittaja arsha, Ajeerna, Visuchika, Sarpadamsha, Sannipatikajwara, Vatavyadhi.*

12) *Arka* containing formulations are mainly indicated for *Raktapitta, Pleeha, Gulma udara roga, Karna roga, Kasa, Kustha.*

13) *Snuhi* containing formulations are mainly indicated for *Pleeha, gulma, udara roga, Kesha dadru, Jalodara, Khalitya, Bhagandara, Agnimandhya, Ajeerna, Shula.*

14) *Langali* containing formulations are mainly indicated for *Arshas, Jwara, Kustha, Visarpa, Rasayana.*

15) *Karaveera* containing formulations are mainly indicated for *Kushta, Vatharaktha, Udara, Jwara, Pandu, Kamala*.

### Discussion

In *Rasa shastra*, almost all drugs in crude form are toxic and the ill effects due to intake of improperly processed *Rasa aushadies* are mentioned in detail. *Visha upavisha dravyas* when administered after proper processing and appropriate dose act as nectar otherwise it will act as a poison. *Ayurvedic* classics contain various methods to remove the toxins and to increase the therapeutic properties of a drug. Even after proper purification methods due to over dosing and remnants of toxic contents there are chances of poisoning.

*Dathura, Bhang* are deliriant poisons and rarely cause death and hence treatment at higher centres rarely required. It may be the reason that they have been used in many *yogas*. *Karaveera* is a cardiac poison and emergency treatment is often required, it may be the reason why it's seen in less number of *yogas*. *Snuhi ksheera* and *arka ksheera* are mainly used as *bhavana dravyas* and it may be due to their irritant property. *Parada, Gandhaka, Harithalam, Manashila, Tankana, Abhraka* are the commonly used *Rasa* drugs in *upavisha* containing formulations. *Bhanga* and *Ahiphena* are Narcotic drugs and they are commonly used in *grahani, visoochika* and sleeplessness. Even though *Upavisha* drugs have property similar to *visha*, majority of drugs have *rasayana* property. This implies that even poisons when administered at right dose and proper purification acts like nectar.

### Conclusion

From this study it can be concluded that all *upavishas* mentioned in classical texts are applicable for a wide variety of diseases. If *Upavishas* are used in therapeutic doses and after specific detoxification processes they can produce quick and excellent results. The recent researches studies also proved that there is a chemical change after *shodhana* of poisonous drugs that showed increase in active constituents and decrease in toxic contents. Hence toxic drugs should always be used after specific purification processes. An acute poison produce excellent results when administered properly after purification processes.

### References

1. Vilas A. Dole, Prakash Paranjpe, A Text Book of Rasa Sastra, Chaukambha Sanskrit Pratisthan, Delhi, 2010.
2. Dr. A.D. Satpute.. Rasaratna samuchaya, reprint 2006 ed. New Delhi. Chowkhamba Sanskrit pratisthan
3. Pandit Kashinatha Sastry. Rasatharangini Paribhasha vijnaniyam, 11 ed. New Delhi, Mothilal Banarasi Das; 2014.
4. Pandit Kashinatha Sastry. Rasatharangini Paribhasha vijnaniyam, 11 ed. New Delhi, Mothilal Banarasi Das; 2014.
5. Narayan Reddy. K.S. Organic irritant poisons. In: The Essentials Of Forensic And Toxicology. 31 st edition. Hyderabad. K S ungunadevi; 2012.
6. Kaviraj Sri Ambikadatta Sastri. Rasa ratna samuchaya. Varanasi. Chaukamba 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Amarabharati Prakashan, 1995