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Guggulu in general practice - Amayika prayogas in classical texts-a review

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Abstract: Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana covers authentic pharmacological aspects dealt in *Ayurveda*. *Guggulu* has its widespread utility not only as an ingredient and binding agent in various formulations, but also included in various *Amayika prayogas* by our authors. These *Prayogas* are explained in various dosage forms like *Kashaya*, *dhoopa*, *churna* etc. Here is an attempt to bring together the utility of *Guggulu* in various *Amayika prayogas*, the knowledge of which may be utilised in our day-to-day clinical practice by our physicians.

Introduction:

“*Ayurveda*”, one of the world's oldest holistic healing systems, is developed over the concepts of the body's constitution (*prakriti*), and life forces (*doshas*). These comprise the primary foundation of ayurvedic medicine upon which it is abundantly grown as a science. Goals of treatment in *Ayurveda* are to eliminate the impurities, reduce the symptoms, increase resistance to disease, and thereby maintain health and longevity. Also *Ayurveda* propagates the concept of *Panchamahabhuta*, as every individual is composed of five basic elements found in the universe: space, air, fire, water, and earth. Also the structural and supporting units of the body are explained as *Dhatu*. Generally, an Ayurvedic practitioner will create a treatment plan specifically designed based on the unique combination of *prakriti*, *dosha*, *dhatu* and *panchamahabhutas* in the particular person.

Rasashastra and *Bhaishajya Kalpana* are the potential branches of *Ayurveda*, which deal with the preparation of Ayurvedic medicines, using herbomineral drugs. This is a vast field of ayurvedic pharmacology, where many dosage forms and formulations have been dealt with. In our classics there has been a term known as *Amayika prayoga* where the author explains special formulations with indications of his own experience. One among the most potent dosage forms is *Guggulu kalpana*. The value of *guggulu kalpana* is simply because of *Guggulu* added as an ingredient. The *Amayika prayogas* of *guggulu* alone as a main ingredient, which has been explained by various authors are enlisted below.

Guggulu as a Dravya:

Guggulu with Latin Name *Commiphora wightii*(Arn) is one among the most potent herb derived from flowering Mukul myrrh tree. According to Ayurveda, *Guggulu*, which literally means “**that which protects from disease¹**” in Sanskrit, is one of the most important purifying herbs mentioned in classical texts in following contexts:

Guggulvadi Varga¹-Nighantu adarsha

Rasayana varga²- Hareeta samhitha

Sangnaa sthapaka dashemaani³ and Pancha niryaasa⁴ –Charaka Samhitha

Eladi varga⁵- Sushruta samhitha

Karporadi varga^{6,7} – Saligraama, Madanapaala and Bhavaprakasha nighantu

Chandanadi varga^{10,11} - Raja nighantu, Dhanvantari Nighantu

Synonyms: Synonyms play a significant role in knowing about the drug and also which context it is mentioned in our treatises. Synonyms of *guggulu* are explained below:

| Sl n | Synonym | Meaning | Reference |
|------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | <i>Kalaniryasa⁶</i> | Exudates during summer | <i>Madanapaala nighantu</i> |
| 3 | <i>Mahishaksha⁶</i> | Colour of the eyes of buffalo | <i>Madanapaala nighantu</i> |
| 4 | <i>Shiva⁶</i> | Lord shiva | <i>Madanapaala nighantu</i> |
| 5 | <i>Palankasha⁶</i> | Reduces the bulkyness of the body | <i>Madanapaala nighantu</i> |
| 6 | <i>Kaushika⁶</i> | Originates from the <i>Koshas</i> of tree | <i>Madanapaala nighantu</i> |
| 7 | <i>Devadhoopa^{6,7}</i> | Dhoopa used for worshipping | <i>Madanapaala nighantu; Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 8 | <i>Pura¹</i> | One of the most significant drug to cure all diseases | <i>Nighantu adarsha</i> |
| 9 | <i>Sarala srava⁷</i> | Which oozes out easily from the tree | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 10 | <i>Kumbha⁷</i> | comes out of the hollow spaces of the tree | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 11 | <i>Shreevasa⁷</i> | Lord Vishnu | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 12 | <i>Shreeveshta⁷</i> | Gum resin of <i>Pinus roxburghii</i> Sarg, or simply resin | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 13 | <i>Vriksha dhoopaka⁷</i> | Dhoopa which is from a tree | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 14 | <i>Gandhabiroja⁷</i> | That which spread good fragrance | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 15 | <i>Bola⁷</i> | Niryasa like that of Bola | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |

| | | | |
|----|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 16 | <i>Ulukhala</i> ⁷ | Comes out of hollow spaces like <i>ulukhala</i> of the tree | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 17 | <i>Gandharaaja</i> ⁷ | King of Sugandha dravyas | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 18 | <i>Swarna kana</i> ⁷ | particles are of golden yellow in colour | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 19 | <i>Sarasa</i> ⁷ | Sticky in nature | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 20 | <i>Kana guggulu</i> ⁷ | Turns into small golden coloured globules when dry | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |
| 21 | <i>Marudesha</i> ⁷ | Which is obtained in sandy areas | <i>Bha.Pra.ni</i> |

Guggulu and its Kalpana:

Identification⁷: Adulteration in every drug is a major concern in present era. *Guggulu* is found adulterated with *Shallaki Nirryasa* in the market available samples. The distinguishing featured would be that *Guggulu* is harder and is in the form of *Kana*/globules. The colour varies as *Guggulu* has a darker shade when compared to *Boswellia serrata*. Also *Shallaki nirryasa* burns faster when compared to *Guggulu*⁸ and turns whitish when dissolved in water.⁸

Test for perfectness⁸:

1. When dissolved in water it forms an emulsion-like substance which is yellowish in colour.
2. When ether extracts of *Guggulu* are dried and exposed to fumes of H₂SO₄ solution it turns dark purple.
3. Alcoholic extracts should contain ash value not more than 5%.

Types of guggulu: Types of *Guggulu* is enumerated as follows:

| Sl no | Treatise | Types |
|-------|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Atharva Veda</i> - 2 types | <i>Nadi Sameepotha</i> and <i>Samudra sameepotha</i> |
| 2 | <i>Bhavaprakasha nighantu</i> -5 types | <i>Mahishaksha</i> , <i>Mahaaneela</i> , <i>Kumuda</i> , <i>Padma</i> and <i>Hiranya</i> ⁷ |
| 3 | <i>Charaka Samhitha</i> and <i>Sushrutha samhitha</i> - 2 types | <i>Puraana</i> and <i>Nava</i> |
| 4 | <i>Ashtanga hridaya</i> -3 types | <i>Sadhaarana</i> , <i>Kana</i> and <i>Bhumija guggulu</i> ¹⁰ |

SHODHANA : *Shodhana* plays an important role in the potency and mode of action of the drug. *Ashuddha Guggulu* causes skin rashes, irregular menstruation, diarrhea, headache, mild nausea, and with very high doses causes liver toxicity. *Shodhana* of *guggulu* according to different authors are mentioned below:

| Texts | Shodhana Dravya | Method |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Rasajalanidhi ⁹ | Dugdha, triphala kwatha, Dashamoola kwatha, Guduchi Kwatha | Swedana |
| Astanga Hridaya ¹⁰ | Dashamoola kwatha, nisha and nimbi dala kwatha | Aalodhya vastraputana |
| API ¹⁴ | Gomutra, vasa patra swarasa or kashaya, nirgundinnswrasa with haridra churna | Swedana |

Rasa Panchaka of Guggulu: The mode of action of drugs and formulations depends on the characteristic features such as *Rasa*, *guna*, *veerya*, *vipaaka* etc of that drug. *Rasapanchaka* of *guggulu* is explained in detail in *Gadanigraha*, *Brihatrayees* etc.

| <u>Treatise</u> | <u>Rasa</u> | <u>Guna</u> | <u>Veerya</u> | <u>Vipak</u> | <u>Prabhava</u> | <u>Doshagnata</u> |
|---|------------------------------|---|---------------|--------------|---|-------------------|
| Harita Samhitha ² , Dhanvantari nighantu | Tikta, Katu, Madhura Kashaya | Laghu, ruksha, sukshma | Ushna | Katu | Tridosha shyamaka | Tridosha shyamaka |
| Madana pala Nighantu | Madhura | Vishada, sara, sukshma | Ushna | | Bhagna sandhana kara, Vishya swarya | |
| Sushruta samhitha .chi.5 | | Sugandhita, laghu, sukshma, tikshna, laghu, ruksha picchila | Ushna | Katu | Naveena guggulu-brimhana, vrishya Puraana guggulu-apakarshaka | Kaphavataghna |

Guggulu and Doshas

Guggulu is a complex herb that contains the bitter, pungent, astringent, and sweet tastes helps to stabilize *Vata* and *Kapha* imbalances without aggravating *Pitta*.

Amayika prayogas: The word *Amayika* literally has a meaning of that, which is honest, sincere and true¹⁵. *Prayoga* has a wider meaning as a practice, recipe, usage, trial etc¹⁶. Thus *Amayika Prayogas* can be taken as therapeutic application of a drug based on *guna karma* etc.

Aamayika prayoga explained in Haritha samhitha and Vangasena

| Vyadhi | Kashaya dravya |
|---|---|
| Vata roga ² | Guduchi, eranda, prasaarini, Raasna |
| Pittaroga ² | Vasa, chandana, hrivara, mridvika, katuki, kharjura, parushaka |
| Kapha roga ² | Triphala, vyosha, gomutra, nimba, dhanyaka, pushkara moola, amritha, vyaghri, duralabha |
| Kandu ² | daarvi, patola in the form of kwatha |
| Pandu ² | Pathya, punarnava, darvi, gomutra, amritha kwatha |
| Vrana ² | Triphala kwatha, kiratatikta, amritha nimba, vrisha, vyaghri, duralabha |
| Bhagandhara ² | in Triphala kwatha -dose- 2 masha twice daily |
| Vataja andavridhi ² | With gomutra |
| Shotha ² | Either punarnava, devadaru and shunti kwatha or dashamoola kwatha |
| Malaavarodha ² | Triphala churna and guggulu (guggulu vataka - Yogaratnakara) dose-3 masha; Anupana: triphala kwatha. |
| Guggulu kalpa ¹⁴ - | Kwatha- daruharidra, patola patra, kusha, along with gomutra/ ksharajala/ushnajala followed by mudga yusha. Indications: Prameha, udavarta, udara, krimi, granthi, arbuda, nadi vrana, aadyavata, kushta, dushta vrana, koshtagata vayu, sandhigata astigata vayu. |
| Guggulu gutika- Gadanigraha ¹⁴ | Guggulu - 2 pala, arjuna twak, loha churna, vidanga, shu. bhallataka, gokshura, trivrit, triphala. Indications: Vrana, palitya, jaraa naasha. To be consumed for a minimum for 6 months. |
| Guggulu Rasayana- Vangasena ¹⁵ - rasayanadhikara | triphala, asana, khadira, amritha, punarnava, bringa, gokshura - 1 aadhaka each- avalehya consistency. Guggulu - 30 pala. Added matranusaara with madhu, gritha and sharkara. |

In Gadanigraha¹⁵

Guggulu gutika-- Guggulu - 2 pala, arjuna twak, loha churna, vidanga, shu. bhallataka, gokshura, trivrit, triphala.

Indications: vrana, palitya, jaraa naasha. To be consumed for a minimum for 6 months.

In Rasaratna samuchaya¹⁶: Sarvarogantaka Rasayana

Triphala, kanta loha bhasma, abhraka bhasma, vidanga, haridra, swarna makshika - etc 1 part each.

guggulu -equal to the total of above ingredients.

Indication-medoroga, kaphavata roga.

In Bhava prakaasha nighantu³:

1. Along with pippali, vasa, madhu and gritha in Puraana kapha vikaras.
2. With indrayava, ela and guda in Atisara, pravahika, antra daha.
3. Parada, Somala, vidanga in Gandamala and Guggulu lepa in Gandamala.
4. With loha bhasma-in pandu and durbalata.
5. With shrive in phiranga roga.

6. With *Ela* and *kasisa* in *anartava*.
7. *Guggulu lepa* and *dhoopa* in *Arshas*.
8. For *Prakshalana* in *Purana vrana-Guggulu* dissolved in *Triphala kwatha*.

Points to remember while administering *Guggulu* in general practice:

- One who consumes *Guggulu* in any form should avoid using foods which are sour and spicy, those which can cause indigestion, excessive physical work, exposure to excessive sunlight, alcohol consumption and severe emotional disturbances like anger³.
- The Maximum Dose of *Guggulu* is 1 Tula for *Rasayana* Purpose. If administered in excessive quantities side effects like *Timira*, *klaibya*, *krishatva*, *Moorcha*, *shaithilya* and *rookshya* may develop¹.

Discussion: In this compilation there has been an attempt to consider *Guggulu* in general, although no explanation regarding the distinguished use of *Nava* and *Purana guggulu* is given which has to be considered while administering *guggulu* in any form. As both have quite opposite qualities and *Purana guggulu* has more *rasayanika* *gunas* and nourishing compared to *Nava guggulu*, it should be considered in *Pandu*, *durbalata*, *kshayaja atisara* etc. And also *Nava Guggulu* can be considered for *Medoroga*, *kaphavata roga* as required. *Shodhana* plays a major role in the pharmacological action of any drug. *Shodhana* of *guggulu* in *Dolayandra* method has proven to be most effective¹⁷ in terms of yield %, lesser disintegration time and maximum concentration of Guggulsterone-E.

Conclusion:

Guggulu is the most fascinating ingredient of clinical practice. The large scale production of *guggulu kalpanas* in the form of vati/tablets have been added with ethanol extracts of *guggulu* which may not prove their efficacy as expected. Hence *Amayika Prayogas* can replace these products which can be more efficacious and target specific as *Guggulu* can be used in its authentic form.

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