



## Kshara – A Potent Drug in Ayurveda

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### Abstract :

Ayurveda is a popular science of medicine since *vedic* period. Ayurveda utilizes various plant parts, minerals, metals and animal products for treatment. One such popular treatment is *Ksharakarma*. It's mentioned under *Anushastra*. It's less invasive procedure than surgery and thermal cauterization. Current literature study focuses on *Kshara*, different types, sources / drugs for *kshara* preparation and it's applications in various diseases. **Aim & objectives:** 1) To explore various pharmacological actions of *kshara*. 2) To know the drugs used for *kshara* preparation, form of *kshara* in different diseased conditions. **Materials and methods:** Literature of present study is reviewed from *samhitas*, textbooks, articles etc.

Key words: Ayurveda, *Kshara*, *Anushastra*

### Introduction:

Ayurveda is a popular science of medicine since *vedic* period. *Kshara* is a form of medicine stated in *ayurveda*. According to *Sushruta Samhita*, *Tatra ksharanat ksananat va ksharah i.e.*, *Kshara* scrapes away excess *doshas* and *dhatu*s. It is of two types based on method of application i.e., *pratisarana* (external application) and *paneeya* (internal administration). *Pratisarana kshara* is used in *kushta*, *mandala kushta*, leucoderma, *arshas*, *dushtavrana*, *nadi*, *charmakila*, *bahya vidhradi*. *Paniya kshara* is used in *Garavisha*, *arshas*, *asmari*, *arochaka*, *agnimandya*.

Application methods of *kshara* in diseases:

*Kushta*: In *kushtas* (Skin diseases) if surgical procedures are contraindicated then *kshara* can be used. If the patches are numb, no sweating, no itching then rub with brush made of *Danti*, *Kutaja* or leaves of *Arka*, *Nimba*.<sup>[1]</sup>

*Manadala kushta*: *Kadali adi lepa* mentioned *charaka samhita* for external application. <sup>[2]</sup>

Leucoderma : *Kshara* of *malati* mixed with *hasti mada* (elephant rut) is used. <sup>[3]</sup>

*Arshas*/Hemorrhoids: The patient is anaesthetized under spinal or local anaesthesia. Lubricant is applied on the slit proctoscope and introduced into the anal canal. Apply *Kshara* on the internal pile mass and wait till

it turns to *pakwa jambu phala varna*. Wash the area with lemon juice and thus *Kshara* is neutralized. Rectal packing is done with *Yastimadhu taila* Or *ghruta*.<sup>[4]</sup>

*Dushtavrana*: *Apamarga Kshara pratisarana* was employed in this condition due to its properties like *chedana, lekshana, pachana, dahana, tridoshaghna* and *vilayana*.<sup>[5]</sup> *Vasa Kshara pratisarana* was done in *dushtavrana* i.e., *Vranapradesha* was cleaned using distilled water and sterile gauze. *Teekshna Vasa Kshara* was applied on *Dustavrana* using *shalaka*. *Kshara* was removed after a duration of 100 *matra kala*. It was followed by cleaning with *Nimbuswarasa* and observed for *krishnata*. Later the area was washed with distilled water. *Jatyadi grutha* application and bandaging was continued for 21 days which helped in wound healing. *Kshara* properties like *ushna, teekshna, chedana, lekshana* caused *Vrana shodhana*. *Vasa* due to its *tiktakashaya rasas, sheeta veerya, laghu ruksha gunas, katu vipaka, kapha pittahara* properties resulted in management of *vrana*.<sup>[6]</sup>

*Nadivrana/Pilonidal sinus* : A pilot study was conducted on 17 patients divided into 2 groups A & B, 10 & 7 patients were present in these groups respectively. Group A was treated with total excision of the pinonidal sinus under spinal anaesthesia followed by application of *Apamarga Kshara plota*. Next day it was removed and *Jati Kalpa Grutha* ointment was applied for further healing. Group B was treated with partial excision followed by *Apamarga ksharasutra* application. Changing of *ksharasutra* was performed once in every 5 days. Group B had 2 complicated cases. Group A had taken 2 weeks for complete cure where as uncomplicated cases of Group B took 4 weeks for complete cure. 2 complicated cases of Group B took 9 weeks for complete cure. *Arogya rasayan* was given for both groups to enhance immunity.<sup>[7]</sup>

*Charmakila/Warts*: For treating warts Subcutaneous intralesional injection of *Apamarga\_ksharodaka* was employed in case series. The warts were shed off leaving minimal scars in 2-6 days after treatment. This study has not reported any side effects.<sup>[8]</sup> Another single case study was conducted on a patient with common warts on left side of neck region. In a single sitting local application of *Tikshna Kadalikanda Kshara* for twice resulted in excision of warts and prevented recurrence.<sup>[9]</sup>

*Bahyavidradhi/ External Abscess*: *Kshara darana* is mentioned in *Shastikarma* for treatment of *Bahyavidradhi*. *Darana* i.e., application of *teekshna guna dravya* over an abscess to cause spontaneous rupture of pus cavity for easy drainage. A case study was conducted for an abscess over right buttock region. *Palashakshara darana* for a duration of one minute followed by *Jatyadi taila* dressing for 5 consecutive days with daily follow up resulted in abscess drainage (If pus cavity doesn't open spontaneously then *kshara darana* was repeated on the next day). Later for further wound healing *Jatyadi taila* was applied. *Kshara darana* immediately reduced the pain, size of swelling, tenderness. Presence of *Tikshna* and *Ushna* qualities caused breaking of pus loculi and drainage.<sup>[10]</sup>

*Gudabhramsha* : Anaesthetize the patient under local or spinal anaesthesia. Introduce lubricated slit proctoscope into the anal canal. *Kshara* is applied at lowermost prolapsed part or part of healthy mucosa around 3cm area and wash using *nimbu swarasa* when it turns to reddish black or after 2 minutes. Rectal packing is to be done with *Yastimadhu taila* or *ghruta*. This process causes fibrosis of anal canal and prolapse of rectum subsides completely.<sup>[11]</sup>

*Mamsarbuda/Rhabdomyosarcoma*: A single case study was done on a patient who had undergone surgery for Rhabdomyosarcoma (Spindle cell sarcoma). Later this condition was still progressing after surgery. Again patient underwent surgery. But this condition recurred in the calf region with foul smell, bleeding. So patient was advised for amputation of right leg. Patient refused amputation and came to our hospital for further management. Patient was treated with blood transfusion and asked to continue oral medication, *Triphala kashaya parisheka* followed by bandaging daily for 2 months and follow up was done. After 2 months patient got admitted at our hospital. *Apamarga Ksharasutra* ligation around the base along with *Arbudahara lepa* beside *ksharasutra* for 7 consecutive days. Simultaneously along with oral medication,

blood transfusion was also done. It improved patient condition. Patient was discharged with oral medication till further follow up.<sup>[12]</sup>

**Necrotizing fasciitis:** A single case study was done on necrotizing fasciitis of right index finger in which the distal portion had affected by gangrene. *Kshara* was applied for adequate debridement of slough. Complete debridement was noticed in 2sittings of *kshara karma*. Later wound healing was managed by application of Leech therapy.<sup>[13]</sup>

**Mootrashmari:** A single group study was conducted on 20patients suffering from *Mootrashmari*. *Anandayoga* capsule of 250mg twice a day for 60days with *Avimutra arka* as *anupana* was taken. This study proved that there was noticeable reduction in size of *ashmari*, pain abdomen and burning micturition.<sup>[14]</sup>

**Discussion and Conclusion:** *Kshara* – an alkaline form of medicine by its application results in *ksharana* of *Dushta twak mamsadi dhatus* i.e.,disintegration of vitiated skin, muscle etc. *Kshara* has incision, excision, scraping actions. By the above mentioned studies it can be concluded that *kshara* possess the following properties like burning, hot potency, sharp, dissolving, cleansing, digestive, wound healing and drying.

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