



ARKA KALPANA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Dr. Tejaswini A. Kondekar¹, Dr. Anupama S. Patil²

¹P.G. Scholar, Department of Dravyaguna Vigyana,

²Associate Professor, Department of Dravyaguna Vigyana.

Loknete Rajarambapu Patil Ayurvedic Medical College, Islampur, Maharashtra.

ABSTRACT:

There are five basic types of *Oushadhi Kalpana* such as *Swaras*, *Kalka*, *Kwatha*, *Heema* and *Phant*. *Arka* is such another promising *Kalpana*. *Arka* has attracted attention in researchers. *Arka* is purest form of drugs. It is obtained by giving *Agni Sanskar* to drug. *Arka* is preparation obtained by distillation of drugs soaked in water using the *Arkayantra* or any convenient modern distillation apparatus. *Arka* is most potent *Kalpana* of all *kashaykalpana*. It has increased potency, reduced dose, more shelf life and fast action etc. This article is based on Classical review of *Arka Kalpana*, Specific methods for preparation of *Arka*, *Prashasta Arka lakshana*, Dose, *Prayogamarga*, *Anupaan*, Importance of *Arka* etc.

Key words: *Arka*, *Arka Kalpana*, *Arka* preparation, importance of *Arka*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is an ancient system of medicine. Ayurvedic studies are about 5000 years old having great healing potential by using natural components. *Ayurveda* is originated through *vedic* culture. It is called as *Upaveda* of *Atharva Veda*. *Ayurveda* has evolved into various branches for wellbeing of Humans. Its main concern is to treat diseases and keep body fit and healthy. The concrete foundation of *Ayurveda* is medicine and foundation of medicine is medicinal plants.

Since pre-historic period man is using plants for medicinal purpose to restore health and to alleviate several disorders. He might have used these drugs in raw form like juice or powders. In *vedic* period there is mention of *Soma rasa* in *Rugveda*. *Ayurvedic* formulations are provided by many Samhitakar and Acharyas. There are five basic types of *Oushadhi Kalpana* such as *Swaras*, *Kalka*, *Kwatha*, *Heema* and *Phant*¹.

As stated by Acharya Chakrapani, *kalpana* is *vishesh shakti*². With *Sanskara* raw drug can be converted into a potent medicine. *Arka* is such another promising *Kalpana*. *Arka* has attracted attention of researchers. There is no

reference of *Arkakalpana* in *Bruhatrayi*. *Arkakalpana* was first mentioned by *Acharya Shodhal* in his book *Gadanigraha* in 12th century. It is widely described by *Lankapati Raavan* who was grandson of *Pulasthya Rushi* and son of *Vishwashrava*. He told *Arkakalpana* to his beloved wife *Mandodari* while she was suffering from *GarbhKlesha*. *Arka* is purest form of drugs. It is obtained by giving *Agni Sanskar* to drug. *Arka* is preparation obtained by distillation of drugs soaked in water using the *Arkayantra* or any convenient modern distillation apparatus³. It may have all volatile active principles in effective form in its final product. It is more palatable form of *Ayurvedic* dosage forms in comparison to *swaras, kalka, Kwath, Heema, Phant* etc. According to *Arkaprakash* there are five *Oushadhi Kalpana*'s, *Kalka, Churna, Swaras, Taila* and *Arka*. *Arka* is most potent *Kalpana* of all⁴. It increases potency, reduces dose, increases shelf life and hastens the action etc.

DEFINITION OF ARKA-

1. *Arka* is a liquid preparation gained by distillation of drugs soaked in water using the *Arka yantra* on any other convenient modern distillation apparatus⁵.
2. *Arka* is an essence of drugs⁶.

SYNONYMS OF ARKA⁷-

Parisruta Jala

Parisranvana

GENERAL METHOD OF PREPARATION OF ARKA⁸ -

1. The drugs are cleaned and coarsely powdered.
2. Required quantity of water is added in to drugs for soaking and kept overnight.
3. Drug becomes soft until morning. So, when boiled It releases essential volatile principles easily.
4. The softened material is poured into *Arkayantra* next morning. Then it is boiled. Vapors are then cooled and collected in a vessel or receiver.

SPECIFIC METHOD OF PREPARATION OF ARKA⁹-

According to *Arkaprakash*, drugs are classified in 5 categories- *Atyantakathina, Kathina, Aardra, Pallava* and *Drava*. Different types of methods of preparation are mentioned for different category. Different quantity of water is added to different type of *Dravya*'s. Soaking time is also different.

Table no 1: showing different method of preparation of Arka-

Sr. No.	Type of drug	Quantity of water to added	Time of Soaking	Example
1	<i>Atyantakathina</i>	3 parts of water	8 prahara- 24 hours	<i>Chandana</i>
2	<i>Kathina</i>	2 parts	8 prahara-24 hours Or 16 prahara-48 hours	<i>Ajmoda</i>
3	<i>Sarasa</i>	1/20 th part	1 Muhurt-48 min	<i>Eranda,</i> <i>Bhringraj</i>

4	<i>Nirasa</i>	1/20 th part	1 Prahar-3 hours	<i>Vata, Ashwatha</i>
5	<i>Patra</i>	1/100 th part	24 min	<i>Vasa</i>
6	<i>Mrudu dugdhika</i>	4 parts	In sunlight till become hot.	<i>Arka</i>
7	<i>Tikshna dugdhika</i>	10 parts	3 days	<i>Satala</i>
8	<i>Phala</i>	0	-	<i>Aamra</i>
9	<i>Atipakvaphala</i>	0	-	<i>Kadali</i>
10	<i>Katuphala</i>	1/40 th part	-	<i>Pippali</i>
11	<i>Kashtha oushadha</i>	1/80 th part of water+4 times <i>sajjiksharaandsaindhava</i>	In sunlight till water becomes hot.	<i>Udumbara</i>
12	<i>Pushpa</i>	1/16 th part	-	<i>Taruni</i>
13	<i>Drava Dravya</i>	0 part	-	<i>Gomutra</i>

PRASHASTA ARKA LAKSHAN –

A. According to Arkaprakash-

1. The Arka which is having more *Sugandha* than *Dravya*.
2. Arka having same *Varna of Dravya* which when kept in *Jeernasthi Mrittikapatra*. When kept in different *Patra*; colour looks like color of *Shankha,kunda, or Indu* (moon).
3. It tastes like *Dravya* when kept on tongue. This type of Arka is *Uttam Arka*¹⁰.

B. According to *Ayurveda Sara Sangraha –*

1. In *Ayurveda Sara Sangraha* mentioned that Arka will be having clear *Shweta varna* like *Parada* and *Gandha* as that of *Dravyas*¹¹.

BHAISHAJYA MARGA (ROUTE OF DRUG ADMINISTRATION) FOR ARKA-

Arka can be used for *Paan, Swedan, Nasya, Gandusha, Anjana, Lepa, Dhupana* And *Karna Purana*. In *Panchamshatakama of Arkaprakasha granth*, various modes of administration are mentioned according to various diseases. In most of the diseases Arka is advised for *paan*.

For *Daahnashanlepa* of Arka is advised.

For *Bhootonmadnasya, Anjana, lepa, paan* is advised.

For *Apsmarnasya, karnapurana, Anjana, paan* etc advised [12].

DOSE^{13, 14} –

In AFI and API dose 12-24 ml is mentioned for most of *Arkas* when taken orally.

ANUPAN¹⁵-

Anupan is vehicle of medicine. It increases absorption and effect of medicine. Various *Anupan* like *jal*, *madhu*, milk is mentioned. But *Arka* is usually mixed with equal quantity of water before use.

ARKAPANOTTAR KARMA¹⁶

After *Arka sevan*, *Tambulbhakshan* is advised by *Arkaprakash*. If *tambul* is not available then *lavang* or clove should be consumed.

SHELF LIFE-

According to drug and cosmetic act 1945-16B, 6th amendment, shelf life of *Arka* is 1 year.

ARKA GRAHAM PATRA /STORAGE OF ARKA¹⁷-

Arka must be stored in *Jeernasthimrittikapatra*, Glass bottles or stone bottles. If these three are not available then *mrittikapatra* should be used.

IMPORTANCE OF ARKA¹⁸-

1. *Arka* is more effective than *Kalka*, *Churna*, *Swarasa* and *Taila*. It is most potent form of drug.
2. *Arka*'s are *Dosha Rahitam*, *Sheeghrakari* (fast acting) and have many *Guna*'s hence called as *Gunasanghprakashkam*. Lord Shiva himself has praised *Arka*.
3. *Arka* is most potent form of drug; it has more shelf life and patient compliance. Dose of the drugs can be reduced by using *Arka* due to its potency.
4. *Arka* is prepared by the combination of *Jala* and with the help of *Agni*, so due to *Agnisanskar* *Arkas* become *Laghupaki*, *Vyavayi*, *Vikasi*, and thus assimilates quickly in the body.
5. It is easy to administer and saves lot of time. It can be used in preventive and curative aspect. It has highest concentration of volatile oil.

DISCUSSION

Arka kalpana is one of the unique formulations in this modern age. Various dosage forms are being converted to *Arka* due to its reduced dose, patient compliance and increased potency. We can find many references regarding *Arka kalpana* in different literatures like *Arkaprakash*, A.F.I, *Ayurveda Sara Sangraha*, *Gadanigraha* of *Shodhal*, *Rasatantrasara* etc. A detailed explanation regarding all the aspects in the manufacture of *Arka* is seen in *Ravanakrit Arkaprakash*. Various routes of administrations are also mentioned in literature. *Arkapanottar karma*, *Prashasta Arka Lakshana*, *Properties of Arka* give detailed idea about various aspects of *Arka Kalpana*.

CONCLUSION

Arka kalpana is a very unique formulation in *kashay Kalpana*, due to its method of preparation and efficacy. The main authentic text which explains the procedures involved in the preparation of *Arka kalpana* is *Ravanakrit Arka Prakasha*. *Arka* is easy to prepare and store. *Arka* is *Laghupaki*, *Vyayayi* so assimilates quickly in body so they are fast acting. *Arka* is ready to take form so, it is Patient friendly. Shelf life of *Arka* is more than *churna*, *kwath*, *Swaras*, *kalka* etc. *Arka* can be used as a *Paan*, *Lepa*, *Nasya*, *Gandoosha*, *Anjanso*, it can be used by various routes of drug administration as required.

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