

PHARMACOLOGICAL REVIEW OF SHUNTHYADI CHURNA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ATISARA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, one of the oldest medical systems originating in India, is well-known for its holistic methods and the use of multi-herbal formulations. Among the various dosage forms detailed in classical Ayurvedic texts, Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana holds significant importance. Within this group, Churna Kalpana—the powdered herbal formulation—is considered one of the simplest and most commonly used preparations in Ayurvedic practice. It is easy to prepare and serves both as an independent remedy and as a foundational component in more complex formulations. Classical texts also provide well-defined procedures for its preparation and information regarding its shelf life. The use of medicinal plants for enhancing digestive health has long been a cornerstone of Ayurvedic therapy. Shunthyadi Churna, as described by Acharya Sharangadhara, is a notable example, composed of ingredients like Shunthi, Prativisha, Hingu, Musta, Kutaja, and Chitraka, and is traditionally used in the treatment of Atisara (Diarrhoea).

KEYWORDS: Shunthyadi Churna, Sharangdhara, Atisara, Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, employs various formulations to manage a wide range of diseases.^[1] Churnas are finely powdered forms of dried herbs known for their swift action and easy absorption in the body.^[2] Among these, churna Kalpana, or the preparation of powdered medicines, holds an important place due to its

simplicity, efficacy, and ease of administration.^[3]

This article reviews the traditional concept of churna kalpana with a special focus on Shunthyadi churna. Shunthyadi churna is a classical formulation consisting of equal parts of Shunthi, Prativisha, Hingu, Musta, Kutaja, and Chitraka.

Shunthi plays a vital role in managing Atisara due to its Amapachaka and Agnideepaka actions, attributed to its Katu Rasa, Ushna Veerya, and LaghuGuna. Its Madhura Vipaka aids Vatanulomana, while its Grahi and Shulaprashamana properties help to absorb excess intestinal fluid and relieve abdominal pain. By enhancing Agni and reducing Ama, Shunthi corrects the root cause of Atisara through its Ruksha and Grahi gunas.^[4]

Hingu is known for its strong Krimighna and Atisarahara properties, making it effective against intestinal pathogens that cause diarrhoea. It is especially useful in AmaAtisara, characterized by picchila, malodorous stools. Due to its astringent action, Hingu helps reduce bowel frequency while aiding in Amapachana. It also acts as a Deepana by stimulating Agni, thereby enhancing digestion and alleviating the gastrointestinal symptoms of Atisara.^[5]

Musta acts as a Deepana and Grahi, enhancing Agni, promoting Amapachana, and reducing loose stools. Its anti-diarrheal and anti-inflammatory effects have been shown in studies, highlighting its ability to reduce gut inflammation and target bacterial virulence without direct antimicrobial action.^[6]

Mustaka, mentioned in Charaka Samhita (Sutra Sthana, Chapter 25), is valued for its Deepana, Grahi, and Mutrala actions. Traditionally used in gastrointestinal disorders for its strong astringent effect, modern studies support its anti-inflammatory, digestive, and diuretic properties.^[7]

Kutaja (Holarrhena antidysenterica) is widely used in Ayurveda for Atisara, caused by Agnidoshha or Ajeerna. Its seeds act as a strong Krimighna and help treat gut infections and diarrhea.^[8]

Chitraka is known for its strong Deepana and Pachana properties, useful in managing indigestion, flatulence, and slow metabolism.^[9] The combined action of Shunthi, Prativisha, Hingu, Mustaka, Kutaja, and Chitraka makes Shunthyadi Churna an effective formulation for the management of Atisara. This article aims to compile comprehensive information on Shunthyadi Churna and its individual ingredients, providing an in-depth understanding of their significance in Ayurveda for Atisara Vyadhi. By exploring traditional preparation techniques of Churna Kalpana, the review highlights the lasting relevance and therapeutic potential of Shunthyadi Churna.

SHUNTHYADI CHURNA - INGREDIENTS LATINE NAME, FAMILY AND RASAPANCHAK

शुण्ठ्यादिचूर्णमामातीसारे ।

शुण्ठीप्रतिविषाहिङ्गुमुस्ताकुटजचित्रकैः ।

चूर्णमुष्णाम्बुनापीतमामातीसारनाशनम् ॥ शा. म. 6/46 ⁽¹⁰⁾

Ingredient	Latin name	Family	Rasa	Veerya	Vipaka	Guna
Shunthi	<i>Zingiber officinale</i> Rosc	Zingiberaceae	Katu	Ushna	Madhura	Laghu, Snigdha
Prativisha	<i>Aconitum heterophyllum</i> Wall.	Renunculaceae	Tikta, Katu	Ushna	Katu	Laghu, Ruksha
Hingu	<i>Ferula narthex</i> Boiss.	Umbelliferae	Katu	Ushna	Katu	Laghu, Snigdha, Tikshna

Musta	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> Linn.	Cyperaceae	Tikta, Katu, Kashaya	Sheeta	Katu	Laghu, Ruksha
Kutaja	<i>Holarrhena antidysentrica</i> Linn.	Apocynaceae	Tikta, Kashaya	Sheeta	Katu	Laghu, Ruksha
Chitrak	<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> Linn.	Plumbaginaceae	Katu	Ushna	Katu	Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna

SHUNTHI^[11]

Karma-Rochana, Pachan, Deepana, Vatanulomana, Shulprashama, Agnimandiyahara, Ajirnahara, Krumighana.

Prayoga –Ajirnahara, Adhmanhara, Udarshulhara, Aruchihara.

PRATIVISHA^[12]

Karma - Chardighana, Arshoghana, Krumighana, Aampachaka, Grahi, Deepana, Pachana

Prayoga - Ajirnahara, JwarAtisarahara, Atisarahara, Agnimandya, Krumi.

HINGU^[13]

Karma – Anulomaka, Shulprashaman, Deepan, Pachan, Rochan, Krumighana, Adhman hara, Udarvikarshamak

Prayoga – Anulomaka, Udarshula, Vibandha, Krumi.

MUSTA^[14]

Karma - Deepana, Pachana, Grahi, Krimighna, Kaphaghna, Sangrahaka, Atisarahara.

Prayoga – Ajirna, Sanngrahani, Krumiroga.

KUTAJA^[15]

Karma - Deepan, Stambhaka, Arshoghana, Krumighana.

Prayoga - Atisara, Pravahika, JwarAtisara, Udarshula.

CHIRAKA^[16]

Karma - Deepana, Pachana, Pittasaraka, Grahi, Krimighna.

Prayoga - Agnimandya, Ajeerna, Atisara, Krimiroga.

Mode of Action of Shunthyadi churna

Most of the ingredients of Shunthyadi Churna have Ushna Veerya and Katu Vipaka with Deepana and Pachana property which is important for Amapachana. It helps to reduce Udarshoola caused by Agnimandya and Ama. Some of the ingredients like Kutaja and Shunthi have Kashaya Rasa, Sheet Veerya and Laghu-ruksha guna which helps to reduce drava mala pravrutti i.e. Atisara. With the help of Tikta rasa and Ushna Veerya this formulation will acts as Agnivardhaka.

A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF CHURNA KALPANA

According to the ShabdaKalpa Druma, the word churna refers to a product obtained through the process of peshana karma, which involves grinding or pounding the materials into a fine powder.^[17]

Churna is a formulation prepared by finely powdering either a single medicinal ingredient or a blend of multiple substances. Each component is ground individually and then combined thoroughly to achieve a uniform mixture.^[18]

The classical text mentions

अत्यन्तशुष्कयद्रव्यंसुपिष्टं वस्त्रगालितम्।

तस्यात्पूर्णम्रजःक्षोदःतन्मात्राकर्षसम्मिता॥ शा. म. 6/1⁽¹⁹⁾

This verse by Acharya Sharangadhara suggests that any substance which is thoroughly dried, finely ground, and sifted through a cloth qualifies as churna. The standard measurement/dose is considered to be one karsha.

Acharya Kashyapa also defines churna as a preparation where medicinal substances are ground into a fine powder suitable for therapeutic use.

GENERAL PROCEDURE FOR PREPARING SHUNTHYADI CHURNA

1. Selection of Ingredients

The preparation begins by selecting the required ingredients for Shunthyadi Churna, which include Shunthi (dry ginger), Prativisha, Hingu (asafoetida), Musta, Kutaja, and Chitraka. All raw materials should be of high quality, authentic, and free from adulteration or contaminants.

2. Cleaning of Materials

The selected ingredients are carefully cleaned to remove any dust, soil, or foreign particles. This process is crucial to guarantee the purity and safety of the finished product.

3. Drying the Ingredients

After thorough cleaning, the materials are dried completely. Depending on the nature of each herb, drying can be done under sunlight or in the shade. Ensuring the herbs are moisture-free helps prevent microbial growth and extends the shelf life of the churna.

4. Grinding into Powder

Once properly dried, each ingredient is separately ground into a fine powder. This can be done using traditional tools like a mortar and pestle or with a mechanical grinder, depending on the scale of preparation.

5. Sifting the Powder

The powdered materials are then passed through a fine mesh sieve or cloth to achieve a consistent particle size. Any coarse or unground particles are separated, and the sieved powders are re-measured if necessary.

6. Mixing the Powders

As Shunthyadi Churna consists of multiple herbal components, the individually sieved powders are mixed thoroughly to form a uniform and homogenous blend.

7. Storage of the Final Product

The prepared churna is stored in clean, airtight containers made of glass or food-grade plastic. It should be kept in a cool, dry place to maintain its efficacy and prevent exposure to moisture or air.

8. Shelf Life

- According to the verse "मासद्वयात्तथाचूर्णिनीनियन्त्वमाप्नुयात्"(शा. प. 1/51)^[20] the potency of churna begins to reduce after

two months, as per the classical text of Sharangadhara.

- However, as per the 2016 gazette notification issued by the Government of India regarding the shelf life of Ayurvedic formulations, the standard shelf life of churna preparations is recognized as up to two years.⁽²¹⁾

9. Dose

- The verse "त्राकषणस्मिता॥"शा. म. 6/1 indicates the Karsha is recommended dosage of churna.
- In general practice, the usual adult dose of churna is approximately 12 grams.

KEY USES OF CHURNA

According to various Ayurvedic texts, churna (powdered formulations) have a wide range of uses, including:

- Externally, churnas are applied through methods such as PrAtisarana (rubbing on teeth and gums with a finger), Avadhulana (sprinkling), and Lepana (application) to help treat wounds and various skin disorders.
- They are often used as main treatments for several diseases in Ayurveda. Examples include formulations like Talisadi Churna, Bhallataka Churna, Rasayana Churna, and Shankhpushpi Kalka.
- Churnas can also serve as supportive agents (adjuvants) when combined with other substances. For instance, Swarna Bhasma is used with Trikatu Churna, and Abhraka Bhasma is combined with Talisadi Churna to enhance therapeutic effects.
- Additionally, churnas are the base ingredients in preparing other Ayurvedic dosage forms such as tablets (Vati), herbal jams (Avaleha), distilled extracts (Arka), decoctions (Kasaya), cold preparations (Hima), and infused waters (Phanta).

DISCUSSION

Traditional Ayurvedic medicine emphasizes the healing power of medicinal substances, with ancient practitioners relying on their deep knowledge of medicinal properties and medicine preparation. This allowed them to create effective remedies through careful methods.

However, modern Ayurveda faces challenges like fast-paced lifestyles, population growth, and industrialization, making it harder to standardize medicines and maintain consistent quality.

Shunthyadi churna is a notable example of Ayurvedic formulations traditionally used to manage Atisara (diarrhoea) and other digestive disorders. Its role in alleviating gastrointestinal discomfort underscores the importance of conducting thorough scientific investigations. To effectively bridge the gap between traditional knowledge and modern medicine, well-designed clinical trials are crucial. Such studies would provide reliable, evidence-based validation of Shunthyadichurna's therapeutic effects, promoting its integration into contemporary healthcare systems.

Moreover, exploring the pharmacological mechanisms behind Shunthyadi churna can deepen our understanding of how its components interact within the body, potentially revealing new insights into digestive health management. This dual approach of clinical validation and mechanistic research can not only affirm the efficacy of traditional formulations but also enhance their acceptance among healthcare professionals and patients alike.

CONCLUSION

The collective actions of Shunthi, Prativisha, Hingu, Musta, Kutaja, and Chitraka address the key causes of Atisara, such as Agnimandya, Ama, and Krumi. Their Deepana and Pachana properties enhance Agni and support Amapachana, while Grahi and Stambhaka actions help in reducing excess fluid from the intestines. Krimighna karma targets intestinal pathogens, and Shulaprasamana properties alleviate abdominal pain. Together, these herbs restore digestive balance and effectively manage Atisara. Bringing together traditional Ayurvedic knowledge and modern scientific research is essential for the successful application of Shunthyadi Churna in the treatment of Atisara.

As Ayurveda evolves within today's healthcare environment, it is important to establish uniform standards for preparation and carry out comprehensive clinical studies. These efforts will provide clear evidence of the formulation's effectiveness and help integrate it into mainstream medical practice, giving patients confidence in its use. This approach not only safeguards the valuable heritage of Ayurveda but also promotes trustworthy and effective therapeutic options.

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