

**A LITERARY REVIEW ON VARNYA MAHAKASHAYA****Bhuvaneshwari\*, Dr. G. S. Kulkarni, Dr. S. S. Sarawad**

PG Scholar, Dept. of PG Studies in Dravya Guna, BVVS AMCH Bagalkot.

Article Received on  
04 January 2025,Revised on 24 Jan. 2025,  
Accepted on 14 Feb. 2025

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20255-35421

**\*Corresponding Author****Dr. Bhuvaneshwari**PG Scholar, Dept. of PG  
Studies in Dravya Guna,  
BVVS AMCH Bagalkot.**ABSTRACT**

Beauty is a subject of socio-medical importance. Cosmetics are used in wide range through out the world which lead to many hazardous effect due to chemicals they contain. Huge market of cosmetics are constantly growing which states that there is a need of good cosmetics products which are free from free radicals and with no side effects. Varnya, on the other hand, is a classic term for restoring and maintaining the natural texture and tone of the skin. Varnya mahakashaya is the 8<sup>th</sup> group of 10 drugs among 50 mahakashayas described in Ayurvedic classic that is 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of Charaka samhita sutrasthana. The dravyas of varnya mahakashaya are tikta madhura rasatmaka, raktaprasadaka and kapha pitta shamaka. The mechanism of action of the herbs is to maintain skin color, i.e, varna vruddhi of twak. These medicines are used either internally or externally, either

individually or in combination, in a variety of ways. Most of them are prescribed for skin diseases. The pharmacological properties of these herbs show a complexion promoting effect and has the potential to preserve and restore the lost beauty without side effects. The aim of this study is to evaluate the use and the mode of action of herbs mentioned in varnya mahakashaya of Acharya Charaka for maintenance of skin complexion i.e. varna vriddhi of twak or rupa prasadana.

**KEYWORDS:** Varnya mahakashaya, Varna vruddhi, Rupa prasadana.**INTRODUCTION**

The face which is an important part of the body is gently cared by everyone. People always try to keep their skin healthy, good and shining. Cosmetics has gained a lot of attention and it plays an important part in the daily chores. A lot many cosmetics products are present in the market and daily hundreds of cosmetics products are launched as beauty and skin colour is

sociologically important and an issue for all.

Ayurveda is holistic and ancient science which gives the information about every medical condition. Varna, which means colour and the drug that improves the appearance of the skin is known as Varnya. Charaka samhita is a great text in Ayurveda stated a group of 10 medicinal plants known as varnya mahakashaya in sutrasthana which can be used in variety of ways like decoction, oil /ghrita preparations, lepana, bathing etc.

Dravyas in varnya mahakashaya include Shweta chandana, Padmaka, Nagakesara, Ushira Manjishtha, Sariva, Shweta durva, Harita durva, Yashtimadhu, Kshiravidari.<sup>[1]</sup>

Chaya and Prabha are 2 things that cover all the elements of good skin. Chaya means complexion that can be seen nearby. Prabha means glow which usually can be seen from the distance. Both form an important part of varna examination. This mahakashaya helps to increase both the elements.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Evaluation and literary study of varnya mahakashaya dravyas.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

References were collected from Ayurveda classics such as Charaka samhita, books and various journals.

- Twacha is the upadhatu of mamsa and according to Acharya Sushruta during garbhotpatti, twak is formed during raktapachana process.
- According to Acharya Charaka and Sushruta udhakadhara and avabhasini defines skin colour.
- The pitta which is situated under skin is called as bhrajaka pitta. It is responsible for the colour of the skin. All the treatment procedures like lepa, abhyanga, avagaha, parisheka are absorbed and digested by bhrajaka pitta.
- As per twak definition raktadhatu is responsible for twak (skin) formation.
- Vata is responsible for skin darkening by its Vriddhi “**Kaarshya kashnarya ushna kaamitvam.....||**” So the vriddhi of vata causes karshna means skin darkening. A dark pigment derived from amino acid tyrosine and secreted by melanocytes in deep germinative layers which is absorbed by melanin pigment secretion. In human skin, melanogenesis is initiated by exposing to UV radiation which causes darkening of skin.

- According to all above description about twak, the main factors responsible mainly for skin complexion are rakta, bhrajaka pitta and vata.

### **Shweta chandana**

- Latin name: Santalum album
- Family: Santalaceae
- Rasa: Tikta, Madhura
- Veerya: Sheeta
- Vipaka: Katu
- Doshagnata: Pitta kaphashamaka
- Chemical composition: Santalol 90%
- Commonly used ayurvedic cosmetic for skin care and suitable for all skin types.
- Rich in sesquiterpenoid alcohols that is used in various skin fairness herbal cosmetics.
- Alpha santanol and beta santanol are chemical components present in its oil.
- Alpha santanol has inhibitory action on tyrosinase.
- Due to its varnya and dahashamaka properties it is used in all skin diseases.<sup>2</sup>

### **Padmaka**

- Latin name: Prunus cyrasodius
- Family: Rosaceae
- Rasa: Tikta, kashaya
- Veerya: Sheeta
- Vipaka: Katu
- Doshagnata: Tridosahara
- Due to its varnya, kandughna, Kusthaghna and Dahashamaka properties it used in skin care.<sup>[3]</sup>
- It enhances skin fairness by antimelanogenesis activity of puddumin B and it suppresses tyrosinase protein.<sup>[4]</sup>

### **Nagakesara**

- Latin name: Mesua ferrea
- Family: Guttiferae
- Rasa: Tikta, kashaya
- Veerya: Alpaushna

- Vipaka: Katu
- Doshagnata: Kapha pittashamaka
- Chemical composition: Mesuaferin A&B, Bayoflovhinals, Mamisin mesuaul, Mesuon
- It helps to balance the excess oil production of the skin.
- Helps to reduce the dark spots and blemishes on the skin.
- It deeply clears and purifies the skin and also lightens the pigmentation.
- Its antioxidant action helps to protect skin from ultraviolet rays.<sup>[5]</sup>

### Ushira

- Latin name: Vetiveria zizanioidis
- Family: Gramineae
- Rasa: Tikta, madhura
- Veerya: Sheeta
- Vipaka: Katu
- Doshagnata: Pitta kaphashamaka
- In Ayurveda it is used as dahashamaka, twakdosahara.<sup>[6]</sup>
- Chemical constituents like alfa amorphene, beta vatirenene, alfa grujunenr and dehydroaromadendrene are present.<sup>[4]</sup>
- It shows antioxidant action because of which it suppresses the induced melanogenesis and thus decreases production of melanin by inactivating tyrosinase and simultaneously does separation of oxidative stress.<sup>[4]</sup>

### Manjishtha

- Latin name: Rubia cordifolia
- Family: Rubiaceae
- Rasa: Tikta, madhura, kashaya
- Veerya: Ushna
- Vipaka: Katu
- Doshagnata: Pitta kaphashamaka
- Chemical composition: Purin, Manjishthin, Jantho sudo Purin.
- Used in different types of skin diseases as it acts as varnya and raktaprasadaka.<sup>[7]</sup>
- Chemically it contains glucosides along with resins, lime salt and colouring agent.
- Methanolic extract of manjishtha has been reported to show inhibitory action on

tyrosinase, hence it acts as skin whitening agent.<sup>[4]</sup>

### **Sariva**

- Latin name: Hemidesmus indicus
- Family: Asclepiadaeaceae
- Rasa : Madhura, tikta
- Veerya: Sheeta
- Vipaka: Madhura
- Doshagnata: Tridoshashamaka
- Chemical composition: Methoxy Salisilik aldehyde, Sisterol, Tetra sayclintrytripin, Keton, Saponine.
- Well known raktaprasadaka herb in Ayurveda, used in all types of skin diseases.
- It shows antioxidant activity.
- Methanolic extract of its root shows tyrosinase inhibitory activity.<sup>[4]</sup>

### **Shweta durva**

- Latin name: Cynodon dactylon
- Family : Graminaceae
- Rasa: Tikta, kashaya
- Veerya: Sheeta
- Vipaka: Madhura
- Doshagnata: Tridoshashamaka
- Chemical composition: 10.4% -Proteins, 27.1%-Fibers, 11.7%-Calcium, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Sodium, Potassium, 36.6%Carbohydrate.
- It maintains alkalinity of blood and also does purification of blood and therefore used as varnya.<sup>[8]</sup>

### **Harita durva**

- Latin name: Cynodon dactylon
- Family: Graminaceae
- Rasa: Tikta, kashaya, madhura
- Veerya: Sheeta
- Vipaka: Madhura
- Doshagnata: Kaphapitta shamaka

- Chemical composition: 10.4% -Proteins, 27.1%-Fibers, 11.7%-Calcium, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Sodium, Potassium, 36.6% Carbohydrate.
- It maintains alkalinity of blood and also does purification of blood and therefore used as varnya.<sup>[8]</sup>

### **Yashtimadhu**

- Latin name: Glycyrrhiza glabra
- Family: Leguminosae
- Rasa: Madhura
- Veerya: Sheeta
- Vipaka: Madhura
- Doshagnata : Tridosha shamaka
- Chemical composition: Glycrayzin aysolikkiritin estrogen, Glucose, Sucrose.
- Yashtimadhu root has varnya, anti-aging, antioxidant properties which are useful for maintenance of healthy skin.<sup>[9]</sup>
- Glycyrrhizic acid present in it controls the secretion of melanin in the skin and thus reduces dark pigmentation and increases fairness of skin.<sup>[4]</sup> Hence, used widely in cosmetic products.

### **Kshiravidari**

- Latin name: Ipomoia digitata
- Family: Leguminosae
- Rasa: Madhura
- Veerya: Sheeta
- Vipaka: Madhura
- Doshagnata: Vatapittashamaka
- Chemical composition: Carbohydrate 64.6%, Protein 10.9%
- Helps in balancing pitta dosha. Improves the quality of kapha and plays important part in nourishment of skin.<sup>[10]</sup>

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Mode of action according to ayurveda**

1. Varnyadravyas when used externally or internally acts on bhrajaka pitta. Bhrajaka pitta is an important factor related with varna (Complexion). Ushnavirya stimulates bhrajaka pitta

and does raktavardhana and so helps to absorb the medicines applied externally and improves varna (Complexion).

2. Madhurarasatmakadravyas increase the production of rasa, rakta, majja, shukra, oja which in turn acts on varna.
3. Madhura rasa, tikta rasa and sheetavirya has pittaghna action.
4. Madhura rasa and sheetavirya act as ojovardhaka and thus helps enhancing skin complexion.
5. Madhura rasa, madhuravipaka, ushnavirya has vataghna action and hence removes blackishness. Excessive vatadosha causes blackishness in skin and blood.
6. Stickiness and increased fluidity is an indicator of impurities in the blood. kashaya and tiktarasatmakadravyas absorb kleda and cools down Pitta. It therefore results in purification of blood, i.e, raktashodhana. It relieves the blood from excess fluidity and stickiness. And this way leads to varnaprasadana.
7. So we can say that- dravyas in varnyamahakashaya act as varnya, raktaprasadaka, raktavardhaka, raktashodhaka, ojovardhaka, pittaghna and vataghna.
8. Varnyamahakashaya not only works on blood but also acts as filtering agent of blood in body, i.e, Liver. It works on stomach where the basic elements that help to prepare blood are abundant.

### Mode of action according to modern

According to modern review, varnya dravyas disrupts the melanin formation pathway through tyrosinase inhibition. So it's potentially excellent whitening agent that improves skin color.

### CONCLUSION

As per the review of above all mentioned factors-Majority of dravyas in varnya mahakashaya are madhura tikta rasatmaka, kapha pitta shamaka. Therefore, shows varnya effect and they can be used externally or internally. They work on variety of elements which creates and nourishes the skin. So varnya mahakashaya described by Charaka charya are powerful for enhancing skin complexion. So we should use these herbs in different combinations and forms to treat patients to obtain complexion and glowing skin as they have high antioxidant and anti-inflammatory potential. We can conclude that varnya mahakashaya plays many roles such as purification agent, stimulator and creator of natural blood.

**REFERENCES**

1. Harish Chandra Singh Kushvaha, Shadvirechanshatashriy Adhyaya- SutraSthan Charak Samhita of Aacharya Charak, Reprint, Varanasi, Chaukhamba Orientalia, 62: 4 – 8.
2. Dr. K.C Chunekar, Karpuradi Varga- ShwetChandan, Bhavaprakash Nighantu of Bhavmishra, Reprint, Varanasi, Chaukhamba Bharati Academy, 189.
3. Vd. Vishnu Mahadev Gogate, Padamak, Dravyaguna Vigyan, Pune Vidyamitra Prakashan, 490.
4. Khemchand Sharma, Critical review of Ayurvedic varnya herbs and their tyrosinase inhibition effect, Ancient Science of life, Jul-Sep, 2015, 2016; 35(1): 20.
5. Dr. K.C Chunekar, Guduchyadi Varga- Kshirvidari, Bhavaprakash Nighantu of Bhavmishra, Karpuradi Varga, Reprint, Varanasi, Chaukhamba Bharati Academy, 389.
6. Vishnu Mahadev Gogate, Ushir, Dravyaguna Vigyan, Pune, Vidyamitra Prakashan, 288.
7. Vishnu Mahadev Gogate, Manjishtha, Dravyaguna Vigyan, Pune, Vidyamitra Prakashan, 587.
8. Dr. K.C Chunekar, Guduchyadi Varga- Durva, Bhavaprakash Nighantu of Bhavmishra, Reprint, Varanasi, Chaukhamba Bharati Academy, 385.
9. Vishnu Mahadev Gogate, Yashtimadhu, Dravyaguna Vigyan, Pune, Vidyamitra Prakashan, 559.
10. Dr. K.C Chunekar, Karpuradi Varga - Nagkeshar, Bhavaprakash Nighantu of Bhavmishra, Reprint, Varanasi, Chaukhamba Bharati Academy, 230.