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ROLE OF TIKTA RASA IN VISHA CHIKITSA: A CLASSICAL AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE WITH RELEVANCE TO TOXICOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Tikta Rasa is widely described in classical Ayurvedic literature as *Vishagna*. As for understanding the pharmacological action of any substance, *Ayurveda* used *Rasa-panchaka* approach, which first deals with the *Rasa* of that very substance. So, this narrative review examines the role of *Tikta rasa* in *Visha Chikitsa* by synthesising descriptions from the classical Ayurveda texts with toxicological reasoning. The paper discusses the *Pancha-bhauttika* basis, *guna–karma* profile, dosha and dhatu interactions of *Tikta rasa*, and maps these to possible *Vishagna* actions that could be provided by the *Tikta Rasa* in general. The conceptual analysis highlights scope for further pharmacological and clinical exploration of *Tikta Dravya* in modern toxicology research.

KEYWORDS: Tikta Rasa, *Vishagna, Rasa, Visha Chikitsa, Pancha-bhauttika, guna–karma, Tikta Dravya.*

INTRODUCTION

Visha Chikitsa, the science of poison management, forms a core component in Ayurveda. Classical texts consistently emphasise the importance of rasa as one of the primary

determinant of drug actions. Among the six rasas, *Tikta Rasa* is uniquely described as *Vishagna* and *Krimigna*, with specific roles in conditions characterised by *Daha* (burning), *Murcha* (syncope), *Jwara* (fever), *Kushta* (skin disorders), and disorders of *Rakta* and *Pitta* which are also a main component in the pathogenesis and clinical presentation of *Visha*.

Rasa in Ayurveda is defined as the knowledge perceived through *Rasanendriya* located at *Jihva*, emerging at the moment of contact between a substance and the tongue. Acharya Charaka distinguishes *Rasa* from *Anurasa* - the secondary, delayed or mild perception. Rasa also has a pivotal role in understanding the pharmaceutical action of a substance as it stands as the first in the chronology of *Rasa-panchaka*.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Source of data: This is a conceptual literary review. Classical Ayurvedic texts including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Ashtanga Sangraha*, *Bhavaprakasha Nighantu* and their available commentaries were systematically reviewed and analysed. Contemporary information was gathered from textbooks, peer-reviewed journals, using relevant keywords. The collected data was interpreted and presented in a comprehensive manner.

RESULT

Panchaboutika composition of *Tikta Rasa*

- Acharya Vagbhata – *Aakasha* & *Vayu*[5]
- Acharya Charaka – *Vayu* & *Aakasha*[6]
- Acharya Susrutha – *Vayu* & *Aakasha*[7]

Acharya Susrutha adds that the intake of a particular rasa leads to increase of the *Panchamahabuta* predominance of that particular *Rasa* to increase in the body.[7]

Indukara, a commentator of Astanga Samgraha, has highlighted the relation between seasons, *Panchabhoota* composition of *Rasas* and evaluation of *Rasas*. Where *Tikta Rasa* is generated in *Shishira Ritu* when *Vayu* and *Aakasha Mahabhootas* are predominant.[8]

Tikta Rasa Guna

- *Ruksha*
- *Sheetha*

- *Laghu*

The *Ruksha Guna* provides dryness in the body, the *Sheetha Guna* causes *Sthambhana* effect in body, the *Laghu Guna* is responsible for lightness.[10]

Tikta rasa* effect on *Dosha *Kapha* & *Pitha* pacifying **Action of *Tikta rasa***

- Though its non-relishing by its own, it destroys disrelish
- It is *Vishagna, krimigna*
- It alleviates *Murcha, Daha, Kantu, Kushta, Thrishna*
- Provides *Sthiratha* to *Twak* and *Mamsa*
- *Jwaragna*
- *Deepana, Pachana*
- Does *Sthanya-shodhana*
- Has *Lekhana* property
- Absorbent of *Kledha, Medha, Vasa, Majja, Lasika, Puya, Swedha, Mutra, Pureesha, Pitha* and *Sleshma*.

Role of *Tikta Rasa in Jwara Chikitsa*

In ayurveda *Tikta rasa* is opined to be having actions in decreasing *Kapha* and *Pitta.* Acharya Vagbhata opines that *Thikta Rasa* has special role in curing *Pitta* related diseases in *Jwara Chikitsa*. In the Sarvanga sundara commentary of Arunadhatta on Ashtanga Hridaya, he adds that even if *Kasaya Kalpana* is to be given for *Pittaja* condition it should be given with *Tikta Rasa Pradhanya Dravya.*[13]

Visha Swabhava

Acharya Bhava Prakasha opines due to the predominance of *Ushna* and *Theksha guna* of *Visha,* it mainly does *Prakopa* of P*itta dosha.*

In the general pathogenesis of *Visha Acharya Vagbhata* opines that *Visha* after entering into body does vitiation of *Rakta datu* first then followed by the vitiation of *Kapha*, *Pitta* and *Vata Doshas* respectively.

DISCUSSION

Tikta Rasa which is predominantly composed of *Vayu* and *Akasha Mahabuta,* differs in its *Panchamahabhuta* composition from *Visha,* which is predominantly constituted of *Jala Mahabhuta* and acquires more potency during *Varsha Ritu.*

The main *Dosha* vitiations explained in the pathogenesis of *Visha* are *Kapha* and *Pitta,* and the main *Dushya* involved is *Rakta* which again as *ashraya-ashrayi sambhantha* to *Pitta Dosha. Tikta Rasa* is *Kapha Pitta* pacifying in nature.

Tikta rasa also has the action of *Vishagna.*
In Ayurveda *Jwara* is one *Vikara* whose therapeutic principles can be applied in all other conditions also, in that very same aspect *Tikta Rasa* is also explained to be used in as main line of treatment in P*ittaja Jwara* conditions.

CONCLUSION

Tikta Rasa occupies a significant position in *Visha Chikitsa* owing to its unique *Panchamahabhuta* composition, pharmacological properties, and direct *Vishaghna* action. Being predominantly composed of *Vayu* and *Akasha Mahabhuta, Tikta Rasa* possesses *Sheeta, Ruksha, and Laghu qualities,* which enable it to alleviate the *Kapha* and *Pitta* predominance commonly observed in the pathogenesis of *Visha.* In contrast, *Visha* is predominantly constituted of *Jala Mahabhuta* and may acquire greater potency during *Varsha Ritu.*

The therapeutic relevance of *Tikta Rasa* in poisoning is further strengthened by its *Vishaghna, Jwaraghna,* and *Krimighna* actions described in classical Ayurvedic literature. Its capacity to pacify *Pitta* is particularly significant because *Rakta,* an important *Dushya* in *Visha,* serves as the *Ashraya* of *Pitta.*