

ROLE OF GUDUCHI AS A RASAYANA IN ENHANCING IMMUNITY AGAINST INFECTIOUS DISEASES – A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

According to *Ayurvedic* principles, disease (*Vyadhi*) is seen as the result of an imbalance in the body's *Doshas* and *Dooshyas* when the body's *Vyadhikshamatwa* (immunity) is compromised. *Rasayana* is thought to promote *dhatuposhan* and enhance *Oja*, thereby boosting immunity. *Tinospora cordifolia*, often known as *Guduchi*, has a variety of medicinal characteristics, including those that are anti-inflammatory, anti-arthritic, anti-oxidant, anti-allergic, and anti-stress. *Guduchi* is considered one of the best *Rasayanas* and is unusual in its potent versatility. The significant actions of *Guduchi* include promoting *Bala* (cellular and humoral immunity), *Agnideepana*, cures fever, eliminates *Ama* (metabolic wastes and toxins). *Guduchi* is known to be a rich source of trace elements which act as antioxidants, it is also known as '*Amrita*' because it's capacity to rejuvenate and heal damaged cells.

Aim– This study aims at public awareness about the benefits of *Guduchi* as a *Rasayana* for promoting health and treating infectious diseases. **Objective:** To study the role of *guduchi* as a *rasayan* against infectious diseases. **Result:** *Guduchi* aids in managing infectious diseases through its *Amapachana*, *Agnideepana*, *Jwaraghna*, and *Balya* properties, it improves digestion and metabolism, relieves symptoms like fever and cough, and supports recovery and strength during the post-infectious phase. **Conclusion:** The *Rasayana* properties of *Guduchi* can be effectively utilized both for treating and preventing infectious diseases.

KEYWORDS: *Guduchi*, Infectious diseases, Immunity, Rasayana, Vyadhikshamatwa.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda places great emphasis on leading a long, happy, and healthy life. Many people are more vulnerable to illness as a result of changing their food, the environment and other factors. On the other hand, some people remain healthy regardless of neglecting dietary rules or weather changes and not get affected by any illness. Numerous microbes penetrate the human body through the water and air, yet are unable to produce illness due to immune response present in the living body. The body's immunity is the most crucial factor when it comes to health and illness. Immunity and the concept of *Vyadhikshamatva* mentioned in classical ayurvedic text are analogous. Disease results from the combination of vitiated *Dosha* and *Doosha* which happens when *Vyadhikshamatwa* is reduced. The concepts of immunity and immunomodulation are extensively explored and used in *Ayurveda*, particularly in *Rasayana tantra*.^[1] *Rasayana* is considered to enhance *Oja* and promote the *Dhatuposhana* process, which leads to *Vyadhikshamatva*. In *Ayurveda*, number of medicinal plants are referred to as *Rasayana*. *Guduchi* is one of the most highly valued and common herbs known to possess a number of wonderful therapeutic values through its use. It's regarded as one of the best *Rasayana* and unique in its strong adaptability. Over the past few years, significant progress has been attained regarding its biological activity and medicinal applications. *Guduchi* is known to be a rich source of trace elements (Zinc and Copper) which act as antioxidants and protects cells from the damaging effects of oxygen radicals generated during immune activation.^[2]

AIM– This study aims at public awareness about the benefits of *Guduchi* as a *Rasayana* for promoting health and treating infectious diseases.

OBJECTIVE- To study the role of *guduchi* as a *rasayan* against infectious diseases.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

In this review study we searched data from various *ayurvedic* texts, published review articles, research papers, and various online database like google scholar, PubMed.

Infectious diseases

Infectious diseases are caused by pathogenic microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi; the diseases can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another.^[3] Some infectious diseases spread from person to person. Some diseases are spread by insect or animal bites. And other are obtained from the consumption of contaminated food

or water, or being in exposed to organisms in the surroundings. These infectious diseases occur due to lack of immunity in the body. Infectious diseases can range from a simple Common cold to diseases like Cholera, TB, Typhoid etc. The general symptoms of infectious diseases include fever, fatigue, cough, muscle aches etc. Infectious diseases can induce host cell responses that may cause additional tissue damage, usually by immune mediated mechanisms.^[4]

Rasayana

Rasayan is one of the eight clinical specialities of traditional *Ayurveda*, *rasayana* establishes a basis of well-being and equilibrium in physiology of human body. *Rasayana* means the way for attaining excellence in all body tissues through some special measures and medicines.^[5] *Rasayana* acts at the level of *Rasa*, *Agni* and the *Srotas*,^[6] thus enabling to procure the best qualities of different *Dhatus*. *Rasayana* plays 2 roles in the control of infectious diseases - as a medication in diseased people & prevention of diseases in healthy individuals.

Guduchi

Throughout India, *guduchi* is a large, glabrous, perennial, deciduous, climbing shrub with a weak, mushy stem. It is a common herb in traditional and *Ayurvedic* medicine. The listed chemical components from this shrub are members of many classes, includes steroids, glycosides, alkaloids, and diterpenoid lactones, aliphatic chemicals, phenolics, sesquiterpenoid, and polysaccharides. The properties of the plant are *Tikta*, *Kashaya Rasa*, *Guru*, *Snigdha Guna*, *Ushna Veerya* and *Madhura Vipaka*.^[7] It pacifies all the three *Doshas* and maintain their balance with each other i.e. why it is said to be having *Rasayana* character. When taken with *Ghruta* (*Ghee*), it balances *Vata* with *Guda* (*Jaggery*) *Pitta* and with Honey the *Kapha*. *Guduchi* is having *Vayasthapana*, *Dahaprashamana*, *Trishnanigrahana*, *Stanyashodhana*, *Triptighna*, *Rasayani*, *Samgrahini*, *Balya*, *Agni deepani*, *Valeepalitanashini* and *Medhya* actions.^[8] The commonly used parts are dried stem, roots and leaves. *Guduchi* is given as *Swarasa*, *Kashaya*, *Satwa* etc.

Action of Guduchi in infectious diseases

The infectious pathogen produces *Ama* (endotoxins), which damage tissue components (due to *Agnimandya*) and cause disease (*Vyadhi*). *Guduchi* acts in infectious diseases through *Amapachana*, *Agnideepana*, *Jwaraghna* & *Balya* property. *Guduchi* helps to increase the killing ability of macrophages.

Immunomodulatory action of *Guduchi*^[9]

The alcoholic and aqueous extracts of *T. cordifolia* are reported to have beneficial effects on the immune system and have been tested successfully for their immunomodulatory activity. The novel (1,4)- α -D glucan derived from the plant activates the immune system through the activation of macrophages via TLR6 signaling, NF κ B translocation and cytokine production. The aqueous extract of *T. cordifolia* was found to enhance phagocytosis in vitro. The aqueous and ethanolic extracts also induced an increase in antibody production in vivo. *T. cordifolia* extract (TCE) treatment caused significant reduction in eosinophil count and improved haemoglobin in HIV patients.^[9] The alcoholic extracts showed potent immunomodulatory action as evident by enhancement in the bone marrow cellularity as well as α -esterase activity in the rat's groups.^[10]

RESULT

In *Ayurveda*, *Guduchi* is counted amongst the '*Rasayana*'. *Acharya Charaka* described *rasayana* as anti-aging methods, which increase the life span, promote intelligence, improved memory and ultimately ensure freedom from diseases, all of these indicating its immune-stimulant effect. *Guduchi* aids in managing infectious diseases through its *Amapachana*, *Agnideepana*, *Jwaraghna*, and *Balya* properties, it improves digestion and metabolism, relieves symptoms like fever and cough, and supports recovery and strength during infectious & post-infectious phase.

CONCLUSION

Today, individuals are more concerned about their health and associated issues. *Guduchi's Rasayana* effect can be used for therapeutic purposes & Prevention of infectious diseases. The term "*Amrita*" fits the plant extremely well as it acts as nectar in bringing back the afflicted Cells return to normality & prevent the development of any disease. Thus, *Rasayana* properties of *Guduchi* can be effectively utilized both for treating and preventing infectious diseases.

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