

A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF KWATHA KALPANA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO FOOD-BASED UPAKALPANA IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda emphasizes that the effectiveness of treatment depends not only on the selection of drugs but also on their proper pharmaceutical processing. Bhaishajya Kalpana, the branch of Ayurveda dealing with drug preparation and formulation, provides systematic methods to convert raw natural substances into safe, effective, and patient-friendly dosage forms. Among the various formulations described in Ayurvedic classics, Kwatha Kalpana (herbal decoction) occupies a central and foundational position. Kwatha is a liquid preparation obtained by boiling coarse powder of medicinal drugs with water and reducing it to a prescribed volume. References to decoction-based preparations are found from the Vedic period, while detailed pharmaceutical guidelines are systematically described during the Samhita period by Acharyas such as Charaka, Sushruta, Vagbhata, Kashyapa, Harita, and Sharangadhara. Kwatha is included under

Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana and further elaborated in Saptavidha Kashaya Kalpana, highlighting its adaptability according to patient strength, disease severity, and therapeutic

purpose. This review aims to compile, analyze, and present classical and contemporary perspectives on Kwatha Kalpana, including its pharmaceutical principles, methods of preparation, administration, Prakshepa, shelf life, and clinical utility. Classical variations in drug-water proportion, soaking, vessel selection, heat application, reduction, and acceptability criteria are discussed to highlight the scientific reasoning underlying Ayurvedic pharmaceuticals. The concepts of Grahya and Agrahya Kwatha demonstrate the importance of quality control and freshness, emphasizing that Kwatha is intended for immediate use and has a very short shelf life. A special focus is given to the concept of Upakalpana of Kwatha, particularly food-based preparations such as Yavagu, Yusha, Manda, Peya, Vilepi, and medicated drinking water. These preparations illustrate the Ayurvedic principle that food and medicine are not separate entities but exist on a therapeutic continuum. Kwatha-based food preparations play a significant role in digestion, convalescence, seasonal adaptation, and long-term health preservation. Their mild nature, ease of digestion, and suitability for vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, and chronically ill patients highlight their preventive and promotive value. The review also discusses the reasons for the widespread use of Kwatha from the Samhita period to modern times, including its simplicity, effectiveness, adaptability, and close association with digestion and daily diet. Advantages such as rapid absorption and flexibility are balanced against limitations like short shelf life, poor palatability, and preparation inconvenience. The evolution of modified dosage forms such as Ghana, tablets, syrups, and fermented preparations is examined as an adaptive response to these limitations. In conclusion, Kwatha Kalpana represents not merely a dosage form but a holistic pharmaceutical concept that integrates treatment, diet, and prevention. Its continued relevance in modern Ayurvedic practice reflects the timeless applicability of classical principles when understood and applied rationally.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Kwatha Kalpana, Bhaishajya Kalpana.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda gives great importance to the proper preparation of medicines so that they act safely and effectively in the body. The branch of Ayurveda that deals with the preparation, processing, and formulation of medicines is known as **Bhaishajya Kalpana**. It explains how raw natural substances are converted into suitable dosage forms that are easy to administer, stable, and therapeutically effective. Among the many formulations described in Ayurveda, liquid preparations hold a special place because of their quick absorption and action.

Kwatha Kalpana, or herbal decoction, is one of the most commonly used and time-tested dosage forms in Ayurvedic practice. From the Samhita period to modern times, Kwatha has been widely used both as a primary medicine and as a base for many secondary and modified formulations. This article presents a detailed and simplified review of Kwatha Kalpana, covering its classical background, preparation methods, clinical use, food-related applications, advantages, limitations, and contemporary relevance.^[1]

What is Bhaishajya Kalpana

Bhaishajya Kalpana is the specialized branch of Ayurveda that deals with the complete science of medicine preparation. It explains how naturally available substances such as plants, minerals, and animal products are converted into suitable medicinal forms before being administered to patients. Raw substances are rarely used directly, because in their natural form they may be difficult to digest, poorly absorbed, unstable, or even harmful. Bhaishajya Kalpana provides systematic methods of processing these substances so that their therapeutic potential can be expressed safely and effectively.

This branch not only focuses on preparation, but also emphasizes proper identification of drugs, collection at the correct season, purification when required, selection of appropriate dosage form, correct dose, time of administration, and storage. The ultimate aim of Bhaishajya Kalpana is to ensure safety, efficacy, stability, and patient acceptability. In Ayurveda, medicine is not merely a chemical entity but a carefully prepared substance that works in harmony with the body, digestive fire, and disease condition.^[2,3]

Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana^[1,2,3]

Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana refers to the five fundamental liquid preparations that form the foundation of Ayurvedic pharmaceuticals. These five preparations are Swarasa, Kalka, Kwatha, Hima, and Phanta. They are primarily based on extraction of active principles from medicinal plants using water, either with or without the application of heat.

Swarasa is the expressed juice obtained from fresh plant material and is considered the most potent form because it contains the maximum concentration of active constituents. Kalka is a paste prepared by grinding fresh or wetting dried drugs, and it provides a strong but slightly less concentrated form than Swarasa. Kwatha is prepared by boiling drugs with water and reducing the volume, making it suitable for deeper systemic action while remaining easier to digest. Hima is a cold infusion prepared without heat and is preferred when heat may destroy

active principles or aggravate Pitta. Phanta is a hot infusion where hot water is poured over drugs and allowed to steep, resulting in the mildest form among the five.

These five preparations are selected based on the nature of the drug, the disease, the strength of the patient, and the state of digestion. Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana is extensively described by Acharya Charaka, Sushruta, Vagbhata, and Sharangadhara and serves as the base from which most secondary and complex formulations are developed.

1. Swarasa – expressed fresh juice
2. Kalka – paste obtained by grinding the drug
3. Kwatha – decoction prepared by boiling with water
4. Hima – cold infusion
5. Phanta – hot infusion

Saptavidha Kashaya Kalpana according to Kashyapa and Harita^[4,5]

According to Kashyapa Samhita

Acharya Kashyapa described *Saptavidha Kashaya Kalpana* with special consideration for children, women, and individuals with delicate health. His approach is practical and patient-centered, focusing on how the same medicine can be given in different forms depending on strength and tolerance. According to Kashyapa, the seven preparations include Swarasa, Kalka, Kwatha, Hima, Phanta, Churna, and Abhishava.

In this system, Kwatha occupies an important middle position. It is stronger than Hima and Phanta, yet gentler than Swarasa and Kalka, making it suitable for patients who require effective treatment but cannot tolerate very strong preparations. Kashyapa emphasized that the physician should choose the form of Kashaya according to digestive power, age, and disease severity rather than using the same form for all patients. This reflects a flexible and individualized approach to therapy.

According to Harita Samhita

Acharya Harita explained Saptavidha Kashaya Kalpana in a different manner by classifying Kwatha itself into seven types based on the degree of water reduction and therapeutic purpose. Mildly reduced Kwatha is advised for nourishing and supportive purposes, while more concentrated Kwatha is recommended for cleansing and dosha-reducing actions, especially in chronic and Kapha-dominant conditions.

Harita also introduced the concepts of Grahya and Agrahya Kwatha, emphasizing that a decoction must be fresh, properly prepared, and acceptable in taste, smell, and consistency. Overcooked, undercooked, stale, or improperly prepared Kwatha is considered unfit for use. This shows that quality control and pharmaceutical judgment were integral to classical Ayurveda.

Conceptual Significance

Together, the views of Kashyapa and Harita highlight the flexible nature of Kashaya Kalpana. Kashyapa focuses on patient suitability, while Harita emphasizes therapeutic strength and preparation. This combined understanding explains why Kwatha has remained relevant from the Samhita period to modern practice and how later developments such as food-based preparations and modified dosage forms evolved naturally.

Kwatha: Introduction and Historical Importance^[2,3,6]

Kwatha is one of the most important and widely used dosage forms described in Ayurveda. It is a liquid preparation obtained by boiling coarse powder of medicinal drugs with water and reducing it to a prescribed volume. The purpose of this process is to extract the water-soluble and heat-stable active principles of the drug in a form that is easy to digest and quickly absorbed. Because of this balance between strength and digestibility, Kwatha occupies a central position among the various Kashaya Kalpanas.

The concept of using boiled herbal preparations can be traced back to the Vedic period, where water was used as a medium to extract the therapeutic properties of plants. Early references to herbal decoctions are found in the Atharvaveda, indicating that boiling herbs in water for healing purposes was already an established practice. During the Samhita period, Acharyas like Charaka, Sushruta, and Vagbhata gave systematic descriptions of Kwatha preparation, dose, and indications, transforming it from a simple household remedy into a well-defined pharmaceutical dosage form.

Charaka emphasized that medicines prepared using heat, such as Kwatha, are lighter to digest compared to fresh juice or paste. This observation shows a clear understanding of the relationship between pharmaceutical processing and digestion. Sushruta highlighted the usefulness of Kwatha as a base preparation for medicated oils and ghee, while Vagbhata described its preparation method in detail and advised its use in a lukewarm state for better assimilation.

Nirukti of the Word Kashaya^[3]

The word Kashaya is derived from three components:

- 'Ka' refers to the body
- 'Sha' refers to functions or activities
- 'Ya' refers to regulation or control

Thus, Kashaya means that which helps in regulating the functions of the body and maintaining balance. It also indicates astringent taste and cleansing action.

Synonyms of Kwatha^[3]

Kwatha is known by various names in classical texts, such as:

- Kashaya
- Shrita
- Niryuha
- Kadha
- Shrita Jala
- Kwathita Jala

These terms are often used interchangeably depending on the text and context.

Standard Process of Preparation of Kwatha^[2,3,6,7,8,9]

The standard process of preparing Kwatha is not a single rigid method but a carefully regulated procedure that varies slightly according to different Acharyas, the nature of the drug, and the therapeutic purpose. The basic principle behind Kwatha preparation is to extract the active, water-soluble components of medicinal substances using controlled heat, while preserving their therapeutic strength and digestibility.

The process begins with the **selection of raw drugs**. Classical texts clearly state that only properly identified, mature, clean, and disease-free plant material should be used. Drugs collected from polluted places, marshy land, roadsides, or unhealthy environments are considered inferior and unsuitable for therapeutic use. The quality of raw material is considered the foundation of an effective Kwatha, as no processing can compensate for poor-quality drugs.

After selection, the drugs are dried when required and then converted into **coarse powder**, known as *Yavakuta Churna*. Fine powder is deliberately avoided in Kwatha preparation because it may lead to excessive extraction, turbidity, difficulty in filtration, and irritation of

the digestive tract. Coarse powder allows gradual and balanced extraction during boiling and produces a clear and therapeutically effective decoction.

The next important step is deciding the **quantity of water**, which differs among Acharyas. Charaka generally recommends adding sixteen parts of water to one part of drug and reducing it to one-fourth. Sushruta suggests eight parts of water reduced to one-fourth, while Vagbhata advises four or eight parts depending on the strength and hardness of the drug. Sharangadhara standardizes the method by recommending sixteen parts of water reduced to one-eighth. These variations are not contradictions but practical adaptations based on drug nature and clinical intent.

Another important consideration is the **hardness of the drug**. Soft drugs require less water, while hard and woody drugs require more water and longer boiling time. This ensures complete extraction without destroying active principles. Many Acharyas emphasize that the physician must use judgment rather than blindly following a fixed ratio.

Before boiling, some texts advise **soaking the drugs in water**, usually overnight. Soaking softens plant tissues, shortens cooking time, and improves extraction. Although not mandatory in all cases, soaking is especially useful for hard or dense drugs.

After deciding the drug–water proportion and soaking when required, the next important factor is the **choice of vessel**. Classical Ayurvedic texts strongly recommend the use of earthen vessels for preparing Kwatha. Earthen pots are believed to provide uniform heat distribution and prevent sudden temperature rise, which helps in protecting delicate active principles. They are also considered chemically inert and do not react with the medicinal substances during boiling. Some texts mention the use of copper or iron vessels coated externally with mud as alternatives. In present-day practice, stainless steel vessels are commonly used because they are easily available, safe, and convenient, although the classical preference remains earthenware.

The **application of heat** is another crucial aspect of Kwatha preparation. All Acharyas emphasize the use of *Mandagni*, meaning mild and controlled heat. Excessive heat can destroy thermolabile constituents, alter taste, and reduce therapeutic efficacy. Classical descriptions suggest slow boiling with intermittent stirring to prevent the drugs from sticking to the bottom of the vessel and burning. Modern interpretation places the ideal temperature

roughly between 85 and 90 degrees Celsius, which allows efficient extraction without degradation.

As boiling continues, the liquid gradually reduces in volume. The **degree of reduction** is predetermined according to the chosen method, such as one-fourth or one-eighth of the initial water quantity. Classical texts describe an important practical sign of proper reduction: the residual drug material becomes almost tasteless, indicating that its active principles have been transferred into the liquid. This sensory observation shows the empirical pharmaceutical wisdom of ancient Acharyas.

Once the desired reduction is achieved, the liquid is removed from heat and allowed to cool slightly. The decoction is then **filtered through a clean cloth** to separate the liquid from the solid residue. Filtration should be gentle and complete, ensuring clarity without squeezing the residue excessively, as forceful pressing may introduce unwanted coarse particles into the Kwatha.

The final product should have an appropriate color, aroma, and taste, characteristic of the drugs used. A Kwatha that is too thick, burnt-smelling, excessively bitter, or watery is considered improperly prepared. Classical texts emphasize that a well-prepared Kwatha is clear, fresh, and therapeutically potent, ready for immediate use.

After preparation, classical texts place great emphasis on assessing whether the Kwatha is suitable for use. This assessment is described through the concepts of **Grahya** (acceptable) and **Agrahya** (unacceptable) Kwatha. A properly prepared Kwatha should be fresh, clear, and free from any unpleasant smell or burnt odor. Its color and taste should be characteristic of the drugs used and should not appear excessively concentrated or diluted. Such a Kwatha is considered therapeutically active and safe for administration.

An Agrahya Kwatha is one that has been improperly prepared or mishandled. Decoctions that are overboiled may become excessively thick, bitter, or irritating to digestion. Underboiled Kwatha may appear watery and weak, lacking sufficient extraction of active principles. Kwatha that has been kept for a long time, reheated, fermented unintentionally, or contaminated with dust or moisture is also considered unfit for use. Classical authors clearly warn that such improperly prepared decoctions may reduce therapeutic benefit or even cause adverse effects.

Another important aspect emphasized in Ayurveda is the **freshness of Kwatha**. Kwatha is intended for immediate use after preparation. Classical texts mention that its potency generally lasts only for one *Prahara*, approximately three hours. Beyond this period, the therapeutic strength gradually declines. This short shelf life explains why Kwatha is traditionally prepared daily and why it was closely associated with household practice and fresh food preparation.

Certain **practical precautions** are also described. The vessel should not be covered during boiling, as covering may trap vapors and alter the lightness and digestibility of the decoction. Continuous or frequent stirring is advised to ensure uniform heating. The residue left after filtration should be discarded and never reused, as its medicinal value is considered exhausted. Kwatha should also never be reheated, as reheating is believed to alter its properties and reduce efficacy.

These detailed guidelines show that Kwatha Kalpana is not a crude or casual method of boiling herbs, but a carefully regulated pharmaceutical process. Attention to preparation, reduction, freshness, and acceptability ensures that the decoction acts effectively while remaining safe and easy to digest.

Administration and Dose of Kwatha

The administration of Kwatha is given great importance in Ayurveda because even a well-prepared medicine may not act properly if it is taken at the wrong time, in an improper manner, or in an unsuitable dose. Classical texts emphasize that the dose and method of administration of Kwatha should be decided after considering the patient's age, strength, digestive capacity, nature of disease, and dominance of doshas.

The commonly recommended dose of Kwatha in adults is **two Pala**, which is approximately **ninety-six milliliters**. However, this is considered a general dose and not a fixed rule. For individuals with weak digestion, children, elderly patients, or those suffering from chronic illness, a smaller dose is advised. In strong individuals with good digestive fire and severe disease conditions, the dose may be moderately increased under proper supervision.

Kwatha is usually administered in a **lukewarm state**, as this enhances digestion and absorption. In Vata-dominant disorders, warm Kwatha is especially preferred, while in certain Pitta-dominant conditions, it may be allowed to cool slightly before administration.

Classical texts generally advise that Kwatha should be taken **after the previous meal has been completely digested**, as taking it over undigested food may interfere with digestion and reduce its effectiveness.

The **time of administration** also varies according to therapeutic purpose. In many conditions, morning administration on an empty stomach is preferred for better systemic action. In some cases, Kwatha is advised before meals, after meals, or at specific times of the day to achieve desired effects such as digestion, nourishment, or cleansing. The physician's judgment plays a key role in deciding the appropriate timing.

Kwatha is also administered in different ways apart from oral intake. It may be used as an enema, gargle, wash, or irrigation fluid depending on the disease condition. Regardless of the route, classical texts clearly state that Kwatha should be freshly prepared and should not be stored or reheated, as this may reduce its potency and alter its action.

Prakshepa

Prakshepa refers to substances added to Kwatha to modify its action, improve taste, or balance doshas. These substances are usually added after the Kwatha is prepared and filtered so that their properties are preserved. Commonly used Prakshepa Dravyas include honey, ghee, sugar, jaggery, and salt.

The selection of Prakshepa depends on dosha predominance and disease condition. Ghee or sugar is commonly added in Vata disorders, cooling substances are preferred in Pitta conditions, and honey is often used in Kapha disorders. Prakshepa also helps improve absorption and directs the therapeutic action of Kwatha.

Thus, Prakshepa allows individualization of treatment without altering the basic preparation of Kwatha.

Shelf Life

Kwatha is meant for immediate use and is not intended for storage. Classical Ayurvedic texts state that its therapeutic potency lasts only for one Prahara, which is approximately three hours after preparation. As it is a water-based preparation without preservatives, it can easily spoil if kept for longer periods.

Reheating or storing Kwatha is discouraged, as this alters its properties and reduces efficacy. This limitation of short shelf life later led to the development of modified dosage forms with improved stability.

Upakalpana of Kwatha and Modified Kalpana^[2,3,6]

Upakalpana refers to allied or derivative preparations that arise from the basic concept of Kwatha. These preparations represent a natural extension of Kwatha Kalpana into daily diet and supportive nutrition, reflecting the Ayurvedic view that food and medicine are closely interconnected. In classical Ayurveda, Kwatha is not restricted only to therapeutic administration in disease, but is also adapted into food-like preparations to support digestion, nourishment, recovery, and maintenance of health.

Among the commonly described food-based Upakalpanas, Yavagu occupies an important place. Yavagu is a thin medicated gruel prepared by cooking rice with a larger quantity of water along with medicinal drugs. Because of its light nature and easy digestibility, Yavagu is especially useful in conditions of weak digestion, fever, convalescence, and post-panchakarma care. When medicinal drugs are incorporated into Yavagu in the form of Kwatha or directly during cooking, it acts both as nourishment and medicine.

Yusha is another important Upakalpana derived from the Kwatha concept. It is a medicated pulse soup prepared by boiling pulses with water and selected medicinal substances. Yusha provides better nourishment than Yavagu while still remaining light and easy to digest. It is particularly useful in patients who require gradual strengthening without overburdening digestion. The incorporation of medicinal herbs into Yusha allows therapeutic action to be delivered through regular food intake.

Manda, Peya, and Vilepi represent different stages of rice-based preparations that vary in thickness and nutritive value. Manda is the thin watery portion obtained from boiled rice and is often medicated using mild Kwatha or herbs. Peya is slightly thicker and provides more nourishment, while Vilepi is comparatively thicker and more sustaining. These preparations are widely used in acute illness, recovery phases, and digestive disorders. When prepared using medicated water or Kwatha, they serve as gentle therapeutic foods that restore strength while maintaining digestive balance.

Shadanganeeya is a classical example of medicated drinking water prepared using specific herbs boiled in water. Though simple in appearance, it is essentially a mild Kwatha adapted for daily consumption. Such preparations help maintain hydration, regulate digestion, and prevent disease, especially during seasonal changes or epidemics. This demonstrates how Kwatha Kalpana was seamlessly integrated into routine dietary practices.

Over time, the limitations of classical Kwatha such as short shelf life, poor palatability, and inconvenience of daily preparation led to the development of modified dosage forms. Preparations like Ghana, Ghanavati, granules, syrups, and fermented formulations were developed by concentrating or transforming Kwatha while preserving its therapeutic essence. Although these modified forms differ in appearance and convenience, their conceptual foundation remains rooted in Kwatha Kalpana.

Thus, Upakalpana of Kwatha represents a bridge between medicine and food. It highlights the Ayurvedic principle that healing can occur through simple, well-prepared dietary formulations, making Kwatha Kalpana not only a therapeutic tool but also a foundation for health preservation and recovery.

DISCUSSION

Importance of Kwatha Kalpana in Ayurveda

Kwatha Kalpana holds a central position in Ayurvedic pharmaceuticals because it represents a balanced approach between potency and digestibility. Unlike very concentrated preparations such as Swarasa or Kalka, Kwatha provides effective therapeutic action while remaining relatively easy to digest. This balance makes it suitable for a wide range of patients, including those with chronic illness, weak digestion, or long-standing doshic imbalance. Because water is used as the extraction medium, Kwatha efficiently delivers water-soluble and heat-stable active principles in a form that the body can readily assimilate.

Another important aspect of Kwatha Kalpana is its flexibility. The same set of drugs can be prepared in different strengths by altering the quantity of water, duration of boiling, and degree of reduction. This allows the physician to tailor the medicine according to disease severity, stage of illness, and patient strength. Such adaptability is rarely seen in rigid dosage forms and explains why Kwatha continues to be clinically relevant even in modern practice.

Kwatha also serves as the foundation for many secondary and modified formulations. Preparations such as Avaleha, Sneha, Asava, Arishta, and Ghana are all derived from Kwatha or its concentrated forms. This foundational role highlights that Kwatha is not merely one among many formulations, but a core pharmaceutical concept upon which much of Ayurvedic medicine is built.

Reasons for the Widespread Use of Kwatha from Samhita Period to Modern Times.

One of the main reasons for the continued use of Kwatha from the Samhita period to the present day is its simplicity and practicality. The basic materials required for Kwatha preparation are easily available, and the method does not demand complex equipment or advanced processing techniques. This made Kwatha suitable not only for physicians but also for household use, allowing Ayurvedic treatment to reach common people across different regions and social settings.

Another important reason is the close relationship between Kwatha and digestion. Classical Acharyas repeatedly emphasized that the success of treatment depends on Agni, or digestive fire. Kwatha, being a warm, liquid preparation, supports digestion rather than overloading it. This makes it particularly useful in chronic diseases, metabolic disorders, and conditions involving Ama. Because it can be adjusted in strength, Kwatha can be used across different stages of disease, from acute management to long-term support.

Kwatha also gained widespread acceptance because of its versatility in administration. It is used not only as an oral medicine but also in Panchakarma procedures such as Basti, Dhara, and washing or cleansing therapies. This multi-route applicability strengthened its role in classical practice and ensured its continued relevance even as therapeutic techniques evolved.

In modern times, despite the availability of tablets and capsules, Kwatha continues to be prescribed because of its reliable clinical outcomes. Many practitioners still prefer Kwatha in conditions where quick absorption, systemic action, and digestive support are required. Even when modified dosage forms are used, their conceptual basis often traces back to classical Kwatha Kalpana, showing continuity rather than replacement.

Role of Kwatha and Upakalpana in Preservation of Health

Kwatha and its related Upakalpanas play an important role not only in treating disease but also in preserving health, which is the primary aim of Ayurveda. Health preservation in

Ayurveda depends largely on maintaining proper digestion, balanced doshas, and gradual nourishment of tissues. Kwatha-based preparations support all these goals in a gentle and sustainable manner.

One of the key ways in which Kwatha contributes to health preservation is by supporting **digestive fire without overstimulation**. Mild herbal decoctions taken regularly, either alone or incorporated into food, help regulate digestion, prevent accumulation of Ama, and maintain metabolic balance. For example, medicated water prepared with simple digestive herbs and consumed throughout the day acts as a mild Kwatha that continuously supports digestion and hydration. This practice is especially useful during seasonal changes, when digestive strength naturally fluctuates.

Upakalpanas such as **Yavagu and Manda** are excellent examples of how Kwatha principles are applied for preventive care. These preparations are light, easily digestible, and can be customized with mild medicinal herbs. In individuals recovering from illness, seasonal weakness, or digestive disturbances, medicated Yavagu helps restore strength gradually without burdening the digestive system. Regular use of such preparations prevents sudden dietary overload and reduces the risk of relapse.

Yusha, or medicated pulse soup, serves as another important health-preserving preparation. Pulses provide nourishment, while herbs incorporated through boiling act therapeutically. Yusha prepared with digestive or strengthening herbs is commonly advised for individuals who need nourishment but are not ready for heavy food. This balanced approach helps maintain tissue health while keeping digestion stable.

Kwatha-based preparations are also useful in **daily routines for specific populations**, such as children, the elderly, and individuals with chronic digestive sensitivity. Mild decoctions or food-based Upakalpanas ensure that medicinal support is delivered in a form that resembles food, making long-term use safe and acceptable. This prevents dependency on strong medicines and supports gradual, natural balance.

Another important aspect of health preservation through Kwatha is its role in **preventing disease rather than reacting to it**. Regular intake of mild herbal decoctions as drinking water, especially those suited to season and constitution, helps maintain internal balance and enhances resistance. Such practices were traditionally used during epidemics, seasonal

transitions, and periods of increased vulnerability, demonstrating the preventive wisdom embedded in Kwatha Kalpana.

In modern terms, Kwatha and its Upakalpanas function similarly to therapeutic diets and functional foods. They provide continuous, low-intensity support to the body rather than short-term, high-intensity intervention. This approach aligns well with long-term health maintenance, especially in lifestyle-related disorders and age-related decline.

Thus, Kwatha and Upakalpana represent a subtle yet powerful system of health preservation. By integrating medicinal principles into daily food and drink, Ayurveda ensures that healing becomes a continuous process rather than an occasional intervention. This philosophy explains why Kwatha Kalpana remains relevant not only in disease management but also in sustaining health across the lifespan.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Kwatha Kalpana

One of the major advantages of Kwatha Kalpana is its **high therapeutic effectiveness combined with good digestibility**. Because Kwatha is a liquid preparation, it is absorbed faster than solid dosage forms and begins to act quickly. The use of water as a medium ensures efficient extraction of water-soluble and heat-stable active principles, making Kwatha particularly effective in systemic and chronic conditions. Its warm and liquid nature also supports digestion, which is a central requirement for successful treatment in Ayurveda.

Another important advantage is the **flexibility of preparation and use**. Kwatha can be prepared in varying strengths by altering the quantity of water, duration of boiling, and degree of reduction. This allows the same formulation to be adapted for different patients and disease stages. Kwatha can also be administered through multiple routes, including oral intake, enema, washing, and irrigation, which increases its clinical utility. Furthermore, Kwatha serves as the foundation for many secondary formulations, highlighting its central role in Ayurvedic pharmaceuticals.

Kwatha Kalpana is also advantageous because of its **close integration with diet and daily routine**. It can be easily incorporated into food-based preparations, making long-term use feasible and safe. This quality is particularly valuable in preventive healthcare, convalescence, and chronic disease management, where gentle and sustained support is required rather than aggressive intervention.

Despite these advantages, Kwatha Kalpana has certain **limitations**. The most significant drawback is its **very short shelf life**, which necessitates fresh preparation each time. This can be inconvenient for both patients and practitioners, especially in modern settings where time and resources are limited. The **taste of Kwatha**, which is often bitter or astringent, may also reduce patient compliance, particularly among children and elderly individuals.

Another limitation is the **time and effort required for preparation**. Unlike ready-made tablets or capsules, Kwatha requires proper measurement, boiling, and filtration, which may not be practical for all patients. There is also the possibility of variation in quality if the preparation is not done correctly, as factors such as heat control, water proportion, and drug quality directly influence efficacy.

These disadvantages led to the development of modified dosage forms that aim to retain the therapeutic essence of Kwatha while improving convenience, stability, and acceptability. However, despite these limitations, classical Kwatha continues to be valued for its reliability and effectiveness when prepared and used correctly.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Kwatha Kalpana

One of the main advantages of Kwatha Kalpana is its effective therapeutic action combined with good digestibility. As a liquid preparation, Kwatha is absorbed quickly and begins to act faster than solid dosage forms. The use of water as a medium allows efficient extraction of active principles, making Kwatha especially useful in chronic and systemic conditions. Its warm and liquid nature also supports digestion, which is essential for successful treatment in Ayurveda.

Another important advantage is the flexibility of Kwatha preparation and use. The same formulation can be prepared in different strengths by adjusting the amount of water and boiling time. Kwatha can also be administered through different routes and easily integrated into food-based preparations, making it suitable for long-term and preventive use.

However, Kwatha Kalpana has certain limitations. Its very short shelf life requires fresh preparation each time, which may be inconvenient in modern practice. The bitter or astringent taste can reduce patient acceptance, especially in children and elderly individuals. Preparation also requires time and careful attention, and improper preparation may affect efficacy.

Despite these drawbacks, Kwatha remains a valuable dosage form, and its limitations have led to the development of modified formulations that aim to improve convenience while preserving therapeutic benefits.

CONCLUSION

Kwatha Kalpana is one of the most important and time-tested dosage forms in Ayurveda. Its strength lies in its effective therapeutic action along with good digestibility, achieved through the use of water and controlled heat. This balance explains its continued use from the Samhita period to the present day.

Kwatha is adaptable in preparation, dose, and use, allowing it to be tailored to different patients and disease conditions. Its extension into food-based Upakalpanas highlights the Ayurvedic principle that food and medicine work together in preserving health. Although Kwatha has practical limitations such as short shelf life, modified formulations have helped overcome these issues while retaining its core therapeutic value.

Thus, Kwatha Kalpana represents a holistic approach that integrates treatment, diet, and prevention, making it highly relevant in both classical and modern Ayurvedic practice.

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