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Encyclopedic Study of Haritaki (*Terminalia Chebula* Ritz.) In Reference To Prameha

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Abstract

Many people believe in nature cure. Mahatma Gandhi also believed in this system. I may be pardoned to say that no system of medicine is as near to nature as Ayurveda and really speaking Ayurveda is the best nature cure that man has ever invented. Brihattrayi is the collection of basic classic books for ayurvedic practioners and researchers from very begning. Haritaki is an important herbal drug has been used successfully by many more ayurvedic practioners from very begning in prameharoga (diabetes mellitus). The present encyclopedic study aims to highlighten the therapeutic value of Haritaki (Terminalia chebula Retz.) in reference to prameha rogaand helps to new researchers and practioners.

Key Words: Ayurveda, Haritaki, Brihattrayi, Encyclopedic, Prameharogaetc.

Introduction

Medicinal plants have been used as natural medicines. This practice has been in existence since prehistoric times. There are different ways in which plants have been found useful in medicines such as crude extract of plants has been used directly because of the presence of natural chemical constituents such as berberine, morphine, psilocin, tannin, flavonoids, vincristine etc¹. History of drug can be studied under *Vedic* kala, Upanishad, Purana, Samhita, Nighantu and Adhunika kala. Haritaki (Terminalia chebula Retz.) is a popular tree, which is used by traditional practioner to cure various ailments. On comprehensive review of Ayurvedic classics it was found that *Haritaki* was not described in *vedic compandia*, but described in *Charaka samhita*, *Sushruta samhita* and both *Ashtanga Samgraha* and *Ashtanga Hradaya*, other *samhita granthas* and in *chikitsagrantha* like *Chakradatta*, *Sharangadhara samhita*, *Yogaratnakara* etc. and also in *nighantus*. Our aim was launched with an aim to explore the possibility of a better control over diabetes by *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula* Retz.).

Terminalia chebula Retz.is a moderate sized or large deciduous tree, attaining 25-30m in height. Leaf-buds branch lets and youngest leaves with soft, shining, generally rust-coloured hairs. Leaves 7-20 cm. By 4-8cm., glabrous or nearly so when

mature, not clustered, distant, alternate, or sub opposite, elliptic-oblong, acute, rounded or cordate at the base, penninerved, petioles 2-5 cm. Long, pubescent, usually with glands near the top. Flowers are hermaphrodite 4mm across sessile, dull-white or yellow, an offensives small. Bark 6mm thick, dark brown with many generally shallow vertical cracks. Fruit – the mature myrobalan is of an ovoid form, from 2.5 to 3.75 cm. Long, sometimes tapering towards the lower extremity obscurely 5-ribbed².

In *vedic* compendia any description of *Haritaki* was not found. In *Shaunakasamhita* of *Atharvaveda*, term "*Jivanti*" was comes for *Leptadenia reticulata* W. & A. not for *Terminalia chebula* Retz. Acoording to *Bhavamishra Haritaki* was originated from the drop of *Amrita* (Nector) which was fall down on earth during drinking of *Amrita* by Lord *Indra*.

Haritaki (Terminalia chebula Ritz.) in Brihattrayi

In Charaka samhita, Haritaki was mentioned with synonyms i.e. abhaya, amrita, pathya, vijaya, shiva and haritaki. it is described among virechanopaga, arshoghna, kushthaghna, hikkanigrahana, kasahar, jvarahar, prajasthapana, vayah-sthapana mahakashaya. In samhita vachadi, Sushruta mushkakai, parushakadi, mustadi, haritkyadi, triphaladi & amlakyadi gana while in Ashtanga Samgraha Vagbhatta has mentioned it in parushakadi gana, vachadi gana, mustadi gana etc. In Charaka samhita Haritaki is indicated in jvara, prameha, kushtha, unmada, apasmara, krimi roga, pandu, grahani, visha, madatyaya, and bhutabadha etc³. In Sushruta samhita Haritaki was mentioned with synonyms i.e. abhaya, amrita, pathya, vijaya and haritaki. it is indicated in kushtha, kandu, apasmara unmada, pandu, bhagandara, garavisha, pliha roga, urustambha, gandamala, nadi vrana, netra roga, raktapitta, prameha⁴. While in Ashtanga Hridaya, Haritaki was mentioned with synonyms i.e. abhaya, pathya, pranada, vijaya, shiva and haritaki. it is indicated in garadosha, raktagulma, kshata, shukra, timira,

visha, vrana, ajirna, kushtha, tvakdosha, shopha and udararoga etc⁵.

The pharmacological properties (*guna-karma*) of *Haritaki* fruit are as follows⁶ –

- Rasa Kashaya, Amla, Madhura, Tikta and Katu
- Guna Tikshna and Laghu
- Vipaka Katu
- VÍrya Ushna

Materials and Methods

Charaka Samhita (1000 B.C. - 4 A.D.)

This treatise is one of the existing old medical treatises of India, *Charaka samhita* can be considered as one of the oldest book of internal medicine. This text has been composed by *Maharishi Agnivesha* (1000 B.C.), *Acharya Charaka* (2000 B.C.) has reducted it and it is reconstructed by *Acharya Dridhabala* (4th Cent. A.D.). In *Charaka Samhita*, various formulations of *Haritaki were used in prameha* (*Diabetes mellitus*), which are given in the table no. 1⁷.

Sushruta Samhita (1000 B.C.-500 A.D.)

This *samhita* is composed by *Vriddha Sushruta* (1000 B.C.) and is chiefly concerned to Surgery along with the other parts of medicine. This treatise was reducted by *Sushruta* in 2nd Cent. A.D. Later on revised by *Nagarjuna*, the greatest scientist of *Bauddha* era during 5th cent.A.D. At present time, this *Samhita* appears to be much recent than *Charaka Samhita* because of the fact that its amelioration (*pathashuddhi*) was done by *Chandrata* in 10th Cent. A.D. In *Sushruta Samhita* various formulations of *Haritaki were used in prameha* (*Diabetes mellitus*), which are given in the table no.2⁸.

Ashtanga Samgraha (600 A.D.)

This important treatise is written by *Vriaddha Vagbhatta*. He has included 45mahakashaya of *Charaka Samhita* in his treatise. In *Ashtanga Samgraha Haritaki* has mentioned in parushakadigana, vachadi gana, mustadi gana etc. In this samhita various formulations of *Haritaki were used in prameha (Diabetes mellitus)*, which are given in the table no.3⁹.

Ashtanga Hridaya (700 A.D.)

This *samhita* has been written by *acharya Vagbhatta* in 7th Cent. A.D.In *Ashtanga Hridaya*, various formulations of *Haritaki were used or could be used in prameha (Diabetes mellitus)*, which are given in the table no. 4¹⁰.

Sharangadhara Samhita (1400 A.D.)

It comes under Laghuttrayi, writter of this book was Acharya Sharangadhara son of Damodar. This book is divided into three parts purva khanda, madhyama khanda and uttara khanda. purva khanda is concerned with mana prakarana, nadipariksha, dipana and pachana actions etc. Madhayama khanda is concerned with bhaishajya and rasashastra. Uttarakhanda is concerned with panchakarma and kriyakalpa, ahiphena is first time introduced here. For the first time this treatise gives difference between asava and arishta. Sharangadhara has introduced snayu krimi for the first time. Many new formulations have been applied in this treatise in many diseases according to author's experience like shakhotaka in shlipada, shringabhasma in hridvashula and kanchanara in gandamala etc. Haritaki was mentioned in various formulations of Haritaki were used in prameha (Diabetes mellitus), which are given in the table no. 5^{11} .

B.c. Haritaki in chikitsa grantha Yogaratnakara (17th Cent. A.D.)

This text book was written in 7th Cent., this holds different *yogas* (preparations) for different diseases. *Haritaki* was mentioned in different formulations for multiple purposes. The formulations which were indicated for *prameharoga* are mentioned in table no. 6¹².

Chakradatta (11th Cent. A.D.)

This *chikitsa grantha* has been written by *Chakrapanidatta*, the great commentator of *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita* has gone to as name *Charaka Chaturanana* and *Sushruta Sahasraksha*. *Haritaki* was mentioned in different formulations for multiple purposes. The formulations which were indicated for *prameha* or *madhumeharoga* are mentioned in table no.7¹³.

B.d.1. Haritakiin various Nighantu

i. Saushruta nighantu (6th Cent.)

This *nighantu* was written by *Acharya Saushruta* based on *Susruta samhita*. In this *nighantu*, *Haritaki* has been described in *mushkakadi gana*. *Abhaya*, *Pathya*, *vijaya*, *amrita*, *pranada*, *nandini* are the synonym of it¹⁴.

ii. Ashtanganighantu (8th Cent.)

Ashtanga nighantu was written byVahatacharya. In this nighantu,Haritaki has been described in parushakadi gana. It's synonym are described here are pranada, putana,amogha, abhaya, jaya, pathya, amrita, haimavati, pinditaka, kayastha and rohini¹⁵.

iii. Dhanvantarinighantu (10th Cent.)

It was written by Mahendra Bhaugik. In the beginning of Nighantu, author pays homage to lord Dhanawantari and again he mentions its name as Dravyavali. At the end of Dravyavali author desires to describe the drugs of Dravyavali with their synonyms and after that he has described their properties and actions along with synonyms. Haritaki has been placed in guduchyadi varga and abhaya, pathya, prapathya, putana, amrita, jaya, avyatha, haimavati, vayastha, chetaki, shiva, pranada, nandini, rohini and vijaya have been given as its synonym. Regarding its properties, it has been said as kashaya, amla, katu, tikta, madhura in rasa. It is indicated in lekhana karma, medhya karma, chakshuroga, meha, kushtha, vrana, vamana, shopha, vatarakata, mutrakrichchhra and indriyaprasadana 16.

iv. Madanapalanighantu (14th Cent.)

This *nighantu* was written by *Madanpal*. In this nighantu Haritaki has been found in abhayadi varga. Following are the synonym of Haritaki are shiva, pathya, chetaki, vijaya, jaya, putana, prapathya, prathama, amogha, kayastha, pranada, amrita, jivaniya, hemavati, vritana, abhaya, vayahastha, nandini, shreyasi and rohini. Regarding its properties, it has been said as kashaya, katu, tikta, amla, madhura rasa, ruksha guna, ushna virya. It is indicated in dipana, medhya, vrishya, chakshushya, brimhana, shvasa, kasa, jvara, prameha, gulma, arsha, kushtha, shopha, udararoga, krimi, grahani, vibandha,

vishamajvara, gulma, adhmana, vrana, hikka and kandu¹⁷.

v. Rajanighantu (14th Cent.)

This book is written by *Narhari Pandit*, who had add first *Dravyaguna*in *Astanga Ayurveda* and also gives it first place in *ashtanga Ayurveda*. This book is particularly based on the *Dhanwantari nighantu*. The subject matter has been divided into 23 chapters. *Haritaki* is included in *amradi varga* in this *nighantu*. *Haimavati*, *jaya*, *abhaya*, *shiva*, *avyatha*, *chetanika*, *rohini pathya*, *prapashtya*, *putana*, *amrita*, *jivapriya*, *jivanika*, *jivanti*, *pranada*, *jivya*, *kayastha*, *shreyasi*, *devi*, *divya* and *vijaya* have been given as its synonyms. Its *rasa* has been mentioned as *kashaya*, *Katu*, *tikta*, *amla*, *madhura*¹⁸.

vi. Bhavaprakashanighantu(16th Cent.)

was written nighantu by Acharya Bhavmishra, Haritaki has been described in haritakyadi varga and the following synonyms are found in this nighantu- abhaya, pathya, kayastha, putana, amrita, haimavati, avyatha, chetaki, shreyasi, shiva, vayastha, vijaya, jivanti, and rohini. Its rasa has been mentioned as kashaya, katu, amla, madhura and tikta rasa, laghu and ruksha guna, ushna virya and vipaka madhura. It indicated in dipana, medhya, rasayana, chakshushya, anulomana, shvasa, kasa, prameha, kushtha, shotha, arsha, udararoga, krimi, grahani, vibandha, vishamajvara, gulma, adhayamana, chhardi, hikka, kamla, shula, anaha, pliha roga, ashmari, mutrakrichchha and mutraghata¹⁹.

vii. Shaligramanighantu (19th Cent.)

In this nighantu Haritaki has been placed in haritakyadivarga and abhaya, pathya, kayastha, putana, amrita, haimavati, avyatha, chetaki, shreyasi, shiva, vayastha, vijaya, jivanti and rohini are said as its synonyms. Its rasa has been mentioned as kashaya, amla, madhura tikta and katu in rasa; laghu and ruksha guna, ushna virya and vipaka madhura. It is indicated in dipana, medhya, rasayana, chakshushya, anulomana, shvasa, kasa, prameha, arsha, kushtha, shotha, udararoga, krimi, grahani,vibandha, vishamajvara, gulma, adhayamana, chhardi, hikka, kamla,

shula, anaha, pliha, ashmari, mutrakrichchhra and mutraghata²⁰.

viii. *Priyanighantu* (20th Cent.)

This book was written by Acharya Priyavrata Sharma, In this nighantu Haritaki was mentioned in Haritkyadi varga and Haritaki, abhaya, kayastha has been included as its synonym. Regarding its properties, it has been said as as pancarasa and alavana in rasa. It is tridoshahara and indicated in dosha anulomana, dipana, pachana, arsha, gulma, udavarta, anaha, udararoga, shotha, pandu, svarabheda and kasa²¹.

Medicinal aspect and hypoglycemic activity

Experimental study on *Haritaki (Terminalia chebula* Retz.) with regards diabetes has been done are:

- 1.Antihyperglycemic effect of water extract of dry fruits of *Terminalia chebula* in experimental diabetes mellitus²².
- 2. Long-term Effects of *Terminalia chebula* Retz. On Hyperglycemia and Associated Hyperlipidemia, Tissue Glycogen Content and in Vitro Release of Insulin in Streptozotocin Induced Diabetic Rats²³.

On the basis of above mentioned properties of *Haritaki* and review of experimental study on *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula* Retz.) and in API-part-I, Vol.-I, the therapeutic uses in *Prameha* of *Haritaki* is also mentioned, we select this drug forreview of its effect on *prameha* (diabetes mellitus).

Mode of action of Haritaki as per ayurvedic pharmacology

Prameha is a tridoshaja vyadhi. Abadhhash-leshma is particular dosha in all types of prameha. The clinical entity in which patient voids the urine having concordance with madhu i.e. of kashaya and madhura taste, ruksha texture and madhu (honey) like colour and body acquires sweetness is called madhumeha. Treatment of madhumeha is difficult due to contradictory treatment of vata (predominant dosha) and meda (predominant dushya). Drugs which combate vata will increase meda and kapha and vice-versa. In avaranajanya madhumeha the treatment must be such that is

should not vitiate vata and should clear avarana also.

Haritaki is indicated in prameha by authors of brihattarayi, other samhitagrantha, chikitsagrantha and nighantus, kapha, abadhha meda and vata are main factors in pathogenesis of madhumeha. Haritaki having kashaya, katu, tikta,

amla, madhura in rasa, ruksha in guna, ushna in virya. It also has tridoshashamaka action which is desirable in treatment of prameha. By the phytochemical study, UV-Vis. spectroscopy and FTIR study of hydoalcoholic extract of fruit pericarp shows following compounds are present in it, which are mention in table no. 8.

Table 1: Charaka Samhita

S.No.	Preparation	Indication	Reference
1.	Santarpana yoga	Kapha prameha	C.Ci. 6/22
2.	Kvatha	Prameha	C.Ci. 6/26
3.	Kvatha	Kapha prameha	C.Ci. 6/27
4.	Kvatha	Kapha prameha	C.Ci. 6/28
5.	Kvatha	Kapha prameha	C.Ci. 6/29
6.	Kvatha	Pittaja prameha	C.Ci. 6/30
7.	Phalatrikadi Kvatha	Sarva prameha	C.Ci. 6/40
8.	Lodhrasava	Prameha, pandu, arsha etc.	C.Ci. 6/41
9.	Kvatha / svarasa	Prameha	C.Ci. 6/46

Table 2: Sushruta Samhita

S.No.	Preparation	Indication	Reference
4.	Arishta	Kushtha, meha, pandu etc.	S.Ci. 10/6
5.	Ayaskriti	Kushtha, meha, meda, shotha etc.	S.Ci. 10/11
6.	Mahaushadha ayaskriti	Kushtha, prameha etc.	S.Ci. 10/12
7.	Kvatha	Sarva prameha	S.Ci. 11/8
8.	Kvatha	Phenameha	S.Ci. 11/9
9.	Kvatha	Ksharameha	S.Ci. 11/9
10.	Kvatha	Sarva prameha	S.Ci. 11/11
11.	Dhanvantara ghrita	Meha, shotha, gulma, pidika etc.	S.Ci. 12/5
12.	Navayasa lauha	Shotha, pandu, kustha, prameha etc.	S.Ci. 12/11

Table 3: Ashtanga Samgrah

S.No.	Preparation	Indication	Reference
1.	Churna	Sarva prameha	A.S.Ci.14/6
2.	Kvatha	Kapha meha	A.S.Ci.14/7
3.	Kashaya	Lala meha	A.S.Ci.14/8
4.	Kashaya	Kshara meha	A.S.Ci.14/8
5.	Dhanvantara ghrita	Sarva prameha, arsha, kushtha etc.	A.S.Ci.14/12
6.	Lodhrasava	Krimi, shopha, sarva prameha etc.	A.S.Ci.14/14
7.	Dashamularishta	Krimi, shopha, sarva prameha etc.	A.S.Ci.14/15
8.	Mustadi churna	Meha, pliha, pandu etc.	A.S.Ci.14/18

Table 4: Ashtanga Hridaya

S.No.	Preparation	Indication	Reference
1.	Kvatha	Sarva prameha	A. H.Ci. 12/6
2.	Kashaya	Kaphaja prameha	A. H.Ci. 12/7
3.	Siddha grita	Sarva prameha, gulma, arsha etc.	A. H.Ci. 12/20
4.	Rodhrasava	Prameha, arsha, kushtha etc.	A. H.Ci. 12/26

Table 5: Sharangadhara Samhita

S.No.	Preparation	Indication	Reference
1.	Varadi kvatha	Prameha	Sa.M. 2/110
2.	Vatsakadi kvatha	Prameha	Sa.M. 2/110
3.	Phalatrikadi kvatha	Sarva prameha	Sa.M. 2/111

4.	Mehabaddha rasa	Jirna prameha	Sa.M.12/203

Table 6: Yogaratnakara

S.No.	Preparation	Indication	Reference	Page No.
1.	Kvatha	Kaphaja prameha	<i>Y.R.Utt.Pr.</i> 1	82
2.	Kvatha	Kaphaja prameha	Y.R.Utt.Pr.2	82
3.	Kashaya	Lala meha	<i>Y.R.Utt.Pr.</i> 1	83
4.	Kashaya	Kshara meha	Y.R.Utt.Pr.2	84
5.	Kvatha	Dvandvaja prameha	Y.R.Utt.Pr.2	84
6.	Phalatrikadi Kvatha	Sarva prameha	<i>Y.R.Utt.Pr.</i> 1	85
7.	Nisha triphala yoga	Prameha roga	<i>Y.R.Utt.Pr.</i> 1	86
8.	Triphala kalka	Meha roga	<i>Y.R.Utt.Pr.</i> 1	86
9.	Triphaladi churna	Prameha roga	<i>Y.R.Utt.Pr.</i> 1	86
10.	Nyagrodhadi churna	Prameha roga	Y.R.Utt.Pr.3	86
11.	Svarasa	Prameha roga	Y.R.Utt.Pr.4	86
12.	Karkatibeejadi churna	Mutravarodha	<i>Y.R.Utt.Pr.</i> 1	87
13.	Gokshuradi guti	Prameha, vata roga, pradara etc.	<i>Y.R.Utt.Pr.</i> 1	87
14.	Chandraprabha guti	Prameha, vata roga, pradara etc.	<i>Y.R.Utt.Pr.</i> 1	88
15.	Asava ghrita	Pandu, arsha, udararoga, prameha	<i>Y.R.Utt.Pr.</i> 1	90
16.	Simhmriata ghrita	Prameha, bhagandara	<i>Y.R.Utt.Pr.</i> 1	90

Table 7: Chakradutta

S.No.	Preparation	Indication	Reference
1.	Triphaladi kvatha	Phenameha	C.D.Pr. 10
2.	Kvatha	Kaphameha	C.D.Pr. 11
3.	Kvatha	Pittaprameha	C.D.Pr. 13
4.	Kashaya	Pittaprameha	C.D.Pr. 15
5.	Kvatha	Sarvaprameha	C.D.Pr. 21
6.	Phalatrikadi kvatha	Sarvaprameha	C.D.Pr. 22
7.	Katamkateryadi kvatha	Sarvaprameha	C.D.Pr. 23
8.	Triphaladi kvatha	Sarvaprameha	C.D.Pr. 24
9.	Churna	Sarvaprameha	C.D.Pr. 25
10.	Nyagrodhadi Churna	Sarvaprameha	C.D.Pr. 29,30
11.	Dhanvantara ghrita	Sarvaprameha	C.D.Pr. 35,38
12.	Mahadadimadi ghrita	Sarvaprameha	C.D.Pr. 46
13.	Tryushanadi gutika	Sarvaprameha	C.D.Pr. 52

Table 8: Phytochemical study of hydroalcoholic (50%-50%) extract of fruit pericarp of Haritaki

S.No.	Chemical tests	Hydroalcholic extract Haritaki
	Carbohydrates	-
	Protiens	+
	Amino acids	+
	Glycosides	+
	Flavanoids	+
	Alkaloids	+
	Tannins and Phenolic	+
Compounds		
	Steroids	-
	Vitamins	+

Abrevations: C. - Charaka samhita, S. - Sushruta samhita, A.H. -Ashtanga Hridaya, Su. -Sutrasthana, Ci. - Chikitsasthana, K.- Kalpasthana, Si. - Siddhisthana, U. - Uttaratantra

Discussion

In Charaka samhita Haritaki is indicated in jvara, prameha, kushtha, unmada, apasmara, krimi roga, pandu, grahani, visha, madatyaya, and bhutabadha etc. In Sushruta samhita it is indicated in kushtha, kandu, apasmara unmada, pandu, bhagandara, garavisha, pliha roga, urustambha, gandamala, nadi vrana, netra roga, raktapitta, prameha. While in Ashtanga Hridaya, it is indicated in garadosha, raktagulma, kshata, shukra, timira, visha, vrana, ajirna, During review of prameha it has been revealed that madhumeha is included under ashtamahagada

mentioned by acharya Charaka (C.S.In.9/8), and prameha is included under ashtamahagada by acharya Sushruta (Su.S. 33/4) and acharya Vagbhatta (A.H.Ni.8/30). Aggravated kapha, pitta, meda and vitiated vataare the factors involved chiefly pathogenesis of prameha. Haritaki is indicated in prameha by some nighantukara also. Its properties and actions arekashaya, katu, tikta, amla, madhura rasa, ruksha guna and ushna virya by which it could be effective in prameha roga (Diabetes mellitus). According to modern concepts tannic acid reduces glucose absorption by coating the inner layer intestine. By the research works in past we can say the presence of flavonoids, tannis are possibly supports and provide strong evidence of its hypoglycemic effect^{24,25}.

Conclusion

The present review on Haritaki starting from vedic era upto modern era. On review it was noted that in *vedic* compendia *Haritaki* has not mentioned, but in brahattrayi and Ashtanga samgraha a lot of references regarding its synonyms, properties, indications are available. In brahattrayi use of Haritaki fruitis indicated in jvara, prameha, kushtha, unmada, apasmara, krami roga, pandu, grahani, visha, madatyaya, and bhutabadha etc. Madhumeha is one among vatika prameha. Aggravated kapha, pitta, meda and vitiated vata are the factors involved chiefly pathogenesis of prameha. The properties of Haritaki are kashaya, katu, tikta, amla, madhura rasa, ruksha guna and ushna virya and by all these properties Haritaki could be effective in prameha roga specialy in madhumeha (Diabetes mellitus type-2). In this regard, further studies need to carry out to explore Haritaki for its therapeutics potential in preventing and treating prameharoga (diabetes mellitus).

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