

Available online on 15.05.2019 at <http://jddtonline.info>

Journal of Drug Delivery and Therapeutics

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Review Article

A Review on Traditional Ayurveda Formulations and their Therapeutic Importance

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda the therapeutic system of Indian medicine utilizes various types of dosage forms for health benefits including *Vati*, *Churna*, *Kwatha*, *Asava*, *Arishta*, *Kalka* and *Avaleha*, etc. The different formulations possess different *Virya* (potency) therefore they act in different way. Ayurveda specified uses of various formulation for different health benefits and some formulation meant for specified uses through different route of administration like; oral, topical and nasal formulations, etc. Ayurveda also recommended use of various formulations with in specified age group say for example *Bhasma* not very popular in children. The availability of large number of formulation options not only enhances patient compliance but also increases physician choices. The liquid, solid, semisolid and *Dhupan* (smoke) are some ayurveda drug formulations based on their appearance, these all formulations having their specific characteristics differ from each other. Present article explored the concept and importance of diversified ayurveda formulations used for various therapeutic purposes.

Keywords: *Ayurveda, formulations, dosage forms, Virya.***Article Info:** Received 27 March 2019; Review Completed 4 May 2019; Accepted 08 May 2019; Available online 15 May 2019**Cite this article as:**Motghare KP, Yeokar V, A Review on Traditional Ayurveda Formulations and their Therapeutic Importance, Journal of Drug Delivery and Therapeutics. 2019; 9(3):650-653 <http://dx.doi.org/10.22270/jddt.v9i3.2663>***Address for Correspondence:**

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Introduction

The ayurveda ancient system of health cure describes use of various drug formulations for the management of different diseases. The ayurveda medicine originated since 3000-5000 years ago, the *Vedic* text and philosophical texts in early civilization explored logical concept of disease management using various raw formulations. The basic ingredients of different ayurveda formulation sourced from plants, animals and minerals origin, the single ayurveda formulation contain only one chief ingredient while compound formulations contain more than one ingredients of therapeutic importance. The preparation of ayurveda

formulation depends upon various factors depicted in **Figure 1**.

Aim & Objective

1. To study various ayurveda formulations as per traditional literatures.
2. To study role of ayurveda formulations in the management of various diseases.
3. To explore knowledge of traditional formulary in a view to enhance acceptance of ayurveda science.

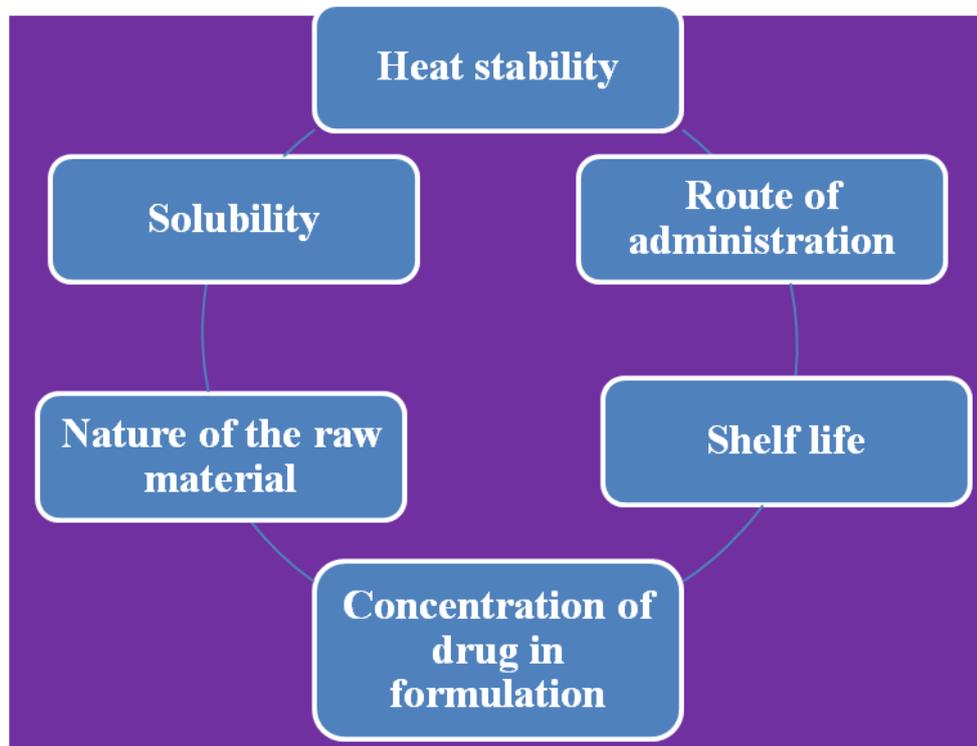


Figure 1: Factor affecting quality of ayurveda formulation.

Material & Methods

Literature available on Ayurveda sciences and online data summarizes and observation of study described as below:

Observation of Study

The wide range of ayurveda formulations offers following advantages:

- ❖ Availability of wide range of formulations enhances patient compliances.
- ❖ Physician has choice to prescribe same drug in different forms.
- ❖ Different ayurveda formulations provide advantage to specific age groups i.e. liquid forms for elderly and children.
- ❖ Some drug can't be available in solid form therefore converted into liquid and *Vice-Versa*.
- ❖ Sometimes different formulations of same drug possess varied stability profile; generally solid form is more stable than liquid.
- ❖ Storage, dispensing, transportation and utility advantages.
- ❖ Diversified qualities such as; appearance, taste and smell etc. of different formulations enhance market value of drugs.
- ❖ Finally difference in potency of various formulation modulate therapeutic window.

Major Ayurveda Formulations

1. *Ark*
2. *Asava & Arishta*
3. *Avaleh*

4. *Bhasma*
5. *Churna*
6. *Ghrita*
7. *Guggulu*
8. *Kwath/ Kashaya*
9. *Pak*
10. *Ras Rasayan*
11. *Taila*
12. *Vati*

1. *Ark*:

Ark means distillation of herbs, light in nature and easily assimilated in the system.

Examples: *Gulab Ark* and *Ajwain Ark*

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Gulab Ark* controls skin oil, helps to remove excess oil from skin, reduces dryness and repairs damage.
- *Ajwain Ark* Improves stomach functions, boost digestion, maintain health of gastrointestinal tract enhances immune system and improves appetite.

2. *Asava & Arishta*

Asava & Arishta are natural fermented liquid medicines, prepared as herbal juices or their decoctions which undergo fermentation after the addition of sugar. *Arishtas* is prepared by boiling the herbs in water and *Asavas* prepared by fresh herbal juices.

Examples: *Ashokarishta*, *Arjunarishta* and *Kumaryasava*

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Kumaryasava* relieves gas discomfort, acidity, stimulates digestive enzymes and relief constipation.
- *Ashokarishta* reduces pain menstruation, regulate heavy periods and bleeding, cure indigestion and balances *Pitta Dosh*.
- *Arjunarishta* used as a cardiac tonic, helps in heart and respiratory disorders, control ischemia, angina and heart failure.

3. Avaleh

Avaleh includes jams/paste like products as per modern concept; it is semisolid dosage forms prepared by using Jaggery, juices or decoction.

Examples: *Chyavanprash* and *Drakshavleh*

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Chyavanprash* boosting immune system, protecting body from infections like cough & cold etc. Improve internal strength.
- *Drakshavleh* has immunomodulatory, anti-oxidant and anti-tumor effect. Improve memory, youthfulness, luster and complexion.

4. Bhasma

Bhasma means purified calcinations; it is very fine ayurveda medicinal powders prepared through the process of calcination which involve heating of metals, minerals and herbs etc. at a high temperature so to convert them into their oxides.

Examples: *Godanti bhasma*, *Abhraka bhasma*, *Swaran Bhasma* and *Praval*, etc.

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Godanti bhasma* used in the treatment of headache, chronic fever and leucorrhea etc.
- *Abhraka bhasma* used for digestive impairment, bronchitis, fever, bleeding disorders, cough, diabetes and for skin diseases.
- *Swaran Bhasma* used as natural aphrodisiac, cardiac tonic, immune booster and to cure asthma.

5. Churna

Churna means powder form of dried raw herbs. It is prepared by drying raw herbs, grind and then passed through specific sieves to prepare fine powder.

Examples: *Lavan Bhaskar Churna* and *Sitopladi Churna*, etc.

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Lavan Bhaskar Churna* offer beneficial effects in gastritis, indigestion and constipation.
- *Sitopladi Churna* used in respiratory congestion and bronchial conditions. Boost strength and power.

6. Ghrita

Ghrita means medicated clarified butters; cow's milk first churned to obtain butter, which is then heated at a specific temperature to get *Ghee* which further processed with herbs to obtain *Ghrit*.

Examples: *Jatyadi ghrit*, *Amrit ghrit* and *Brahmi ghrit*.

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Jatyadi ghrit* has antimicrobial activities, used in minor wounds, ulcers and burns.
- *Amrit ghrit* balances *Vata* and *Pitta Dosh*, used in the treatment of vaginal and urinary ailments.

7. Guggulu

Guggulu means resins of therapeutic values. It mainly contains *Guggulu* as the main ingredient. **Examples:** *Triphala guggulu*, *Medohar guggulu* and *Yograj guggulu*.

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Triphala guggulu* recommend for treating atherosclerosis, used for high cholesterol level and weight loss.
- *Medohar guggulu* used as anti obesity drug, helps to maintain cholesterol level and weight loss.

8. Kwath/ Kashaya

Kwath/ Kashaya means decoctions, it is prepared by boiling herbs in water for specific time and temperature.

Examples: *Drakshadi kwath* and *Caturbhadra kwatha*

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Drakshadi kwath* help to reduces ill effects of alcohol and also used to treat fever which may occur due to the vitiation of *Vata* and *Pitta Dosh*.
- *Caturbhadra kwatha* used in allergies, asthma, arthritis, cold, colitis and constipation.

9. Pak

Pak means herbal granules, paste like preparation slightly thick than *Avaleh*.

Examples: *Musli Pak* and *Supari Pak*

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Musli Pak* used for restoring physical strength, offer aphrodisiac benefits, improves stamina and luster.
- *Supari Pak* used for the management of leucorrhoea and reduces infections of reproductive organs.

10. Ras Rasayan

Ras Rasayan means herbal mineral medicines, sometimes consisted of *Bhasma*, mineral based medicines purified by different process like; *Sanskara* and *Shodhan*.

Examples: *Swarna Soot Shekhar Ras* and *Vat vidhwansan Ras*.

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Swarna Soot Shekhar Ras* used in the treatment of gastritis, dyspepsia, vomiting and abdominal cramps, etc.
- *Vat vidhwansan Ras* used in the treatment of neuritis, malabsorption syndrome, abdominal colic and gynaecological disorders.

11. Taila

Taila means medicated oils extracted from seeds of herb then processed to make medicated oils.

Examples: *Anu taila* and *Balaguducyadi taila*

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Anu taila* used in the treatment of headache, hair fall, graying of hair and diseases of ear, nose and throat, etc.
- *Balaguducyadi taila* used to treat problems related to skin; possesses antifungal, antiseptic and antioxidant properties.

12. Vati

Vati is one of the most important ayurveda formulations it resembles tablets/pills, prepared from one or more plants or minerals in the form of compressed powder/tablets.

Examples: *Kutajghan vati*, *Chanderprabha vati* and *Arogyavardhini vati*.

Therapeutic Importance:

- *Kutajghan Vati* cures diarrhoea, stomach infections and irritable bowel syndrome. *Kutajghan Vati* eliminates organisms from the digestive tract.
- *Arogyavardhini vati* promotes digestive fire, clears channels, balances fats, remove toxins and balances all three *Doshas*.

Conclusion

Ayurveda described various dosage forms for health benefits such as; *Vati*, *Churna*, *Kwatha*, *Asava*, *Arishta*, *Kalka* and *Avaleha*, etc. The different potency of these formulations offers diversified therapeutic benefits since these all formulations act in different way. As like modern science ayurveda mentioned solid, semisolid, liquid and inhalation (smoke) dosage forms for various health related issues. These formulations not only enhance wide applicability of chief ingredient but also improve patient compliances. The availability of large number of options also increases physician choices depending upon age of

patients. Present article summarized the concept and importance of diversified ayurveda formulations used for various therapeutic purposes.

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