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Review Article

A Review on Antidotes W.S.R to Visha Vaidya Jyotsnika

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an ancient system of health care, native of Indian subcontinent. It is one of the oldest scientific medical systems of the world with a long record of clinical experience. More than a medical system, ayurveda is a way of life. It is concerned with eight prime branches of medicine. Agada tantra is a specialized branch of ayurveda that offers meticulously detailed information about animal and non animal poisons and methods of eliminating these poisons from the body. It particularly advocates different antidotes for materials which are poisonous to human body. Here, the antidotes mentioned in Visha vaidya jyotsnika are reviewed.

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INTRODUCTION

Agada tantra is a branch of Ayurveda that deals with management of various poisons. Toxicology deals with various types of poisons- plant, animal origin poisons, etc. and its management. It has been a tradition of vishachikitsa to be taught only through guru shishyasampradaya. Hence very rare books were available during that time. Vishavaidyajyotsnika reconfirms its relevance as it narrates about the ancient tradition of vishavaidya sampradaya along with mantra chikitsa which was written in the local language Malayalam. The word meaning of vishavaidyajyotsnika is moonlight that gives the eternal happiness from heart¹.

Various poisons have been described and for its management different antidotes have been mentioned in texts of agada tantra.

A poison is a substance which when introduced into or applied to the body is capable of injuring health or

destroying life. It causes damage to tissues, illness or death to the organism. The substance that causes sadness to the world is called visha. As the world becomes despaired at the sight of it, it was called visha².

Antidotes exert effects by a variety of mechanisms, including forming an inert complex with the poison, accelerating detoxification of the poison, reducing the rate of conversion of the poison to a more toxic compound, competing with the poison for essential receptor sites, blocking essential receptors through which the toxic effects are mediated, and bypassing the effect of the poison³.

The use of antidotes depends upon its indications and availability of drugs. Most of the antidotes explained in this text are plant origin.

Table 1: Poisons and its antidotes⁴

Sl. No	Poison	Antidotes
1	Kannampatty	Puzhparuhi (<i>Hibiscus tiliaceus</i>)
2	Alcohol	Lemon (<i>Citrus limon</i>)
3	Bhanga (<i>Cannabis sativa</i>)	Bimbi (<i>Coccinia indica</i>)
4	Aveen (<i>Papaver somniferum</i>)	Root and leaves of mathigni (<i>Datura metel</i>)
5	Langali (<i>Gloriosa superba</i>)	Root of neeli (<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>)
6	Nirvisha (<i>Delphinium denudatum</i>)	Maricha (<i>Piper nigrum</i>)
7	Pashana- sarshapa (<i>Brasica nigra</i>)	Root of neeli (<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>), mrinalam (<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>)
8	Parada (Mercury)	Kushmanda (<i>Benincasa hispida</i>)
9	Aaval (Chirivilwa- <i>Holoptelea integrifolia</i>) and Chitraka (<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i>)	Eranda (<i>Ricinus communis</i>), navaneeta (butter) and shatavari (<i>Asparagus recemosa</i>)
10	Oral intake of Kupilu (<i>Strychnus nuxvomica</i>)	Kalka of tender leaves of Gunja (<i>Abrus precatoris</i>)
11	Vatsanabha (<i>Aconitum ferox</i>)	Nirvisha (<i>Delphinium denudatum</i>)
12	Removing poison from buttermilk and curd	Old unripe mango brine and cotyledon
13	Dhooma patra	Coconut milk
14	Taila veerya	Saline water
15	Panasa	Telkada (<i>Heliotrapium indicum</i>), shunti (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>)

Some of antidotes and its properties

Bimbi (*Coccinia indica*): It has tikta rasa (bitter taste), laghu (light), ruksha guna (dry), ushna (hot potency) veerya and katu vipaka. It is kaphapittahara (alleviates kapha and pitta) and is indicated in raktapitta (bleeding disorder), daha (burning sensation), etc.

Neeli (*Indigofera tinctoria*): It has tikta rasa (bitter taste); laghu (light), ruksha guna (dry); ushna veerya (hot potency); katu vipaka; kaphavatahara (alleviates kapha and vata dosha), visaghna (anti-poisonous), keshya (hair tonic), krimighna (anti-microbial) properties⁵

Nimbu swarasa (*Citrus limon*):

It has amla (sour taste), katu rasa (pungent taste); laghu (light), tikshna guna (sharp), ushna veerya (hot potency), amla vipaka; vatakaphahara (alleviates vata and kapha), deepana-pachana (appetiser), chakshusya (beneficial to eye) ⁶. It has analgesic, hypoglycaemic, anticholinesterase, anticancer, anti-diabetic, hypocholesterolemic, hypolipidemic, insulin secretagogue, anthelmintic, antimicrobial antiulcer and estrogenic properties⁷.

Kamala (*Nelumbo nucifera*):

It has kashaya (astringent), madhura (sweet), tikta rasa (bitter taste); sheeta veerya (cold in potency); laghu (light), snigdha (unctous), pichhila guna; madhura vipaka; kaphapittahara (alleviates kapha and pitta), mutravirajaniya, varnya (increases complexion), garbhasthapaka⁸. It has anti-ischemia, antioxidant, anticancer, antiviral, anti-obesity, lipolytic, antipyretic, hepato-protective, hypoglycaemic, anti-diarrhoeal, anti-fungal, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and diuretic activities⁹.

Shunti (*Zingiber officinale*):

It has katu rasa (pungent taste); ruksha (dry), tiksna guna (sharp), ushna veerya (hot potency); madhura vipaka;

deepaniya (appetiser), kusthahara (anti-pruritic) and shoolahna karma (analgesic). It has immuno-modulatory, anti-tumorigenic, anti-inflammatory, anti-hyperglycemic actions¹⁰.

Maricha (*Piper nigrum*): It has katu rasa (pungent taste), laghu (light), teekshna guna (sharp), katu vipaka, ushna veerya (hot potency), krimighna property (anti- microbial)

Gunja (*Abrus precatoris*): It has tikta kashaya rasa (bitter and astringent taste), laghu (light) ruksha (dry) guna, ushna veerya (hot potency), katu vipaka. It is chakshushya (beneficial to eyes).

DISCUSSION

Poison is a substance which when introduced into or applied to the body is capable of injuring health or destroying life. Antidotes are medications that limit the progression of adverse health outcomes that result from exposure to exogenous agents: drugs, metals and toxins¹¹. In this text most of the antidotes mentioned are plant origin drugs. With the attributes of the drug they counter act the poison to reduce the toxic effect of the drug. The metal poison described is mercury and the antidote is an herbal drug kushmanda. It is said to be an antidote for mercury even in rasashastra books. Few antidotes for food preparations have also been mentioned like panasa, buttermilk and oil.

CONCLUSION

To manage the ill effects of poisons different antidotes have been mentioned in books of agada tantra. In this book, specific antidotes which are easily available are explained; with which the mortality rate caused because of poisoning can be addressed. Though such explanations and references are found; seldom work has been carried out in these areas. Hence research works carried out on these may throw more light in understanding the action of these antidotes.

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