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Review Article

Gandhahastadi Agada: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Agada Tantra is a branch of Ayurveda that deals with the science of toxicology. It deals with the treatment of various poisons. For the management of poisons various treatment procedures have been described, one among them is the use of formulations taken internally. Varied formulations are described of just herbal, animal origin drugs and also herbo-mineral in origin. One among them is Gandhahastadi agada that is mentioned in the treatment of visha. It is a formulation of nineteen drugs and the bhavana dravya is of animal origin drugs namely Ajamutra (Goat's urine), Go pitta (cow's bile) and Ashwa pitta (horse's bile) alternatively for seven days. This is indicated in various conditions such as Visuchika, Pilla, Arbuda, Arma, Kandu, Kshaya (consumption), Dourbhalya (asthenia), Madatyaya (alcoholism), Pandu (anaemia), Moha (unconsciousness), etc. and also as nasya in sarvajwara (all types of fever).

Keywords: Gandhahastadi Agada, visha, formulation

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INTRODUCTION

Poison is defined as any substance taken into or formed in the body that destroys life or impairs health. Agada is derived as 'A' means 'no/prevention' and 'Gada' means 'diseases' thus Agada means that which prevents diseases ¹. Agada is one of the remedies explained in the chaturvimshati upakrama (24 treatment procedure) as auoshadhi prayoga ². Acharya Charaka explained many agada yogas which are used for removing or pacifying visha from the body. One

among them is Gandhahasthi agada. Gandhahasthi agada contains nineteen drugs from plant origin and three drugs as bhavana dravya of animal origin. All drugs used are tikshna and ushna in nature. This recipe which is an antidote of poisons is called as Gandhahasthi agada. The effect of the formulation has been compared "as trees are destroyed by the elephants, so also all the ailments caused by poisoning are cured" ³

Table 1: Ingredients with properties and indications

S. N.	Dravya (Drug)	Rasa (Taste)	Guna (Property)	Veerya (Potency)	Vipaka (Metabolic Property)	Doshaghata
1	Shwetha Katabhi ⁴ (Jyothismati) <i>Celastraceae paniculatus</i>	Katu (pungent) Tikta (Bitter)	Tikshna (sharp) Sara (mobile) Snigdha (unctuous)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu (Pungent)	Kapha-vatahara (alleviates vata and kapha)
2	Vacha ⁵ <i>Acorus calamus</i>	Katu (Pungent) Tikta (Bitter)	Laghu (Light) Tikshna (sharp)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu (Pungent)	Kapha-vatahara (alleviates vata and kapha)
3	Ashwagandha ⁶ <i>Withania somnifera</i>	Katu (Pungent) Tikta (Bitter), Kashaya (Astringent)	Snigdha (unctuous) Laghu (Light)	Ushna (Hot)	Madhura (Sweet)	Vata-kaphahara (alleviates vata and kapha)
4	Hingu ⁷ <i>Ferula foetida</i>	Katu (Pungent) Tikta (Bitter)	Laghu (Light) Snigdha (unctuous) Tikshna (sharp)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu (Pungent)	Kapha vata hara (alleviates vata and kapha)
5	Amrutha ⁸ <i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	Kashaya (Astringent) Tikta (Bitter)	Guru (Heavy) Snigdha (unctuous)	Ushna (Hot)	Madhura (Sweet)	Tridosha shamaka (alleviates all the doshas)
6	Kushta ⁹ <i>Saussurea lappa</i>	Tikta (Bitter) Katu (Pungent) Madhura (Sweet)	Laghu (Light) Ruksha (Dry) Tikshna (sharp)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu (Pungent)	Vata-kaphahara (alleviates vata and kapha)
7	Saindhava ¹⁰ Rock salt	Madhura (Sweet) Lavana (Salt)	Laghu (Light) Snigdha (unctuous)	Sheeta (Cold)	Madhura (Sweet)	Tridosahara (alleviates all the doshas)
8	Lashuna ¹¹ <i>Allium sativum</i>	Madhura (Sweet) Lavana (Salt) Katu (Pungent) Tikta (Bitter) Kashaya (Astringent)	Snigdha (Unctuous) Guru (Heavy) Tikshna (Sharp) Sara (Mobile)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu (Pungent)	Vata-kaphahara (alleviates vata and kapha)
9	Sarshapa ¹² <i>Brassica nigra</i>	Katu (Pungent) Tikta (Bitter)	Tikshna (sharp) Laghu (light) Snigdha (unctuous)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu (Pungent)	Kapha-vatahara (alleviates vata and kapha)
10	Kapittamadhya ¹³ <i>Feronia elephantum</i>	Kashaya (Astringent) Amla (Sour)	Guru (Heavy) Ruksha (Dry)	Sheeta (Cold)	Katu (Pungent)	Vata-pitta shamaka (alleviates vata and pitta doshas)
11	Tuntuka (Shonyaka) ¹⁴ <i>Oroxylum indicum</i>	Tikta (Bitter) Madhura (Sweet) Kashaya (Astringent)	Laghu (Light) Ruksha (Dry)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu (Pungent)	Kapha -vatahara (alleviates vata and kapha)
12	Karanja ¹⁵ <i>Pongamia pinnata</i>	Tikta (Bitter) Katu (Pungent) Kashaya (Astringent)	Laghu (Light) Tikshna (sharp)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu (Pungent)	Kapha-vathara (alleviates vata and kapha)
13	Shunthi ¹⁶ <i>Zingiber officinale</i>	Katu (Pungent)	Laghu (Light) Ruksha (Dry) Tikshna (Sharp)	Ushna (Hot)	Madhura (Sweet)	Vata -kaphahara (alleviates vata and kapha)
14	Pippali ¹⁷ <i>Piper longum</i>	Katu (Pungent)	Tikshna (Sharp) Laghu (Light) Snigdha (Unctuous)	Ushna (Hot)	Madhura (Sweet)	Vata-kaphahara (alleviates vata and kapha)
15	Maricha ¹⁸ <i>Piper nigrum</i>	Katu (Pungent)	Laghu (Light) Tikshna (Sharp)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu (Pungent)	Kapha vatahara (alleviates vata and kapha)
16	Shirisha ¹⁹ <i>Albizia lebbek</i>	Kashaya (Astringent) Tikta (Bitter)	Laghu (Light) Ruksha (Dry) Tikshna (sharp)	Anushna	Katu (Pungent)	Tridosahara (alleviates all the doshas)
17	Haridra ²⁰ <i>Curcuma longa</i>	Tikta (Bitter) Katu (Pungent)	Ruksha (Dry) Laghu (Light)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu (Pungent)	Kapha vatahara (alleviates vata and kapha)
18	Daruharidra ²¹ <i>Berberis aristata</i>	Tikta (Bitter) Kashaya (Astringent)	Laghu (Light) Ruksha (Dry)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu (Pungent)	Kapha -pittahara (alleviates kapha and pitta)
19	Vamshalochana ²² <i>Bambusa arundinacea</i>	Madhura (Sweet) Kashaya (Astringent)	Laghu (Light) Ruksha (Dry)	Sheeta (Cold)	Madhura (Sweet)	Kaphapitta hara (alleviates kapha and pitta)
20	Aja mutra ²³ (Goat's urine)	Kashaya (Astringent) Madhura (Sweet)	Tikshna (sharp) Snigdha (unctuous)	Ushna (Hot)	-----	Tridosha shamaka (alleviates all the doshas)
21	Go pitta and Aja pitta ²⁴	Tikta (Bitter)		Ushna		Vatashleshma

	(Bile of cow and goat)		-----	(Hot)	-----	vinashini (alleviates vata and kapha dosha)
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Table 2: Ingredients with pharmacological actions

Sl. No.	Dravya (Drug)	Karma (action)	Rogagnata indications (Therapeutic)	Pharmacological actions
1	Shwetha Katabhi (Jyothismati) <i>Celastraceae paniculatus</i>	Medhya (Enhances memory power) Buddhi and smritivardhaka (increases memory and intellect) Vrnahara (Ulcer- healing)	Kushta (leprosy) Vatavyadhi (All types of neurological disorders) Udara (Abdominal disorders) Gulma (Tumours)	Intellect promoter Appetizer Stimulant Emetic and digestive
2	Vacha <i>Acorus calamus</i>	Medhya (Enhances memory power) Krimighna (Anti-microbial) Bhutaghna (Protects from the evil spirits) Lekhana (aids in reducing corpulency) Deepana (Gastro-stimulant) Pachana (Digestive)	Unmada (Insanity) Apasmara (Epilepsy) Jwara (Fever) Murcha (Fainting) Arsha (Haemorrhoids) Klaibya (Erectile dysfunction)	Vermifuge Carminative Tranquilizer Sedative
3	Ashwagandha <i>Withania somnifera</i>	Balya (Strengthens the body) Vishaghna (Anti poisonous) Krimighna (Anti-microbial) Rasayan (Rejuvenation of body)	Shopha (Inflammation) Shwitra (Leukoderma) Kshaya (Emaciation) Granthi (Cystic swelling) Vandhyathva (Infertility) Kasa (Cough) Shwasa (Difficulty in breathing)	Sedative Hypotonic Antiseptic Antimitotic Antitumor
4	Hingu <i>Ferula foetida</i>	Hridhya (Cardio protective) Deepana (Gastro-stimulant) Pachana (Digestive) Chakshushya (Improves the eyesight)	Krimi (Microbial disorder) Murcha (Fainting) Apasmara (Epilepsy) Shola (Pain) Gulma (Tumours) Udara (Diseases of the abdomen) Agnimandya (Dyspepsia)	Carminative Contraceptive Antimicrobial Antiepileptic Nervine stimulant
5	Amruta <i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	Medhya (Enhances memory power) Hridya (cardio protective) Balya (Strengthens the body) Chakshushya (Improves the eyesight) Sangrahi Amahara	Jwara (Fever) Vatarakta (Gout) Pandu (Anaemia) Kamala (Jaundice) Prameha (Diabetes) Kushta (leprosy) Chardhi (Emesis) Krimi (Microbial disorder) Kandu (Pruritis) Kasa (Cough) Raktaasrshas (Bleeding piles) Medoroga (Obesity) Visarpa (Erysipelas) Bhrama (Hallucinations)	Antipyretic Diuretic
6	Kushta <i>Saussurea lappa</i>	Vishaghna (Anti poisonous) Shothahara (Anti-inflammatory) Shukrala Kantikara (Increases the complexion)	Kushta (leprosy) Hikka (Hiccups) Kasa (Cough) Shwasa (Difficulty in breathing) Hridroga (Cardiac diseases) Kandu (pruritis) Vatarakta (Gout) Parshwashoola (Chest pain)	Hypolipidaemic Antiseptic Antibacterial Insecticidal Insect repellent Anti-inflammatory Bronchodilator Hypotensive
7	Saindhava	Chakshuya (Good for eyes) Hridya (Cardio protective) Ruchya Vrishya (Aphrodisiac)	Agnimandya (Dyspepsia) Aruchi (Anorexia)	
8	Lashuna <i>Allium sativum</i>	Brimhana Vrishya (Aphrodisiac) Pachana (Digestive) Balya (Strengthens the body) Netrya (Improves the eyesight) Varnya (Enhance skin complexion) Rasayana (Rejuvenation of body) Medhya (Enhances memory power)	Vatavyadhi (all types of Neurological disorders) Udara roga (Abdominal disorder) Gulma (Tumours) Shwasa (Difficulty in breathing) Kasa (Cough) Asthibhagna (Fracture) Rajayakshma (Tuberculosis)	Carminative Aphrodisiac Expectorant Disinfectant Stimulant Rubefacient

		Hrudya (Cardio protective)	Shotha (Inflammation) Krimi (Microbial disorder)	
9	Sarshapa <i>Brassica nigra</i>	Agnivardhaka (Gastro-stimulant) Rakshoghna Arthighna (Analgesics)	Vatavyadhi (all types of Neurological disorders) Aghnimandhya (Dyspepsia) Krimi (Microbial disorder) Kushta (leprosy) Kandu (pruritic)	Laxative Diuretic Anthelmintic Rubifacient
10	Kapittamadhya	Sangrahi Lekhana (aids in reducing corpulence)	Trishna (Excessive Thirst) Hikka (Hiccups) Danthashata (diseases of the tooth) Swarabheda (Dystonia) Kasa (Cough) Vrana (Ulcers) Mutradoshha (Urinary disorders)	
11	Tuntuka (Shonyaka) <i>Oroxylum indicum</i>	Deepana (Gastro-stimulant) Pachana (Digestive) Rochana Hridya (cardio protective) Grahi Ruchya	Amavata (Rheumatoid arthritis) Atisara (diarrhoea) Aruchi (Anorexia) Kasa (Cough) Basti vikara Vataroga (all types of Neurological disorders) Shotha (Inflammation)	Anti-inflammatory Antiarthritic Diaphoretic Antibacterial
12	Karanja <i>Pongamia pinnata</i>	Deepana (Gastro-stimulant) Pachana (Digestive) Bhedana Vranaropana (wound healing) Vedana sthapana (Analgesics) Yakrithuttejeka (Choleretics)	Kushta (leprosy) Udavarta (Distention of the abdomen) Gulma (Tumours) Arsha (Plies) Krimi (Microbial disorder) Unmada (Insanity) Yakrut vikara (diseases of the liver) Prameha (Diabetes)	Hypoglycaemic Antipyretic Hypotensive Insecticidal Wound healing Anthelmintic
13	Shunthi <i>Zingiber officinale</i>	Deepana (Gastro-stimulant) Pachana (Digestive) Vrishya (Aphrodisiac) Grahi Ruchya Hridya (cardio protective)	All types of Udara roga Agnimandya (Dyspepsia) Shula (Pain) Amavata (Rheumatoid arthritis) Hikka (Hiccups) Shwasa (Difficulty in breathing) Kasa (Cough) Raktapitta (Bleeding diseases) Pandu (Anaemia) Vrana (Ulcer) Jwara (Fever) Kushta (Leprosy) Shlipada (Elephantiasis) Hridroga (Cardiac diseases) Arshas (Piles)	Stimulant Digestive Carminative Rubefacient Gastrointestinal stimulant Sialagogue
14	Pippali <i>Piper longum</i>	Rasayana (Rejuvenation of body) Deepana (Gastro-stimulant) Vrishya (Aphrodisiac) Rechaka (Drastic purgative) Shulanashaka (Analgesic)	Udara (Abdominal disorders) Pliharoga (Diseases of the spleen) Jwara (Fever) Kushta (Leprosy) Prameha (Diabetes) Gulma (Tumours) Amavata (Rheumatoid arthritis) Shula (Pain) Arshas (Piles)	Appetizer Digestive Carminative Aphrodisiac Diuretic Stimulant Vermifuge
15	Maricha <i>Piper nigrum</i>	Deeapana (Gastro-stimulant) Rochana Chedana Avrishya	Pinasa (Running nose) Kasa (Cough) Pravahika (Ulcerative colitis) Hridroga (Diseases of the heart) Krimi (Microbial disorder) Shwasa (Difficulty in breathing) Shula (Pain)	Stimulant Carminative Appetizers Vermifuge
16	Shirisha <i>Albizia lebbek</i>	Vishghana (Anti poisonous) Shotahara (anti-inflammatory) Vranahara (Ulcer- healing)	Shotha (Inflammation) Kasa (Cough) Vrana (Ulcers) Visarpa (Erysipelas)	Antiallergic Analgesic Anti-inflammatory Antioxidant

			Kushta (Anti-leprosy) Krimi (Microbial disorder)	Antispermatogenic
17	Haridra <i>Curcuma longa</i>	Varnya (Enhances skin complexion) Vranahara (Ulcer- healing) Vishaghna (Anti poisonous) Ruchikara	Prameha (Diabetes) Kushta (Leprosy) Krimi (Microbial disorder) Kandu (Pruritic) Pandu (Anaemia) Kamala (Jaundice)	Hepatoprotective Antiallergic Immunostimulant Anticancer Stimulant Antioxidant Antihyperlipidemic Antimicrobial
18	Daruharidra <i>Berberis aristata</i>	Netrya (Improves the eyesight) Vishaghna (Anti poisonous) Varnya (Enhances skin complexion) Vranaha (Ulcer- healing) Asya and karna rogahara (useful in oral cavity and ear disorders)	Netra roga (Diseases of eyes) Prameha (Diabetes) Kushta (Leprosy) Shweta pradara (Leucorrhoea) Kamala (Jaundice) Vrana (Ulcers) Visarpa (Erysipelas)	Stomachic Tonic Antipyretic
19	Vamshalochana <i>Bambusa arundinacea</i>	Brimhana Balya (strengths the body) Vrishya (Aphrodisiac) Trishnahara (Relieves thirst) Vranahara (Ulcer- healing)	Mutrakrichra (Dysuria) Prameha (Diabetes) Kushta (Leprosy)	Expectorant Antipyretic Analgesic Anti-inflammatory Ulcer healing Febrifuge
20	Aja mutra (Goat's urine)		Kasa (Cough) Shwasa (Difficulty in breathing) Kamala (Jaundice) Pandu (Anaemia)	
21	Go pitta and Aja pitta (Bile of Co & Goat)	Vishahara (Anti poisonous)	Pama (Scabies)	

METHOD OF PREPARATION: 25

All the drugs are to be taken in equal quantity, powdered separately and sieved through a cloth to get fine powders of the drugs. Then bhavana (trituration) has to be done with Ajamutra (Goat's urine), followed by bhavana with Go pitta (cow's bile) and Ashwa pitta (horse's bile) alternatively for seven days.

INDICATIONS: 26

As nasya in sarvajwara (all types of fever), Bhuta (affliction by evil spirits), Graha (affliction by supernatural bodies), Visuchika (choleric diarrhoea), Ajeerna (indigestion), Murcha (fainting), Unmada (insanity), Apasmara (epilepsy), Kacha, Patala, Nilika, Shirodosha (diseases of the head), Shushkakshipaka, Pilla, Arbuda, Arma, Kandu (itching), Tamodosha, Kshaya (consumption), Dourbhalya (asthenia), Madatyaya (alcoholism), Pandu (anaemia), Moha (unconsciousness).

Useful as a Lepa (external application) in conditions such as: Vishadigdha, Kshatha, Lida, Dashta, Peeta, Vishaghatthi – external application in ulcers caused by a poisonous arrow and ailments caused by poisons transmitted through licking and bite or by poisons taken orally.

Arshas (gudalepa) – external application over the anus in swollen piles; Mudagarba (yonilepa) – external application over the vagina in obstructed labour and dead fetus; Dushta Prathishyaya (lalata lepa)- external application over the forehead in coryza.

Useful in Vriddhi (enlargement of scrotum), Kitibha (a type of skin diseases), Kushta (obstinate skin diseases including leprosy), Shwitra (leukoderma), Vicharchika (eczema), etc. as a lepa (external application).

DISCUSSION

Gandhahasthi agada is a formulation of nineteen herbal ingredients, the Bhavana dravyas are ajamutra, gopitta and ashwapitta. Author has mentioned vyathasa bavitha for Go and Ashwa pittas as alternatively for seven days.

Among the nineteen ingredients, sixteen drugs are ushna virya and three are sheeta in virya. Among all the ingredients nearly fifteen drugs have katu (pungent), tikta (bitter) and kashaya (astringent) rasas and four have madhura (sweet) and lavana (salty) pradhana rasa. Among nineteen drugs fourteen have kapha-vatahara (pacifies kapha and vata dosha) and five have tridosha shamaka (pacifies all doshas) properties. By analysing all these properties like rasa, guna, veerya, vipaka and doshaghna () of the agada one can assess that this agada is very teekshana (sharp) in nature. Bhavana dravyas are also teekshana. Thus, this agada can act as shodhana dravya in visha chikitsa.

The mode of administration of agada is nasya (nasal therapy), anjana (collyrium), pana (internal administration) and lepa (anointment). It is indicated in various diseases from shiras to pada which means that, it is indicated in all general as well as systemic disorders in the body. All the drugs which are mentioned have vishaghna, krimighna, kushtaghna, vedanasthapaka, etc. properties.

CONCLUSION

Gandhahasthi agada is the herbal preparation which is mentioned under the context of visha chikitsa. It is indicated in all types of visha and also used in the complications caused by visha (poison). Aushadi prayoga is mentioned as one of the mode in chaturvimshati upakrama to remove the visha from the body or to pacify the action of spreading of visha in the body. As this agada contains many teekshana dravyas, it may help in pacifying visha. Most of the drugs are

available for the preparation of this agada yoga except Go pitta and Ashwa pitta. As no research works are carried out on this and it's not available in the market, study could be carried out on this formulation and brought into clinical practice.

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