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A Review on *Palasha Kshara Nirmana*

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ABSTRACT

Ancient Ayurveda physicians were well versed about alkalis, acids, salts etc. They prepared *Ksharas* (alkalis) from plant and mineral sources, which are used both internally and externally. They successfully used *Ksharas* from *Palasha*, *Tila*, *Yava*, *Snuhi* etc. For their minor surgical procedures and other treatments. Acharyas also prepared different *Ksharas* based on its tikshnatwa. The Bruhatrayis explained about *Kshara* preparation in their works. *Acharya Vagbhata* mentioned it in *sutrasthana* 30th chapter and *Acharya Susruta*, in *sutrasthana* 11th Chapter. In this article, an attempt is made to describe the preparation of *Palasha Kshara*, and its demerits and difficulties encountered during the preparation.

KEYWORDS

Palasha Kshara, Classical method



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INTRODUCTION

Kshara Kalpana is one among the popular *Kalpanas* in *Ayurveda*. Based on *tikshanatwa* of *Kshara* they are of three types i.e., *Mrudu*, *madyama* and *tikshna kshara*¹. These *Ksharas* can be used both externally and internally. The *Chedana* and *Bhedana* properties of *Kshara*, makes it superior than surgical procedures². It is more beneficial in anorectal conditions like *Bhagandara*, *Arshas*, *Gudhabramsha* etc. and also, in other diseases like *dushta vrana*, *Mamsa dhatu dushti*³ etc. The prepared *Palasha Kshara* is *Mrudu* in nature, during *Kshara preparation* this *kshara* can be converted into *madyama Kshara* or *Tikshna Kshara* based on the requirement⁴. In *Palasha Kshara* preparation we need to burn the *Palasha* wood completely into ash. The obtained ash is mixed with water and used to prepare the *Kshara*. The *palasha Kshara* is highly hygroscopic in nature so it should be kept in an air tight container.

LITERARY REVIEW

In *Ashtanga Hrudaya*, *Sutrastana*, 30th chapter *Kshara Agni karma vidhi* and *Susruta Samhita* *Sutrasthana* 11th chapter *Ksharapakavidhi*, explains in detail about *Kshara* preparation. *Kshara dravyas* and *amla dravyas* are the main group of drugs

which are widely used in *Ayurveda* preparations and para surgical procedures. All *sukti kalpanas* can be considered as *amla dravyas* (acidic in nature.), and all *Kshara drvyas* like *Apamarga*, *Kramuka*, *Mulaka* etc. are alkaline in nature.

General method of preparation in classics⁵

- On an auspicious day, a middle aged, big size tree, which is grown in a good place is selected.
- After offering worships and oblations it should be cut into small pieces and made into a heap.
- With reeds of dried *Tila* plant the heap is set on fire. Till it is burned to ash.
- To this collected ash, six *drona* of water or *Gomutra* is added in the ratio of 1:6.
- Stir the mixture well and filter through a cloth, this process needs to be repeated 21 times.
- After 21 times of filtration, the solution (*Kshara jala*) will become transparent and slimy.
- It is poured in to a big iron vessel and boiled, till it becomes a slimy red coloured solution.
- Once bubbles start appearing, *bharjitha sukthi*, and other *kashta aushadhis* are added to get *madhyama* and *teeksjna kshara*.



▪ The boiling is continuing till it dries up and attains consistency of neither very solid nor very liquid.

▪ The obtained *Palasha* kashara can be collected and preserved in an iron vessel.

Advantages of alkali⁶

Among shastra and *anushstras*. *kshara* is the best. It can cure even *Atikricchra vyadhis* by its *chedana bhedana* property and it can be used internally also. It can pacify all the three doshas⁷.

Trividha Kshara yojana⁸

• *Teekshna Kshara* can be used in - Diseases arising from *vata, kapha, medas, arbuda* etc.

• *Madhyama Kshara* can be used in – Diseases with moderate strength.

• *Mrudu Kshara* can be used in – Diseases arising from *pitta rakta, arshas* etc.

Kshara guna⁹

Acharya explains 10 *Kshara* gunas. they are, it is neither too strong nor too mild, and it must be smooth, slimy, spreading quick. It must be white in colour, it must adhere in the site of application, easy to remove, not produce too much of exudation and pain.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials needed

- *Palasha* wood-25kg
- Plastic Buckets -4
- Kora cloth – q.s.

- Large Iron vessel -1
- Spatula- 1
- Air tight glass bottle -1

METHOD OF PREPARATION

Both *Bruhatrayis* and *Laghutrayis* has given almost similar explanation as well as clinical indications for *Kshara Kalpana*. *Palasha Kshara, Yava Kshara, Apamarga Kshara* etc. are some of the *Ksharas* which acharyas have used enormously and mentioned plenty of times in their works. The biggest difficulty faced in preparing *Palasha Kshara* was to get original *Palasha* wood with proper ageing. This difficulty was overcome with the help of SDM Ayurveda Pharmacy, Udupi, A total of 25kg *Palasha* wood was bought from SDM Ayurveda pharmacy Udupi (Figure 1).



Figure 1 *Palasha* wood

It was made into small pieces and dried under sun light for 10 days, then it was made into a heap and burnt. The unburned *Palasha* wood was again collected in a large iron vessel and was burned



completely till it became ash. A total of 5.1 kg *Palasha* ash was obtained. Acharyas have mentioned different ways for preparation of *Kshara* among them, the method explained by *Susrutacharya* was adopted, wherein 6 parts of water was added to the obtained ash. It was Kept for 1 day undisturbed (Figure 2).



Figure 2 Soaking of *Palasha* ash

On the next day, it was filtered 21 times through cotton cloth (Figure 3). After filtration crystal clear *kshara jala* was obtained (Figure 4).



Figure 3 Filtering

Figure 4 *Kshara jala*

The obtained *Kshara jala* was then heated in a big iron vessel for one day, till it has reduced completely. As the reduction

continue, its colour changed from transparent to reddish (Figure 5 and Figure 6). Towards the end stage of the procedure, it was converted to fully reddish solution (Figure 7), with bubbles coming out. At this stage, *bharjitha shukthi* and other medicines are added for preparing *madhyama* and *tikshna ksharas*. For obtaining *mrudu kshara*, heating process was continued.



Figure 5 Reduction stage-i Figure6 Stage-ii



Figure 7 Stage-III

RESULTS

As the reduction process continued, the *Kshara jala* turned reddish in colour. Gradually, a salt like supernatant layer appeared (Figure 8). When the heating was continued, this layer broke into smaller



pieces. As the heating proceeded, reddish



Figure 8 Stage-IV

slimy paste like *Kshara* was obtained (Figure 9). The procedure was continued till the water part completely evaporated leaving behind a cream red powder (Figure 10, Figure 11).



Figure 9 Stage-V



Figure 10 Stage-VI

CONCLUSION

“*Tatra Ksharanat kshananaat va Kshara:*¹⁰”

Kshara was named so due to its *Ksharana* and *kshanana guna*. The reference regarding *Palasha Kshara*'s medicinal utility is available in *Rasa Tarangini*, *Yoga Ratnakara* etc. The correct preparation of *Palasha Kshara*, which can be used both internally and externally is difficult. The *Palasha Kshara* prepared according to

classical method is having more quality. Through this article, how to prepare *Palasha Kshara* methodically and the difficulties faced are explained.



Figure 11 Palasha Kshara



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