

A Review on Conceptual and Applied Aspect of *Pramathi*

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Abstract

Narration of *Deepan Pachan paribhasha* is the unique identity of *Sharangdhara Samhita* and *Pramathi* is one of them. *Pramathi* means by virtue of specific cleansing properties/ potency some drugs expel out the accumulated *doshas* from the *strotasa*. It is the need of time to explore these *paribhasha* (pharmacological actions) theoretically as well as clinically. *Pramathi* drugs are having *teja* and *vayu mahabhoota* dominance in them so their action is carried out with the help of *laghu*, *rooksha*, *sookshma*, *teekshna*, *vishada guna*, *katu rasa*, *katu vipaka* and *ushna veerya*. In the treatment of *pureeshavegadharan Charaka* has mentioned *pramathi annapana* also, in *kshayaja kasa chikitsa*, soup of meat of *jangala* animals which is having *pramathi* properties is indicated. The references of indications of *maricha* and *vacha* as in *mookhdooshikahara lepa* and *pradhaman nasya* can be interpreted and correlated with the concept of *pramathi*. Clinically in such conditions where *doshas* or *aama* have created the obstruction in *strotasa* the *pramathi* drugs are the choice of drug for the treatment.

Keywords

Pramathi, maricha, vacha



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INTRODUCTION

The pharmacology of *Ayurved* is mainly based on its fundamental principles. The action of drugs like *deepan*, *pachan*, *lekhan*, *bruhan*, are expressed in terms of their specific function in specific clinical conditions. *Sharangdhara* was the first who explained these terms with examples under the heading of ‘*paribhshsa*’ (pharmacological definitions). The aim of defining these terms was to explain specific *karmas* (functions) in specific pathological conditions and also to differentiate closely similar karma like *stransan* (laxative), *rechan* (cathartics), *bhedan* (purgatives) and *anuloman* (aperients)¹. *Pramathi karma* is one of them. *Pramathi* means the drugs which removes the accumulated *doshas* from the *strotas* (system) by their own specific action; for example *maricha* and *vacha*².

In clinical practice we need to use specific actions of particular drugs to relieve the *samprapti* (pathogenesis) of a disease. For this we must know such pharmacological actions comprehensively. Among the 23 *paribhashas* described by *sharangdhara* ‘*pramathi*’ is one of them having clinical importance. The concept of *pramathi* is mainly recognized by the examples given in

definition i.e., *maricha* and *vacha*. Very few references are available regarding *pramathi* concept in *samhita* and other *granthas*. Also very few physicians apply the drugs like *maricha* (*Piper nigrum*) and *vacha* (*Acorus calamus*) according to their *pramathi* action or they are unknown about the specific conditions of using *pramathi* drugs.

The main aim of this article is to explore the concept of *pramathi*; search for scattered references of *pramathi* in *samhita* and other *granthas*. To form and correlate these links with each other. To clinically analyze their theoretical and clinical aspect and to highlight the specific clinical conditions of application of *pramathi* drugs on the basis of clinical evidences.

Basis of Panchamahabhautik dominance

According to the etymological derivation in *Vachaspatyam* the drugs predominantly and forcefully expelled the *doshas* by after churning them are *pramathi*³. *Vaidyaka shabda sindhu kosha* has more elaborated the definition. The *pramathi* drugs act by virtue of their *sookshma* (subtle) and *teekshna* (sharp/quick) properties; also expels the sticky *doshas* in *strotasa* by churning them and expands the lumen also⁴. *Vacha* and *maricha* are the examples given

of *pramathi* narrated by *Sharangdhara*. We can interpret the mechanism of action of *pramathi* on the basis of *panchabhautika siddhant*. Critically analyzing the etymology and definition of *pramathi* and *rasapanchaka* of *maricha* and *vacha* we can make the inference that *pramathi* karma is having *teja* and *vayu mahabhoota* dominance. *Tejasa dravyas* are *ushna* (hot), *teekshna* (sharp), *sookshma* (minute), *laghu* (light), *rooksha* (rough), *vishada* (non-slimy) properties while *vayu mahabhoota* having *laghu*, *sheeta* (cold), *vishada*, *rooksha*, *khara* (coarse), *sookshma* properties⁵. We can interpret the action of *pramathi* on the basis of above *gunas* as in **Table no 1**. The *pramathi* action is carried out by the combined effect of *teja* and *vayu mahabhoota gunas*. Sushrutas quotation in (Su.Su. 46/515) supports above mention karma that various actions of *dravyas* are inferred by the different qualities in them⁶.

Basis of *rasapanchaka siddhant*

The drugs *maricha* and *vacha* both having *katu rasa*, *katu vipaka* and *ushna verya*. We can also interpret the action of *pramathi* on the basis of this *rasapanchaka* as in **Table no. 2**. *Aama* (indigested food product) creates *strotorodha*⁹ (obstruction in channels) also the *abhishyandi* drugs

(obstructants) by their *picchil* (unctuous), *guru* (heavy) properties block the strotas¹⁰. The *pramathi* drugs relieve the *strotorodha* means they must have *aamapachana* (digesting power) and *abhishyandahara* (obstruction reliving) properties. Thus by *panchabhautik* dominance and *rasapanchak* of *vacha* and *maricha* the action of *pramathi* is correlated.

Clinical application

Reviewing the *Ayurvedic* literature we found very few and scattered references regarding *pramathi*. In the treatment principle of *pureeshvegadharan* (holding the urge for defecation) *Charaka* has mentioned *pramathi annapan*. By virtue of their cleansing nature it clears the passage of their obstruction; here the *pramathi aahar* which is having *teja* and *vayu mahabhoota* dominance relives the obstruction in *pureeshavaha strotas*¹¹. The *pramathi annapan* can be advised in *pakwashaya shoola* (lower abdomen pain), *shirashoola* (headache), *malavashtambha* (constipation), *aadhman* (flatulence) when these pathological conditions are formed due to *pureeshavgadharan*.

In the treatment of *kshayaja kasa* (cough due to wasting) *Acharya Charaka* has advised *pramathi aahara*.

Table 1 Action of Pramathi on the Basis of Mahabhoota Dominance.

<i>Mahabhoota</i>	<i>Guna</i>	<i>Action (karma)</i>
Teja + Vayu	<i>Laghu</i>	Reduces <i>upalepa</i> (coating) in <i>strotasa</i> (channels), also reduces <i>parthiva ansha</i> (heaviness) in <i>strotasa</i> which have created <i>strotorodha</i> (obstruction)
	<i>Rooksha</i>	Reduces excessive oiliness and <i>abhishyanda</i> (exudation) from <i>strotasa</i> and make them free.
	<i>Teekshna</i>	Expels the waste forcibly from <i>strotasa</i> by their sharp or quick acting property.
	<i>Ushna</i>	By its heating property it liquefies the <i>doshas</i> making favorable condition to expel out the waste.
	<i>sookshma</i>	By its penetrating property it move inside minute channels (<i>sookshma strotasa</i>) and help to make the channels free from <i>doshas</i> .
	<i>Vishada</i>	It purifies or clean the <i>strotasa</i> by its sucking property also reduces moistness in the <i>strotasa</i> .
	<i>khara</i>	It reduces extra thickness or coating in the <i>strotasa</i> and make <i>strotasa</i> in normal state.

Table 2 Action of Pramathi on the Basis of Rasapanchaka

<i>Pramathi drugs</i>	<i>Rasapanchak</i>	<i>Action</i>
<i>Maricha</i> and <i>Vacha</i>	<i>Katu rasa</i>	<i>Kledamalan upahanti</i> – help in the elimination of the waste products which are sticky in nature and produces the <i>oleation</i> . <i>Bandhan chinattee</i> – break the obstruction in <i>strotasa</i> . <i>Margan vivrunoti</i> – clarify or expand the passage ⁷ .
	<i>Ushna veerya</i>	<i>Swedan and vilayan</i> – The hot potency liquefies the <i>doshas</i> in <i>strotas</i> and make favorable condition for expulsion ⁸ .

Here *Charaka* quotes that after the administration of *anuvasan* type of enema (oil enema), the patient should be given the soup of meat of animals and birds which are *jangals* (those living in thin forest), *vartaka* etc, those which are *bileshaya* (those living in burrows) and meat eating *prasahas* (those eating by snatching their food) seriatim. Because of their hot potency and *pramathi* attribute, these ingredients cause exudation of *kapha* accumulated in the channels of circulation. After the body is cleansed of this

aggravated *kapha*, these meat soups while flowing appropriately in the channels of circulation cause nourishment of tissue¹². The specialty of this treatment is that the opposite clinical condition is present here, i.e. the patient of *kshayaja kasa* having *strotorodha* by *kapha*. If we apply *bruhan* (nourishing) therapy for *kshayapradhan samprapti* (pathogenesis due to wasting) the *kapha* will vitiate leading to more *strotorodha* and *agnimandya* (anorexia). On the other hand if we apply *kaphaghna*

chikitsa for reliving *strotorodha* by *kapha* it will lead to *dhatukshaya* (wasting of *dhatu*s). Considering both these facts *Charaka* has mentioned *pramathi aahar* which fulfills both the conditions as mentioned in the concept of *shuddha* (pure/appropriate) treatment that the treatment which alleviates or cures one disease or *dosha* and gives rise to another disease or *dosha* is not *shuddha*; a pure one is that which cures one and does not give rise to another¹³. The clinical application of above *pramathi aahara* reference is that in such condition where *kshayapradhan samprapti* and *strotorodha* by *kapha* or *aama* is present we can apply in that particular disease also.

The other reference of *pramathi* can be considered as indirect reference. As *Acharya Sharangdhara* has mentioned *maricha* and *vacha* as an examples of *pramathi*; the references where both these drugs are therapeutically used and the expected action is like *pramathi* can be interpreted as *pramathi* action.

Mukhadooshika chikitsa (Acne treatment): *Acharya Sharangdhara* has mentioned *maricha* and *vacha* as ingredients of *mukhalepa* (face paste) for the treatment of acne¹⁴. By applying fundamental

principles of Ayurveda the reason behind inclusion of *vacha* and *maricha* in *mookhadooshikahara lepa* (paste for acne) can be interpreted as – The *adhishtana* i.e. seat of *mookhadooshika* is *twacha* (skin) means *rasavaha*, *raktawaha* and *masavaha strotasa*. The *samprapti* (pathogenesis) of *mookhadooshika* narrated by *Sushruta* is aggravated *kapha*, *vata* and *rakta* create *pidika* (eruption) resembling thorns of *shalmali* tree appear on the face of youths¹⁵. Aggravated *kapha*, *rakta* and *vata* are accumulated in *pidika* which also creates *strotorodha*. To expel out these *doshas* the *lepa* of *maricha* and *vacha* with *lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa*) and *dhanyaka* (*Coriandrum sativum*) is applied over the *pidika*. The *lepa dravyas* by their potency penetrate and enter in the *strotasa* by their *sookshma guna*. By *ushna*, *teekshna*, *vishada* and *rooksha guna* they churn and irritate the local accumulated *doshas* in turn they are expelled out in the form of exudate by cracking the outer layer of skin. This way the *strotasa* is cleaned which in turn help for *ropana kriya* (healing process) and afterwards skin becomes normal.

Pradhamana nasya (nasal insufflation) – *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned both *maricha* and *vacha* in *shirovirechanopaga*

gana (group of purgatives to the head). They are mainly used in the form of *pradhamana nasya*. The action of *pradhamana nasya* is different from other types. This type of *nasya* is used in the condition where excessive *doshas* are accumulated in *shira* (head) or *pranavaha strotasa* (respiratory tract). The fine powder of *vacha* or *maricha* is blown/inhaled into the nose with the help of *nadi yantra*¹⁷ (tubular instrument). It enters into small channels of *pranavaha strotasa* by their *sookshma guna*; then by the *ushna*, *teekshna*, *rooksha* and *vishad guna* the accumulated *doshas* are expelled from the nostrils in the form of *ksavathu* (sneezing reflex). The same mechanism of action happens here by *maricha* and *vacha* which is described in the definition of *pramathi*. In other diseases like *pravahika*, *peenasa*, *udavarta* etc. where *maricha* or *vacha* is indicated in the same pathogenesis of accumulation of *doshas* the *pramathi* action can be interpreted.

CONCLUSION

For the treatment of any disease it is important to know the exact *vyadhi avastha* (condition of disease), mode of pathogenesis, which help us to choose the perfect drug or formulation. *Pramathi* is

such an action where the accumulated *doshas* are expelled out by virtue of their cleansing nature. Very few or scattered references are available in *ayurvedic* literature and electronic resources regarding *pramathi* action. In *pureeshavegadharana* and *kshyaja kasa* treatment *pramathi annapana* is indicated which helps to relieve the obstruction in that particular *strotasa*. Also from indirect references of therapeutic indications of *maricha* and *vacha* which are regarded as *pramathi* drugs by *Sharangdhara*; the mechanism of action of *vacha* and *maricha* in *mookhadooshikahara lepa* and *pradhamana nasya* can be correlated or linked with action of *pramathi*. This will help the researchers and physicians of *Ayurveda* as broad spectrum of application of concept of *pramathi*.

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