

Relevance of Rituharitaki in Ayurveda – A Review

Dr Shradha R Kokare, Dr Suraj I. Shirsath,

Assistant Professor- Department of Swasthavritta, MES Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Ghanekhunt- Lote, Talukakhed, District – Ratnagiri (Maharashtra).

Associate Professor- Department of Kayachikitsa, MES Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Ghanekhunt- Lote, Talukakhed, District – Ratnagiri (Maharashtra).

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ABSTRACT:

In Ayurveda, it is mentioned that when seasonal variations occur, the Dosha (bioelements) get imbalanced in the form of Chaya and Prakopa (accumulation and aggravation).⁽¹⁾ As Varsha Ritu (monsoon) is the season with least Bala (strength), Tridosha vitiation, and weakened Agni (state of digestion and metabolism), human being are susceptible to many diseases.⁽²⁾ Various modalities are mentioned to alleviate this Dosha vitiation and to improve the Agni by improving the Vyadhikshamatva (immunity).⁽³⁾ One among those is the seasonal usage of Haritaki (Terminalia chebula Retz), which is mentioned in one of the Laghutrayi-Bhavaprakasha, in the Haritakyaadi Varga as Rasayana (anti-aging).⁽⁴⁾ This Rituharitaki is a simple and cost-effective Rasayana that is easy to administer. So in this article there is a small description about Haritaki and its benefits according to seasonal regimen.

Keywords: Ritu, Haritaki, Rituharitaki.

I. INTRODUCTION:

Due to tremendous changes in the mode of living as well as seasonal variations, human beings are prone to various infections and lifestyle ailments. The infectious diseases once thought to be under control, are re-emerging with increased virulence. The outbreak of the seasonal epidemics during the last few monsoons has affected millions, and this has been a serious concern in the public health sector. So, the present situation requires critical health concern to prevent the outbreak of various diseases.

Human passion on herbal medicine dated back to time immemorial. As we are aware, the very survival of animal kingdom is dependent of plant kingdom. Plants play major role in the pharmacotherapy in day to day life. Vedic literature indicates mainly about the utility of single herbs in

the management of different ailments (5). Haritaki (Terminalia chebula retz) is one of the important as well as commonest herbs used by folk, household and traditional medicine. Its fruit rind is used in medicine; it is one of the ingredients of triphala i.e, Haritaki, Bibhitaki and Amalaki (6). Haritaki with different Anupana (vehicle) yields rejuvenative effect in different ritu (seasons) (7). Acharya Charaka highlighted its rejuvenative properties in chikitsasthana. He specifically stated that Haritaki is best among the herbs to be used regularly. i.e. "Haritaki pathyanam". (8).

Review on Ritu:

Ritu means (season) and Charya means (guidelines), it is a seasonal guidelines for living, According to our Acharyas movement of sun is responsible for the different types of Ritu (season), this divides a year into two parts one is Uttarayan And second one is Dakshinayan. Both Ayans have 6-6 months and 3-3 Ritu, In Uttarayan (Shishira, Vasant, Grishma) and in Dakshinayan (Varsha, Sharad, Hemant).

The prime principle of Ayurveda science is Swasthyashya Swasthya Rakshanam (maintain the health of healthy), To fulfil this purpose Ayurved Classics have been mentioned DinCharya (Daily regimen) and Ritu Charya (Seasonal regimen), Ritu Haritaki is a part of Ritu Charya ,when season wise Haritaki powder is taken with different adjuvant is called Ritu Haritaki

Review on Haritakee:

Gana: Prajasthapana, Jwaraghna, Kushtaghna, Kasaghna, Arshoghna.(Charaka); Triphala, Amalakyadi, Parushakadi, (Sushruta.)

Latin name: Terminalia chebula retz.

Family: Combretaceae.

Kula: Haritakee kula.

Synonyms: Haimavati, Shiva, Pathya, Abhaya, Kayastha, Shreyasi, Chetaki, Amrita, Vijaya etc.

Vernacular names:

Hindi: Harad, **Kannada:** Alalekayi, **Marathi:** Hirada, **English name:** Myrobalans, Chebulic, myrobalan.

Tamil: Kadukkai, **Telugu:** Karakkai,

Morphology:

It is a large perennial tree, which grows up to 30-40 feet height. Phyllotaxy: Alternate.

Leaf: simple, petiolated, aggregated at the tip of the branches, leathery, obovate/ oblong -ovate, acute, wavy margins, having a glandular structure at

base of leaf. Inflorescences: Axillary and terminal spike. Flower: Complete, regular, bisexual. Fruit: Obovoid or ellipsoidal more or less five ribbed when dry.

Habitat: Abundant in Northern India, also occurs in Bihar, West Bengal, Assam, Central and South India.

Chemical constituents: Anthraquinone Glycoside, Chebulinic acid, Tannic acid, Terchebin, Vit C, Arachidic, Behenic, Lindic, Oleic, Palmatic, Stearic acid. (9)

Types of Haritakee: (10)

Acharya Bhavaprakasha mentioned 7 Types of Haritakee, such as:

Sr. no	Type of Haritaki	Shape	Uses
1.	Vijaya	Oval in shape	Sarvaroga (Cures all diseases)
2.	Rohini	Round in shape	Vrana (Wound healing)
3.	Putana	Small and less bulky	Pralepa (used for application)
4.	Amruta	Bulky	Shodhana (for purification)
5.	Abhaya	Fruit has five lines on it	Netra roga (eye diseases)
6.	Jeevanti	Yellow in colour	Sarvaroga (Cures all diseases)
7.	Chetaki	Having three lines	Rechaka (purgative)

Grahya laxanas of Haritakee: (11)

A fruit of Haritakee which sinks in water, which is fresh, smooth, bulky, round in shape and weighs at least 26 grams is considered ideal for medicinal use.

Rasa panchaka of Haritakee:

Guna: - Laghu, Ruksha

Rasa: - Kashaya pradhana Lavana varjita pancha rasa.

Virya: - Ushna

Vipaka: - Madhura

Prabhava: - Tridosahara, patyakara.

Contraindication to take Haritaki: Who is suffering from indigestion, taking dry and spicy food for a long time, physically weak people who have low strength and immunity due to excessive and regular sexual activities, alcohol consumption and intake of poison, in the condition of excessive hunger, thirst and heat stroke Haritaki should not be used.

Special properties of different form of Haritaki:

If chewed it stimulates appetite, increased digestive fire, if it takes in powdered form it has laxative effect, boiled Haritaki has anti diarrhoeal effect, fried Haritaki pacifies TriDosh, Haritaki with meals is beneficial for intellectual power and for the better perception from the sense organ and after meals it cures disease due to wrong dietary habits and imbalance in three biological humours (Tridosh), takes with rock salt helpful in alleviating Kapha, with sugar helpful in alleviating Pitta, with ghee helpful in alleviating Vata.

Discussion on Ritu Haritakee sevana:

Haritaki provides the restorative effect i.e. rasayana by cleansing the channels of body. But for producing the rasayana effect it needs various supportive dravyas in different ritu such as;

In Shishira ritu: Haritaki + pippali

In Vasanta ritu: Haritaki + madhu,

In Grishma ritu: Haritaki + guda.

In Varsha ritu: Haritaki + saindava lavana,
 In Sharada ritu: Haritaki +sharkara
 In Hemanta ritu: Haritaki +shunti,



Fig.1.Ritus and Haritaki anupan

Effect of Haritaki with Pippali (Piperlongum) on dosha, agni, and bala in Shishira ritu.

Shishira ritu (winter season) is first season of the adana kala (strengtheningseason), during this period the intensity of sun rays will gradually increase, alongwith this ruksha Guna (dryness) also increases and strength of person gradually decreases due to excess coldness. Theaccumulation of kapha takes place in this season. To mitigate the accumulated kapha, Haritakee should be taken with piper longum fruit, as it is good sleshmahara (kapha mitigate), due to itskatu rasa (pungent taste), laghu, tikshna Guna (lightness and penetratingproperties) and ushna virya. Apart from this it also brings the shamana rupi pitta to its equilibrium state. By this it maintains the equilibrium status of the dosha leading to agni samyata, dhatu samyata(equilibrium state of agni and body tissue) and ultimately leads to Rasayana karma.

Effect of Haritaki with Madhu (Honey)on dosha, agni and bala in Vasanta ritu.

Vasanta ritu (spring season) is second ritu of Adan kala, comes under sadharana ritu. During this ritu, ahara andoushadha dravyas (food and medicines)are madhyama rukshata (moderately dry)and astringent. Hence, strength of personis reduced. The aggravation of kapha takesplace in this ritu. To mitigate theaggravated kapha, Haritakee should betaken with honey. The laghu, ruksha Guna(lightness and dryness) and kashaya rasa(astringent taste) of Haritakee and madhuhelp to mitigate kapha. Ushna virya ofHaritakee also

acts as kaphahara.Because of its madhura vipaka, thiscombination also acts as rasayana.

Effect of Haritaki with Guda (Jaggery)on dosha, agni and bala in Grishma ritu.

It is the third Ritu of Aadan-Kala. There is very hot and dry weather due to strong and penetrating sun rays which evaporates the moisture of earth the strength of the person becomes very low. In this season Pitta Dosha increases and environmental heat leads to diminution of JatharAgni. Dehydration, heat stroke, chickenpox, mumps, measles, diarrhoea, typhoid, Sunburns are the common diseases found in Grishma Ritu(summer season) these diseases mainly due to vitiated Pitta Dosha. Haritaki should be taken with Guda (jaggery) in this season, Guda (jaggery) must be old or stored, because only this type of Guda (jaggery) pacifies Pitta and Vata , increases digestive fire, does not block the channels and also Raktaprasadak(Vitalizes Blood or improves haemoglobin), Mutrashodhan (clears urine), and Haritaki is also light, digestive, appetizing in nature so this combination are beneficial in above conditions.

Effect of Haritaki with Saindava lavanaon dosha, agni, bala in varsha ritu.

Varsha ritu (rainy season); is firstseason of visarga kala (debilitating),during which alpa rukshata (mildroughness), amla rasa (sour taste) arepredominant. Agni (digestive power)becomes irregular. Bala (strength) of theperson is less. Due to mandagni(decreased digestive energy) and excesscold, sanchaya (accumulation) of pittadosha and prakopa (aggravation) of vatatakes place.

The lavana rasa (salt taste) isformed in sharada ritu (autumn season),but its utility is best during varsha ritu(rainy season) to tackle aggravated vata.Haritakee with saindava lavana(rock salt)brings the sanchita pitta (accumulatedpitta) to equilibrium state due to laghuGuna (lightness) and madhura vipaka ofboth Haritakee and saindhava lavana.

Saindhava lavana acts as vata shamakadue to its lavana rasa, snigdha guna (unctuousness), and madhura vipaka (postdigestion). Haritakee acts as vata shamakadue to the madhura, amla rasa, ushnavirya and madhura vipaka. When the vataand pitta are brought to their equilibriumstate, they ultimately enhance the agni(metabolism), which is impaired due tovata prakopa (aggravation of vata) andpitta sanchaya (accumulation of pitta),Haritakee and saindhava act as appetizer,digestant, and

restore the strength of the person by its madhura vipaka.

Effect of Haritaki with sharkara ondosh, agni, bala in Sharada ritu.

Sharada ritu (autumn season) is second ritu (season) of visarga kala, comes under the sadharana ritu. During which madhyama snigdha (mild unctuousness) and lavana rasa (salt taste) are predominant. Agni (digestion) becomes teekshna (increased), Bala (strength) of the person is madhyam (moderate), due to predominance of snigdha guna, lavana rasa. Haritaki with sharkara (sugar candy) does purification of provoked pitta, due to its snigdha Guna (unctuousness), madhurarasa (sweet taste) and vipaka (postdigestion). By this the pitta gets purified. When the pitta dosha is purified, it restores the strength and digestive capacity of the person. Madhura rasa, madhuravipaka and sheeta virya of sharkara prevent the further vitiation of the pitta. Along with this they help in mitigating shamana rupi vata (which are under mitigating stage), due to their snigdha Guna, madhura rasa and vipaka. The ushna virya of Haritaki mitigate the vata.

Effect of Haritaki with Shunti (Ginger officinale) on dosha, agni, bala in Hemanta ritu.

Hemanta ritu (winter season) is the last season of visarga kala, during which the snigdha Guna and madhura rasa are predominant. In this season the strength of the person is good, the pitta is in mitigating state and kapha at its accumulating stage. It mitigates the kapha at its accumulating stage and prevents aggravation, due to ushna virya (hot potency), katu, tikta, kashaya rasa (pungent, bitter, astringent taste), laghu, ruksha Guna (lightness, dryness) of Haritakee and shunti (ginger). Along with this it helps to bring back the pitta to equilibrium state by its madhura vipaka. Due to its ushna virya it stimulates the agni which gets impaired during vitiation of pitta.

II. CONCLUSION:

Ayurveda clearly advises the daily regime and the seasonal regime. If followed properly, these holistic lifestyle guidelines for diet, exercise, work etc could prove to be wonderful in maintaining

good health and keeping the diseases away. Hence Haritakee with its Anupana dravyas in different ritus does the shodhan of doshas, brings the impaired agni to its equilibrium state, and maintains the healthy state of dhatu and mala and leads to rasayana (rejuvenator) karma, by detoxifying and balancing the bodily humors throughout the year.

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