

## Relevance of Rituharitaki according to Ayurveda – A Review

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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).<sup>(1)</sup> 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.<sup>(2)</sup> Various modalities are mentioned to alleviate this Dosha vitiation and to improve the Agni by improving the Vyadhikshamatva (immunity).<sup>(3)</sup> 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).<sup>(4)</sup> 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. "Haritakipathyanam". (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 Din Charya (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:** Haritakeekula.

**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	Netraroga (eye diseases)
6.	Jeevanti	Yellow in colour	Sarvaroga (Cures all diseases)
7.	Chetaki	Having three lines	Rechaka (purgative)

**Grahyalaxanas 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: - Kashayapradhana Lavanavarjitapancha 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 (Tridosha), takes with rock salt helpful in alleviating Kapha, with sugar helpful in alleviating Pitta, with ghee helpful in alleviating Vata.

**Discussion on Ritu Haritakeesevana:**

Haritaki provides the restorative effect i.e. rasayana by cleansing the channels of body. But for

producing therasayana effect it needs various supportivedravayas in different ritu such as;  
In Shishiraritu:Haritaki + pippali  
In Vasantaritu:Haritaki+madhu,

In Grishmaritu:Haritaki + guda.  
In Varsharitu: Haritaki + saindavalavana,  
In Sharadaritu: Haritaki +sharkara  
In Hemantaritu: Haritaki +shunti,



Fig.1.Ritus and Haritakianupan

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

Shishiraritu (winter season) is first season of the adanakala (strengtheningseason), during this period the intensity of sun rays will gradually increase, alongwith this rukshaGuna(dryness) also increases and strength of person gradually decreases due to excess coldness. Theaccumulation of kaphatakes 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, tikshnaGuna (lightness and penetratingproperties) and ushnavirya. Apart from this it also brings the shamanarupi pitta to its equilibrium state. By this it maintains the equilibrium status of the doshaleading to agnisamyata, dhatusamyata(equilibrium state of agniand body tissue) and ultimately leads to Rasayana karma.

#### Effect of Haritaki with Madhu (Honey)ondosha, agni and bala in Vasantaritu.

Vasantaritu(spring season) is second ritu of Adan kala, comes under sadharanaritu. During this ritu, ahara andoushadhadravayas (food and medicines)aremadhyamarukshata (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, rukshaGuna(lightness and dryness) and kashaya rasa(astringent taste) of Haritakee and madhuhelp

to mitigate kapha. Ushnavirya ofHaritakee also acts as kaphahara.Because of its madhuravipaka, thiscombination also acts as rasayana.

#### Effect of Haritaki with Guda(Jaggery)ondosha, agni and bala in Grishmaritu.

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 GrishmaRitu(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 Saindavalavanaon dosha, agni, bala in varsharitu.

Varsharitu (rainy season); is firstseason of visargakala (debilitating),during which alparukshata (mildroughness), amla rasa (sour taste) arepredominant. Agni (digestive

power) becomes irregular. Bala (strength) of the person is less. Due to mandagni (decreased digestive energy) and excess cold, sanchaya (accumulation) of pittadosha and prakopa (aggravation) of vata takes place.

The lavana rasa (salt taste) is formed in sharadaritu (autumn season), but its utility is best during varsharitu (rainy season) to tackle aggravated vata. Haritakee with saindavalavana (rock salt) brings the sanchita pitta (accumulated pitta) to equilibrium state due to laghu Guna (lightness) and madhuravipaka of both Haritakee and saindavalavana.

Saindhalavana acts as vatashamak due to its lavana rasa, snigdha guna (unctuousness), and madhuravipaka (postdigestion). Haritakee acts as vatashamak due to the madhura, amla rasa, ushnvirya and madhuravipaka. When the vata and pitta are brought to their equilibrium state, they ultimately enhance the agni (metabolism), which is impaired due to vataprakopa (aggravation of vata) and pitta sanchaya (accumulation of pitta). Haritakee and saindhava act as appetizer, digestant, and restore the strength of the person by its madhuravipaka.

#### **Effect of Haritaki with sharkara ondosh, agni, bala in Sharadaritu.**

Sharadaritu (autumn season) is second ritu (season) of visargakala, comes under the sadharanaritu. During which madhyamasnigdha (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, lavanarasa. 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 sheetavirya of sharkara prevent the further vitiation of the pitta. Along with this they help in mitigating shamanarupivata (which are under mitigating stage), due to their snigdha Guna, madhura rasa and vipaka. The ushnvirya of Haritaki mitigate the vata.

#### **Effect of Haritaki with Shunti (Ginger officinale) on dosha, agni, bala in Hemantaritu.**

Hemantaritu (winter season) is the last season of visargakala, 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 ushnvirya (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 madhuravipaka. Due to its ushnvirya 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 Anupanadravyas 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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