

Review Article

Vrischikagad – A conceptual Review

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ABSTRACT:

Agadatantra is one of the eight branches of *Ayurved* explaining the poisons and its treatment aspects. In relation with poisonous effects it also explains the treatment in unique style as *Agadas* (Ayurvedic Antidotes). In *Ashtang Hridaya Uttartsthan* details regarding the *Vrischikagad* (Antidote formulation for scorpion sting) can be seen. The name itself suggest that it is mainly used in the *Vrischika Visha badha* (Scorpion Envenomation) in the describing *shloka* it is mentioned that '*Paramo Vrischikagadah*' (Very potent antidote in Scorpion Envenomation). In this article; an attempt is made for the vigorous conceptual review and efforts establish the probable action of *Vrischikagad* on the basis of properties of each ingredients used. How it can be helpful in the treatment of scorpion poisoning.

KEY WORDS: Vrischikagad, Vrischik, Agadatantra, Action, Scorpion envenomation**INTRODUCTION:**

According to WHO, the "Drug" is defined as the substance that when taken into the living organism, may modify one of its functions of that organism.¹

In *Ayurveda* "Drug" has been given more importance for the treatment and prevention of the disease. *Charaka* has included it under '*Trisutra of Ayurveda*' and considered it at 2nd place in the vital four folds of treatment.^{2,3}

According to *Ayurveda* there is nothing in the world which is not having medicinal value even though it is a poison. So it is solely depend upon the physician's skill to make a drug as a beneficial one or a harmful one.

The drug is said to be ideal which cures the diseases without any toxic effects. Emphasizing this fact, *Ayurveda* has given a comprehensive approach about the complete knowledge of the drugs right from the

procurement, identification, processing and their applications. Every physician might know this medicinal value of each and every drug. Along with this, it is a Physician's responsibility to know the medicinal properties of the drugs clinically i.e. by experience. Drugs which are specifically used for the treatment of poisoning are known as '*Agada*'.

An Ayurvedic Review:

In *Ashtang Hridaya* written by *Vagbhata* in *Uttartsthana* section we can get a below said description of *Vrischikagad*.

पारावतशकृत्पथ्यातगरं विश्वभेषजं ।

बीजपूररसोन्मिश्रः परमो वृश्चिकागदः ॥

अष्टांगहृदय उत्तरस्थान ३७/३४

Table No. 1: Ingredients of Vrischikagad:⁵

Drug name	Synonyms	Botanical name	English name
<i>Paravat shakrit</i>	-	-	Excreta of Pigeon
<i>Pathya</i>	<i>Haritaki, Vijaya, Abhaya</i>	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Chebulic Myrobalans
<i>Tagar</i>	<i>Kutil, Nata, Nahush</i>	<i>Valeriana wallichii</i>	Indian Varerian Rhioime
<i>Vishwabheshaj</i>	<i>Shunthi, Vishwa, Nagar</i>	<i>Zingiber officinale</i>	Dry Zingiber
<i>Beejapoor</i>	<i>Matulung, Ruchak</i>	<i>Citrus medica</i>	Citron

Preparation of the *Vrischikagad*:

All the above said ingredients except *Beejapoor* taken into equal quantity. (10 gm each) Each drug is triturated in *khalva yantra* (Mortar & Pestle) and filtered through the fresh and clean cotton cloth to obtain the fine powder. Thus obtained fine powder of each drug is again triturated into the *khalva yantra* and mixed thoroughly. The ripe *Matulung phal* (Fruit of *Citrus medica*) made into small pieces and grinded in a mixer and mashed material shifted to a piece of

cotton and squeezed to obtain the *Swaras* (Squash).

Then the mixture of fine powder is soaked with the *Matulung swaras* and trituration is started till it becomes dry, in this way the one *bhavana* (process of assimilating the liquid portion with the fine powders) is given to that compound mixture and the brown coloured *Vrischikagad* is prepared. Dried powder form of *Vrischikagad* is stored in air tight glass container.

Table No. 2: Pharmacodynamics of ingredients of *Vrischikagad*: ⁶

Sr. No.	Name of Drug	Rasa	Guna	Veerya	Vipak	Karma
1.	<i>Paravat Shakrit</i> ⁷	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha, Teekshna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Pitta Kapha shamak</i>
2.	<i>Pathya</i>	<i>Pancharasa Kashay pradhan, lavan varjit</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Tridosahara</i>
3.	<i>Tagar</i>	<i>Tikta, Katu, Kashay</i>	<i>Laghu, Snigdha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha vata shamak, Visharoga nashak</i>
4.	<i>Vishwabheshaj</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Laghu, Snigdha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Tridosahara</i>
5.	<i>Beejapoor</i>	<i>Madhur, Amla</i>	<i>Laghu, Snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Vata pittaghna</i>

Table No. 3: Chemical composition of ingredients of *Vrischikagad* (Ref. Wealth of India) ⁸

Sr. No.	Name of Drug	Chemical constituents	Action
1.	<i>Pathya</i>	Tannin, Chebulin	Antispasmodic, acting on smooth muscles and blood pressure
2.	<i>Tagar</i>	Valeric acid, Valepotriates	Tranquilizers, sedative
3.	<i>Vishwabheshaj</i>	Gingerol, Shogol	Stimulates heart in cats, Vasomotor and respiratory centre stimulant, Thermogenic , Emollient, Rubefacient, Anodyne, Useful in Cardiopathy.
4.	<i>Beejapoor</i>	Citron oil	Fruit and seeds are Cardiotonic , used in Palpitation , Anti-scorbutic.

DISCUSSION:

The ingredients of *Vrischikagad* are *Paravat shakrit*, *Pathya* (*Haritaki*), *Tagar*, *Vishwabheshaj* (*Shunthi*), *Matulung*.

Thus prepared *Vrischikagad* is used in the treatment of the *Vrischik damsha*. The probable action of *Vrischikagad* on the Indian Red Scorpion venom poisoning is discussed here.

Paravat shakrit (Pigeon's Excreta) have the activity on the heart. As in Indian red scorpion is cardiotoxic and in its poisoning heart is the target organ.

Haritaki is used in *Rasayan karma* (Immuno-modulatory); the properties of *Visha* and *Rasayan* are equally opposite. In *Visha*, *tridosha prakop* is there and *Haritaki* is *Tridoshar*. It has action on the smooth muscles and blood pressure because of its chemical content chebulic acid. So it will help to reduce the blood pressure as well as it will pacify the *prakupit doshas* also. *Haritaki* will tackle the adverse effects of *visha*.

Tagar itself is *vishanashak* due to its *prabhav*. Valeric acid which is present in *Tagar* is mainly Anticonvulsant, so with the use of *Tagar* the convulsions due to the Indian Red Scorpion venom

poisoning can be controlled. Also *Tagar* acts as Tranquilizer and Sedative, so this will help to reduce the anxiety and agitation of the patient.

Shunthi is another ingredient of the *Vrischikagad*. It showed the stimulation of the heart in cats. It is used in the cardiopathy. So it is useful for the heart, which is the main target organ in the Indian red scorpion venom poisoning.

Matulung phala swaras is used in this formulation, as it is included in the *Amla varga*. *Amla rasa* is told as *Hridya* (Cardiotonic). Its fruit and seeds are Cardiotonic. It is also useful in palpitation. Its main action is on the heart.

CONCLUSION:

Unique contribution of *Agadtantra* to *Ayurved* is *Agadas* explained in the context of poisoning. *Vrischikagad* explained in *Ashtang Hridaya* is no exception to that contribution. By observing the properties and its site of action of its ingredients. It can be said that it is very much useful in the scorpion poisoning. In this way *Vrischikagad* is mainly designed to protect the heart and to take care of the *prakupit doshas* and in this way the adverse effects of action can be controlled. According to basic principle of *Agadtantra*, *Hridayavarana* can be achieved with the help of *Vrischikagad*.

By considering the ingredients used in the preparation of *Vrischikagad*, their individual properties and their probable action; it can be concluded that, it is helpful in the treatment of scorpion poisoning theoretically. Preclinical studies will establish its actual efficacy. But conceptually it is helping in relieving the poisonous effects of scorpion; proving its name as '*Vrischikagad*'.

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