

The Wonder Drug Of Ayurveda – Haritaki

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Abstract:-

Haritaki is widely used medicinal plant which is used largely in the preparation of many Ayurvedic medicines. It is found all over India chiefly in forest and area of light rainfall it grows on variety of soils but in clay & sandy soils it grows best.

The fruits ripe from November to March depending up on the locality the Haritaki fruits contains a substance which has antibacterial and antifungal properties. Haritaki is also used in combination with two more herbs to prepare a formulation known as Triphala. This medicine is widely used for antiaging activity. It is also used for increasing the immunity power of the body.

Key words - Haritaki, Antifungal, Antiaging

Introduction:-

Ayurveda has always emphasized on healthy life & maintaining the health status of the individuals. Rasayan is one of the multidimensional concepts of Ayurveda which deals with both preventive & curative aspect of health. Also, Rasayan is one of the eight branches of Ayurveda.

Rasayan therapy enriches nutritional quality of Rasa, enhances digestion and metabolism by normalizing Agni, Bala, and Promoting the competence of channels. The concept of Rasayan is described in detail in all the classical texts, Samhitas of Ayurveda. Acharya Charak has started the most important chikitsa sthan with Rasayan Adhyaya which itself can indicates its importance.

The first Rasayan mentioned by Acharya charak is nothing but Haritaki. It is said to be pancharasatmak. Acharya Charaka highlighted its rejuvenative properties in chikitsasthana. He specifically stated that Haritaki is best among the herbs to be used regularly. i.e. "Haritakee pathyanam". Haritaki rasayana described the rasayana effect of Haritaki taken along with different seasons. The administration of Rutuharitaki Rasayana with different anupanas in specific season it help to maintain health of peoples as well as for prevention of seasonal dieases.

Aim & objectives –To review study the Haritaki as per classical literature.

Synonyms :- Haritaki, Kayastha, Avyatha, Shiva, Abhya, Putana, Chetaki, Vayastha, Pathya, Haimavati, Putana, Rohini.

Parts used – Fruit

Taxonomical Description :-

Moderate to large sized deciduous tree, attaining height up to 90 ft. youngest leaves , branchlets and leaf buds have soft, shining, generally rust coloured hairs.

Leaves – 7 to 20 cm long and 4 to 8 cm wide, glabrous or nearly so when mature, not clustered, distant, alternate or subopposite, elliptic-oblong, acute, rounded or cordate at base , penninerved, secondary nerves 6-8 pairs, arching, prominent , petioles are 2 to 5 cm long , pubescent usually with two glands near the top.

Inflorescence - Spikes sometimes simple , usually in short panicles, terminal and in the axils of the uppermost leaves.

Flowers – All hermaphrodite , 4mm, across, sessile, dull white or yellow with an offensive smell. Bracts exceeding the flowers, subulate or lanceolate , hairy, conspicuous among the buds soon deciduous. Calyxis campanulate, 3mm long, flat at the base expanding a little towards the mouth, glabrous outside, hairy within.

Fruits - Pendulous drupe, 2-4cm long , ellipsoid or obovoid from a broad base, glabrous, more or less 5 – ribbed, when dry becomes yellowish green.

Seed – Oblong , bony, very thick and obscurely angled.

Bark – 6mm thick , dark brown with many generally shallow vertical cracks.

Wood - Wood is very hard , brownish grey, with a greenish or yellowish tinge , with an irregular small dark purple hard wood , close grained.

Botanical Name – Terminalia chebula Retz.

Botanical Classification –

Family – Combretaceae
 Kingdom - Plantae
 Division - Phanerogams
 Sub kingdom - Angiosperms
 Class - Monocotyledons
 Sub class - Epigynae
 Genus - Terminalia
 Species - Chebula

Vernacular Names –

English – Chebulik myrobalan
 Hindi - Harara, Harad
 Bengali - Haritaki
 Gujarati – Hardo
 Marathi - Hirda

Ayurvedic Properties :-

Rasa - Madhur, Amla, Katu, Tikta, Kashay

Guna – Laghu, Ruksha

Virya – Ushna

Vipak - Madhur

Prabhav – Tridosahar

Doshaghnta – Tridosahara, Vatahara

Rogaghnta

Shotha, Arsha, Aruchi, Hridoga, Kasa, Grahani, Vibandha, Jirnajwar, Vishamjwar, Shioroga, Tamakshwas, Gulma, Udarroga, Kushta, Swarbheda

Action (Karma) of Haritaki according to Ayurveda :-

Deepaniya – Increase appetite

Rasayan – Rejuvenative

Brimhana – Nourishing

Yogavahi - Catalyst enhancing the action of other herbs

Pachan - Digestive

Grahi - Absorbs fluids from the intestines.

Lekhaniya – Scrapes accumulations from the tissues & channels

Chakshushya – Improve eye sight

Anuloma – Corrects the flow of vata downwards.

Sanyashodhan - Purifies breast milk

Rechana – Purgative

Medhya - Intellect

Ayurvedhak – Increase longevity

Arshoghna - Anti - haemorrhoidal

Chemical constituents of Haritaki :-

It contains high phenolic content, especially hydrolyzable tannins, anthraquinone, flavonol, carbohydrates, glucose and sorbitol , chebulic acid , chebulinic acid , ellagic acid, gallic acid ,

Types of Haritaki

There are seven types of Haritaki have been explored depending on its existence, which has enlisted as follows:

1. **VIJAYA** : Available in Vindhya Pradesh, used in all diseases.
2. **ROHINI** : Available I Pratishtanaka, used for effective healing.
3. **PUTANA** : Available in Sindh area, smaller in size with big hard seeds, used for external plastering
4. **AMRITA** : Available in Champa, Bangladesh area, used as Panchakarma (Detoxification, body purifier).
5. **ABHAYA** : Available in Champa, Bangladesh area, more effective for Ophthalmic use
6. **JIVANTI** : Available in Saurashtra region of Gujarat, used for all cases.
7. **CHETAKI** : Available in Himachal Pradesh, More laxative than Others.

Traditional Uses of haritaki:

The fruit of haritaki has been extensively used in Thai traditional medicine for laxative, carminative, astringent, expectorant, and tonic effects. It is routinely used as traditional medicine by tribes of Tamil Nadu to cure several ailments such as fever, cough, diarrhoea, gastroenteritis, skin diseases, candidiasis, urinary tract infection and wound infections .

It is used commonly in many Ayurvedic preparations as diuretic and cardio tonic . It is used to prevent aging and impart longevity, immunity It is reputed to cure blindness and it is believed to inhibit the growth of malignant tumors .

Haritaki as Kayakalpa:

It can be used as a kayakalpa (rejuvenating the body and the mind) if taken in evening in prescribed amounts. To act as kayakalpa it should be consumed according to the Ritu with specific anupanas.

Consumption of Haritaki in 6 seasons

Sr. No.	Ritu	Anupan
1	Vasant	Madhu
2	Greeshma	Guda
3	Varsha	Saindhav
4	Sharad	Sharkara
5	Hemant	Sunthi
6	shishira	Pipali

Shishira Ritu – Haritaki + Pippali:-

- In Shishira Ritu the ‘_Sheeta’ & ‘_Ruksha’ Gunas are aggravated and also ‘_Sanchaya’ of Kapha dosha is seen in this Ritu.
- Due to increase in dryness & coldness in the climate ‘_Agni’ bala also aggravates.
- Haritaki & Pippali being ‘_Tridosh-hara’, both with their Gunas like ‘_Anushna’, ‘_Laghu’ and ‘_Tikshna’ Gunas & ‘_Katu’ rasa of Pippali & ‘_Ruksha’, ‘_Ushna’ guna & ‘_Kashaya pradhana ‘_Pancharasatmak’ properties of Haritaki helps to compensate the Kapha dosha in its ‘_Sanchaya-Avastha’ as it is rightly said by Acharya’s.
- Hence combination of both the drugs give the ‘_Depan, Pachan & Rasayana’ effect which helps to maintain Bala & vital power of the body which is key for healthy living also the same effect is seen in Hemant Ritu.

Vasanta Ritu – Haritaki + Honey (Madhu):-

- In Vasanta Ritu, coldness is decreased & slow & steady increase in warm & slightly inclined sunrays is seen.
- It is the Kala of ‘_Prakupita Kapha dosha’ possibilities of having ‘_Kaphapradhan Vyadhis’ in this season.
- Also it is seen that ‘_Snigdha’ guna of Shishira Ritu aggravates due to ‘_Vilayana’ of ‘_Sanchit Kapha dosha’ as ‘_Sheeta’ guna of Shishira Ritu is replaced by ‘_Ushna’ guna in Vasant Ritu.
- To compensate the above said condition, Honey seems to be the choice of medicine as it is said by Acharya Charak.
- Along with ‘_Ruksha’, ‘_Ushna’ & ‘_Laghu’ Gunas of Haritaki, Honey helps to compensate the Kapha dosha with its ‘_Ruksha’, ‘_Anushna’ & ‘_Laghu’ Gunas & its ‘_Kashaya anurasa’

Greeshma Ritu – Haritaki + Jaggery (Guda):-

- In this season both ‘_Ruksha’ & ‘_Ushna’ Gunas are its peak & also ‘_Sharir Bala’ of an individual is decreased as compared to other Ritus.
- Haritaki helps to reduce the ‘_Sanchit Vatta dosha’. Also ‘_Madhur, Guru, Sheet’ gunatmaka Jaggery (Guda) along with ‘_Rasayana Prabhav’ of Haritaki helps to increase the Bala of individual with ‘_Bruhana karma’.
- Also it is said that Haritaki alone should not be given in this Ritu as it is ‘_Ruksha’ & ‘_Ushna’ which might cause adverse effect if consumed alone. Hence it is advisable to use Haritaki with ‘_Dravyas’ like Jaggery in this Ritu.

Varsha Ritu – Haritaki + Saindhav:-

- This is the Kala in which ‘_Prakopa-Avastha’ of ‘_Vata dosha’ is seen naturally
- ‘_Lavan rasatmaka Saindhav’ works best with ‘_Pancharasatmak Haritaki’ producing effect of all Six Rasas. Also ‘_Lavan rasa’ is said to be ‘_Snigdha’ which is of great use to act on with ‘_Ruksha gunatmaka Haritaki’ in ‘_Vatta Prakupita Ruksha Sharir’.
- This works on ‘_Sanchit Pitta dosha’, & also ‘_Saindhav’ is said to be ‘_Avidahi’ by Acharya Charak which works on ‘_Tikshna, Ushna’ Gunas of ‘_Pitta dosha’.

Sharada Ritu – Haritaki + Sharkara (Sita):-

- This is the Kala in which ‘_Prakopa-Avastha’ of ‘_Pitta dosha’ is seen naturally.
- ‘_Bala’ of the ‘_Sharir & Agni’ starts to regain in this season.
- The main factors seen in this season are ‘_Sheeta, Snigdha & Pitta Prakopa-Avastha’.
- To compensate these factors ‘_Madhur rasatmaka & Sheet’ gunatmaka ‘_Sharkara’ is used along with Haritaki.
- Also Acharya Charak has stated all the properties shows the ‘_Pitta-Shaman’ action of ‘_Sharkara’.
- These properties are boosted with the combination of Haritaki which itself is ‘_Tridosh-hara & Rasayana’ in nature.

Hemanta Ritu – Haritaki + Shunthi:-

- This is one of the healthiest seasons of all. □
- In this Ritu Snigdha & Sheeta Gunas are aggravated along with aggravation of Bala of Jatha-Agni.
- This is the Kala in which Sanchaya-Avastha of Kapha dosha is started & further carried out till Shishira Ritu.
- Thus in this Ritu-Haritaki is advised with Shunthi Also Ushna guna & Kapha-hara guna of both the drugs gives booster effect to work on Sheeta guna of the Ritu as well as Sanchit Kapha dosha & helps to compensate it.

Conclusion :-

Haritaki is a wonderful herb as it offers several benefits as being cheap and easily available. It can be taken throughout the year with specific anupan in different seasons. It would help in this way not only to maintain health, but to avoid the seasonal disturbances in body and other common seasonal diseases like diarrhea, cold, cough, flu etc. Haritaki 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 karma by detoxifying and balancing the bodily humors throughout the year.

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