

REVIEW ARTICLE

Critical Insights into the Therapeutic Potential of $\mathit{Piccha} \; \mathit{Basti}-A$ Review

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Panchakarma (~five basic therapeutic procedures in Ayurvedic medicine) therapies, integral to Ayurvedic management, include Basti (~medicated enema), targeting Vata imbalances. Piccha Basti, a subtype, employs a standardized blend of honey, raw sugar, clarified butter, medicinal paste, and herbal decoction. It addresses gastrointestinal disorders such as diarrhea and inflammatory bowel disease.

Materials and Methods: The study reviewed classical Ayurvedic texts including *Brihatrayee* and *Laghutrayee* and conducted a comprehensive search across various databases and journals such as PubMed, JAIM, and ResearchGate for information on "*Basti*" and "*Piccha Basti*." Individual constituent drugs of *Piccha Basti* were also investigated. Relevant articles were critically analyzed to draw conclusions.

Results: Basti (~medicated enema), administered rectally, targets the colon, primarily affected by Vatadosha in classical texts. It acts on Vata dosha, Pitta, and Kapha dosha, maintaining equilibrium. The Virya (potency) spreads systemically, exhibiting local and systemic effects. Picchabasti constituents, predominantly Madhur (sweet), Tikta (pungent), and Kashaya (astringent), possess properties such as Picchil (~viscous), Sangrahi (~absorbent), Raktashodhaka (~hemostatic), Shonitasthapana (~blood-staunching), Vranaropana (~wound-healing), and Shothahara (~anti-inflammatory), expediting gut healing. Picchil (~viscous) property protects the gut mucosa, while Sangrahi (~absorbent) property regulates stool consistency. Raktashodhaka (~hemostatic) and Shonitasthapan (~blood-staunching) properties control bleeding, and Vranaropaka Karma (~wound-healing) aids ulcer healing.

Conclusion: In *Ayurvedic* literature, *Piccha Basti* is lauded for its therapeutic efficacy in treating conditions such as *Jirna Atisara* (~chronic diarrhea), *Pravahika* (~dysentery), and *Grahani Dosha* (~irritable bowel syndrome). On reviewing numerous articles detailing the constituents of *Piccha Basti*, it has been concluded that these components possess specific chemical constituents that exert a targeted effect on inflammatory bowel disease.

1. INTRODUCTION

Panchakarma (five basic therapeutic procedures in Ayurvedic medicine) therapies hold a prominent place in *Ayurvedic* disease management, with a rich history of efficacy and safety documented over centuries of practice. Among these therapies, *Basti* (medicated enema), is a principal treatment of the *Shodhana* (~purification process), stands out as a critical therapeutic approach for addressing

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PG Scholar, Department of Panchakarma, National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed to be University (*De novo*), Jaipur, Rajasthan, India. Email: bhoomijchaudhary1717@gmail.com various ailments, particularly those related to *Vata* imbalances.^[1] Classical texts delineate two primary types of Basti: *Asthapana Basti* and *Anuvasana Basti*,^[2] distinguished by their respective compositions of decoction and oleaginous substances. The composition of *Niruha Basti* is meticulously chosen to address the accumulation of pathological *Doshas* within the body, aiming to eliminate them effectively.^[3] *Piccha Basti*, categorized as a subtype of *Asthapana Basti* (therapeutic decoction enema) or *Niruha Basti* (therapeutic decoction enema) within the *Ayurvedic* tradition, comprises a specific formulation featuring a standardized blend of *Madhu* (honey), *Sharkara* (raw sugar), *Ghrita* (clarified butter derived from cow's milk), *Kalka* (a finely prepared paste of plant-based medicinal substances), and

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Kwath (a herbal decoction).^[4] The therapeutic focus of *Piccha Basti* is directed toward alleviating compromised gastrointestinal conditions, including *Jirna Atisara* (~chronic diarrhea), *Pravahika* (~dysentery), and *Grahani Dosha* (~irritable bowel syndrome [IBS]).^[5] A review of the therapeutic potential of *Piccha Basti* is warranted due to the increasing burden of IBD resulting from unhealthy lifestyles and dietary habits. Conventional treatments often carry adverse effects, prompting a search for safer and more effective alternatives. This review aims to elucidate the mechanisms underlying the therapeutic effects of *Piccha Basti*, particularly its anti-inflammatory properties, immunomodulatory effects, intestinal protective mechanisms, and role in maintaining gut microbiotic homeostasis.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

For this study, an extensive review of classical *Ayurvedic* texts including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Ashtanga Sangraha*, *Sharangdhar Samhita*, *Chakradatta*, *Yogratnakar*, and *Bhavaprakasha* was conducted. A comprehensive search using keywords "*Basti*" and "*Piccha* Basti" was performed across various databases and journals such as PubMed, *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine*, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar that were published until the date April 2024. In addition, each constituent drug of *Piccha Basti* was searched individually in both indexed and non-indexed journals. On identification of relevant articles, a final database was meticulously reviewed, and conclusions were drawn based on critical analysis of the findings.

3. RESULTS

Therefore, based on the comprehensive review conducted, it is evident that *Piccha Basti* emerges as a promising modality for the treatment of *Grahani dosha* with special reference to inflammatory bowel disease.

3.1. Overview of Piccha Basti and Therapeutic Uses

Table 1 explains Piccha Basti according to different Acharyas.

3.2. Method of Preparation

Piccha Basti, considered a type of *Niruha Basti* in *Ayurveda*, shares a similar preparation method. However, *Acharya Charaka* provides a distinct method in his *Atisara chikitsa adhyaya* (the chapter management on diarrhea), involving the utilization of *Salmalia malbarica* stems. These stems are encased in *Kusha* (~green grass), bundled, covered with black mud, and dried in the shade. Afterward, the dried bundle undergoes heating in cow dung fire until it reaches a shining red-hot state. Subsequently, it is cooled, broken, and triturated to extract the processed *Salmali* stem. This resultant paste is mixed with boiled milk, *Ghrita*, and a paste of *Madhuka* in appropriate proportions to form the Basti formulation.^[6]

A different preparation method is outlined by *Acharya Sushruta* in *Chikitsa sthan*, which involves boiling *Badar*, *Erawati*, *Shelu*, *Shalmali*, and *Dhanvanankura* with milk, followed by straining and mixing with honey and blood from animals such as *Varah*, *Mahish*, *Aurabhra*, *Krishna Murga*, *Aja*, or *Kukkuta*. Other *Ayurvedic* scholars also adopt these methods for preparing the *Basti*.^[14]

3.3. Properties of the Drugs Used in Piccha Basti

The drugs which are used as a substance of *Piccha Basti* by various *Acharyas* described in Table 2.

3.4. Gritha (Ghee)^[22]

- Rasa: Madhura (sweet)
- Virya: Sheeta (cold)
- Vipaka: Madhura (sweet)

Its properties are Agnideepana (~promotes digestive fire), Alpabhishyandi (~it causes very minimal or no obstruction to the channels), Chakshushya (~beneficial for vision), Medya (~increases memory power), Pittanilaharam (~pacifies vata and pitta), Kanthivardhaka (~increases brightness), Ojovardhakam (~increases immunity), Lavanya Vardhakam (~Increases lusture), Ayurvardakam (~increases life span), and Swarsmrithikaram (~promotes voice and power).

3.5. Dugdha (Milk)^[23]

- Rasa: Madhura (sweet)
- Virya: Sheeta (cold)
- Vipaka: Madhura (sweet)

Its properties are Vata Pitta haram (~pacifies vata and Pitta), Sram (~mobile in nature), Sadha Sukrakaram (~promotes semen instantaneously), Sheetalam (~cool in nature), Satmyam sarva Shareeranam (~suitable to all persons), Jeevaniyam (~life promoter), Brhimanam (~nutritious), Vajikaram (~aphrodisiac), Vaya Stapanam (~life stabilizer), Sandhikaram (~heals up fractures), Rasayam (~tissue vitalizer), and Dosha Dhatu Mala Srotasaam kinchith kledakaram (~it enhances mild moisture to Dosha, Dhatu, Mala, and Srotas).

3.6. Madhu (Honey)[24]

- Rasa: Madhura (sweet)
- Anurasa: Kashaya
- Virya: Sheeta (cold)
- Vipaka: Madhura (sweet).

It has properties such as *Grahi* (~absorbent), *Vilekanam* (~depletory of body fats), *Deepanam* (~appetizer), and *Vranashodanaropanam* (~*clears and heals ulcers*). It is helpful in treating skin diseases, cough, hemorrhoids, urinary tract disorders, worm infestations, diarrhea, and constipation. Its *Yogavahi* property helps in speeding up the *Basti* action.

The above all Dravya having mostly similar properties such as *Madhur*, *Tikta, Kashay rasa*, and *Sheetavirya*. This ingredients doing action on body such as *Grahi* (~absorbent), *Snigdha* (~unctuous), *Dipana* (~increase digestive power), *Raktasodhana* (~blood purifying), *Sothagna* (~anti-inflammatory), cure *Shrama* (tiredness), *Trishna* (~thirst), *Daha* (~burning), *Picchila* (~sliminess), *Dahaprashman* (~decrease burning sensation), *Stambhana* (~to block), cure the disease of *Raktapitta* and *Vatapitta*.

3.7. Mode of action of Piccha Basti

In Figure 1, the mode of action of *Piccha Basti* is elucidated with a focus on the predominant utilization of *Madhur*, *Tikta*, and *Kashay rasa Dravyas*.

4. DISCUSSION

Basti, administered through the anus route, delivers medicinal liquid directly into the *Pakwashaya* (~colon). In classical texts, the *Pakwashaya* (~colon) is identified as the site primarily affected by *Vatadosha*.^[25] Therefore, *Basti* primarily acts on *Vatadosha*, followed

by *Pitta* and *Kapha Dosha*,^[26] ultimately maintaining equilibrium among the three doshas. In addition, the *Virya* (~potency) of the *Basti Dravya* spreads throughout the body, enabling *Basti* to exhibit both local and systemic functions.

The constituents of *Piccha Basti* predominantly possess the tastes of *Madhur* (sweet), *Tikta* (bitter), and *Kashaya*(astringent), along with properties such as *Picchil* (~viscous), *Sangrahi* (~absorbent), *Raktashodhaka* (~hemostatic), *Shonitasthapana* (~bloodstaunching), *Vranaropana* (~wound-healing), and *Shothahara* (~antiinflammatory).

These medicinal qualities collectively facilitate faster healing of the gut. The *Picchil* (~viscous) property provides a protective layering of the damaged mucosal lining in the gut, safeguarding it from chemical irritation. *Sangrahi* (~absorbent) property, attributed to the *Kashayrasa*,^[27] promotes water absorption in the large intestine, thus maintaining stool consistency and reducing the frequency of loose stools. The *Raktashodhaka* (~hemostatic) and *Shonitasthapan* (~blood-staunching) properties, attributed to *Tiktarasa* and *Sheetvirya*, respectively, pacify vitiated *Raktadosha*, thereby controlling bleeding from wounds. *Vranaropaka* karma, due to the *Kashayrasa*,^[27] plays a role in ulcer healing and the regeneration of new, healthy cells. *Kashaya rasa* also imparts antibacterial property can be likened to an anti-inflammatory effect, further aiding in the healing process.

As per Ayurvedic concept to correlate the modern concept, the Mocharasa of Shalmali is recognized for its rich content of tannic and gallic acids, known for their astringent properties that facilitate the precipitation of proteins. This action is beneficial for the restoration of the damaged epithelial mucosal lining of ulcerated mucosa.^[28] The methanol extract of Dalbergia sissoo stem bark (DSME) induces a significant increase in pH levels while concurrently reducing acid volume and acidity. This restoration of balance is highly favorable for exerting antiulcer effects. DSME potentially offers gastrointestinal protection through various mechanisms including scavenging of free radicals, restoration of enzymatic antioxidants, cryoprotection, and establishment of barriers against non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.^[29] Glycyrrhiza glabra exhibits significant antimicrobial activity, particularly against Escherichia coli bacteria, implicated in ulcerative colitis. This effect is attributed to the presence of secondary metabolites, including saponins, alkaloids, and flavonoids. Notably, compounds such as glabridin, glabrol, glabrene, hispaglabridin A, hispaglabridin B, 40-methylglabridin, and 3-hydroxyglabrol, isolated from G. glabra, contribute to this activity. The mechanism likely involves the downregulation of bacterial gene expression, inhibition of bacterial growth, and reduction of bacterial toxin production.[30] Nrf2, a key regulator, counteracts oxidative stress-induced cellular damage and inflammation by modulating anti-inflammatory cytokine production and inducing antioxidant enzymes. It plays a crucial role in preserving intestinal integrity in ulcerative colitis by translocating to the nucleus on oxidative stress exposure, thereby activating multiple antioxidant genes.^[31] In Ficus bengalensis, various phytochemicals such as phenolic compounds and flavonoids are implicated in its antioxidant properties. Flavonoids additionally exhibit mast cell stabilizing effects. Terpenoids and flavonoids possess anti-inflammatory properties, likely contributing to F. bengalensis' anti-inflammatory effects in inflammatory bowel disease.[32] The ethanol extract of Ficus racemosa has good anti-inflammatory activity demonstrated by inhibition of both cyclooxygenase-1 and 5-lipoxygenase enzymes, attributed to the

presence of a novel glycoside compound called racemosic acid.^[33] In Ficus religiosa, flavonoids exhibit anti-ulcerogenic activity and gastric protection activity.^[34] Mimosa pudica displays antimicrobial activity against E. coli associated with ulcerative colitis.[35] The crude hydroalcoholic extract of Holarrhena antidysenterica exhibits dual gut stimulant and relaxant properties, likely mediated by histamine receptor activation and calcium channel blockade, respectively. Holarrhena antidysenterica inhibits stable toxin production and intestinal secretions, reducing the virulence of enterotoxigenic E. coli strains, thus providing protection against various stages of diarrhea.^[36] The chloroform extract of Cyperus rotundus demonstrates direct inhibition of gene expression for proinflammatory cytokines including IL-4, IL-6, IL-12, and IFN-γ in colon tissue. The potential mechanism underlying its ameliorating effect is likely attributed to active principles such as natural steroids and terpenoids, either individually or synergistically, exerting antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects by downregulating proinflammatory cytokines.[37] Cordia dichotoma exhibits gastroprotective and antiulcer effects, along with antiinflammatory activity.[38]

5. CONCLUSION

After evaluating the actions of all its components, it has been determined that *Piccha Basti* exhibits potential in modulating gut microbiota composition, thereby promoting a balanced microbial ecosystem crucial for gastrointestinal health. Through this modulation, *Piccha Basti* may mitigate dysbiosis commonly associated with IBS, thereby aiding in the restoration of intestinal homeostasis. The synergistic combination of ingredients in *Piccha Basti* highlights its efficacy in managing conditions such as *Jirna Atisara* (~chronic diarrhea), *Pravahika* (~dysentery), and *Grahani Dosha* (~IBS), as endorsed by *Ayurvedic Acharyas*.

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7. AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All the authors contributed equally in the design and execution of the article.

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9. ETHICAL APPROVALS

This study is not required ethical clearance as it is a review study.

10. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

11. DATA AVAILABILITY

This is an original manuscript and all data are available for only review purposes from principal investigators.

12. PUBLISHERS NOTE

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Table 1: Piccha Basti according to different Acharyas.

Reference book	Drug used	Disease		
Cha. Chi. 19/64-68 ^[6] Su. Uttar. 40/142-143 ^[7] As. Hri. Chi. 9/73-76 ^[8] As. Hri. Chi. 9/95 ^[9] As. San. Chi. 11/21 ^[10]	Shalmalivrint, Yashthimadhu, Ksheer (milk), Ghrita (clarified butter), and Taila (oil), Madhu	 Paittika type of diarrhea, fever, edema, gulma (~abdominal lumps), chronic diarrhea, grahani (~digestive disorders), and the acute complications of purgation as well as of Asthapana Basti. Mild or massive bleeding from anus with pain, Vayu Vibanda (~obstruction pf Vayu) Pravahika, (~dysentery) Mootra-Purishsange (~obstruction of urine & stool), Gudpak (inflammation in rectum) 		
Cha. Chi. 14/225-228 ^[11] As. San. Chi. 10/41 ^[12] As. Hri. Chi. 8/125-128 ^[13]	Yavasa, Kushamoola, Kasamool, Shalmal pushpa, Nyagrodha, Udumbar, and Ashwattha shring for decoction, alongside Mocharasa, Smanga, Chandan, Utpal, Vatsaka beej, Priyangu, and Padmakeshar for paste material, with additional sugar, honey, and ghrita in the Basti	It cures dysentery, prolapsed of rectum, bleeding, and fever.		
Su. Chi. 38/85-86 ^[14] Chakradatta/Niruhadhikar/32-34 ^[15]	Badar, Nagbala, Shelu, Shalmali, and Dhanvanakur cooked with Ksheer and Madhu, supplemented with blood from various animals such as varah, mahish, aurabha, baidal, aeney, kaukkutam, and aja.			
As. Hri. Chi. 9/118-119 ^[16]	Vacha, Bilva, Pippli, Kushtha, Satahya Saindhav add in piccha basti	Obstruction due to <i>Vatta & Kapha</i> , Secretion of <i>Kapha</i> in <i>Atisara</i> (diarrhea), Pain in <i>Pravahika</i> (~Dysentery)		
As. Hri. Chi. 9/96-98 ^[17] Yogratnakar/Atisarchikitsa/84-85 ^[18]	Leaves of <i>Shimshapa</i> and <i>Kovidar</i> and <i>yava</i> are boiled in water and add <i>Ghrit, Ksheera</i> .	Picchastrav (~Oily secretion), Gudabhransha (~prolapsed rectum), pain due to Pravahaan (~Dysentery), Kshatkshina		
Sha. Uttarakhand. 6/23–24 ^[19]	<i>Badar, Nagbala, Shelu, Shalmali,</i> and <i>Dhanvna, Musta</i> cooked with <i>Ksheer</i> and <i>Madhu,</i> supplemented with blood from various animals such as <i>Aja, Aurabha, and eney.</i> Dose -12 <i>pala</i>			
Yogratnakar/Atisarchikitsa/80–83 ^[20]	Shalmalipushpa, Ksheer, Ghrit, Taila, Yashthimadhu, Madhu	Mild or massive bleeding from anus with pain, Vayu Vibanda (~obstruction of vayu) Pravahika, (~IBS) Mootra-Purishsange (~obstruction of urine & stool)		
Bhavaprakasa/Purvakhand/ Panchakarmavidhiprakarna - 5/159,160 ^[21]	Badar, eravati, Shelu, Shalmalipushpa, Ankur boiled with Ksheer, add Madhu, the blood of Aja, Urbhra, Enah Dose – 12Pala			

Drug	Botanical name	Family	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka
Shalmali vrint	Salmalia malabarica	Bombacaceae	Madhura, Kashaya	Laghu, snigdha, picchil	Sheeta	Madhura
Shalmali niryasa	Salmalia malabarica	Bombacaceae	Kashaya,	Laghu, snigdha, picchil	Sheeta	Madhura
Yashthimadhu	Glycyrrhiza glabra	Leguminaceae	Madhura	Guru, snigdha	Sheeta	Madhura
Yavasa	Alhagi Camelorum	Leguminaceae	Madhura, Tikta, Kashaya	Laghu		Katu
Kasamool	Saccharum spontaneum	Poaceae	Madhura, kashaya	-	Sheeta	Madhura
Kushamool	Desmostachya bipinnata	Poaceae	Madhura, kashaya	Snigdha	Sheeta	Madhura
Shalmali pushpa	Salmalia malabarica	Bombacaceae	Madhura, kashayaa	Laghu, snigdha, picchil	Sheeta	Madhura
Nyagrodha	Ficus benghalensis	Moraceae	Kashaya	Guru, Ruksha	Sheeta	Katu
Udumbar	Ficus racemosa	Moraceae	Kashaya	Guru, Ruksha	Sheeta	Katu
Ashwattha shring	Ficus religiosa	Moraceae	Kashaya	Guru, Ruksha	Sheeta	Katu
Smanga	Mimosa pudica	Leguminosae	Kashya, Tikta	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Katu
Chandan	Santalum album	Santalaceae	Tikta, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Katu
Utpal	Nymphaea rubra	Nymphaeaceae	Madhura, Kashaya, Tikta	Laghu, Snigdha, Picchila	Sheeta	Katu
Vatsaka beej	Holarrhena antidysenterica	Apocynaceae	Tikta, Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Katu
Priyangu	Callicarpa Macrophylla	Verbenaceae	Tikta, Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	-
Padmakeshar	Prunus Puddum	Rosaceae	Kashya, Tikta	Laghu, Snigdha	Sheeta	-
Badar	Ziziphus sativa	Rhamnaceae	Madhura	Snigdha, Guru	Sheeta	-
Nagbala	Sida veronicaefolia	Malvaceae	Madhura amla, kashaya	Guru	Ushna	-
Shelu	Cordia dichotoma	Boraginaceae	Kashaya, Tikta-Bark Madhura - fruit	Guru, Snigdha	Sheeta	Katu
Dhanvanakur	Grewia tiliaefolia	Tiliaceae	Madhura, Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Madhura	Ushna
Shimshapa	Dalbergia sissoo	Fabaceae	Kashaya, Katu, Tikta	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Katu
Kovidar	Bauhinia variegata	Caesalpiniaceae	Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Katu
Musta	Cyperus rotundus L.	Cyperaceae	Tikta, Katu, Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Katu
Gritha		-	Madhura	Snigdha	Sheeta	Madhura
Dugdha		-	Madhura	Snigdha	Sheeta	Madhura
Honey		-	Madhura, Kashaya	Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura

Table 2: Various drugs are used by various acharyas in Pichha Basti.

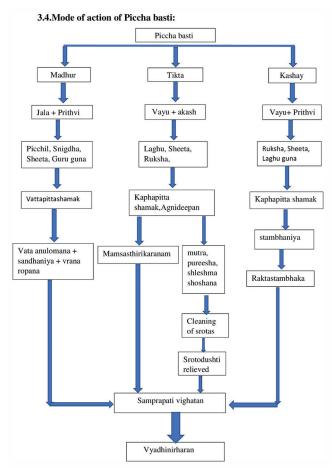


Figure 1: Mode of action of Pichha basti