

REVIEW ARTICLE

A Review of *Arshoghna Mahakashaya* in the *Charaka Samhita*

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ABSTRACT

Arsha, one of the most prevalent ano-rectal disorders, can manifest at any stage of life and is extensively described in *Ayurvedic* literature. These texts elucidate its etiology, pathology, symptomatology, classifications, and therapeutic approaches. *Arsha* denotes the abnormal proliferation of muscle tissue in various forms that arise in the rectum and adjacent areas, often as a consequence of imbalances in the *doshas* associated with the skin, muscle, and adipose tissues. Manifesting at the opening of the *guda marga* (anal passage), *Arsha* can be as problematic as an adversary, even in its mildest manifestations, leading to considerable discomfort and distress. The *Mahakashaya*, an Ayurvedic classification of medications based on their therapeutic actions (*Karmas*), provides valuable insights into the management of *Arsha*. *Acharya Charaka* categorizes *Arsha* into two types: *Ardra* (wet) and *Shushka* (dry). In the *Charaka Samhita*, *Sutrastana*, Chapter 4, the *Arshoghna Mahakashaya* group enumerates ten potent herbs known for their efficacy in the management of *Arsha*. These herbs include *Kutaja*, *Bilva*, *Chitraka*, *Shundi*, *Ativisha*, *Abhaya*, *Dhanvayasa*, *Daruharidra*, *Vacha*, and *Chavya*. Each plant in this category possesses specific *Rasa* (taste), *Guna* (qualities), *Veerya* (potency), and *Vipaka* (post-digestive effect), which collectively contribute to its therapeutic efficacy against *Arsha*. In the treatment of *Arshas*, *Tikta*, *Katu*, and *Kashaya rasa pradhana dravyas* are of critical importance. These medications are classified based on their pharmacological properties, thereby offering targeted relief to individuals affected by this condition.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, recognized as the science of life, outlines an ideal approach to living a disease-free, healthy, and prolonged existence. *Arsha* has emerged as one of the most prevalent and distressing conditions in the 21st century. Haemorrhoids, a

common affliction, impact at least half of the population at some point in their lives, with approximately 5% of individuals experiencing one or more symptoms associated with haemorrhoids^[1]. *Acharya* Susruta classified *Arsha roga* as one of the *Ashtamahagada*. According to *Acharya* Vagbhata, *mandagni* serves as the primary cause of all diseases. The details of niddan are mentioned in table 1. *Arsas* refers to the abnormal proliferation of muscle tissue in various forms appearing in the rectum and other areas, resulting from an

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imbalance in the *doshas* associated with the skin, muscle, and adipose tissues. This condition manifests at the opening of the *guda marga* and can afflict individuals significantly, akin to an adversary. Even the mildest form of this condition can lead to considerable distress and discomfort for the patient. Modern medicine typically addresses haemorrhoids through symptomatic treatments—including analgesics, antibiotics, local anesthetics, laxatives, and similar remedies—that alleviate symptoms but often neglect the underlying pathology^[2]. Consequently, many patients ultimately require surgical intervention. Currently, haemorrhoids are treated through both surgical and non-surgical methods; however, these strategies frequently entail risks and potential complications, thereby prompting researchers to investigate safer and more effective therapeutic options. There is an urgent need to identify a safe, effective, and affordable therapy that addresses a broad spectrum of clinical presentations of haemorrhoids, reduces the necessity for haemorrhoidectomy and other para-surgical interventions, and provides comprehensive management of haemorrhoids in their early stages. The *samprapti*, *prarupa* are mentioned below in flow chart fig -1 .the *rupa* are mentioned in tabel 2. Every treatment and condition warrants rigorous research, and any areas of uncertainty should be resolved promptly. In light of these objectives, the *Charakokta Arshoghna Mahakashaya*, recommended for managing *Arsha* in Chapter Four of the Charaka Samhita, was selected for the present study.

Classification on the Basis of Origin^[3]

1. *Sahaja*
2. *Janmotharakalaja*
3. *Sahaja Arsha*

It is due to vitiation of Shonitha and Sukra. It is difficult to diagnose, because it is present deep inside (*Durdarshanani*)

- *Janmotharakalaja*

It is due to incompatible Ahara and Vihara.

Classification on the Basis of characters of Bleeding^[4]

1. *Ardra*
2. *Shushka*
1. *Ardra*

Also called as *Sravi Arsha*. It is due to aggravation of rakta and pitha with excessive discharge.

2. *Shushka Arsha*

It is caused by aggravation of Vayu and Kapha.

Classification on the Basis of Site of Origin^[5]

1. *Bahya*
2. *Abhyanthara*
1. *Bahya*

It is *drishya*, occurring in *bahya vali*

2. *Abhyanthara*

It is *adrishya*, arising from *madhyama* and *antar vali*.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

All relevant information on *Arshoghna Mahakashaya* has been sourced from the Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana, Chapter 4 (*Kshadvirechan Shatashritiya Adhyaya*), as well as various textbooks on *Dravyaguna Vigyana*. Additional classical references have been drawn from the *Brihatrayi* and *Laghutrayi* texts.

Nowadays, haemorrhoids are becoming increasingly common among people. Classical references of 10 *Arshoghna* drugs by *Acharya Charaka* are found to cure effectively in *Arsha* the list are mentioned in table 3. These herbs have been used for a long duration in the *Ayurvedic* system because of their efficacy. To explore the research conducted on medicinal plants like *kutaja*, *shunti*, *chitraka*, *bilva*, and others, which are referenced in *Arshoghna Mahakashaya*, a detailed study is required.

3. RESULT

Most of the *dravyas* included by *Acharya Charaka* in *Arshoghna Mahakashaya* are characterized by *Kashaya* (astringent), *Tikta* (bitter), and *Katu* (pungent) tastes. Among the herbs listed in *Arshoghna Mahakashaya*, *Tikta Rasa* and *Katu Rasa* herbs are the most prevalent, followed by *Kashaya*, *Madhura* (sweet), *Amla* (sour), and *Lavana* (salty) tastes.

Katu Rasa dravyas aid in *Agnidipana* (stimulating digestion), *Swyathunasana* (reducing swelling), and *Rochana* (enhancing taste). *Tikta Rasa* herbs support *Arochakaghna* (relieving anorexia), *Dipana* (enhancing appetite), and *Pachana* (digestive) effects. *Kashaya Rasa* herbs contribute to *Ropana* (healing), *Sosana* (drying), and *Stambhana* (astringent) actions. This indicates that medications with *Tikta*, *Katu*, and *Kashaya* tastes are particularly important in treating *Arshas* (haemorrhoids). Since *Arsha* is a *Raktadoshaja* (blood-related) and *Mamsaja* (muscle-related) disorder, *Tikta* and *Kashaya* herbs help reduce blood impurities (*Raktadosha*), while *Katu Rasa* aids in reducing muscle-related imbalances (*Mamsa doshas*).

The majority of these herbs have *Ushna Virya* (heating potency), with a few having *Sheeta Virya* (cooling potency).

Ushna Virya herbs relieve constipation, promoting easier bowel movements and reducing dry haemorrhoids. Meanwhile, *Sheeta Virya* herbs help control bleeding by reducing excessive blood flow. The Arshoghna Mahakashaya karma and pharmacological action are mentioned in table 4 and table 5.

4. DISCUSSION

From the above study, we can conclude that *Mandagni* is the main cause of *Arsha*, by which *Apanavayu* gets aggravated. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned *Arshoghna Mahakashaya* in *Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana* 4th chapter. It includes a group of 10 drugs. It includes both *Ushna* and *Sheeta Veerya* drugs. *Ushna Veerya* drugs can be used to reduce constipation and expel the stool easily in *Shushka Arsha*, and *Sheeta Veerya* drugs help to stop the excessive blood flow in *Ardra Arsha*. All the drugs explained in *Arshoghna Mahakashaya* are effective in *Arsha*.

5. CONCLUSION

In the study mentioned, *Acharya Charaka* precisely characterized herbal medications to address specific ailments. The herbal agents in *Arshoghna Mahakashaya* possess anti-haemorrhoidal properties, making them effective for treating haemorrhoids as well as various other conditions. Additionally, these herbs offer promising opportunities for creating therapeutic formulations based on their pharmacological actions.

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Nil.

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

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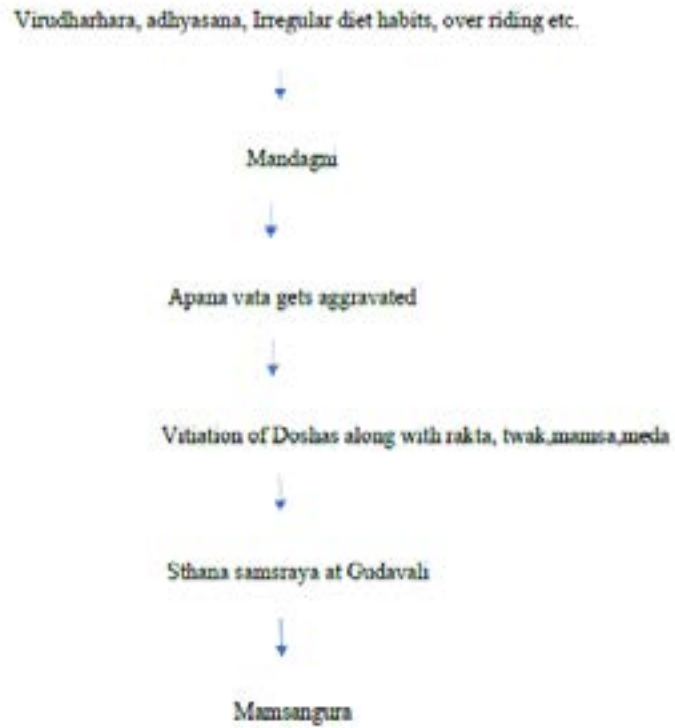
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Table 1: Nidana^[6]

| <i>AHARAJA</i> | <i>VIHARAJA</i> |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Abhishyandi</i> | <i>Ativyayama</i> |
| <i>Adhyashana</i> | <i>Divaswapna</i> |
| <i>Virudha</i> | <i>Shayyamutra</i> |
| <i>Ajeerna</i> | <i>Avyayama</i> |
| <i>Pramitha Ashana</i> | <i>Utkadasana</i> |
| <i>Ati Snehapana</i> | <i>Streeprasanga</i> |
| <i>Manda</i> | <i>Vegavidharana</i> |
| <i>Yusha</i> | |

SAMPRAPTI^[7]



PURVARUPA⁸

Anneasradha(Lack of Desire for food) Krichrath pakti(Digestion with Difficulty) Amlika (Sour belching)

Paridaha (Burning Sensation) Vishtambha (Long Stasis of Food) Pipasa (Severe thirst)

Sakthi Sadana (Debility of thighs)

Atopa (Flatulence)

Karshya (Emaciation)

Udgara Bahulyam(Belching)

Kasa – Swasa (Cough & Dyspnea)

Balahani (Loss of Strength)

Indriya Dourbalya (Weakness of Sense Organs)

Guda parikarthana (Cutting pain in the anus)

Table 2: *Rupa*^[9]

| <i>DOSHA</i> | <i>LAKSHANA</i> |
|--------------|--|
| VATAJA | Parishushka, Aruna, Vivarnini, Vishama madhyani, Kadamba pushpa, Tundikeri, Nadimukula, Suchimukhkrithi |
| PITHAJA | Neelagrani, Thanu, Visarpani, Peethavabhasini, Yakrithprakasini, Shukajihva, Yavamadhyani, Jalouka vakthra sadrushyani |
| KAPHAJA | Swethani, Mahamulani, Sthira, Vritha, Snigdha Pandu, Kareera panasasthi gosthanakarani nabhithya na sra-vanthi, Kandu bahulani |
| RAKTAJA | Nyagrodha, vidrama Kakanandhikaphala sadrishya |
| SANNIPATHAJA | Symptoms of all Doshas |

Table 3: List of Arshoghna Mahakashaya^[10]

| NAME | BOTANICAL NAME | FAMILY | USEFUL PART |
|-------------|----------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Kutaja | Holarehena antidysenterica | Apocynaceae | Stem bark & seed |
| Bilva | Aegle marmelos | Rutaceae | Root, Fruit, leaves |
| Chitraka | Plumbago zeylanica | Plumbaginaceae | Root & root bark |
| Nagara | Zingiber officinale | Zingiberaceae | Rhizome |
| Athivisha | Aconitum heterophyllum | Ranunculaceae | Tuberous root |
| Abhaya | Terminalia chebula | Combretaceae | Fruit |
| Dhanvayasa | Fagonia cretica | Zygophyllaceae | Panchanga |
| Daruharidra | Berberis aristata | Berberidaceae | Root & root bark |
| Vacha | Acorus calamus | Araceae | Rhizome |
| Chavya | Piper chaba | Piperaceae | Root |

Table 4: List of Arshoghna gana mahakashaya Rasapanchaka and Karma

| NAME | RASA | GUNA | VEERYA | VIPAKA | DOSHA KARMA |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------|---------|---------------------|
| Kutaja | Tiktha, | Laghu, | Sheetha | Katu | Pitha-Kapha Shamaka |
| Bilva | Kashaya Tiktha, | Ruksha Laghu, | Ushna | Katu | Kapha-Vata Shamaka |
| Chithraka | Kashaya Katu | Ruksha Theekshna | Ushna | Katu | Vata-Kapha Shamaka |
| Shundi | Katu | Laghu, | Ushna | Katu | Vata-Kapha Shamaka |
| Ativisha | Katu, Tiktha | Snigdha Laghu, | Ushna | Katu | Pitha-Kapha Shamaka |
| Abhaya | Pancharasa | Ruksha Laghu, Ruksha | Ushna | Madhura | Tridosha Shamaka |
| Dhanvayasa | Madhura, Kashaya, Tiktha | Laghu | Sheetha | Madhura | Vata-Pitha Shamaka |
| Daruharidra | Tiktha | Laghu, | Ushna | Katu | Pitha-Kapha Shamaka |
| Vacha | Katu, Tiktha | Ruksha Laghu, | Ushna | Katu | Kapha-Vata Shamaka |
| Chavya | Katu | Ruksha Laghu, Ruksha | Ushna | Katu | Vata-Kapha Shamaka |

Table 5: Pharmacological activity of *Arshoghna mahakashaya* Dravyas

| Name | Pharmacological Activity |
|-------------|--|
| Kutaja | Antidiarrhoeal, Anti Microbial |
| Bilva | Antidiarrhoeal, Anti-Inflammatory |
| Chithraka | Anti-inflammatory |
| Shundi | Anti-Inflammatory, Antimicrobial |
| Ativisha | Antimicrobial, Antipyretic, Antidiarrhoeal |
| Abhaya | Anti-Inflammatory, Antimicrobial |
| Dhanvayasa | Anti-Inflammatory, Antimicrobial |
| Daruharidra | Anti-Inflammatory, Anti-Diarrhoeal |
| Vacha | Anti-Ulcer, Antimicrobial |
| Chavya | Anti-Inflammatory, Antidiarrhoeal |