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NAGARADI AGADA – A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Scorpion envenomation or *Vrischika damsha* is a common scenario in the rural parts of India. Though fatal cases reported in the country are few, the symptoms of scorpion stings are unbearable. Excruciating pain, swelling and burning sensation post bites are hardly manageable especially by children, aged, weak and immunocompromised people. Ayurveda has excellent remedies against *Vrischika visha*. *Nagaradi Agada* is one such formulation that is very effective against *Vrischika visha*. This is an *agada yoga* meant for external application. Easy preparation and administration make this *yoga* a right choice for *Vrischika Visha*. Moreover, it shows *vishahara, sophahara, rujahara, kandugna* properties that effectively reduces all the symptoms of *visha*.

KEYWORDS: Scorpion envenomation, *Vrischika visha*, *Nagaradi Agada*, *Vishahara.*

INTRODUCTION

Scorpion envenomation is an acute poisoning condition especially in the rural parts of India. Though mortality rates are usually low in scorpion bites, it can cause morbidity in children and immunocompromised people. It is estimated that there are more than 1500 species variety of scorpions in the world among which 30 varieties can cause severe toxic manifestations in the body when sting.[1] Scorpion venom is mainly composed of neurotoxic proteins, inorganic salts, amino acids, enzymes and organic compounds. They produce both neurotoxic and haemolytic toxic effects in the body. Severity of envenomation mainly depends upon several factors like sensitivity of person, anatomical site of bite, amount of venom injected and time lapse between bite and treatment. Symptoms of scorpion bite can range from local manifestations like redness, pain and swelling at the site of bite to moderate symptoms like fever, nausea, vomiting, joint pain and tachycardia.[2] Rarely the symptoms can aggravate and result in death mainly due to myocarditis and encephalopathy.[3]

References of *Vrishcika visha lakshanas* and its treatment can be found in many literatures including the *brihatrayi's* and regional and traditional *visha chikitsa grantha's*. Like the modern understanding of scorpion envenomation signs and symptoms, that are categorized into mild, moderate and severe, *Vrischika* is classified into 3 types namely: *Manda, Madhyama* and *Mahavisha Vrischika.*[4] *Vahnivat daha, atiruk, Shyavata, toda* and *sphutana* are the *samanya lakshanas* of *vrischika visha.*[5]

Nagaradi Agada is a unique formulation explained by *Acharya Vagbhata* in the context of *Vrischika visha chikitsa.*[6]

INGREDIENTS

There are only 5 ingredients in *Nagaradi Agada*.

Table 1.

SI NO.	INGREDIENT	BOTANICAL NAME	FAMILY	COMMON NAME
1.	*Nagara*	Zingiber officinale	Zingiberaceae	Dry ginger
2.	*Kapota purisha*			Excreta of pigeon
3.	*Beejapuraka*	Citrus medica	Rutaceae	Citron / Lemon
4.	*Haratala*			Orpiment
5.	*Saindhava*			Rock Salt

Table 2: Pharmacodynamics of *Nagaradi Agada.*

SI NO.	DRUG	*RASA*	*GUNA*	*VIRYA*	*VIPAKA*	*KARMA*
1.	*Nagara*[7]	*Katu*	*Laghu, Snigdha*	*Ushna*	*Madhura*	*Kaphavatahara, Sothahara, Shoolaprashamana, Vatanulomana*
2.	*Kapota purisha*	*Katu*	*Laghu, Rukha, Tikshna*	*Ushna*	*Katu*	*Pittakapha shamaka*
3.	*Beejapuraka*[8]	*Madhura, Amla*	*Laghu, Snigdha*	*Sheeta*	*Madhura*	*Vatapittahara*
4.	*Haratala*[9]	*Katu*	*Snigdha*	*Ushna*	*Katu*	*Ojuskara, Balakara*
5.	*Saindhava*[10]	*Lavana*	*Sheeta, Ruksha*	*Sheeta*	*Madhura*	*Tridoshahara, Mutrala, Shoolahara*

Table 3: Pharmacological properties of *Nagaradi Agada.*

SI. NO.	DRUG	ACTIVE PRINCIPLE	ACTION
1.	*Nagara*	Gingerol, Shogol	Anti-inflammatory
2.	*Kapota purisha*	Nitrogen, Organic compounds, Minerals like Ca, Mg, Fe, Zn.	Anti-platelet action[11]
3.	*Beejapuraka*	Citron oil, Flavonoids	Anti-bacterial, Antioxidant, Anti-inflammatory[12]
4.	*Haratala*	As_2S_3	
5.	*Saindhava*	NaCl	Anti-inflammatory, Antioxidant, Cardio-tonic

PREPARATION OF *NAGARADI AGADA*

All the ingredients except *Beejapuraka rasa* are taken in equal quantity (10 grams each). They are made into fine powders separately using a *khalva yantra*. All the fine powders are later mixed in the *khalvayantra* and triturated properly to obtain a homogeneous mixture. Ripened *matulunga* or *beejapuraka* is taken and *swarasa* is obtained by straining the crushed fruits. A cloth or fine strainer is used to filter the *swarasa*. Fine powdered mixture is then triturated along with the *swarasa* of *beejapuraka*. Once it attains the consistency of *lepa* it is ready to administer. If not for immediate use, *bhavana* can be continued until the mixture turns dry. Dry powdered form of *Nagaradi Agada* can be stored in an airtight container and can be used later by adding suitable adjuvant.

MODE OF ADMINISTRATION

Used as *lepa* or external application at the site of bite.

DISCUSSION

Nagaradi Agada contains 5 Ingredients: *Nagara, Kapota purisha, Haratala, Saindava lavana* and *Beejapuraka Swarasa*.

Nagara exhibits anti-inflammatory properties. *Shothahara, Shoolagna* and *Kaphavatahara* properties of *Shunti* effectively helps in reducing the symptoms of scorpion envenomation.

Kapota purisha or pigeon's excreta has shown anti-platelet activity. The Indian red scorpion venom has direct effect on the heart being cardiotoxic in nature.

Haratala is widely used in many Ayurveda formulations. Its *rasayana* properties are excellent even though not used extensively. *Hartala* is used in many skin diseases and shows *vishagna guna.*

Saindhava lavana shows cardiotonic properties that acts against the scorpion venom. Anti-inflammatory and *shoolahara* properties adds on to the symptomatic management of scorpion stings.

Beejapooraka swarasa being *amla rasa* and *hrudya*, containing flavonoids as active principles shows excellent cardioprotective and antioxidant properties. Moreover, it acts as the *bhavana dravya* in the preparation of agada yoga. Being acidic in nature, citrus juice effectively neutralizes the highly alkaline pigeon's excreta and removes toxins from it.

PROBABLE MODE OF ACTION

On analysing the *rasapanchaka* of individual ingredients, the *yoga* is *Katu rasa pradhana, Laghu* and *snigdha* in *guna, Ushna veerya, Madhura vipaka* predominantly. The formulation shows *tridoshahara* property. Cardioprotective properties exhibited by individual drugs effectively eliminates the hazardous effects of venom. *Vishagna* property of *Nagaradi Agada* can be due to

prabhava of the *yoga* than the effect of individual ingredients.

CHALLENGES

Haratala being a *dhatu visha*, should be used only after adequate *shodhana*.

Very few research works have been carried out on the *Kapota purisha*. Guano or pigeon poop is a highly concentrated organic waste which contains harmful microorganisms like E-coli and salmonella.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda classifies *Vrischika visha* into *Sadhya* and *Asadhya* based on the prognosis. Among this, *sadhya* variety can be correlated to the scorpion stings that produce mainly local symptoms like pain, burning sensation, swelling and itching. This can be successfully treated with *Nagaradi Agada*. Pharmacodynamics and properties exhibited by individual ingredients of this formulation supports this. Fewer ingredients, easily available drugs, simple preparation, safe and convenient mode of administration are the major advantages of this formulation.

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CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

NIL.

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