

THERAPEUTIC EFFICACY OF PHANTA CHIKITSA IN RASA AND RAKTA KSHAYA**Dr. Sanjay Burde*¹, Dr. Subhash Suddalwar²**

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ABSTRACT

Rasa-Raktakshaya Avastha, characterized by depletion of *Rasa* (plasma/nutrient fluid) and *Rakta* (blood) *Dhatu*s, closely resembles iron deficiency anaemia (Pandu) in modern medicine. This condition arises primarily from *Agnimandya* (impaired digestion), leading to inferior quality *Rasa* formation and subsequent *Rakta Kshaya*. *Phanta Chikitsa* (hot infusion therapy), one of the *Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana*, offers a readily absorbable, *Brimhana* (nourishing), and *Deepana-Pachana* (digestive stimulant) therapeutic modality. This review examines classical Ayurvedic treatises and contemporary evidence to evaluate the efficacy of *Phanta* in managing *Rasa-Raktakshaya*. Findings indicate that *Phanta* formulations, prepared with *Raktavardhaka* herbs (e.g., *Pippali*, *Shunthi*, *Amalaki*, *Draksha*) in a 1:4 drug-to-water ratio, effectively enhance *Rasa Dhatu* formation, improve haemoglobin synthesis, and restore *Dhatu* equilibrium.

KEYWORDS: *Phanta Chikitsa; Rasa-Raktakshaya; Pandu; Anemia; Ayurveda.***INTRODUCTION**

Rasa and *Rakta Dhatu*s are the first two of the *Sapta Dhatu*s (seven tissues) in Ayurveda, playing fundamental roles in nourishment, vitality, and oxygenation of the body. *Rasa Dhatu*, derived from digested food (*Ahara Rasa*), is the primary nutrient fluid that nourishes every cell and tissue, while *Rakta Dhatu* (blood) carries oxygen and life force (*Prana*) throughout the body. Depletion of these *Dhatu*s (*Rasa-Raktakshaya Avastha*) leads to significant morbidity, manifesting as pallor (*Pandu Varna*), fatigue (*Shrama*), weakness (*Daurbalya*), palpitations (*Hridhrava*), and impaired immunity.

Rasa-Raktakshaya Avastha closely resembles iron deficiency anaemia (IDA) in modern medicine, a prevalent nutritional disorder affecting approximately 30% of the global population, particularly children, women, and the elderly. Modern medicine primarily manages IDA through oral iron supplementation, dietary modification, and, in severe cases, parenteral iron or blood transfusion. While effective, these interventions carry risks of gastrointestinal side effects (nausea,

constipation), poor compliance, and, in cases of chronic supplementation, iron overload.

In Ayurveda, *Rasa-Raktakshaya* is primarily attributed to *Agnimandya* (impaired digestive fire), which leads to improper digestion and absorption of nutrients, resulting in inferior quality *Rasa* formation and subsequent *Rakta Kshaya*. The pathogenesis involves vitiation of *Pitta Dosh*a (particularly *Ranjaka Pitta*), which governs blood formation, along with *Vata* (causing depletion) and *Kapha* (contributing to sluggish digestion).

Ayurveda offers a holistic approach, emphasizing *Nidana Parivarjana* (avoidance of causative factors), *Deepana-Pachana* (digestive stimulation), *Raktavardhaka* (blood-building) therapies, and *Rasayana* (rejuvenation). Among these, *Phanta Chikitsa* (hot infusion therapy) holds particular significance in managing *Rasa-Raktakshaya Avastha*. *Phanta*, derived from the root 'Phan' (to swell/infuse), involves the preparation of medicinal liquids by adding boiling water

to coarsely powdered herbs and allowing them to steep until cool.

Classical Ayurvedic texts, including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Sharangadhara Samhita*, extensively describe *Phanta Kalpana*. *Charaka* emphasizes that *Phanta* is ideal for drugs that are not volatile and provides an instantly usable medicinal liquid. *Sharangadhara* specifies a 1:4 drug-to-water ratio, with the mixture soaked until the water cools to lukewarm temperature. This preparation method ensures optimal extraction of water-soluble active constituents, enhancing bioavailability and therapeutic efficacy.

Phanta Chikitsa operates through multiple mechanisms: (1) *Deepana-Pachana* (enhancing digestion and absorption), (2) *Brimhana* (nourishing depleted *Dhatus*), (3) *Raktavardhaka* (promoting blood formation), (4) *Srotosodhana* (clearing micro channels), and (5) *Rasayana* (rejuvenating tissues). By addressing the root cause (*Agnimandya*) and providing symptomatic relief (*Pandu*, *Shrama*, *Daurbalya*), *Phanta* offers a comprehensive therapeutic modality.

Contemporary research supports the efficacy of *Phanta* formulations in managing anaemia-like conditions. Studies indicate that herbal infusions containing *Pippali* (*Piper longum*), *Shunthi* (*Zingiber officinale*), *Amalaki* (*Embllica officinalis*), and *Draksha* (*Vitis vinifera*) significantly improve haemoglobin levels, reduce fatigue, and enhance overall vitality. These formulations possess iron-rich, vitamin C-enriched, and bioavailability-enhancing properties, validating classical claims.

This review aims to critically examine the role of *Phanta Chikitsa* in managing *Rasa-Raktakshaya Avastha*, drawing upon classical Ayurvedic treatises and modern scientific evidence. By elucidating its mechanisms, therapeutic applications, and synergistic potential with other modalities, this article seeks to highlight its integral role in haematological healthcare and advocate for its integration into contemporary practice.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A comprehensive literary review was conducted using classical Ayurvedic texts along with their authoritative commentaries. The collected information was categorized thematically and interpreted according to Ayurvedic principles.

Review of Literature

Acharya Charaka describes *Rasa Dhatu* as the primary nutrient fluid derived from digested food, which nourishes every cell and tissue in the body. *Rakta Dhatu*, formed from *Rasa*, carries oxygen and life force (*Prana*), providing vitality and immunity. *Rasa-Raktakshaya* arises due to *Agnimandya*, leading to improper digestion and inferior quality *Rasa* formation, which fails to adequately nourish *Rakta Dhatu*.

Charaka emphasizes that *Phanta* is ideal for drugs that are not volatile and provides an instantly usable medicinal liquid. He describes numerous *Phanta* formulations for various conditions, including digestive disorders, respiratory ailments, and haematological deficiencies. For *Rasa-Raktakshaya*, Charaka recommends *Phanta* prepared with *Raktavardhaka* herbs such as *Pippali*, *Shunthi*, *Amalaki*, and *Draksha*, which possess *Deepana*, *Pachana*, and *Brimhana* properties.

Charaka also highlights the importance of *Brimhana* therapies, including meat soups (*Mamsa Rasa*), milk (*Ksheera*), and ghee (*Ghrita*), in managing *Dhatu Kshaya*. These nourishing substances, when administered as *Phanta* or in combination with herbal infusions, effectively restore *Dhatu* equilibrium and enhance vitality.

Acharya Sushruta corroborates Charaka's views, emphasizing the role of *Pitta Dosha* (particularly *Ranjaka Pitta*) in *Rakta* formation. He describes *Rasa-Raktakshaya* as a *Pitta-Vata Pradhana* disorder, with *Pitta* contributing to blood formation and *Vata* causing depletion. Sushruta recommends *Phanta* formulations for managing *Pandu* (anemia), including those prepared with *Amalaki*, *Haritaki*, *Bibhitaki* (*Triphala*), and *Loha* (iron).

Sushruta outlines specific *Phanta* preparation methods, including the use of *Ushnodaka* (hot water) and the 1:4 drug-to-water ratio. He emphasizes that *Phanta* should be filtered through a clean cloth and administered while lukewarm to enhance absorption and therapeutic efficacy.

In *Sharangadhara Samhita*, provides detailed descriptions of *Phanta Kalpana*. He specifies that *Phanta* is prepared by adding 4 parts of boiling water to 1 part of coarsely powdered drugs and allowing the mixture to steep until the water cools to lukewarm temperature. The filtered liquid, known as *Phanta* or *Churna Drava*, is then administered as medicine.

Sharangadhara emphasizes that *Phanta* is particularly suitable for light, non-volatile drugs and provides an instantly usable medicinal liquid. He describes numerous *Phanta* formulations for various conditions, including digestive disorders, respiratory ailments, and haematological deficiencies. For *Rasa-Raktakshaya*, *Sharangadhara* recommends *Phanta* prepared with *Raktavardhaka* herbs such as *Pippali*, *Shunthi*, *Amalaki*, and *Draksha*, which possess *Deepana*, *Pachana*, and *Brimhana* properties.

Vagbhata, in *Astanga Hridaya*, integrates Charaka and Sushruta's views, emphasizing the synergistic application of *Phanta* with internal medications and dietary modifications. He describes *Phanta* formulations for *Pandu* management, including those prepared with *Triphala*, *Loha*, and *Raktavardhaka* herbs.

Vagbhata highlights the importance of combining *Phanta* with *Brimhana* therapies, such as meat soups, milk, and ghee, to enhance efficacy in managing *Rasa-Raktakshaya*. This synergistic approach accelerates *Dhatu* restoration and vitality enhancement.

Phanta Kalpana: Preparation as per Sharangadhara Samhita

According to Acharya Sharangadhara, *Phanta Kalpana* is prepared through the following systematic process:

Ingredients

Coarsely powdered drug (*Churna*): 1 part

Boiling water (*Usna Jala*): 4 parts

Method of Preparation

Drug Selection: Choose appropriate drugs that are light in structure (*Laghu*) and suitable for hot water extraction.

Coarse Grinding: Grind the selected drugs into a coarse powder (*Sthula Churna*) to increase surface area for extraction.

Hot Water Addition: Add boiling water (4 parts) to the powdered drug (1 part) in a clean container.

Soaking and Cooling: Cover the container and allow the mixture to steep until the hot water cools down to lukewarm temperature (approximately 10-20 minutes).

Maceration: Gently rub and macerate the soaked herbs to facilitate better extraction of active constituents.

Straining: Strain the liquid through a clean cloth to obtain the final *Phanta* preparation (*Churna Drava*).

Administration: The prepared *Phanta* is consumed warm or as prescribed, usually immediately after preparation to preserve potency.

Characteristics

Drug-to-Water Ratio: 1:4 (1 part drug to 4 parts boiling water)

Temperature: Administered lukewarm (not hot or cold)

Suitability: Ideal for light, non-volatile drugs; provides instantly usable medicinal liquid

Indications: *Alpadosha* (mild vitiation), *Abala* (mild strength), *Bala* (young age), *Laghu Vyadhi* (mild diseases).

Phanta Name	Key Ingredients	Indications (<i>Avastha/Prayoga</i>)
Panchakola Phanta	<i>Pippali, Pippalimula, Chavya, Chitraka, Shunthi</i>	<i>Gulma</i> (abdominal masses), <i>Pliha</i> (spleen disorders), <i>Udararoga</i> (abdominal diseases), <i>Anaha</i> (flatulence), <i>Shula</i> (colic pain), <i>Deepana, Pachana</i>
Sudarshana Phanta	<i>Sudarshana</i> (<i>Crinum latifolium</i>)	<i>Jwara</i> (fever), particularly <i>Kapha-Jwara</i> and <i>Vata-Jwara</i>
Pippalyadi Phanta	<i>Pippali</i> and related herbs	<i>Kasa</i> (cough), <i>Shwasa</i> (asthma), <i>Pratishyaya</i> (common cold), <i>Kshaya</i> (tuberculosis/consumption)
Drakshadi Phanta	<i>Draksha</i> (<i>Vitis vinifera</i>), <i>Kharjura, Sharkara</i>	Pitta disorders, <i>Raktapitta</i> (bleeding disorders), <i>Daha</i> (burning sensation), <i>Trishna</i> (thirst), <i>Murcha</i> (fainting), <i>Pandu</i> (anemia)
Parushakadi Phanta	<i>Parushaka</i> (<i>Grewia asiatica</i>), <i>Draksha, Sharkara</i>	Pitta disorders, <i>Raktapitta, Daha, Trishna, Murcha, Pandu</i>
Amalaki Phanta	<i>Amalaki</i> (<i>Embllica officinalis</i>)	<i>Rasayana</i> (rejuvenation), <i>Raktavardhaka</i> (blood-building), Pitta disorders, <i>Pandu</i> (anemia)
Triphaladi Phanta	<i>Triphala</i> (<i>Amalaki, Haritaki, Bibhitaki</i>)	<i>Netra Roga</i> (eye disorders), <i>Kustha</i> (skin diseases), <i>Pandu</i> (anemia), <i>Agnimandya</i> (digestive impairment)
Mustadi Phanta	<i>Musta</i> (<i>Cyperus rotundus</i>), <i>Parpata, Usheera</i>	<i>Jwara</i> (fever), Pitta disorders, <i>Daha</i> (burning sensation), <i>Trishna</i> (thirst)
Guduchyadi Phanta	<i>Guduchi</i> (<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>), <i>Amalaki, Haritaki</i>	<i>Jwara</i> (fever), <i>Kustha</i> (skin diseases), <i>Pandu</i> (anemia), <i>Rasayana</i>
Dashamula Phanta	<i>Dashamula</i>	<i>Vata</i> disorders, <i>Shwasa</i> (asthma), <i>Kasa</i> (cough), <i>Shula</i> (colic pain), <i>Dhatu Kshaya</i> (tissue depletion)

Mechanisms of Action

Contemporary Research

Phanta in Anemia Management

Recent studies validate the efficacy of *Phanta* formulations in managing anemia-like conditions. A review by Kumar et al. (2025) demonstrated significant improvement in haemoglobin levels, fatigue, and overall vitality following the administration of *Phanta* prepared with *Pippali, Shunthi, Amalaki*, and *Draksha*. These formulations possess iron-rich, vitamin C-enriched, and bioavailability-enhancing properties, effectively

improving haemoglobin synthesis and reducing anaemia symptoms.

Another study by Mishra et al. (2026) reported complete remission of *Pandu* symptoms and improved haemoglobin levels following a regimen of *Phanta Chikitsa, Deepana-Pachana* therapies, and *Raktavardhaka* medications. The *Phanta* formulation, containing bitter and astringent herbs, effectively enhanced *Agni*, improved *Rasa Dhatu* formation, and restored *Rakta Dhatu* equilibrium.

Mechanisms of Action

Modern pharmacology supports the mechanisms of *Phanta Chikitsa*. Herbal ingredients such as *Pippali* (Piper longum), *Shunthi* (Zingiber officinale), *Amalaki* (Emblca officinalis), and *Draksha* (Vitis vinifera) possess iron-rich, vitamin C-enriched, and bioavailability-enhancing properties. Piperine in *Pippali* enhances the bioavailability of iron and other nutrients, while vitamin C in *Amalaki* and *Draksha* facilitates iron absorption.

Hot water infusion (*Phanta*) ensures optimal extraction of water-soluble active constituents, enhancing bioavailability and therapeutic efficacy. The lukewarm temperature of administration further enhances absorption and reduces gastrointestinal side effects.

Integrated Approaches

The synergistic application of *Phanta* with internal medications, *Deepana-Pachana* therapies, and *Brimhana* diets offers a comprehensive pathway to haematological health. *Phanta* enhances digestion and absorption (*Deepana-Pachana*), while internal medications address root causes (*Agnimandya*, Pitta vitiation). *Brimhana* diets (meat soups, milk, ghee) provide nourishment, restoring *Dhatu* equilibrium and enhancing vitality. This dual approach ensures that haematological healing is addressed at both manifest and subtle levels, leading to sustained improvement in blood quality and overall well-being.

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda Pathogenesis of *Rasa-Raktakshaya Avastha*. *Rasa-Raktakshaya* arises primarily from *Agnimandya* (impaired digestive fire), which leads to improper digestion and absorption of nutrients, resulting in inferior quality *Rasa* formation and subsequent *Rakta Kshaya*. The pathogenesis involves vitiation of *Pitta Dosh*a (particularly *Ranjaka Pitta*), which governs blood formation, along with *Vata* (causing depletion) and *Kapha* (contributing to sluggish digestion).

The *Udbhava Sthana* (site of origin) is *Amashaya* (stomach), from where the morbid *Dosh*as circulate and lodge in the *Rasa* and *Rakta Dhatus*, leading to depletion. *Rasa-Raktakshaya* manifests as pallor (*Pandu Varna*), fatigue (*Shrama*), weakness (*Daurbalya*), palpitations (*Hridhrava*), and impaired immunity.

Role of *Phanta Chikitsa*

Phanta directly addresses the root cause (*Agnimandya*) by enhancing digestion and absorption (*Deepana-Pachana*). Through *Brimhana* (nourishing depleted *Dhatu*), *Raktavardhaka* (promoting blood formation), and *Srotosodhana* (clearing microchannels), *Phanta* restores *Dhatu* equilibrium and alleviates symptoms. Contemporary studies support its efficacy in improving haemoglobin levels, reducing fatigue, and enhancing vitality.

Synergistic Application

The integrated application of *Phanta* with internal medications, *Deepana-Pachana* therapies, and *Brimhana* diets offers a holistic approach to haematological health. *Phanta* enhances digestion and absorption, while internal medications and *Brimhana* diets address root causes and provide nourishment. This dual approach ensures comprehensive healing, leading to sustained improvement in blood quality and overall well-being.

Phanta Chikitsa demonstrates remarkable parallels with modern iron supplementation therapy. Both modalities aim to enhance iron levels and improve hemoglobin synthesis. However, *Phanta* uniquely incorporates natural, herbal ingredients with enhanced bioavailability (due to piperine and vitamin C), minimal side effects, and holistic benefits (*Deepana, Pachana, Rasayana*), making it a safer alternative for long-term use.

Pharmacological Mechanisms

Modern pharmacology validates the mechanisms of *Phanta Chikitsa*. Herbal ingredients such as *Pippali* (Piper longum), *Shunthi* (Zingiber officinale), *Amalaki* (Emblca officinalis), and *Draksha* (Vitis vinifera) possess iron-rich, vitamin C-enriched, and bioavailability-enhancing properties. Piperine in *Pippali* enhances the bioavailability of iron and other nutrients, while vitamin C in *Amalaki* and *Draksha* facilitates iron absorption.

Hot water infusion (*Phanta*) ensures optimal extraction of water-soluble active constituents, enhancing bioavailability and therapeutic efficacy. The lukewarm temperature of administration further enhances absorption and reduces gastrointestinal side effects.

Integrated Approaches

The synergistic application of *Phanta* with internal medications, *Deepana-Pachana* therapies, and *Brimhana* diets offers a comprehensive pathway to haematological health. *Phanta* enhances digestion and absorption, while internal medications address root causes (*Agnimandya*, Pitta vitiation). *Brimhana* diets (meat soups, milk, ghee) provide nourishment, restoring *Dhatu* equilibrium and enhancing vitality. This dual approach ensures that haematological healing is addressed at both manifest and subtle levels, leading to sustained improvement in blood quality and overall well-being.

CONCLUSION

Phanta Chikitsa is a cornerstone of *Kashaya Kalpana* in Ayurveda, offering a safe, effective, and sustainable approach to managing *Rasa-Raktakshaya Avastha*. Through *Deepana-Pachana, Brimhana, and Raktavardhaka* actions, *Phanta* restores *Dhatu* equilibrium and alleviates pallor, fatigue, and weakness. Its integration with internal medications and *Brimhana* diets provides a comprehensive therapeutic modality, addressing both symptomatic and root causes. Further clinical research is warranted to validate and integrate

this traditional practice into contemporary global haematological healthcare.

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