

## A CLASSICAL REVIEW ON TAMRA

Dr. Muneesh Sharma\* and Dr. Shweta Chauhan

B.A.M.S., M.D. (Rasashastra).

\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Muneesh Sharma

B.A.M.S., M.D. (Rasashastra).

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## ABSTRACT

“Rasashastra” is the branch of *Ayurveda* which is the science of life. In this branch of *Ayurveda*, we deal with medicinal preparations made out of metals, minerals, poisons, precious stones, aquatic origin substances. These preparations may be potentially toxic if not dealt with properly. Proper care right from raw material to final product and storage is must. Or else the final product can even be life taking. *Tamra* preparation of has always been difficult as far as practical aspect is considered, if not prepared properly it is highly toxic and even after preparation after few days it may again become *Utthita* (toxic form).

**KEYWORDS:** Tamra, Loha, Copper, Rasashastra, Tuttha, Bhunag.

## INTRODUCTION

Tamra is one of the 7 Lohas told in our classical texts. The word Loha is derived from the ‘Luh’ root which means Karsana, a substance obtained from mineral by extractions, another meaning of the Term ‘Loha’ is a substance capable of expelling or removing the vitiated Doshas or diseases from the body or system.

More than 75 synonyms of Tamra are described in classical texts. Some of the are as follows: -

Anuvindam: Got after extraction

Ambakam: Red in colour

Aravindam: Red like sun

Arkam: Auspicious

Udumbaram: Resembles Udumbara Phala

Audumbaram: Resembles Udumbara Phala

Kaniyasam: Available in the form of minute particles

Kamalahvayam: Like lotus in colour

Ushmam: Causes heat in the body

Ushmakaram: Causes heat in the body

Trilochanam, Triyambakam: Obtained from the three sources water, wind and fire.

Nagasya Mardanam: Destroys the Naga Visha

Nepaliyam, Nepalakam: Available in Nepala Desha

Raktadhatu, Raktaloham: By its colour

Ravipriyam, Suryaloham, Suryakyam, Suryagam,

Suryestam: Related to Surya.

Mleccham, Mlecchamukam: Color of Surya

## Names of Tamra in different language

Arabi: Nihas, Nahas, Nohas, Nohaass, Nahas

Assami: Tam

Bangala: Tama, Tam, Tamba

English: Copper

Gujarati: Trambu, Tambu, Trambo

Hindi: Tamba, Tama, Tamma

Kannada: Tamra, Tambra

Marathi: Tambe, Tamra

Parasi: Misa, Mis

Tamil: Tamparam, Chambu, Shambu, Senbu

Telugu: Ragi, Tamramu

## Chief Availability of Tamra

Mineral Sources	Animal Sources
Tuttha	Peacock's feather
Swarna Makshika	Bhunag

## Types

Two types of tamra have been described in Rasaratnasamucchaya 5/42-45 as –

➤ Nepalaka (Rakta): Useful for medicinal purpose.

➤ Mlechcha (Krishna): Useless for medicinal purpose.

## Mythological Origin

Mythological origin of Tamra is described in Varaha Purana in form of dialogue between Varaha and Vasundhara as a story. In Loha Sarvasvam it is described that Tamra is originated from the semen of Kartikeya. According to Rasakamadhenu Shulva has its origin from Surya, the sun.

## Description of Tamra in Different Classics

The word Tamra was not mentioned in Rigveda. The word Ayas is mentioned at several places. To denote Tamra and iron was Lohitayas and Krishna or Shyama Ayas were used respectively. This is according to Atharvaveda and Shatapada Brahmana. Later on when

the term Tamra was coined the word Lohita was restricted to iron.

In Samhitas of Yajurveda and Atharvaveda, the word Tamra was first found. In Brahmana and Upanisadas, Dharmasutras and Smritis we find the word Tamra. In Varaha Purana mythological origin of Tamra is described.

In Charaka Samhita Tamra is mentioned as one of the six metals and Tamra is used in the form of Churna for the cure of diseases and Rasayana. Use of Tamra vessels and Vastinetra of Tamra is indicated.

In Sushruta Samhita, Tamra is described with other metals in Sutrasthana, its pharmacological properties and actions are also described. It is indicated for the treatment for worm infestation, anemia and diabetes. Use of Tamra for utensils, Shalaka preparation, Anjan preparation and in various medicines in the form of Churna was present.

In Ashtanga Samgraha and Kashyapa Samhita external use of Tamra is only described.

In various Nighantus pharmacological and toxic effect of Tamra are described.

In Sharangadhara Samhita methods of Shodhana and Marana of Tamra are described, even in Bhavaprakasha method of Shodhana of Tamra is present.

However, it is in the Rasashastra books that Tamra is dealt in detail.

Rasa Hridaya Tantra (7th century) described the varieties of Tamra in detail.

Rasendra Chudamani (12th century) described pharmacological action of Tamra, its Shodhana and Marana and its use in Anaemia, Arshas and Netra Roga.

Rasaprakash Sudhakara (13th century) describes types of Tamra its Shodhana, Marana and therapeutic use.

Rasaratnasamucchaya (13th century) describes two varieties of Tamra along with good and bad types – process of Shodhana and Marana and also described preparations of Somanathi Tamra Bhasma by Garbhayantra.

Rasendra Chintamani (14th century) described the methods of Shodhana, Marana and Amritikarana of Tamra.

Rasachintamani (15th century) described the special method of preparation of white Tamra Bhasma.

Rasa Paddhati (16th century) gave details of Tamra with special method of Marana without mercury and its therapeutic indications.

Ayurved Prakash (17th century) and Rasa Tarangini (19th century) described the process of Shodhana, Marana and Amritikarana of Tamra.

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