

## A CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL REVIEW OF 'AYASKRITI'

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## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda beholds the liberty of stating and also implementing use of various herbal as well as mineral/ metal origin drugs in different forms. Moreover the form of medicine prepared and the drug ingestion time too plays important role in specific outcome expected in respective diseases. Ayurveda classics like *Brihatrai – Charaka Samhita*, *Sushrut Samhita* and *Ashtanga Samgraha* dictates fine use of many herbs and metals in specified diseases respectively. Use of metals is sparingly mentioned in this classics. But one unique preparation stands out apart and also has acceptable clinical efficacy in present era too. 'Ayaskriti' is the special preparation made of *Loha dhatu – Iron*. The preparatory methods mentioned in classics confers us with three forms of *Ayaskriti* and also enhances the scope of its utility. Three forms; *Churna – powder*, *Avleha – paste* and *Sandhan – fermented syrup*, widen the use and helps to improvise the underlying condition in respective diseases.

**KEYWORDS:** *Ayaskriti, Loha dhatu, Brihatrai.*

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda aims towards maintaining the optimum health state and to cure the disease if any. This moto is fulfilled by undertaking various treatment modalities. Use of herbs and any possible thing – *Dravya* as medicine is mentioned in Ayurveda. The use of mineral or metal base drugs was introduced by *Rasashastra* much later in 8<sup>th</sup> century. Use of metal powder of various metals like *Suvarna*, *Rajat*, *Tamra* and *Loha* are been mentioned in Ayurveda classics. Adopting the specific procedures which makes the metals like iron, gold and silver absorbable in body and act as medicine were used. This procedures were later termed as *Marana* procedures in *Rasashastra*. In Ayurveda this were mentioned under the title of *Ayaskriti*. As the word implies;

*Ayas – Iron - Dhatu**Kriti – formation/preparation*

By this procedure along with iron *Ayaskriti* of different metals can also be prepared.

*Acharya Charaka* had mentioned the procedure of *Ayaskriti* in first chapter of *Chikitsa sthana* by the name *Loha Rasayana*. While *Acharya Susruta* had mentioned it in tenth chapter of *Chikitsa sthana* by stating its three types and elaborate description. Present review throws light on procedures used for making its different forms and its contemporary relevance with use in various diseases.

*Ayaskriti in churna – powder form*

*Acharya Sushruta* had mentioned the procedure to prepare this type of iron preparation out of three types mentioned (*Ayaskriti, Aushadhi Ayaskriti* and *Mahaushadhi Ayaskriti*) in this procedure we obtain the powder form of iron which can be used for various medicinal purposes in respective disorders. Following is the procedure for making powder form of *Ayaskriti*;

1. *Lepana* – smearing of *Lavana* paste – Thin sheets of *Tikshan Loha* are taken and paste of *Lavana* is smeared over it.
2. *Nirvapana* – Then these smeared sheets are heated red hot and dipped in liquid medium of *Triphala-shalasaradi Kashaya*. This procedure is repeated for 16 times.
3. *Churna* – powder formation – After *Nirvapana*, these sheets are again heated on *Khair* wood heat. After cooling by itself this sheets are pounded and filtered through cloth to obtain fine powder.

*Ayaskriti in Avleha – paste form*

*Acharya Charaka* had mentioned the procedure to prepare this type of iron preparation. (*Cha. Chi. 1/3/23*) the procedure can be understood in following steps;

1. *Nirvapana* – *Tikshna loha* sheets of 4\*4 *Anguli* dimension and thickness of sesame seed are taken. These sheets are made red hot by application of strong heat. This red hot sheets are then dipped in liquid medium of *Triphala kwath, Gomutra, Jyotishmati Kshar udaka, Ingudi Kshar udaka* and

*Palash Kshar udaka* respectively. These procedure turns the color of sheet to dark black – *Anjanvat*.

2. *Churna* – powder making – this black colored sheets are pounded well and fine powder is made out of it.
3. *Avleha* – paste formation – thus obtained powder is then mixed with *Madhu* – honey and *Amla* juice in equal quantity.
4. *Kala Samskara* – storing – Then this paste is stored in *Ghee* smeared vessel and kept in *Yava rashi* – barley grain for one year. Each month the ingredients in vessel are mixed thoroughly and kept as before. After one year thus formed paste is used along with *Ghrut* and *Madhu*.

Acharya *Sushruta* had mentioned three types of *Ayaskriti*; *Ayaskriti*, *Aushadhi Ayaskriti* and *Mahaushadhi Ayaskriti*. Among this first preparation is in powder form and second preparation is in paste form

and remaining is in *Sandhan* – fermented syrup form. Following are the preparatory procedures for *Aushadhi Ayaskriti*;

1. *Swaras* – juice collection – *Swaras* of 12 herbs mentioned in *Su.Chikitsa* 10/12 are taken.
2. *Palash droni* – vessel made of *Palash* wood is used to store above collected *Swaras*.
3. *Nirvapana* – iron balls are heated in *Kair* heat and dipped in *Swaras* placed in *Palash droni* for 21 times.
4. *Kwath* – decoction – now this *Swaras* is taken in other vessel and heated to get  $\frac{1}{4}$  quantity.
5. *Nirvapana* – Thin iron sheets are then heated red hot and dipped in this *Kwath*.
6. *Avleha* – paste formation – after completion of above procedure double quantity of *Pippali* powder, *Madhu* and *Ghrut* are added to thus obtained iron sheets gating paste form in the end.

<b>Ayaskriti form with dose</b>	<b>Classical uses</b>	<b>Contemporary disorders</b>
Powder form Dose – according to <i>Agni</i> (125 to 500 mg)	<i>Kushtha, Prameha, Medorog, Shotha, Pandu, Unmada, Apasmara and Rasayana</i> – <i>Su.Chi. 10/11</i>	Skin disorders with <i>Kapaha</i> vitiation, Diabetes, lipidemia, anemia, metabolic disorders
<i>Avleha</i> – paste form Dose – according to <i>Agni</i> (2 to 5 gm)	1. As a <i>Rasayana</i> in all disorders. – <i>Cha. Chi. 1/3/23</i> 2. <i>Kushtha, Prameha, Medorog, Shotha, Rajyakshma</i> specifically – <i>Su. Chi. 10/12</i>	As a rejuvenator, weight loss, post disease weakness, <i>Apatarpan janya vyadhi</i> , Diabetes, emaciation
<i>Sandhan</i> – syrup form Dose – according to <i>Agni</i> (1 <i>Shukti</i> 24 gm/ml)	<i>Kushtha, Prameha, Medorog, Shotha, Rajyakshma</i> specifically – <i>Su. Chi. 10/12</i>	All types of old skin disorders, Diabetes, piles, anemia, mal absorption syndrome

#### **Ayaskriti in Sandhan – fermented syrup form**

Third type mentioned by *Acharya Sushruta* i.e. *Mahaushadhi Ayaskriti* is in *Sandhan* form. Following is the procedure;

1. *Kwath* – decoction – as mentioned in previous procedure, here *kwath* of drugs belonging to *Shalasaradi Gana* are used.
2. *Nirvapana* - Thin iron sheets are then heated red hot and dipped in this *Kwath*.
3. *Sandhan* – fermentation – Thus formed preparation is kept in appropriate *Sandhan Patra* and *Pippali* powder, *Madhu* and *Guda* (Jaggery) is added to it and kept for 15 to 30 days.

#### **Ayaskriti utility**

While mentioning *Avleha* form of *Ayaskriti* by the name *Lohadi Rasayana*, *Acharya Charaka* had stated the use of other metals (Gold, Silver, Copper etc.) in same fashion according to desired outcome. A brief collection of these three forms of *Ayaskriti* and their classical as well as contemporary utility can be tabulated as follows

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