



RESEARCH ARTICLE

A CRITICAL REVIEW ON VATARIGUGGULU

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda conceptualizes health as a state of dynamic equilibrium among *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala* and any disturbance in *Dosha-Dhatu* system leads to the manifestation of disease. *Vata dosha* predominates during the later stages of life, as well as in the concluding phases of the day and night, and when vitiated through improper diet or lifestyle, it gives rise to numerous disorders. *Acharya Charaka* has stated that an increase in *Vata dosha* is the principal cause of pain in the body. Among the eighty distinct types of *Vataroga*, *Gridhrasi* is a *nanatmaja Vatavyadhi*, with its nomenclature derived from the Sanskrit word 'Gridhra,' meaning 'vulture', as individuals afflicted with this condition exhibit a gait resembling that of a vulture. According to *Acharya Charaka*, the main causative factor for *Gridhrasi* is the vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha doshas*^[1]. Because of vitiated *Kapha dosha*, there is *Avrodha* in *Marg of Vayu*, which causes *Vimarg-gaman* of *Vata Dosha*, resulting in *Gridhrasi*. *Vatari Guggulu* is mentioned in *Bhaishajya Ratnavali Amavatachikitsa Prakarana* wherein disease *Gridhrasi* has also been listed as one of the indications of this formulation^[2]. This formulation contains five herbal medicines with *Eranda (Ricinus communis)*, *Guggulu (Commiphora wightii)*, *Gandhak (Sulphur)*, *Amlaki (Emblica officinalis)*, *Bibhitaki (Terminalia bellirica)*, *Haritaki (Terminalia chebula)* and *Gandhak (Sulphur)*. Ingredients of *Vatari Guggulu* are collectively having *Vata shamaka*, *Kapha shamaka*, *Amapachana*, *Deepana*, *Vedana Sthapana* and *Rasayana* properties. This review article emphasizes the components and therapeutic benefits of *Vatari Guggulu*, particularly in treating *Gridhrasi* and lower *Katishool*.

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INTRODUCTION

The human body, according to *Ayurveda*, is constituted by the three *doshas*, seven *dhatu*s, and three *mala*. All physiological processes are governed by the thirteen types of *Agni* present within the body. According to *Acharya Charaka*, the main causative factor for *Gridhrasi* is the vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha doshas*. Predisposing factors include maintaining a single posture for prolonged periods, excessive use of mobile phones and computers, sudden jerky movements during travel, and improper sleeping posture. *Gridhrasi* is a condition characterized by pain that starts from *Kati* and radiates down to *Prishtha*, *Uru*, *Janu*, *Jangha*, and *Pada*^[3] respectively, which resembles with *Sciatica*. The *Gridhrasi* name itself is suggestive of the typical gait of the patient, which resembles with the leg movement of vulture^[4]. *Sciatica* significantly disrupts a person's daily activities by limiting movement of the lower limbs. According to *Ayurveda*, injury to the lumbosacral region (*Abhighata*), faulty posture, excessive physical load, sudden uncoordinated movements, repetitive jerky actions,

sedentary habits, and psychological factors such as anxiety (*chinta*) and grief (*shoka*) are important causes of *Vata Vyadhi*, particularly *Gridhrasi*. Unhealthy lifestyles involving prolonged sitting, improper diet, suppression of natural urges (*vegas*), excessive travelling, overexertion, stress, and late-night routines further disturb the balance of *doshas*, predominantly *Vata*, leading to the manifestation of the disease. If timely and appropriate treatment by a specialist is not undertaken, the condition may progress and result in several complications. In contemporary medicine, *sciatica* is commonly treated with anti-inflammatory medications, muscle relaxants, traction, or surgical procedures; however, these approaches often do not provide a permanent cure and recurrence is common. In contrast, *Ayurveda* presents more holistic and effective management strategies for this painful condition. Therefore, the ideal treatment for *Gridhrasi* should include drugs possessing *Vata-shamaka*, *Kapha-shamaka*, *Vata-anulomaka*, *Deepana*, *Pachana*, and *Shoola-prashamana* properties to address both the root cause and symptoms of the disorder. *Vatari Guggulu* is described in *Bhaishajya Ratnavali Amavatachikitsa Prakarana*. This formulation contains five

herbal medicines with *Gandhak* and each of these medicines has properties like *Vata-shamaka*, *Kapha-shamaka*, *Aama-pachana*, *Deepana* and *Pachana*. Evidence-based medicine is essential in today's era. So, it is necessary to discuss a drug's potential effectiveness considering pharmacological data.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To discuss, evaluate, and elaborate on the medicinal properties of *Vatari Guggulu* and its therapeutic effectiveness in conditions like Sciatica and lower back pain.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials related to *Vatari Guggulu* is collected from Classical Ayurvedic texts, various articles, and books of modern medicine.

REVIEW OF VATARI GUGGULU

Ingredients of *Vatari Guggulu*

CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON THE INGREDIENTS OF VATARI GUGGULU

***Eranda (Ricinus communis)*:** Castor oil is a vegetable product extracted from *Ricinus communis* (castor seed). The castor oil is curative of *Vata* and *Kapha*; it also cures *Pitta*. It pacifies *Vata*, the aggravation of which is the root cause of all diseases. It acts as a cleansing agent in respect of the internal channels of the body. Castor oil is known to consist of up to 90% ricinoleic, 4% linoleic, 3% oleic, 1% stearic, and less than 1% linolenic fatty acids. Ricinine has anti-inflammatory and pain-reducing property.

***Gandhak (Sulphur)*:** *Gandhak* is chemically sulphur and the second most important element in *Rasa Shastra* after *Parada*. It is enumerated in *Uparasa* and has characteristic smell. It has many therapeutic uses, like *Krimi-dosh-har*, *Jantu-ghna*, *Aam-dosh-har*, *Kustha-har* and has *Rasayana* properties. The best acceptable type of *Gandhak* is greenish-yellow, also called *Amalasaar Gandhak*^[17]. Sulphur is insoluble in the stomach and in intestine converted into alkaline sulphide and sulphurated hydrogen, which stimulates the peristalsis. It has a mild laxative effect and a soothing effect on the blood vessels, so it relieves pain by softening the stool in haemorrhoids, fistula-in-ano and anal prolapse. It is also used extensively in arthritis and chronic cough. Purified sulphur has a fungicidal and anti-parasitic effect and is mainly used on various skin diseases.

***Amlaki (Emblica officinalis)*:** *Amlaki*, or Indian gooseberry (*Emblica officinalis*), is known for its medicinal and therapeutic properties from ancient times in India and is considered as wonder fruit for health-conscious population. It is a potent herb rich with anti-oxidant, vitamin-C, tannin and gallic acid. *Amlaki* possesses key properties like *Rasayana*^[17]. Fruit extracts from *Emblica officinalis* have strong antipyretic and analgesic properties. The fruit has a special characteristic feature that makes it a nurturing herb that is credited with a number of health benefits. It possesses anti-inflammatory properties, nourishes body tissue and organs. *Amlaki* fruit is rejuvenative and protective for the heart and respiratory system. It is a natural anti-oxidant that promotes healthy eyes,

growth of hair, nails, and skin. It balances *Jatharagni* (digestive fire). *Amlaki* builds *Ojas* (bodily strength, vigour, energy and ability) to support a healthy immune response.

Bibhitaki (Terminalia bellirica)

वैभीतकोमदकरःकफमारूतनाषनः। (सु.सू.-४६)

Terminalia bellerica, is an important medicinal plant with a diverse pharmacological spectrum. The plant has many important phytoconstituents like gallo-tannic acid, bellericanin, ellagic acid, gallic acid, termilignan, flavone, anolignan, tannins, ellargic acid, ethyl gallate, galloyl glucose, and chebulagic acid. These compounds were found to be responsible for many of the pharmacological activities, such as anti-microbial, anti-oxidant^[18], anti-diarrhoeal, anti-diabetic, analgesic, immunomodulatory, anti-hypertensive, hepatoprotective, antispasmodic, and bronchodilatory activities.

Haritaki (Terminalia chebula)

स्वादुतिक्तकशायत्वात् पितहृत् कफहन्तुसा ।

कटुतिक्तशायत्वादम्लत्वाद् वातहृच्छिवा।^[19] (भा.प्र.)

The drug *Haritaki (Terminalia chebula)*, belongs to the family Combretaceae, is used since ancient times for therapeutic purposes. *Bhavprakash* described *Haritaki* as the first drug in *Bhavprakash Nighantu*. *Haritaki* has five *Rasa* except *Lavana*; its *Vipaka* is *Madhura* and its *Virya* is *Ushna*. Due to these virtues, the plant performs various pharmacological actions such as *Rasayana* (rejuvenating), *Medhya*, *Deepana*, *Aama-pachana* and *Sroto-shodhana*. The main phyto-chemicals of *Haritaki* are chebulic acid, gallic acid, corilagin, chebulagic acid, ellagic acid, chebulinic acid, triterpenoids, and anthraquinones. It performs various therapeutical actions viz, anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, anti-diabetic, hepatoprotective, anti-mutagenic, anti-proliferative, radio-protective, cardio-protective, etc. The dried fruit of *Terminalia chebula* has an inhibitory effect on lipid peroxidation, a pro-inflammatory mediator. It can reduce ischemic progression by lowering TNF- α and IL-6, which indicate reversion of inflammatory response^[20]. Chebulagic acid from immature seeds of *T. chebula* significantly suppresses the onset and progression of collagen-induced arthritis^[21].

Guggulu (Commiphora wightii)

गुग्गुलुर्मेदोऽनिलहराणाम्^[22] (च.सू.२५)

Guggulu has been a key component in the ancient Indian *Ayurvedic* system of medicine. *Guggulu* is a gum or resin extracted from the plant *Commiphora wightii*. It contains volatile oil, gum, resin, guggulipids, guggulsterones, guggulsterols, mukolol, and other steroids. In *Ayurveda*, *Guggulu* is the best among herbs that are used for *medoroga* and *vata* disorders. It is widely used for obesity, and it is also known as fat-burning agent all over the world. It helps to lower cholesterol and triglycerides level. *Guggulu* is very effective in rheumatoid arthritis, gout, and sciatica. Oleoresin was found to be a highly potent anti-inflammatory agent.

Sr.No.	DRAVYA	LATIN NAME	PROPERTIES	PART USED	CHEMICAL COMPOSITION	KARMA
1	<i>Eranda</i> ^[5]	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Rasa – Madhura (<i>Anuras- Katu, Kashaya</i>) Guna - Snigdha, Teekshna, Sukshma Virya – Ushna Vipaka – Madhura	<i>Beeja (Taila)</i>	Ricin, Ricinine ^[6]	<i>Kapha-vatshamaka, Vedana-sthapana</i>
2	<i>Gandhak</i> ^[7]	Sulphur	Rasa – Madhura, <i>Katu Guna</i> – Ushna, Snigdha Virya – Ushna Vipaka – <i>Katu</i>	<i>Shuddha Amlasaar-gandhak</i>		<i>Vata Shamaka, kapha Shamaka, Pitta vardhaka.</i>
3	<i>Amlaki</i> ^[8]	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>	Rasa – Panch-rasa (<i>Alavan</i>) Guna - Guru, Ruksha, Sheeta Virya -Sheeta Vipaka - Madhura	<i>Phala</i>	Gallic Acid, Tannic Acid, Vitamin C, Amino acid ^[9]	<i>Daha-shamaka, Rasayana</i>
4	<i>Bibhitaki</i> ^[10]	<i>Terminalia bellirica</i>	Rasa - Kashaya Guna - Ruksha, Laghu Virya - Ushna Vipaka – Madhura	<i>Phala</i>	Beta sitosterol, Gallic acid, Chebulagic acid, Glucose, Mannitol ^[11]	<i>Shoth-hara, Vedana-sthapana</i>
5	<i>Haritaki</i> ^[12]	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Rasa - Panch-Rasa (<i>Kashaya pradhan, Lavan rasa Rahit</i>) Guna - Ruksha, Laghu Virya - Ushna Vipaka - Madhura	<i>Phala</i>	Gallic, Chebulagic acid, Palmitic acid, Amino acid ^[13]	<i>Vedna-sthapana, Nadi-balya, Tridosha-shamaka</i>
6	<i>Guggulu</i> ^[14]	<i>Commiphora wightii</i>	Rasa - Tikta, <i>Katu</i> Guna - Laghu, Ruksha, Tikhna, Vishad, Sukshma, Sara, Sugandhi Virya - Ushna Vipaka - <i>Katu</i>	<i>Niryasa</i>	Essential oils, Amino acids, Guggulsterone, Eugenol ^[15]	<i>Vedana-sthapana, Shoth-hara, Nadi-balya</i>

PHARMACOLOGICAL PROPERTIES OF VATARI GUGGULU

Sr. No.	Drug	Properties
1.	<i>Eranda</i>	Anti-inflammatory, Analgesic, Bone regenerating property.
2.	<i>Gandhak</i>	Anti-inflammatory.
3.	<i>Amlaki</i>	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-oxidant, Analgesic.
4.	<i>Bibhitaki</i>	Anti-spasmodic, Anti-oxidant, Anti-microbial.
5.	<i>Haritaki</i>	Anti-inflammatory, CNS stimulant, Anti-oxidant, Anti-bacterial, Anti-fungal activity.
6.	<i>Guggulu</i>	Anti-inflammatory, Antiarthritic, Anti-oxidant, Analgesic, Hypolipidemic ^[16] .

DISCUSSION

Due to *Ushana Virya* and *Vata-anulomana* properties, *Vatari Guggulu* normalizes the movement of *Apana Vaayu* and *Vyana Vaayu* which in turn helps to relieve pain. Furthermore, the *Kapha-shamaka* properties of *Eranda* and *Guggulu* by its *Laghu*, *Ushna*, *Sukshma*, *Stroto-shudhikara* properties; checks blockage of path occurred due to *Kapha* and so helps to relieve *Stambha* and *Shotha*. Again by *Aama-pachana* and *Deepana* properties, it corrects *Agni* and relieves generalized symptoms such as *Aruchi*, *Tandra*, and *Gaurava* too. The drug action may be enhanced by *Yogavahi* property of *Gandhaka*. *Vatari Guggulu* has anti-inflammatory and peripheral analgesic activity^[23] which reduces the pressure on the sciatic nerve and improves the degree of movement, i.e. *Sakthi-utkshepa Nigraha*.

CONCLUSION

The drug *Vatari Guggulu* can be effective in *Gridhrasi*, as its ingredients possess *Deepana*, *Pachana*, *Vatanulomana* properties along with *Vata-Shamaka* action.

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