



## A REVIEW ON VISHAGHNA SHIRISHA YOGAS

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DOI: 10.7897/2277-4572.07491

Received on: 15/06/18 Revised on: 09/07/18 Accepted on: 18/07/18

## ABSTRACT

Agada Tantra is a branch of Ayurveda that deals with various poisons, signs and symptoms and the management of poisons of various origins. For the management of poisons various drugs and formulations have been described. One among the vishaghna drugs is Shirisha that is mentioned to be best among the vishaghna dravyas. Many formulations of Shirisha in different modes of administration have been mentioned in the management of various poisons in bruhatravees (treatises of Ayurveda). Shirisha yogas are mentioned for both internal administration and also for external applications as lepa, etc. This review is an attempt to explore the number of yogas mentioned in visha chikitsa which contains shirisha as the main ingredient.

**KEYWORDS:** Shirisha, Visha, formulations, yogas

## INTRODUCTION

Many drugs and formulations have been described as vishaghna (anti-poisonous) among which one of the most important and commonly used drug is Shirisha and it is said to be best among all the vishaghna (anti-poisonous) drugs<sup>1</sup>. Botanically it is termed as *Albizia lebbek* (L.) Benth belonging to the family Fabaceae; is a medicinal plant associated with diverse biological activities like antimicrobial, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, anti-diarrhoeal, immuno modulatory, anti-arthritic, anti- asthmatic, anticonvulsant, etc. stated by various researchers<sup>2</sup>.

Special treatment modalities have been described which work based on their prabhava (specific action). There are some drugs which are considered to be vishaghna (anti-poisonous) in nature. There are different varieties of Shirisha (*Albizia lebbek*)

explained in different Samhitas. Acharya Bhavaprakasha has mentioned two types of Shirisha (*Albizia lebbek*) namely Shweta and Krishna. Krishna (*Albizia lebbek*) variety is easily found but Shweta Shirisha (*Albizia procera*) is very rare<sup>3</sup>.

Traditionally, the barks are used in toothache and diseases of the gum. Decoction of the leaves and barks are protective against bronchial asthma and other allergic disorders. Barks and seeds are astringent and are given in piles and diarrhoea<sup>4</sup>. A Research article has mentioned that ethanolic and methanolic extracts of pods possesses anti- protozoal, anti-fertility activity, hypoglycaemic and anticancer properties. The plant extract has also been reported to have antiseptic, anti-dysenteric, anti-ovulatory, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial and anti-tubercular activities<sup>5</sup>.

Table 1: Yoga containing Shirisha in Charaka Samhita

Sl. No	Yoga	Indications	Mode of administration	Part used
1	Kakandaadi yoga <sup>6</sup>	In conditions where the strangulated or drowned victim or in poisoned person can be revived.	Lepa (ointments) Nasya (Nasal inhalation) Paana (Internal medication)	Phala (fruit)
2	Mritasanjivini agada <sup>7</sup>	Sarva visha nashaka (all types of poisons), Jwara (fever)	Greya (Inhalation through nose) Vilepana (ointments) Dharana (as an amulet) Doopana (fumigation) Grihastasya (kept at home)	Pushpa (flower)
3	Panchama vega <sup>8</sup>	Sthavara visha (vegetative poison)	Ashchotana Anjana (Collyrium) Nasya (Nasal inhalation)	Patra (leaves)

4	Ashtama vega <sup>9</sup>	Sthavara visha (vegetative poison)	Paana (Internal medication)	Pushpa (flowers) swarasa
5	Gandhahasti agada <sup>10</sup>	Sarva visha nashaka	Paana (Internal medication) Anjana (collyrium) Lepa (ointment)	Pushpa (flowers)
6	Mahagandhasti agada <sup>11</sup>	Mushika (rat bite) Luta (spider bite) Sarpa (all types of snake bites) Mula and Kanda visha (roots and rhizomes poisoning)	Paana (Internal medication) Anjana (collyrium) Lepa (ointment)	Panchanga (five parts of the plants)
7	Dhoomagada yoga <sup>12</sup>	Keeta (insect bites)	Doopana yoga (fumigation)	Pushpa (flowers)
8	Sarpa dashta <sup>13</sup>	Jangama visha (animal poison)	Paana (Internal medication) Nasya (Nasal inhalation) Anjana (collyrium)	Pushpa (flowers)
9	Sarvakarmika agada <sup>14</sup>	Luta visha (spider bites)	Paana (Internal medication) Nasya (Nasal inhalation) Anjana (collyrium) Lepa (ointment)	Beeja (seed)
10	Madhukadi yoga <sup>15</sup>	Luta visha (spider bites)	Paana (Internal medication)	Twak (bark)
11	Vrana nashaka yoga <sup>16</sup>	Keeta (insect bite) Luta (spider bite)	Lepa (ointment)	Twak (bark)
12	Vrishchika visha nashaka yoga <sup>17</sup>	Vrishchika visha (scorpion bite)	Lepa (ointment)	Pushpa (flowers)
14	Parama agada <sup>18</sup>	Sthavara (vegetative poison) Jangama (animal poison)	Paana (Internal medication) Nasya (Nasal inhalation) Anjana (collyrium)	Twak (bark)
15	Amrita ghrita <sup>19</sup>	Sthavara (vegetative poison) Jangama (animal poison)	Paana (Internal medication) Nasya (Nasal therapy)	Twak (bark)
16	Pancha shirisha agada <sup>20</sup>	Jangama (animal poison) Sthavara (vegetative poison)	Paana (Internal medication)	Panchanga (five parts of the plants)

Table 2: Yoga containing Shirisha in Sushruta Samhita

Sl. No	Name of the yoga	Indications	Mode of administration	Part used
1	Koshatakyadi yavagu <sup>21</sup>	Visha vegantara	Paana (internal medication)	Twak (bark)
2	Vamshatwagadi agada <sup>22</sup>	Luta (spider bite) Undura Pannaga (variety of snake)	Lepa (ointment) Anjana (collyrium) Nasya (nasal inhalation) Varti (suppository)	Pushpa (flowers)
3	Ekasara yoga <sup>23</sup>	Sarpa visha (snake bite)	Paana (internal medication)	Pushpa (flowers)
4	Ksharagada <sup>24</sup>	Jangama (animal poison) Sthavara (vegetative poison) Sarva visha nashaka (all types poisoning)	Paana (internal medication) Nasya (nasal inhalation) Abhyanga (massage) Lepa (ointment)	Twak (bark)
5	Amrita sarpi <sup>25</sup>	Sarva visha nashaka (all types poisoning)	Paana (internal medication)	Beeja (seed)
6	Mahasugandi agada <sup>26</sup>	Sarva visha nashaka (all types poisoning)	Paana (internal medication) Lepa (ointment) Dharana (wearing)	Pushpa (flowers)

Other uses of Shirisha as a single drug: Shirisha Beeja is used in Dantha kashta visha chikitsa as prathisarana<sup>27</sup>. Shirisha Twak (bark), phala (fruits) and Sara (heart wood) is used for Lepa (ointments), Paana (internal medication) and Anjana in different types of Mushika damsha (rat bites) like putraka, Krishna and Kashaya danta<sup>28</sup>.

Similarly, phala is used for Vamana (emesis) and Sara (heart wood) is used for shirovirechana (Nasya)<sup>29</sup>. In keeta visha chikitsa, shirisha Twak (bark) is used for Paana (internal medication) and Lepa chikitsa (ointments), Alepa (external application) and seka<sup>30</sup>. In pitta pradhana Luta damsha (spider bites), shirisha Twak (bark) is used for both Paana (internal medication) and Lepa (ointment)<sup>31</sup>.

Table 3: Yoga containing Shirisha in Ashtanga Hrudaya

Sl. No	Name of the yoga	Indications	Mode of administration	Part used
1	Koshatakyadi agada <sup>32</sup>	Vishavegantara (between stages of poisoning)	Paana (internal medication)	Twak (bark)
2	Ashtanga agada <sup>33</sup>	Gonasaaja sarpa (a variety of snake)	Paana (internal medication)	Beeja (seed)

As prathisarana (rubbing), shirisha Twak is used in vishadigdha vrana (wound caused by poisoned arrows)<sup>34</sup>. White pepper triturated with the juice of flowers of Shirisha is considered to be best among all types of treatment for sarpa dashta (snake bites)<sup>35</sup>.

In case of vrishchika (scorpion bites) chikitsa Shirisha Phala (seed), Pushpa (flowers) and Beeja (seeds) are used in different forms like Paana (internal medication), Anjana (collyrium) and Lepa (ointment)<sup>36</sup>. Especially in Ratri vrishchika (scorpion bites) chikitsa Pushpa (flowers) and Beeja (seeds) are considered to be best<sup>37</sup>.

In Luta (spider bite) chikitsa, shirsha Twak and phala is used for Lepa and Paana<sup>38</sup>. Shirisha Sara and Phala (fruits) are used for shirovirechana (Nasya) in Bhujanga (snake bites), Luta (spider bite) and Undhura (mice)<sup>39</sup>. In Mushika (rat bites) damsha shirisha Beeja (seed) is considered to be the best<sup>40</sup>.

## DISCUSSION

The total Agada yogas explained in Samhitas with respect to shirisha in visha chikitsa are twenty-five and in some context, they have not named the yoga but explained as vishahara aushadhi for the management of both sthavara (vegetative poison) as well as jangama (animal poison) visha. Seventeen Paana yogas (internal medication), nine Lepas (ointment), eight Nasya yogas (nasal therapy), seven Anjana yogas (collyrium), three Dhoopana yoga (fumigation), two Ashchotana yogas (instillation of medicated drugs into eyes) and two Dharana yogas (used as amulets) are mentioned in Samhitas.

Paana (internal medication) yogas are highest in number as they are more effective in the visha chikitsa. These are one among the chaturmishathi upakarma<sup>41</sup> (24 treatment procedure mentioned in the management of poison) which plays a major role in counteracting the visha and stops the visha from spreading all over the body. It is mentioned in the name of aushadhi which includes Agada yogas. Panchangas of shirisha are used as Paana (internal medication) in many formulations with different anupanas (adjuvants) like Ghrita (ghee) and Madhu (honey)<sup>42</sup>.

Lepa (Ointment) yogas are the type of Bahirparimarjana chikitsa. It is one among the chaturvimshathi upakaramas (24 treatment procedure). In visha damsha conditions, sthanika chikitsa (local external treatment) plays an important role to reduce the pain, itching and inflammation at the site<sup>43</sup>. Shirisha is best vedanasthapaka (analgesic), shothaghna (anti-inflammatory), Vrana Ropaka, vishaghna (anti-poisoning) and tridosha shamaka<sup>44</sup>. It helps in pacifying the Bhrajaka pitta situated in the Twacha thus directly removes the visha and stops spreading of visha into the rakta. All parts of the plant are used but mainly twak<sup>45</sup>.

Nasya (nasal inhalation) is one of the eliminating therapy which helps to remove the vitiated doshas, toxins and poison from the nasal route. It is indicated in sthavara visha (5<sup>th</sup> Vega), Darveekar sarpadamsha (3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Vega), Rajimanta sarpadamsha (6<sup>th</sup> Vega), when the effect of poison is seen in the head; if obstruction occurs at nose, eye, ear, tongue and throat due to poisoning and if person is unconscious. In Luta poisoning, Nasya by Shyama, Yavphal, Fanirjak, Shirisha are mentioned. These are grinded with Vartak juice or with Sarpimanda. In Mushika (rat poisoning) visha, Nasya (nasal inhalation) is done with Shirisha Phala Sara. Shirisha is one

among the shirovirechaniya gana dravyas (Nasya) mentioned in the Charaka Samhita<sup>46</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

Acharya Charaka quoted shirisha as a best anti poisonous drug and also mentioned in vishaghana gana dravyas (anti-poisonous drugs). Many studies conducted by different branches by using different parts of the plant have proved antimicrobial, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, anti-diarrhoeal, immuno-modulatory, anti-arthritic, anti-asthmatic, anticonvulsant, anti-allergic, hepato protective and antioxidant activity of the drug. Thus, it seems to be a promising drug for various activities. In all Samhitas various yogas have been mentioned for internal and external use containing Shirisha as an ingredient. All the yogas are not in practice and hence there remains scope for further research on these yogas.

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**How to cite this article:**

Vidyavati T et al. A review on vishaghna shirisha yogas. J Pharm Sci Innov. 2018;7(4):110-114.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.7897/2277-4572.07491>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

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