



## A REVIEW – ROLE OF TRIPHALA CHURNA IN CONSTIPATION

## Ayurveda

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## ABSTRACT

Constipation is highly prevalent that significantly affects patient's life. Constipation is mostly in nature and dramatically affects the patient's quality of life and becomes a root cause for most of the gastrointestinal disorders like irritable bowel syndrome, haemorrhoid, anal fissure and perianal abscesses. The prevalence in children ranges from 0.7 to 29.6%. In adults, functional Constipation affects between 0.7 to 79% of the general Population.<sup>(1)</sup> This review will focus on to provide a detail account of Constipation and Triphala Churna (which contains Amalaki, Haritaki, Bibhitaki) for its management mentioned in Bhavprakash Nighantu.

## KEYWORDS

Constipation, Triphala Churna, Anupan, Aushadha sevan kal.

## INTRODUCTION

Constipation certainly isn't uncommon in today's society. There are several causes which developed the constipation but primarily it is due to adaptation of sedentary lifestyle in today's modern era.

Factors related to lifestyle which develops the constipation includes lack of Fibre content in daily meals, habit of eating junk food, Inadequate water drinking habits, not eating enough fruits, vegetables and cereals in routine diet, stress, resisting the urge to have a bowel movement and lack of exercise.

According modern secondary causes of Constipation it includes Intestinal Obstructions due to Tumors, Inflammation of Colon, Ischemia, Diverticular diseases, Hirschsprung's disease, taking long term medications like narcotic analgesics (Codeine and Morphine), Parkinson's disease, Hypothyroidism, Hypocalcaemia, Depression etc.

In *Ayurveda* constipation can be correlated with *Malavstambha* which manifests due to *hetu sevan* like *Vishamashan*, *Adhyashan*, *Langhan*, *Guru*, *Ruksha*, *Vistambha*, *Picchil anna sevan*, *Ratrijagran*, *Divaswap*, *Ati-vyayam*, *Atimathuan*, *Vega-vidharan*, *Mansik chinta vyagrata*, *Agnimandya*, *Ati-sheet padartha sevan* etc.<sup>(2)</sup>

*Triphala churna* is widely used in many disorders due to its various pharmacological activities. *Triphala churna* is composed of the three myrobalans, *Terminalia chebula* (*Haritaki*), *Terminalia bellerica* (*Bibhitaki*) and *Embllica officinalis* (*Amalaki*) and is one of the most commonly used *Ayurvedic* preparations. The formulation generally consists of equal proportions of pericarps of this myrobalans in powder form and according *Anupan*, it is able to give significant desire therapeutic effects. According to *Acharya Charak*, taking the *Triphala* with honey and ghee (in unequal quantity) daily has the potential to make a person live for one hundred years devoid of old age and diseases and *Acharya Sushruta* also indicated same formula for treating ulcers and wounds.<sup>(3)</sup> When *Triphala churna* takes with *Anupan* like *Koshnajal* (lukewarm water) it act as a laxative.

*Triphala* has been described in the ancient *Ayurvedic* text as a *Tridoshik Rasayana*, a therapeutic agent with balancing and rejuvenating effects on the three constitutional elements in *Ayurveda vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*. *Haritaki* and *Bibhitaki* have *Ushna virya*, while *Amalaki* has *Sheet virya* property. *Triphala churna*, being a combination of all three, is therefore balanced, making it useful as an internal cleansing, detoxifying formula. It is regarded as an important *Rasayana* and good purgative in *Ayurvedic* medicine. Recipe for this traditional herbal supplement is described in the traditional Indian texts, the *Charaka* and *Sushruta Samhita*.<sup>(4)</sup>

The different properties and the characters of the various ingredients of the *Triphala churna* are as mentioned below

HARITAKI<sup>(5)</sup>

**Latin name** - *Terminalia chebula* Linn.

**Family** - *Combretaceae*

**Classical name** - *Haritaki*

**Sanskrit synonyms** - *Haritaki*, *Pathya*, *Abhaya*, *Avyatha*, *Vayastha*, *Haimavati*, *Shiva*

**Hindi name** - Harre, Harad

**English name** - Chebulic Myrobalan

**Swaroopa (Habit)** - A moderate sized / large deciduous tree

**Habitat** - Found in MP, W. Bengal, Karnataka and Maharashtra in India, Burma and Ceylon

**Types** - Seven types namely *Vijaya*, *Rohini*, *Putana*, *Amrita*, *Abhaya*, *Jivanti* and *Chetaki Ayurvedic Pharmacodynamics*

## RASPANCHAK

**Rasa** - *Pancharasa (Kashaya predominance, Lava rahita)*

**Guna** - *Laghu, Ruksha*

**Virya** - *Ushna*

**Vipaka** - *Madhura*

**Prabhava** - *Tridoshahara*

**Dosha karma** - *kapha pitta shamaka.*

**Parts used** - Fruits

## CHEMICAL COMPOSITION

Fruit contains tannin up to 30%, chebulic acid and gallic acid and some purgative constituents of the nature of Anthraquinone.

## THERAPEUTIC USES

The fruit is the prominent herbal drug, commonly and widely used in Indian system of Medicine and is a frequent addition in a large number of formulations. It is useful in asthma, sore throat, thirst, vomiting, eye disease, heart and bladder diseases, strangury, urinary discharges, ascites, biliousness, inflammation, bleeding piles, typhoid, constipation, anaemia, elephantiasis and delirium. The ripe fruit are purgative, tonic, carminative and strengthens the brain, eyes and gums. The unripe fruit is astringent and useful in dysentery and diarrhoea.<sup>(4)</sup>

BIBHITAKI<sup>(6)</sup>

**Latin name** - *Terminalia bellerica* Roxb.

**Family** - *Combretaceae*

**Classical name** - *Bibhitaka*

**Sanskrit synonyms** - *Aksha*, *Kaliphala*, *Bhutavasa*, *Kalidruma*, *Karnaphala*

**Hindi name** - Bahera, Baherha

**English name** - Belleric Myrobalan

**Swaroopa (Habit)** - A large deciduous tree

**Habitat** - Throughout the deciduous forests of India and Burma

## RASPANCHAK

**Rasa** - *Kashaya*

**Guna** - Laghu, Ruksha  
**Virya** - Ushna  
**Vipaka** - Madhura  
**Prabhava** - Tridoshagna  
**Dosha karma** - Kapha hara  
**Parts used** - Fruit

#### CHEMICAL COMPOSITION

Fruit contains 17% tannin and Gallo-tannic acid (colouring matter) and resin. Seeds contain greenish yellow oil.

#### THERAPEUTIC USES

The bark is beneficial in asthma and leucoderma. The fruit is digestible, laxative and antihelminthic and is employed for bronchitis, sore throat, biliousness, inflammation and in diseases of eye, nose, heart and urinary bladder. The oil is a good application for the hair. On the fresh cuts and wounds, the fine powder is dusted to arrest bleeding as an astringent and styptics agent. The fruit of the Beleric myrobalan forms an ingredient of an important group of three myrobalans (viz embelic, beleric and chebulic myrobalans) popularly known as *Triphala*.<sup>(4)</sup>

#### AMALAKI<sup>(7)</sup>

**Latin name** - *Emblica officinalis* Gartn.

**Family** - Euphorbiaceae

**Classical name** - Amalaki, Dhatri

**Hindi name** - Awala, Amla, Aonla

**Sanskrit synonyms** - Amalaki, Dhatri, Vyastha

**English name** - Indian gooseberry

**Swaroopa (Habit)** - A medium sized tree.

**Habitat** - Found throughout India; often planted in gardens and cultivated also in small and large scale

#### RASPANCHAK

**Rasa** - Pancharasa (Amla predominance and Lavanarahita)

**Guna** - Laghu, Ruksha, Sita

**Virya** - Shita

**Vipaka** - Madhura

**Prabhava** - Rasayan

**Dosha karma** - Tridoshhara, Pittashamaka

**Parts used** - Fruits

#### CHEMICAL COMPOSITION

Fruit is a well known rich source of Vitamin C. Seeds contains fixed oil, phosphatides and an essential oil. Fruits, barks and leaves are rich in tannins.

#### THERAPEUTIC USES

Fruits are the most useful part of the plant and are used medicinally in various diseases adopting different forms. Fruits are used for supplementing Vitamin C and other contents also. It is one of the most popular, common and highly reputed drugs of indigenous system of medicine. It is used in Anaemia, Hyperacidity, Peptic ulcer, Dyspepsia, Anorexia, Diarrhoea, Dysentery, Haemorrhage, Bladder disorders, leucorrhoea, Spermatorrhoea, Epistaxis, Menorrhagia, Jaundice, weak memory condition, nervine debility, oedema and liver condition. The juice of fresh fruit is given as tonic, refrigerant and antiscorbutic, diuretic, laxative and antibilious remedy.<sup>(4)</sup>

#### FORMULATION

**Triphala churna Matra** :- 3-6 gms<sup>(8)</sup>

**Anupan** :- Koshna jal

**Aushadha sevna kal** :- Madhyabhakta kal (in between meal)<sup>(9)</sup>

#### CONCEPTUAL DESCRIPTION ABOUT AUSHADHA SEVAN KAL :-

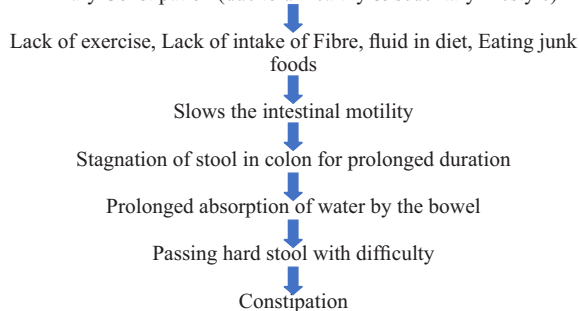
The consumed food initiates the process of digestion, which in turn activates *Samana vayu* and *Pachak pitta*. Thus *Saman vayu* will act over the medicine taken and helps to give the expected result. Then again food is consumed, which covers the medicine and prevents the regurgitation of medicine.<sup>(9)</sup>

*Madyabhakta Aushadhi* due to its quality of not spreading (*Avisari bhava*), subsides the diseases of *Madhya sharir*, which means medicine administered during this kala acts on *Samana vayu*. Once this *Samana vayu* is corrected, *Agni* or *Pachaka pitta* starts working properly. The *Pachaka pitta* nourishes all the other *pittas*. If *Pachak pitta* is corrected all the other *pittas* will start functioning properly. Hence it is indicated in *Paittik vyadhis*. The main function of *Koshtha*

is digestion and metabolism. Once the *Samana vayu* and *Pachaka pitta* are starts functioning normally, the function of *Koshtha* get corrected. Hence it is indicated in *Koshtha gata vyadhis*.<sup>(9)</sup>

#### PATHOPHYSIOLOGY OF CONSTIPATION

Primary Constipation (due to unhealthy & sedentary lifestyle)



#### MODE OF ACTION OF TRIPHALA CHURNA IN CONSTIPATION

It contains *Amalaki dravya* having *Amla ras pradhanatva* along with *Deepan*, *Pachan* properties which helps to regulate proper digestion. It also has *Kledan* property which helps to maintain the adequate moisture level in colon. It also possess the *Sara guna* which promotes the bowel movements.<sup>(10)</sup>

It contains *Haritaki* which having *Kashay rasa* predominant along with *Yakrututtejak* property which helps to stimulate the liver to secrete enough digestive enzymes so that digestion process not get hampered. Further it have properties like *Deepan*, *Pachan* and *Anuloman* which helps for proper digestion and act as a mild laxative as well. It also having *Ushna virya* which pacifies the *Vat* and *Pitta dosha*.<sup>(11)</sup>

It contains *Bibhitaki* which is *Anulomak* ( laxative ) in nature along with it possess the *Bhedan* property , which helps to eliminates sticky and stagnant stool from the colon.<sup>(12)</sup>

As in *Malavstambha vyadhi Vat* and *Pitta doshas* are mainly involved among the Three *dravyas* *Haritaki* and *Bibhitaki* have *Ushna virya* and *Amalaki* has *Sheet virya* hence together they pacifies the *Vat* and *Kapha dosha* and maintain the equilibrium of *doshas*.<sup>(2)</sup> When *Triphala churna* taken orally along with *Koshna jal Anupan* it produces the synergetic effect and act as a laxative as the *Koshna jal* have the properties like *Anulomak*, *Vat* and *Kapha dosha shamak* along with *Deepan* and *Bastishodhak*.<sup>(13)</sup>

#### MODE OF ACTION OF TRIPHALA CHURNA ACCORDING TO MODERN SCIENCE

It is frequently evident that the constipated person always has low level of essential vitamins like Vitamin C, folate, and magnesium in the body and *Amalaki* being rich source of vitamin C , fibres along with magnesium, it fulfils the needs of essential vitamins which are important for the proper digestion.

On the other hand *Haritaki* has Tannin as main chemical constituent (32%-45%) along with flavonoid like Quercetine, catechin and kaempferol which acts as a laxative and helps to increase the bulk of stool and also facilitate the intestinal motility.<sup>(14)</sup>

In *Bibhitaki* Tain termilignan , flavonoids, sterols and tannins are found in more proportion that is why it also acts as laxative.<sup>(15)</sup>

#### DISCUSSION

In *Malavstambha vyadhi Vata dosha* and *Kapha dosha* are mainly involved and in *Triphala churna* formulation *Bibhitaki* and *Haritaki* dravya have *Ushna virya* properties which pacifies both *Vat* and *Kapha doshas*. As this medicine formulation taken with *Anupan* like *Koshna jal* (lukewarm water) it produces synergetic effect on gut and help regulates the bowel moments as the lukewarm water has the property of regulation of intestinal motility. As the stagnation of stool in the colon cause constipation, the *Sar guna* of *Haritaki* and *Bibhitaki* help to eliminate the stagnant stool from colon. In constipation there is always found the low level of essential vitamins like Vitamin C, folate, and magnesium and *Amalaki* being the richest source of Vitamin C, folate and magnesium it helps to fulfil the needs of essential vitamins

in the body. Due to excessive dryness and stagnation of stool in colon it slow down the motility of intestine along with making difficulty while passing stool, the presence of chemical constituent like flavonoids, tannins, catechin, sterols and kaempferol in *Triphala churna*, it acts as a laxative and help to increase the motility of intestine and eventually relieves the constipation.

## CONCLUSION

From the above conceptual review it is evident that the formulation of *Triphala churna* is conceptually proves it's therapeutic property and its synergetic effect on bowel when taken with *Anupan* like *Koshna jal* to relieve the constipation. And by restricting the incidences of constipation one can also restrict the further incidences of Ano rectal disorders cause by Constipation.



**Amalaki**  
Emblica officinalis

**Haritaki**  
Terminalia chebula

**Bibhitaki**  
Terminalia bellirica



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