



International Journal of Medicine and Health Profession Research

Journal home page: www.ijmhpr.com

<https://doi.org/10.36673/IJMHPR.2020.v07.i02.A20>



AYURVEDA DESCRIPTION ON VARIOUS TYPES OF PRATIVISHA: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Ashtanga Ayurveda consists of eight branches of *Ayurveda* in which *Agad Tantra* has its own specialty. *Agad Tantra* is one of the important branch which deals with the poisons of various types such as *Garavisha*, *Dooshivisha* etc. This branch deals with the study and treatment of poisons of *Sthavara Visha* (animate) and *Jangama Visha* (inanimate nature). *Vita* are poisonous substance which disturb the proper functioning of the body and can also lead to death. To treat the adverse effects of poison and to reduce the toxicity, antitoxic agents are used. *Prativisha Chikitsa* is a very ancient knowledge of treatment which deals with the usage of toxic substance in the form of antitoxic agents to treat various types of poisoning. *Visha* has several properties such as *Aashu*, *Laghu* and *Vyavayi* etc. Thus *Prativisha* make use of such properties and *Visha Dravyas* of opposite action to that of the poison consumed is used for the treatment. If any person has consumed *Sthavara Visha* then he should be given *Jangama Visha* but if the person is bitten by snake or any other poisonous animal then he should be given *Sthavara Visha* for the treatment. Hence, antidote of poison is itself a poison whose details are mentioned in various *Ayurvedic* literatures by the scholars.

KEYWORDS

Ayurveda, *Prativisha*, *Jangama*, *Sthavara* and *Visha dravyas*.

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INTRODUCTION

Agad Tantra is a term derived from two words i.e. *Agada* and *Tantra*. The term *Agada* means any disease, pain or poison and *Agada* word means its treatment. *Agad Tantra* is a branch of *Ashtanga Ayurveda* which deals with various types of *Visha*, their effects (resulting from biting of insects, snakes, worms etc.; *Visha* produced due to wrong combination of certain substances) and treatment with *Prativisha* (antidote). *Prativisha* is the substance by which we can reduce the affect caused by *Visha*.

Poison is a substance which induces harmful effects into the body. It can lead to severe illness or sometimes to death also. Ayurvedic scholars have mentioned various types of *Visha* shown in Figure No.1. *Akratimavisha* is natural poison which classified as *Sthavara* and *Jangama*. *Jangama Visha* is produced by poisonous animals such as Rats, insects, serpents, lizards etc. *Sthavara Visha* produced by poisonous plants such as *Dhatura*. *Kritimavisha* are also called as *Garavisha* which are chemically prepared poisons. Exposure to poison can be acute such as biting of snake or worm; chronic and cumulative whose toxic effects are seen after long time due to continuous intake. According to Ayurvedic scholars *Visha* are very harmful because they possess properties like *Ushna* (hot), *Sukshma* (small and minute), *Vyavayi* (quick absorption), *Laghu* (light), *Ruksha* (rough), *Apaki* (undigestible), *Anirdeshya Rasa* (bad in taste), *Jivitahar* (killing action) and *Tikshna* (irritating).

Though poisons are harmful but they are also our last hope for the treatment. Many times, poisons are used as a medicine also, by changing the dose and certain modifications. Animate poisons have properties similar to *Pitta* and act in downward direction while inanimate poison is similar to *Kapha* with movement in upward direction. These opposite properties are used by the scholars in finding the treatment of the poisoning. *Prativisha Chikitsa* makes use of such opposite properties in destroying each other thus nullifying the effects of toxic materials. Some examples of *Prativisha Chikitsa* are as follows:

- *Jayphala* is suggested in case of snake biting.
- *Dhatura* is suggested to treat *Alarka Visha* (Rabies).
- *Karpasa Beeja* is used to treat poisoning caused by intake of *Dhatura*.

Mechanism of action of *Prativisha*

According to *Ayurveda* anything which is not used wisely can become poison and even a poison become medicine if it is used in a wise manner with proper dosage. While using *Prativisha* in *Chikitsa* we should be aware of their side effects and the physician should be ready to handle the situation if there is overdose or improper administration of drug.

Prativisha act like nectar when they are administered into the body or applied on wound which under poison's effect. *Dravya Guna Prabhav* is the virtue of drugs through which they act. It depends on the nature as well as qualities of the drug. Some *Prativisha* possess *Madhura Rasa* which causes elevation in *Vata* and *Pitta Dosha*. Some possess *Tikta Rasa* which elevates *Pitta Dosha* while *Shita Virya* is the property which elevates *Oja* and *Dhatu*. *Prativisha* when combine with *Visha* forms an inert compound which reduces the further conversion to more toxic compound. This compound then stops the reaction by competing with the poisonous compound for the receptor sites. All these process accelerate the detoxification processes and thus reducing the toxic effect of the poison. Figure No.2 represent the mechanism of action of *Prativisha*.

***Prativisha* and their usage in various conditions**

Certain steps are followed in case of Poisoning to remove the toxic element from the body such as:

Make the patient stable by following the procedure of ABCD i.e. Airway, Breathing, Circulation, Depression of CNS.

Properly evaluate the condition of patient

Removal of poison

Use of antidotes

General care

Different types of antidotes are shown in Figure No.3 on the basis of their mechanism of action. Ayurvedic scholars have proposed *Sthavara* and *Jangama Prativisha* which are in accordance with pharmacological classification of conventional medical science.

Mechanical antidote-

These are used to prevent the absorption of poison by mechanical action.

Example: Multiple dose of activated charcoal can be used for morphine and atropine poisoning.

Chemical antidote

They neutralize the poison into the GIT through their chemical action.

Example: Acids can be neutralized by weak alkalies like calcium hydroxide and magnesium hydroxide. Alkalis can be neutralized by weak acids such as vinegar, canned fruit juice etc.

Physiological antidote

They act on the tissues of the body through certain actions such as reduction in toxic conversion of poison or through competition at receptor site.

Example: Ethanol is used as antidote in methyl poisoning.

Chelating antidote

These are used where there is poisoning due to the heavy metals.

Example: EDTA

Use of *Sthavara Visha* in *Jangama Prativisha Chikitsa*

Sthavara Visha is produced by the poisonous plants such as *Dhatura*, *Jayapala* etc. They can be obtained by *Moola*, *Patra*, *Pushpa Tvak* and *Sara* etc. These are used to treat various conditions as depicted below:

To treat *Alarka* (rabies) - *Dhatura*; *Dhatura* along with *Aparajita*; *Dhatura* with *Punarnava* and for *Virechana* one can use *Arkasheer*.

To treat snake bite - *Lepa* of *Tikshana Visha*; *Gunja* with *Nakuli*; *Patha*; *Nasya* with *Langali kanda*.

To treat scorpion bite - *Lepa* of *Jayapala*; *Arkasheera* along with *Palashbeeja*.

Use of *Jangama Visha* in *Sthavara Prativisha Chikitsa*

Jangama Visha produced by poisonous animals such as Rats, insects, lizards etc. They have opposite action to that of *Sthavara Visha* and thus are used in *Sthavara Prativisha Chikitsa*.

Example: To treat a person who has consumed poison, *Jangama Visha* is used when all other antidotes are not working. A stick is selected and a piece of meat is fixed on it. Then a hooded snake is made to bite many times on piece of meat. Then *Choorna* of this meat is given to the patient after proper checkup and precautions.

Use of *Jangama Visha* in *Jangama Prativisha Chikitsa*

To treat poisoning of *Jayapala* - *Ahiphena* is used along with *Madhu* and *Kesara*.

To treat poison of *Kuchala* - *Tambakhu* can be used etc.

To treat poison of *Nagaphena* (*Papaver somniferum*) - *Bruhatkshudra* juice along with cow's milk: *Pippali* for emesis.

To treat *Arkasheera* - *Neeli Swarasa* can be used.

Poison which elevates the *Kapha Dosha* should be removed by emesis; eating food of bitter, pungent taste; application of paste of hot and dry quality drugs. Poison having *Pitta* property should be treated firstly by mild purgation then application of cold quality drugs should be done. Poison having *Vata* stimulating properties, should be nullified by intake of sweet, sour, salty food along with *Ghee*.

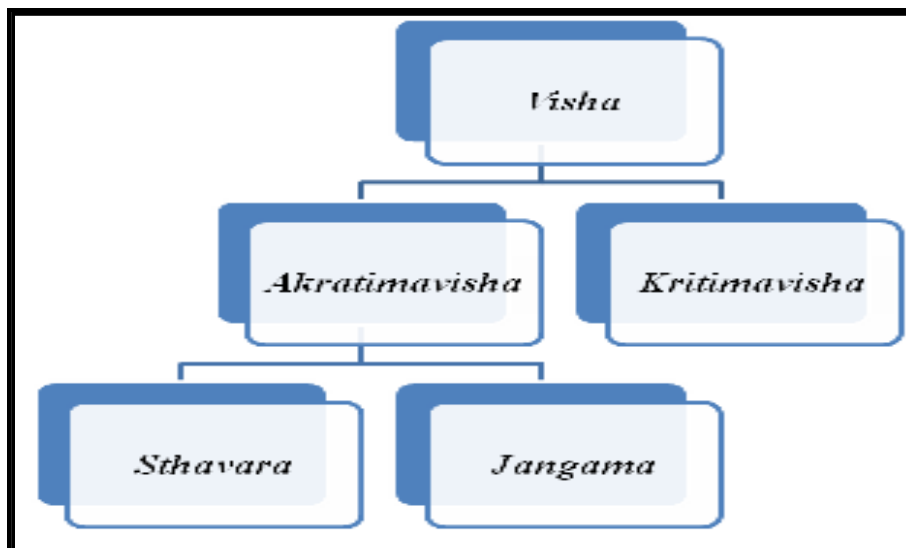


Figure No.1: Types of *Visha*



Figure No.2: Mechanism of action of Prativisha

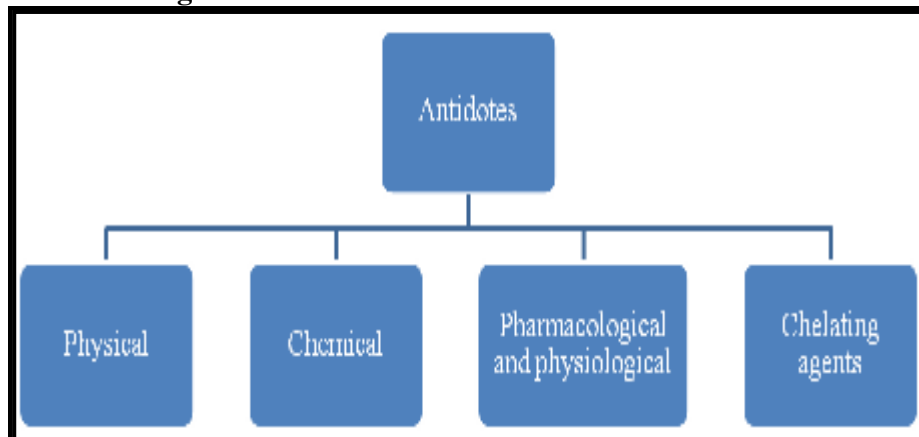


Figure No.3: Different types of antidotes

CONCLUSION

Ayurvedic scholars have mentioned the importance of Prativisha in the various literatures. They have suggested the usage of various Dravyas in case of toxicity caused by certain Visha. Poison affects the specific systems of the body according to its action and nature thus these Dravyas should also have affinity for that particular system so that they can neutralize the effect of the poison. According to scholars, Prativisha is a Dravya which possess Vyayi Guna to act rapidly and is equally potent to the

poison. Thus Ayurveda provides a great approach towards the various poisons and their management through Prativisha Chikitsa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors wish to express their sincere gratitude to Agad Tantra, SAM College of Ayurvedic Sciences and Hospital, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India for providing necessary facilities to carry out this research work.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We declare that we have no conflict of interest.

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Please cite this article in press as: Dipti Sharma. *Ayurveda* description on various types of *prativisha*: A review, *International Journal of Medicine and Health Profession Research*, 7(2), 2020, 91-95.