Critique on the Properties & Effects of Guduchi

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Abstract: Soumyaki Atharvaveda has mentioned that Guduchi is to be kept in house to avoid snakes. Kaushika Sutra mentions Guduchi by the name ‘Kadruchi’. There are several synonyms mentioned under Guduchi and it is included under seven different Dashemani. Guduchi is said to possess best Sangrahika and Vibhandhapramana properties. Guduchi is mentioned alone or in combination with other medicinal plants & minerals in the treatment of Jwara, Prameha. Two varieties - Guduchi and Kanda Guduchi are described. Guduchi has been mentioned under Guduchyadi Varga with Rasayana, Deepana, and Balya properties even its mythological origin is mentioned. The stem is bitter; triggers bile secretion; constipative; cures thirst, fever, burning sensation, vomiting; diuretic; enriches the blood cures jaundice useful in skin diseases; Guduchi juice is useful in diabetes, vaginal and urethral discharges, low grade fevers and enlarged spleen.

Keywords: Guduchi, Charaka, Sushruta, Nighantu, Benefits

1. Introduction

Kaushika Sutra mentions Guduchi by the name ‘Kadruchi’. There are several synonyms mentioned under Guduchi and it is included under seven different Dashemani. Guduchi is said to possess best Sangrahika and Vibhandhapramana properties. Description of Guduchi is found in 41 different contexts and included in 9 Ganas or groups, based on its diverse therapeutic uses. Apart from that it is also placed in smaller group like Vallipanchamullu. Ashanga sangraha: Guduchi is mentioned alone or in combination with other medicinal plants & minerals in the treatment of Jwara, Prameha etc. Dhanvantari Nighantu: Guduchi was mentioned first in one out of seven Vargas. Two varieties Guduchi and kanda Guduchi are mentioned. Kairadeva Nighantu: Guduchi is mentioned in Aushada varga. Varities are mentioned as Guduchi as Guduchi and Pinda Guduchi. Bhavyprakasha Nighantu: Guduchi has been mentioned under Guduchyadi Varga with Rasayana, Deepana, and Balya properties even its mythological origin is mentioned. Raj Nighantu: Description of two types of Guduchi and Kanda Guduchi with therapeutic utilities has been given. Shaligram Nighantu: Guduchi has been described in Guduchyadi Gana. Adhunika Kala: Dravyaguna Vijnana: The Latin name, synonyms, botanical description along with Karma and Guna on different system are described with its Matri and Yogas. Indian medicinal plant: Its botanical description along with different species and medicinal uses are illustrated. Materia medica describes Guduchi is detail and its use in scorpion bite been documented. [1] In a historical war between Rama and Ravan, several monkey warriors supporters of Rama were killed. Pleased by death of Ravan, Lord Indra sprinkled elixir on the dead bodies of the monkeys and induced rebirth. During this process, wherever elixir drops have fallen on the earth, Guduchi plants originated. [5]

The drug Guduchi has been in use in the indigenous system of medicine since remote past. The leaves of Guduchi are mentioned under Titika - Saka Varga which is claimed to be salutary and useful in treating Kashita, Meha, Jwara, Svasa, Kasa, and Arachh. It has been indicated in Ayurvedic Treatises in various ailments like Kamala, Jwara, Vatarakta, etc. The fresh plant is said to be more efficacious than the dry and the stem is the part which is mostly used, from which a kind of starch is prepared known as Guduchi - Satva. According to Bhavamisra Guduchi is considered as bitter, tonic, astringent, diuretic and a potent aphrodisiac and curative against skin infection, jaundice, diabetes, chronic diarrhoea and dysentery. [3] Tinospora cordifolia is mentioned in Ayurvedic literature as a constituent of several compound preparations used in general debility, dyspepsia, fever and urinary diseases. The drug has been observed to relax smooth muscles of intestine, uterus and inhibit constrictor response of histamine and acetylcholine on smooth muscle. Alcoholic extract of stem shows activity against E. coli. Oral administration of the aqueous and alcoholic extract of the plant caused reduction in fasting blood sugar rabbit and rat. The bitter fraction of the aqueous caused insignificant reduction in blood sugar level. Favourable influence on glucose tolerance was observed in rats administered aqueous extract of Tinospora cordifolia for a month. The drug is reported to posses one - fifth of the analgesic effect of Sodium salicylate. Its aqueous extract has a high phagocytic index. The active constituent in the drug was also found to inhibit in vitro the growth of Mycobacterium tuberculosis. Recently Patel et al (1978) reported that the aqueous extract of the stem was found to antagonize the effects of various agonists such as histamine, 5 H - T, bradykinin and prostaglandins E I on the smooth muscles of guinea pig and rat. Hypoglycaemic, CNS depressant, antibacterial, antimicrobial, antipyretic, antiinflammatory, antiarthritic, antiallergic, hepatoprotective, analgesic, immunostimulant, antineoplastic, anti diabetic, adaptogenic, antioxidant, hypotensive, diuretic. [4]

2. Discussion

Chemical composition – berberine, phenylpropane, disaccharides, choline, tinosporin, tinosporon. In terms of Gana – Guduchi is described Laghu (light) Depanam (increases digestive fire) Chakshushya (good for eyes) Medhya (rejuvenating for the mind). The root stem, leaves, of the Guduchi plant are all used medicinally in Ayurveda although it is primarily the bitter stalk of the plant. The
stem is regarded to have anti purgative effects where as the leaves are mucilaginous while the roots give anti emetic effects. [5]

Guduchi is listed as having the following actions: - Vatahara (ALLEVIATES vata), Kaphahara (ALLEVIATES kapha), Rakhtapittahara (ALLEVIATES bleeding disorder), Vayuha sthapano (anti aging), Stanyashodan (detoxifies breast milk), Trishna nirgraha (ALLEVIATES thirst), Daha prashman (ALLEVIATES burning), Jwarghna (ALLEVIATES fever). Acharya Charak classifies Guduchi among astringents, Vata alleviation, appetizers & pacifiers of kapha rakta and constipation. Acharya Charak also lists Guduchi as an ingredient in a paste prepared for treating skin disorder. Guduchi ia also featured in a formula for gout which states that “ghee prepared with Rasna, Guduchi, Madhyayasti (mulethi of both types), Bala, Jivaka, Risabhaka along with milk & added bee wax is used as paste for alleviating Vata Rakta (gout). Acharya Charak lists Guduchi as main ingredient in Taila formulation known as “Amrita taila”. He describes it as one of the best oils. It brings back to normalcy person with diminished energy, agni and strength, confused mind & suffering from insanity. A special focus has been made on its health benefits in treating various metabolic disorders and its potential as an immune booster. It's use as antioxidant, anti - hyperglycemic, anti - hyperlipidemic, hepatoprotective, cardiovascular protective, neuroprotective, osteoprotective, radioprotective, anti - anxiety, adaptogenic, analgesic, anti - inflammatory, antipyretic, anti - diarrheal, anti - ulcer, anti - microbial, and anti - cancer have been well established. It is used as a major component of therapeutics for ameliorating metabolic, endocardial, and several other ailments, aiding in the betterment of human life expectancy. [6]

Guduchi helps to remove toxins, purifies blood, fights bacteria that causes disease and also beneficial in liver disease and urinary tract infection. Guduchi is used by experts in treating heart related conditions & also beneficial to infertility. It boosts immunity. As an universal herb helps in boosting immunity. It is power house of the anti oxidants. Guduchi is very beneficial in improving digestion and treating bowel related issues. Guduchi works as an anti inflammatory, anti pyretic & anti arthritic agent. Guduchi helps to treat arthritis due to anti inflammatory & anti arthritis properties. Guduchi contains anti aging properties that helps reduces dark spots, pimples, fine lines and wrinkles. It gives flawless & glowing skin. Guduchi also used in dengue because it increases the platelets count in dengue due to anti pyretic properties. Guduchi is an adaptogenic herbal medicine. It decreases mental stress and tension that’s why it is known for good health tonic for our body. It also decreases hypertension and lipids concentration in our body through which helps in diabetes type 2 (also called insulin dependent diabetes mellitus). Guduchi helps in good digestion so that it can also be used in piles. Guduchi is a Rasayana or rejuvenator tonic which has the ability to pacify all three types of Doshas and balance them in the body. It balances Vata Dosha when taken with ghee, Pitta with jaggery & Kapha when taken with honey. Guduchi stem – 5ml juice work as good health tonic. Guduchi + sugar – works in liver & skin disease. Guduchi + jaggery – works as laxative. Grind Guduchi leaves with buttermilk cures jaundice when taken 2 to 3 times daily with honey. Guduchi also work as a good de - worming agent when taken as a decoction early in the morning. [7]

Tinospora cordifolia or Guduchi boost the phagocytic activity of macrophages which acts as a defense in our body and plays a crucial role in innate (nonspecific) and adaptive (specific) immunity. Guduchi have both flavonoids and polyphenols which serves as a source of nutraceuticals that alleviate the oxidative stress and helps in prevention and reduction of the chronic degenerative diseases with consequent health benefits. Tinospora cordifolia or Guduchi helps to reduce joint pain and inflammation associated with arthritis by decreasing the synthesis of proinflammatory cytokines. Tinospora cordifolia or Guduchi modulates lipid metabolism via inhibiting glucuronide and cholesterol and also protects hearts against infarction with its antioxidant properties. Tinospora cordifolia or Guduchi works like hypoglycemic agent which stimulates the production of insulin secretion from the pancreas and helps to lower blood sugar levels. Tinospora cordifolia or Guduchi possess significant neuroprotective activity, it modulates the antioxidant enzyme system of brain tissue and preserve the dopaminergic neurons. Guduchi has anti - inflammatory and antioxidant properties which pacifies the mucous membrane of the respiratory system thereby making it very effective in respiratory issues like asthma, cough, cold and tonsils. [8]

3. Conclusion

Kaushika Sutra mentions Guduchi by the name ‘Kudruchi’. There are several synonyms. Guduchi is said to possess best Sangrahika and Vibandha prahramana properties. Guduchi is mentioned alone or in combination with other medicinal plants & minerals in the treatment of Jwara, Prameha. Guduchi has been mentioned under Guduchyadi Varga with Rasayana, Deepana, and Balya properties even its mythological origin is mentioned. It's use as antioxidant, anti - hyperglycemic, anti - hyperlipidemic, hepatoprotective, cardiovascular protective, neuroprotective, osteoprotective, radioprotective, anti - anxiety, adaptogenic, analgesic, anti - inflammatory, antipyretic, anti - diarrheal, anti - ulcer, anti - microbial, and anti - cancer have been well established. It is used as a major component of therapeutics for ameliorating metabolic, endocardial, and several other ailments, aiding in the betterment of human life expectancy.

References