

# Vaitarana Basti: An Ayurvedic Therapy for Rheumatoid Arthritis and Vata Disorders

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**Abstract:** *Basti is considered ardh chikitsa among Panchkarma therapies so this is very speciality treatment of Ayurved. Vaitarana basti is a therapeutic enema in Ayurveda that is used to treat various range of conditions like Amavata, a crippling disease that can cause painful conditions, Imbalanced doshas, Accumulation of toxins in the body, Gridhrasi, a pain condition. It is a type of teekshna basti that has qualities like Amapachana, Srotoshodhana and Vatakaphahara. It helps relieve joint - specific symptoms such as pain, swelling, stiffness, and tenderness also improve functional indicators like grip strength and walking time. It is one of the most praised basti used for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and vata disorders. It is made with a number of ingredients like Saindhava (Rock Salt) which has subtle and penetrating properties that help therapeutic substances be absorbed, Jaggery makes it easier for the solution to interact with and be absorbed by water and Gomutra helps reduce Shotha and Ruja.*

**Keywords:** *Vaitaran Basti, Panchkarma, Amapachan, Aamvata, Vata Kapha, Gomutra*

## 1. Introduction

*Vaitarana* etymology by Padma Purana, vai - truly + tarana - saving. So the meaning is truly save one from many diseases. It is also considered as half of the entire treatments in Ayurveda<sup>1</sup>. It is mainly of two kinds i. e. *Niruha Vasti* and *Sneha Vasti*<sup>2</sup>. In Garuda Purana and various other Hindu religious texts, *Vaitarana* or *Vaitarani* river has been described which lies between the earth and the infernal Naraka, the realm of Yama, Hindu God of death and is believed to purify sins<sup>3</sup>. In other texts like Harihareshwara Mahatmya, Tirtha Yatra Parva of Mahabharat, Matsya Purana, Vamana Purana and Padma Purana river named *Vaitaran* is mentioned. Lastly, it is the Padma Purana which reveals the etymology of *Vaitarani* in *Vaitarani Mahatmya*, where it is defined as *Vai* (truly) *tarini* (saving)<sup>4</sup>. The term *Vaitarana* is used as a name associated with *Shalyatantra Acharya* in *Sushruta Samhita*<sup>5</sup>. In various classical texts uses of this basti is indicated in different conditions like *Chakradatt*<sup>6</sup> in *Soola*, *Anaha*, *Amavata* by *Vridhamandhav*<sup>7</sup> in *Soola*, *Anaha*, *Amavata* and by *Vangasena*<sup>8</sup> in *Soola*, *Amavata*, *Sopha* of *Kati*, *Uru*, *Prushta*, *Urusthambha*, *Gridhrasi*, *Janusamkocham*, *Vishama Jwara*, *Klaibya*. *Saindhava*, *Guda*, *Taila* & *Amlika* are found common in formulations mentioned by *Chakradatt*, *Vridhamandhav* and *Vangasena* but there is difference in opinion with *Drava Dravya* only. In various therapeutic uses different *Drava Dravyas* are used other than the classically mentioned like *Dhanyamla*, *Kulatha Kwatha* etc. Therefore, critical analysis is need for selection of *Drava Dravya*. '*Surabhi Payah*' in *Vangasena* is *Gomutra* but as per Lala Saligramavaidya's Hindi translation of *Vangasenasamhita*, which includes milk as a constituent which may be the influence of former treatises like *Vrindha Madhava* and *Chakradutta*. The first reference

regarding *Vaitarana basti* is found in *Sidhayogah* or *Vrindha Madhava* explained as a separate section after *Niruha Adhikara* as it does not satisfy the common pattern of combination as in *Niruha*. Dr. Premavati Tiwari and Dr. Ashakumari reports a variant reading where *Guda* is replaced by *Hingu*. *Sharngadhara* has given certain important rules regarding the quantity of *Drava Dravya* to be taken for *Sneha* preparations which has been adopted same by *Srikantha Dutta* and *Sivadas Sen basti* also. So, double the quantity of *Gomutra* or *Goksheera* mentioned can be taken, i. e. 2 *Kudava*. On the basis of clinical tradition, *Nischalakara* and *Sivadasa Sen* has mentioned the quantity of *Taila* as 1 *Pala*. *Madanaphala* which is usually added to every *Niruhabasti* has been practice to add in *Vaitaran Basti* by *Tatvachandrika tika*<sup>[12]</sup>. *Niruha Basti* common ingredients are *Makshhika*, *Lavana*, *Sneha*, *Kalka* and *Kwatha*<sup>[13]</sup>. In the absence of *Makshhika*, *Purana Guda* can be substituted<sup>[14]</sup>. *Madanaphala* is also an ingredient of *niruha basti*<sup>[15]</sup>. One can give status of *Niruha Basti* to *Vaitarana Basti*<sup>[16]</sup>. The action of *Basti* is not localized but it has a systemic effect. In Ayurveda, *Veerya* of *basti dravyas* administered into *Pakwasaya* reaches the whole body through *Srotas* [channels] as water when poured into the root of the tree reaches the whole plant<sup>[17]</sup>. Just like a cloth while colouring absorbs only colour not water in the same manner *Basti* administered into *Pakwasaya* draws out the toxic matters from the body<sup>[18]</sup>.

## Ingredients in Vaitarana Vasti

### 1) *Saindahava Lavana* (Rock salt):

*Saindhava Lavana* is the best and purest form of rock salt and advisable in Ayurveda for daily consumption. It possesses 85% NaCl and 15% trace materials, whereas another salt contains 97% NaCl. It contains 84 trace elements, out of 92

trace materials of the human body and is a rich source of calcium, iron, zinc, potassium, magnesium, and copper. It is salty and slightly sweet in taste; *Madhura Vipaka*, *Sheeta Veerya*, light, unctuous in nature, *Tridosahara*, *Agni Deepaka*, *Rochaka*, *Pachaka*, *Pathya*, *Vrishya*, *Chakshusya*, *Avidahi*, and *Hikkahara*. It has numerous health benefits. It improves digestion, relieves constipation as well as flatulence and maintains body electrolytes. It is good for respiratory disorders, joint disorders and stiffness, skin ailments, gastritis and bloating. While preparing the *basti* liquid, rock salt is added to prepare an emulsion which dissolve and expel *Doshas* from the intestines. It absorbs other nutrients into the body from GI tract. It also eliminates toxins from the body and used during sudation therapy. Useful in muscle cramps, worm infestation and halitosis <sup>[19]</sup>.

## 2) *Chincha / Tamarind (Tamarindus indica L.)*

Tamarind is found in the name of *Chincha* or *Amlika* in Ayurvedic texts. It is a cheaply available plant and has a long history of wide medicinal uses, rich in tartaric acid which is a potent antioxidant also a good source of Iron and Thiamine. The ripe fruit of Tamarind is *Madhura - Amla* (sweet - sour) in taste, *Guru* and *Ruksha Guna*, *Usna Veerya*, *Amla* in *Vipaka* and *Vata Pitta* pacifier. It has *Rochana - Deepana* (Appetizing - Digestive), *Trisnānigrahana* (suppresses thirst), *Yakrtitutejaka* (liver stimulant), *Sothahara* (anti - inflammatory), *Mutrala* (diuretic), *Vishaghna* (anti dote to certain poisons), *Vastisodhaka* (urinary antiseptic), *Klamahara* (anti - fatigue) actions also useful in conditions like fever, loss of appetite, wound, sunstroke, rheumatism, and diabetes also its fruit is laxative. Leaves destroy parasitic intestinal worms. It is used as a food and has culinary uses. It is used as anti - oxidant, anti - inflammatory, anti - nematodal, anti - diabetic, anti - cytotoxic, anti - microbial, anti - fungal, anti - viral, hepato - protective, molluscicidal, activities <sup>[20]</sup> <sup>[21]</sup>.

Tamarind fruit has a laxative effect due to the presence of malic acid, tartaric acid and potassium also has anti spasmolytic activity as it blocks calcium channel and it helps in cardiovascular diseases and obesity as it contain polyphenol and flavanoids in it <sup>[22]</sup>.

## 3) *Guda (Jaggery):*

Jaggery is used extensively in Ayurvedic medicines for therapeutic uses, dietary sources and pharmaceutical process. It is not completely refined like sugar. It doesn't increase *Kapha Dosha*. It is a rich source of potassium, iron, magnesium, zinc, selenium, calcium, vitamins and antioxidants. It also contains polyphenols, a phenolic compound which is responsible for anti - oxidant and cytoprotective activities. It cures oedema when it is consumed along with *ardraka*, *abhaya*, *sunthi*, or *pippali*. It is also good for the patients with dysuria, constipation, cardiac problems, asthma, allergies, chronic fever, piles, throat and lung infections, malabsorption syndrome (*Grahani*) and *Kapha Vataja Rogas* <sup>[23]</sup> <sup>[24]</sup>.

## 4) *Gomutra (Cow urine):*

*Gomutra* described in Ayurveda as an effective medicinal with numerous therapeutic uses. It is considered as the best and useful among all *mutra* <sup>[25]</sup>. It consists of water, urea, and a mixture of salts, hormones and enzymes. It is good for worm infestation, skin disorders, and pruritus <sup>[26]</sup>. It is *katu* in taste,

*Tikсна*, *Usna*, alkaline (*Kshara*), *Agnideepaka*, *Medhya*, *Kaphavatahara*, *Pithavardhaka* and beneficial in *Sula*, *Gulma*, *Udara*, *Anaha* also used in *Virechana* and *Asthapana Karma*, obesity, certain cardiac and renal diseases, indigestion, stomach ache, diarrhoea, oedema, jaundice, anaemia, haemorrhoids and skin diseases including vitiligo, removes all the imbalances in the body and maintains the general health. It acts as bio - enhancer, antifungal, antimicrobial, germicidal, bactericidal, anthelmintic, antioxidant and antineoplastic action also used in hypersensitivity reactions and increases the life span of a person. It has immune enhancer properties. It exhibits antimicrobial and germicidal activity due to the presence of urea, creatinine and Arum hydroxide (*Swarna Kshar*) in it.

Its anti - cancerous activity is due to uric acid and Allantoin in it. It shows wound healing activity due to allantoin, immunomodulation due to Arum hydroxide, cardiovascular diseases due to the presence of kallikrein, urokinase, hippuric acid and ammonia, anti - obesity properties due to the content of copper also anti - toxic activity by virtue of Arum hydroxide present in it <sup>[27]</sup>

## 5) *Gudugdha (Cow milk):*

Cow milk is nutritive (*Jeevaniya*) and good for vital organs eyes, brain and heart. It has sweet taste (*Madhura Rasa*), *Sheeta Veerya* (Cooling). It acts as *Rasayana* (immunomodulator) and *Oja Vardhaka* (increases vitality) <sup>[28]</sup>. Due to the presence of lactose calcium in milk is highly absorbed even in the absence of vitamin D. It is good balances of all fat soluble vitamins and vitamin B12. All age group of people can consume and digest it due to homologous nature. Cow's milk is a good source of protein, fat and minerals such as calcium. It improves immunity due to the presence of globulin, and boosts intelligence and promotes bone strength <sup>[29]</sup>.

## 6) *Dhanyamla:*

*Gomutra* is very much *Ruksha* and *Goksheera* is *Mridu*, *Dhanyamla* is seemed to be used as *Drava Dravya* as it is neither too *Teekshna* nor too *Mridhu* and is indicated for *Asthapana*. It can be used in *Vata* and *Vata Kaphaja* conditions <sup>[30]</sup>.

## 7) *Kulatha (Macrotyloma uniflorum L):*

Kulatha is a legume is mentioned as diet and medicine in Ayurveda specifically used in urinary disorders. It is endowed with astringent (*Kashaya*) and *Amla* (sour) taste and hot in nature (*Usna Veerya*). It reduces aggravated *Kapha* and *Vata Dosha*. It is useful in *Rukshana Karma* (emaciating Body). Its therapeutic uses are carminative, diuretic, antipyretic and anthelmintic. Also useful in fever, cough, asthma, urinary calculus, rheumatism, colic, goitre, obesity, worms, hiccup, amenorrhoea, urticaria and abdominal tumours. It contains high source of iron, molybdenum, calcium, polyphenols, flavanoids and in the unprocessed form, it is hypoglycaemic and reduces insulin resistance <sup>[31]</sup>.

## 8) *Tila Taila (Sesame oil):*

*Tila Taila* is a vegetable oil obtained from sesame seeds. Sesame is *Katu - Tikta - Madhura* in taste, *Guru*, *Snigdha* in nature, *Vatahara*, *Kaphapittakara*, anodyne, tonic (*Balya*), *Keshya* (hair vitlizer) and *Garbhasaya Sodhakam*. It improves

hair and skin health, bone growth, blood pressure, good heart health, anxiety and depression, infant health, dental problems, cancer, improve digestive process and lowers inflammation [32]. Sesame oil is very nutritious and provides an excellent source of protein, calcium, omega - 6 fatty acids, magnesium, iron, zinc and vitamin A & E. Sesame oil soothes skin, lubricates intestines, relieves constipation and is recommended for stiff joints, weak knees and nervous spasms [33].

Ingredients and their quantity generally used in Vaitaran Basti are given below

Amli Tamarindus indica 1 pala = 48 grams

Guda Jaggery 1 shukti = 24 grams

Saindhava Lavana rock salt 1 karsha = 12 grams

Go mutra cow urine 1 kudava = 192 ml

Taila sesame oil as required

## 2. Method of Preparation and Administration

Vaitarana basti is a form of Niruha Vasti i. e. decoction enema. In any decoction enema, rock salt, honey, oil / ghee, paste of medicines, decoction and add on liquids are added in that order. They are made into a homogenous liquid and administered as enema.

In Vaitarana basti such procedure is not mentioned. But the preparation shall be done in a similar way.

- First rock salt is powdered properly.
- Instead of honey, syrup of jaggery in mentioned proportion is added to the rock salt. They are pounded and mixed.
- Sesame oil is added and mixed.
- The paste of tamarind is now added to the resultant mixture and ground properly.
- Finally, instead of decoction, urine of cow is added and mixed thoroughly until they become homogenous.

Another method

- The jaggery is ground with equal quantity of cow urine so as to make a homogenous paste.
- Later the rock salt is added to the paste.
- Sesame oil is added in needed proportions to the above said mixture of ingredients and ground till they become homogenous.
- To this, the tamarind paste is added
- Finally the cow urine in mentioned quantity is gradually added to the above said mixture.

They are mixed thoroughly until they properly blend.

- The resultant liquid i. e. medicated decoction is filtered.
- The filtrate is kept in hot water and made lukewarm. The temperature should be tolerable enough to be administered as enema.
- After checking the temperature of the decoction, it is administered as enema.
- This enema should be given after the consumption of food.

### Time of administration:

General time for administering Niruha Vasti i. e. "Madhyahne Kinchidavarthe" [35]. A day can be divided into 3 Ahnas i. e. Purvahna, Madhyahna and Aparahna. Niruha basti is given in Madhyahna time i. e. between 10 am to 2 pm when the

patient feels not so much hunger. Vrindha Madhava and Vangasena explain that Vaitarana basti can be administered to all types of patients; it can be given even after consumption of food [36], which deviates from the general norm of administering Niruha Vasti. Vrindhamadhava advise administration during evening time also. It can be given immediately after food intake should be considered as an exceptional rule and should be administered in special cases like Amavata where the patient is too weak to withstand the strength of the basti.

## 3. Conclusion

Vaitarana Vasti is one of the most effective and economical basti which can be administered in a wide range of diseases. It is not mentioned in *bruhat trayee*. References of it are available in text books like Chakradutta, Vrindhamadhava, Vangasenasamhita etc. The quantity of ingredients and Drava Dravya differ in preparation of basti as per therapeutic uses and disease and patient condition. Many studies on Vaitarana Vasti focus on Amavata and so there is huge scope of studies on rest of the indications like *Klaibya*. More researches and studies are needed to standardise the quantity of ingredients, selection of ingredients in different diseases conditions and to establish the mode of action of Vaitarana basti in different diseases.

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