

A Case Study on Folklore Practice in Southern Part of Kerala on *Eranda (Ricinus communis Linn)* Patra Choorna in Kamala

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Abstract: Ayurveda, the science of life, encompasses the ethnomedical use of various medicinal plants. Acharyas have emphasized the importance of gathering knowledge about herbs from traditional healers such as Gopalas, Vanacharas, and Ajapas. Ethnomedical surveys have shed light on folklore practices, leading to the discovery of Anukta Dravyas (previously undocumented medicinal substances). This case study highlights the use of *Eranda (Ricinus communis Linn)* Patra Choorna (castor leaf powder) as a folklore practice in southern part of Kerala for Kamala. Kamala can be correlated to jaundice in modern terminology. The treatment involved administering *Eranda Patra Choorna* at a dosage of 5 g initially, followed by 2.5 g in consecutive doses, along with milk as *Anupana* (adjuvant) and *Pathya Ahara* (wholesome diet). The intervention was observed to be effective in reducing elevated bilirubin levels (2.8 mg/dL) in the patient, demonstrating the potential efficacy of this traditional practice.

Keywords: Eranda, Kamala, Anupana, Pathayaahara

1. Introduction

Ricinus communis Linn (Eranda), a species of the Euphorbiaceae family, is widely cultivated across India and also grows in the wild. Ayurvedic texts such as *Bhavaprakasha Nighantu*¹ and *Kaiyadeva Nighantu*² describe *Eranda Patra* (castor leaf) as *Vataghna* (pacifying *Vata*) and *Kaphaghna - Krimi Vinashana* (useful against *Kapha* - related disorders and parasites). *Kaiyadeva Nighantu* also mentions its role as a *Rakta - Pitta Prakopana Dravya* (increasing *Rakta* and *Pitta*). *Dhanvantari Nighantu*² states that *Eranda* is *Bhedi* (purgative), *Vrishya* (aphrodisiac), and "*Swadu - Pitta - Ashmarijit*" (effective in *Pitta* disorders and urinary stones). It possesses *Madhura*, *Katu*, and *Kashaya Rasa* (sweet, pungent, and astringent taste), *Tikshna*, *Guru*, and *Snigdha Guna* (sharp, heavy, and unctuous properties), *Madhura Vipaka* (sweet post - digestion effect), and *Ushna Veerya* (hot potency). Its *Vatahara* property is considered *Agrya Karma* (highly effective in *Vata* disorders).⁵ Various studies have been conducted on the hepatoprotective activity of *Eranda Patra* extract, demonstrating its effectiveness in protecting liver function and supporting recovery from liver disorders

In Ayurveda kamala is caused if a *pandu rogi* eats pittaavardhana aharas. The vitiated *pitta* reaches *koshta* and *shaka* making *rakta* and *mamsa Dagdha* and thus causes *kamala*. It is said the symptoms are "*haridranetramootratwagnakhavaktrashakrutthayah*" and "*durbelandriya*"⁶. Jaundice, also known as hyperbilirubinemia, is characterized by yellowish discoloration of the skin, eyes, and mucous membranes due to elevated bilirubin levels in the blood. It occurs when

bilirubin production, metabolism, or excretion is impaired, leading to its accumulation in tissues. Normal serum bilirubin levels are around 1 mg/dL, and an increase beyond this threshold results in symptoms such as fatigue, yellow discoloration of the body and eyes, and scleral icterus (yellowing of the sclera). Jaundice can be caused by pre - hepatic factors, such as excessive bilirubin production due to haemolysis (increased red blood cell breakdown).

2. Aims and Objectives

Evaluate effectiveness of *Eranda Patra choorna (Ricinus communis Linn)* with milk as *anupana* in *kamala*

Methodology

- Study design Single case study
- Assessment criteria: Physical examination and laboratory examination

3. Case Presentation

A 13 - year - old patient, residing in a coastal area, presented with complaints of yellowish discoloration of the skin and sclera, dark - coloured urine, fatigue, and weakness. The patient reported a history of loss of appetite for the past two months, followed by the onset of fatigue and weakness three weeks prior to presentation. On physical examination, the patient had yellowish discoloration of the skin and sclera, with a moderately built physique (weight: 48 kg). No abnormalities were detected in the cardiovascular system or joints.

Laboratory investigations revealed a total bilirubin level of 2.8 mg/dL, while liver enzymes (SGOT, SGPT) were within normal limits. Blood routine examination showed a haemoglobin level of 14.3 g/dL, with an eosinophil count of 10%, while all other routine parameters were within normal reference ranges. The clinical presentation and laboratory findings suggest a possible hepatic treatment. Laboratory Examination was done on 1st day, 1 week after 1st treatment, 1 week after 2nd treatment last assessment on the 2nd week of 2nd treatment

Treatment Plan and Bilirubin Level Monitoring

Day Treatment & Diet Bilirubin Level (mg/dL)
Day 1 <i>Eranda Patra Choorna</i> 5 g at 5 AM with 100 ml milk. Followed by diluted milk and banana till noon milk porridge in the afternoon. 2.8
Day 2–5 Normal diet prescribed. -
Day 5 Bilirubin level checked. 1.4
Day 7 Second dose of <i>Eranda Patra Choorna</i> 2.5 g with milk. Same dietary restrictions followed. -
Day 12 Bilirubin level checked 1.4
After treatment Followed a normal diet. -
Final Check Bilirubin level checked. 0.5

Complaints During Treatment; The patient experienced loose motions 2 times in the evening and the following day after taking the treatment.

4. Result

The patient successfully reduced their bilirubin levels to normal within three weeks using *Eranda (Ricinus communis Linn) Patra Choorna* and dietary restrictions only on the day of medication intake. The yellowish discoloration of the body and sclera gradually faded as the treatment progressed, indicating an improvement in bilirubin levels and liver function.

5. Discussion

This treatment was entirely based on folklore practice, but *Acharyas* have described its *Doshaghna* properties as *Vata - Kaphaghna*. However, *Dhanvantari Nighantu* states that *Eranda Patra* also possesses *Pittaghna* properties. Considering *Dhanvantari Nighantu*, its *Bhedi* (purgative) property and *Ushnatwa* (hot potency) contribute to *Srotosodhana* (channel cleansing), while *Madhura Vipaka* (sweet post - digestive effect) aids in *Pittaghna* action and *Anulomana* (regulation) of Pitta, which is reflected in the loose stools observed on the day and the following day of treatment.

6. Conclusion

Eranda (Ricinus communis Linn) Patra chornam with milk as anupana is effective in kamala by bringing down the elevated bilirubin and symptoms to normal.

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