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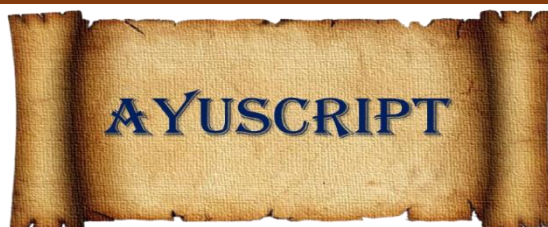
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यन्कल्पेन शरीरं समकल्पयन् ॥१॥ विश्वकर्मोणमाहूय पुरीक्षाटकानि
 र्तेना ॥ तत्र खोडशसहस्रस्त्रीणां चैव वराधिकम् ॥११॥ भवभानिसनो ज्ञानि
 यो मध्ये चकल्पयन् ॥ परिज्ञानतर्कवैवनासोभोगाय कल्पयन् ॥१२॥ या
 यानो गृह्णास्तत्र यद्दुपेचाशतकोटयः ॥ अन्यपि बहुवैलोक्यावसंनिधिगत
 राः ॥१३॥ यन्निर्विद्युत्सुक्तैश्च सुन्दरैश्च दृश्यते ॥ सवाङ्मिन्प्रसूनास्यो पु
 त्रयुयस्य विद्युते ॥१४॥ यथापि नीरमासाद्य तन्मनस्कतया च सः ॥ सना जि
 स्तपस्तेपस्वयं मुदिष्टप बुद्धिमाच ॥१५॥ धनैर्निरसने म्मस्वयं स्वदुःखे
 तः ॥ प्रसन्नो भयवाच्यनोजितपुरस्थितः ॥१६॥ सना जिनापि तुष्टावदृष्टा देवैर्द
 ाकरयन् ॥ निजोराशनमस्तुक्तं नमस्तु सर्वतो मुखः ॥१७॥ विश्वव्यापिन्नमस्तुक्त
 मस्तु निस्तरुपिणः ॥ कल्पयेय नमस्तुक्तं हरिद्वयनमस्तुक्तं ॥१८॥ गृह्णाज्जन्म
 तस्तु नमस्तु चंद्रो जियो ॥ वेदत्रयनमस्तुक्तं सर्वदेव्यनमस्तुक्तं ॥१९॥ प्रसीद
 त्स्वित्वा सुदृष्टीमां दिवा करी ॥ २०॥ यस्मै सक्तयमानो लोदेवदेवो दिवा करः ॥२
 १॥ यथाभीरुभयं परं सक्तं तिनभया ॥ २२॥ अरं वदित्वा सक्तं यस्मै सक्तं





International Journal for Empirical Research in Ayurveda

Management of Bhallataka Poisoning- An Appraisal Tomar S.¹, Hingmire N.²

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ABSTRACT:

Bhallataka (*Semecarpus anacardium* Linn.), categorized under *Upavisha* (sub-toxic substances) in Ayurveda, is a potent medicinal drug widely used in various therapeutic formulations. Despite its significant pharmacological benefits, its application in clinical practice is often limited due to its well-known toxic effects, particularly local adverse reactions such as (burning sensation), (inflammation), (blister formation), and (itching). These manifestations are frequently observed in the Indian population, where Bhallataka is commonly utilized in both classical and folk practices, often without adequate purification (*Shodhana*) or precautionary measures. Although systemic toxicity of Bhallataka is relatively rare, its local toxic effects are more prevalent and sometimes severe, necessitating immediate and effective management. Modern medicine currently lacks specific targeted therapies for managing such localized toxic reactions, thereby highlighting a critical gap in treatment approaches. In contrast, Ayurveda offers a wide array of therapeutic interventions, particularly through *Lepa Kalpana* (topical applications), which are described in classical texts for managing skin-related toxicities and inflammatory conditions. This review aims to systematically explore and compile references from various Ayurvedic literatures regarding the management of Bhallataka-induced local toxicity. Emphasis is placed on identifying, analyzing, and summarizing different *Lepa* formulations and their therapeutic efficacy in alleviating local symptoms.

Key words: Bhallataka toxicity, local effect, Ayurveda treatment, Lepa Kalpana

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Introduction:

Agadtantra is an important branch of Ashtanga Ayurveda. The importance of this branch has been described in our Vedas, Epics, and Samhita. Proper description, classification, clinical features, and management of any kind of Visha have been described in this branch. Some poisonous plants are Dhatura, Bhallataka, Vatsanabha, Bhanga, Vach, Kuchala, and Gunja, etc.

The poisonous plants are categorized as Visha and Upvisha in Ayurvedic texts. A poisonous plant is one that, when touched or consumed in large enough quantities, can be hazardous or lethal to humans or other animals. These plants can be utilized as herbal medicines with therapeutic effects when used in the right proportions and in small doses. Many plants are detrimental to people when consumed or through skin contact with plant chemicals. Poisonous medicinal herbs are used to treat a variety of illnesses, including diabetes, cancer, infections, and fungal growth. According to the review, numerous phytochemical components that have diuretic, purgative, laxative, anti-allergic, and other significant therapeutic effects have been identified in a variety of medicinal plants. If utilized appropriately, poison can be life-giving, calming to the three Doshas, encouraging, and regenerating. Some poisonous plants are Dhatura, Bhallataka, Vatsanabha, Bhanga, Vach, Kuchala, and Gunja, etc. The Shodhana process is the only bridge between Visha and Aushadhi. Shodhana is the process by which physical, chemical, and natural impurities are removed. It will intensify the potency and effectiveness of the drug and nullify its toxicity. The aim of this review article is to provide a brief overview of the numerous medicinal uses of some poisonous plants against local toxicity of Bhallataka [1]. Latest Researches shows better impact of Bhallataka in Cancer studies. The anticancerous effects of Bhallataka Taila in lung cancer is proven to be helpful through metabolomic and

network pharmacology approach[2]. It is the need of the time to explore more safer remedies for Bhallataka toxicity as it is Potent Rasayana drug in different types of present day ailments.

According to the principles of Ayurveda, even strong poisons can be effective medicines when taken correctly. On the other hand, even the most effective medicine can turn into poison if not used properly[3]. In India, it is an old tradition to use poisonous plants after perifying them to treat diseases. Due to their suitability, many formulas have been included in the AFI (Indian Ayurvedic Formulas)[4]. Also, the names of poisonous plants are given in Schedule E (1) of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. Visha(poisonous) and Upavisha(poisonous), among them Upavisha, Vishatinduka(nux vomica) and others. It is widely used in practice along with Vatsanabha(Aconite), which is Visha.[5] According to Acharya Sushruta, there is no substance in the universe that does not have some form of healing. Medicines that treat disease or substances used in special combinations prove the existence of medicinal substances due to their good and powerful results.[6] According to the World Health Organization, approximately 70 - 80% of the world's population is dependent on herbal medicines. The constant use of limited natural resources has led to the near death of many popular plants. Poisonous plants are more common because they are used less frequently. If medical costs can be covered, the burden of effective medicine can be controlled to some extent[7]

Objective- This is a literature review to explore the treatment of Bhallataka poisoning described in Indian medicine with the help of literature from classical and modern Ayurvedic texts and published scientific articles.

Material- Various classical texts, Samhitas, Journals, Peer reviewed articles, Published books in Ayurveda and CCRAS publications, Lexicons, Previous work done in the field etc.

Methods –To review all literature regarding the topic-Thoroughly, systematically, Analysing the data and bring out updated conclusion.

Results

Bhallataka is Classified under Upavisha group^{[8][9]} and Phalavisha^[10]. Properties of Bhallataka are Shukrala, Vata - Sleshmahara, Udara, Anaha, Kustha, Grahani, Gulma, Jwara, Switra, Agnimandya, Krimi, It's Therapeutic uses are in Vrana BhallatakaRasayan, Amrita Bhallataka, Bhallatak Taila, Tilarushkar Yoga^[11].

The famous western toxicologist Paracelsus said the phrase "medicine makes poison" or "Sola dosisfacitvenenum" in Latin. He explained: "Everything is poisonous; Everything is poison." Only dose causes toxicity. Acharya Charaka had expressed the same idea before Paracelsus but in a different way. It is said that if a strong poison is used in a decision, it will be a good medicine^[12].

Treatment of Bhallataka Toxicity:

Though local toxicity of Bhallataka seems to be a common occurrence in the society, there's no drug of choice to manage this condition through allopathic medicine. The treatment in allopathy is only symptomatic i.e. washing the parts with water and application of bland liniments or other ointments containing Silver Nitrate, Silver Sulfadiazine etc. at the local area.^[13]

- In the described case reports, the local treatments included Calosoft lotion [Containing Calamine, Aloe vera, Liquid paraffin], Fusidic-BNF cream [Containing Fusidic acid-2% w/w, Beclomethasone-0.02% w/w], Mupirocin-2% ointment,^[14]
- Topical steroids like Betamethasone cream and Potassium permanganate soaks,^[15] Wet dressings of Boric acid or Burrow's 1:20 solution,^[16]
- Topical Hydrocortisone acetate ointment,^[17] Fluticasone and Mupirocin ointment.^[18]
- Meghanad Swarasa (Juice of

Amaranthus spinosa) mixed with Navaneeta (Butter) or Devdaru(Cedrus deodara), Sarshapa (Brasica campestris), Mustaka (Cyperus rotundus) and Navaneeta (Butter) mixed together to form a Lepa or Tila (Sesamum indicum) mixed with Navaneeta (Butter), Mishri (Sugar) and Dugdha (Milk) or Sharkara (Sugar) mixed with Ghee or Nimba Patra (Leaves of Azadirachta indica), seeds of Tila (Sesamum indicum) and Tila Taila (Sesamum oil) should be boiled together to form a concentrated solution, which can be applied locally. ^[19]

- Tila Kalka (Paste of Sesamum indicum) mixed with Aja Dugdha (Goat milk) and Navaneeta (Butter) or Singular use of Krishna Mrittika (Black clay) pacifies the Shotha (Edema) produced by Bhallataka. ^[20]

Certain Home remedies are –

- For external manifestations of Bhallataka toxicity, Coconut oil, Ghrita, Rala (Resin) ointment or Lead lotion is applied.^[21]
- Dhanyak Patra Kalka (Coriander leaves pulp) or Navaneeta (Butter) mixed with Musta (Cyperus rotundus) are also used as antidotes.^[22]
- Local application of paste made of leaves of Kasamarda (Cassia occidentalis) or leaves of Arjuna (Terminalia arjuna) or Haridra (Curcuma longa) pacifies the toxic effects of Bhallataka.^[23]
- When Amra Haridra (Curcuma amada), Sathi Chawal (Red rice, which gets ready in 60 days) and milk triturated with stale water are locally applied with pressure, it relieves the edema caused due to the smoke of Bhallataka. ^[23]
- Krishna Tila (Sesamum indicum) triturated with milk or curd should be applied as Lepa, when there are

symptoms like wounds, blisters and edema, caused due to contact with oil or smoke of Bhallataka [23].

- The corrugated-meaty seeds of Walnuts, Coconut meat, Chironji seeds (*Buchanania lanzan*) and Krishna Tila (*Sesamum indicum*) should be finely powdered and the local lesion of Bhallataka toxicity should be coated with it. After 4-5 hours, it should be washed off using buttermilk and it should be kept uncoated for some time. After 30 minutes or 1 hour, it should again be coated with fresh preparation of the same Lepa. All the local toxic effects of Bhallataka can be pacified by using Lepa Kalpana in this way.[23]
- Nimba Patra Kalka (Neem leaves paste) can externally be used due to its Pitta Shamaka property, as it's indicated for both of its explicatory factors viz. Vrana (wound) and Visha (poison).[24]
- All types of Pitta Shamaka treatments like Milk, Ghee, Navaneeta, Shatadhauta Ghrita etc. and all the drugs with cold potency can be used in this condition, both externally as well as internally.[25]

Discussion:

Synonyms of Bhallataka are Shophahetu, Shophakrita, Vranakrita which means it causes inflammation and ulceration. We find Laghu, Ruksha property & hot potency in Bhallataka which is similar to poison. Local & systematic manifestation and treatment of Bhallataka (*Semecarpus anacardium*) are described in both Ayurveda and Modern toxicology. According to Modern toxicology allergic dermatitis in *Semecarpus anacardium* fruits is caused due to Urushiol. Local manifestations are more common than systemic manifestations. Various local applications are suggested by Ayurveda in different texts. It can be used in treatment.

Vishaghna (Detoxification) Effect: According to Acharya Charaka, Visha shows the detoxification effect of Prabhava [26]. Acharya Shivadas Sena, in his commentary on Charaka Tattva Pradipika, sees Visha as Vishaghna while Sthavara and Jangama destroy each other. [27]

Commenting on Visha gati (i.e. Jangama Visha moves upwards and Sthavar Visha moves downwards and Vishaghna Karma (detoxification effect), Acharya Chakrapani observed that in the case of Sthavar Visha, Jangama Visha is used as an antidote. He explains that the reason behind the detoxification power of Visha is Prabhava (special power of the medicine).[28]

As per the principal of Vishagna effect, antidote of Sthavar visha Bhallataka is Jangama visha like godugdha, Goghrita, Aja dugdha can work better in the form of Anupana (After drink) and Sahapanam (with drink) in the cases of use of Agadas against it. Also as sthavar and jangam visha counteracts with each other as there Vishagatis are opposite to each other. Bhallataka is therapeutically more useful. But before using internally, it should be subjected through Shodhana sanskara (Purification process). Application of coconut oil on face, extermeties or exposed parts of body should be done before Shodhana sanskara as precaution to avoid its toxic effects. Modern toxicology mentions stomach wash and symptomatic treatment, in its toxicity if taken ingested. But as described in Ayurvedic texts various pastes like application of goat milk, Sesamum, butter or Mixture of *Amaranthus spinosa* leaves juice and butter can be applied for local manifestation. Internally, albumen of coconut or juice of *Tamarindus indica* leaves or Sesamum and coconut can be given. On this note, we can conclude that there's a need of research in this direction to find out a comprehensive remedy for the local toxicity of Bhallataka, which can be possible with the help of Ayurveda.

Tila Kalka (Paste of *Sesamum indicum*) should be triturated with Mahisha Dugdha (Milk of buffalo) and mixed with

Navaneeta (Butter) **or** Yashtimadhu Kalka (Paste of *Glycyrrhiza glabra*) and Tila (*Sesamum indicum*) should be triturated with Dugdha (Milk) **or** Paste of Shalapatra (*Desmodium gangeticum*) to be applied locally. [29]

Conclusion:

During the appraisal of various case-reports of local toxicity of Bhallataka, it has been observed that the usage of Bhallataka is prevalent throughout the country (India) as diversified practices in various strata of the society and therefore, the occurrences of local toxicity of Bhallataka is a common scenario in the Indian population. As Bhallataka is a sub-lethal poison, it's not considered to be a fatal one; and therefore, it is often neglected by the medical fraternity. However, in routine practice, we find the patients of Bhallataka toxicity more regularly in the Out Patient Department as well as In-Patient Department. Usually, the toxicity of Bhallataka causes local manifestations only and can be easily dealt with without major complications. However, in some cases, more severe systemic manifestations may occur; and in few rare cases, even nephrotoxicity can occur, as a result of systemic absorption of the toxin even through the local application. Therefore, the problem of local toxicity of Bhallataka is actually a more severe problem, which is often under-estimated. The allopathic system of medicine provides no specific topical treatment for the local toxicity of Bhallataka and the treatment is only symptomatic. Hence, there's a great scope for the alternative and complementary medicinal systems like Ayurveda to find a specific treatment for this condition. The local treatment modalities like Lepa Kalpana in Ayurveda provide a wide range of local formulations for Bhallataka toxicity; and therefore, it holds the potential to be developed as a specific treatment option in this condition. On this note, we can conclude that there's a need of research in this direction to find out a comprehensive remedy for the local

toxicity of Bhallataka, which can be possible with the help of Ayurveda.

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