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Review Article

A CLASSICAL AYURVEDA REVIEW ON HARIDRA

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ABSTRACT

Curcuma longa Linn. is one of the important medicinal plants of the family Zingiberaceae. Being one among the constituent of Chandraprabha vati, Mahatikta ghrita, Haridra khand, Dashamulaarista etc, Haridra is very widely used in Ayurveda for the treatment of various disorders through its Rasapanchak. The name Haridra signifies its colour. In the Ayurvedic Formulary of India, Haridra is being used in various formulations. It is used as major ingredient in many formulations. It is highly valued from time immemorial because of its vast medicinal properties, traditional usage and cosmetic value. It is extensively used as Anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, antidiabetic, anthelminthic, hepatoprotective, hypolipidemic, antihistaminic, antifungal agent. Information from Ayurvedic texts shows its wide use in the diseases like Prameha, Krimi, Aruchi, Apachi, Pandu, Visa etc. The present article provides all necessary information regarding its classical references to have an overall view of Haridra in Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

Haridra (Curcuma longa Linn.) is one of the important plants having ritual and medicinal both usage. It is a common spice, known mostly for its use in Indian dishes as a common ingredient in curries and other ethnic meals. Turmeric has also been used for centuries in Ayurvedic medicine, which integrates the medicinal properties of herbs with food.

Curcuma longa Linn. which is a member of the ginger family (Zingiberaceae)^[1] is a golden drug in Ayurveda. Modern science has explored many of its functions after several researches. But it should be keep in mind that various Ayurvedic texts also have given a great respect to this common and well known herb. This extraordinary herb has found its way into the spotlight because of its wide range of medicinal benefits. But above all, before studying about any herb, we have to know the classical textual references and for this reason, the review study was done.

Classically, Haridra is Varnya, Medaghna, Vrana ropak, Visodhani, Stanya sodhak etc by its pharmacological activity. It is a well known drug in Ayurveda which is auspicious and also has cosmetic and religious importance. Haridra has a great importance to prevent and control *Prameha*^[2]. It is widely used in the diseases like Krimi, Aruchi, Apachi, Pandu, visa etc. Haridra is mentioned in different texts in different names. From ancient period to *Nighantu kala* it is mentioned in different classics in context to different preventive aspects and diseases. In different Samhitas & Nighantus, Haridra is mentioned in different classics in different Mahakashaya, Ganas or Vargas. This study was done to gather all the information about the classical references to have an overall view of Haridra in Ayurveda.

Historical Background of *Haridra*^[3] Vedic period

By searching the Vedic literature, it was found out that the drug *Haridra* was mentioned

extensively. Acarya Sayana claimed Haridra as Medhya when administered with Madhu and Ghrita. Hindu mythology revealed that the herb Haridra is included in Navapatrika and Devi Durga presides over this plant. According to Sounakiya Atharva veda Saṃhita, Haridra is indicated Svitra and Palitva when used along with Bhṛṇgaraja, Indravaruni and Nili. It was also used externally as Udvartana in Hridroga and Kamala. In Kausika Dharmasutra, it is delineated that Haridra is an antidote for snake venom.

Samhita Kala

Caraka Samhita: In this Saṃhita, comprehensive depiction of Haridra is found. There is talked about Rasa, Guna, Virya, Vipaka, Prabhava, Doshika karma and therapeutic use of Haridra. Haridra is described in several Mahakaṣaya, Yavagu, different Yogas like Nisaamlaki, Vasantakusumakar rasa, Haridrakhanda etc. in various aspects.

Susruta Samhita: Acarya Susruta has mentioned Haridra in 3 Vargas- Haridradi, Mustadi and Lakshadi gana. Rasapancak, therapeutic uses and Doṣakarmata are also described. It is used in various diseases like- Vrana, Visa, Medoroga, Pratisyay etc.

Ashtanga Hridayam: Acarya Vagbhata did not mention the Haridra in detail, but it can be incorporated in different Ganas and therapeutic uses. It is recommended for different diseases as different formulations.

Others Samgraha Grantha

Sharngadhara Samhita: There is no description on botanical and Rasapanchak aspects here; but it has mentioned in different Kalpana to mitigate different diseases like- Churna kalpana, Kwath kalpana, Sneha kalpana, Lepa kalpana etc.

Nighantu Kala: Almost all Nighantu have mentioned about Haridra in various Varga. Synonyms, botanical descriptions, properties, therapeutic uses are also mentioned.

Plant Profile of *Haridra*^[4] **Local name:** Haridra, halud

Botanical name: *Curcuma longa* Linn. **Family:** Zingiberaceae/ Scitaminae **Implication of Botanical Name**^[5]

Curcuma: This word is derived from the Sanskrit Kunkuma, means referring to both turmeric and

saffron.

Longa: Plant is long/tall.

Vernacular names of *Haridra*^[6]
Assamese : Halodhi, Haladhi
Bengali : Halud, Haldi

Gujarati : Haldar
Hindi : Haldi, Hardi
Kannada : Arishina
Marathi : Halad
Malayalam : Manjal
Oriya : Haladi

Punjabi : Haldi, Haldar

Sanskrit : Haridra, Kanchani, Pita, Nisha,

Baravarnini, Yoshitpriya, Hattavilasini, Laksmi, Gauri

Santhali : Sasang Telugu : Pasupu

Tamil : Manjal, Manchal Kashmiri : Ladar, Ladhir

Other names[7]

Arabic : Kurkum, Zarsud, Uruk-Es-Suff

Burmese : Sanwin, Hsanwen, Sanae

English : Turmeric
Latin : Curcuma Longa
Persi : Serd-Chubah

Urdu : Haldi

Nepali : Besar, Haldi

Thai : Kha Min Chan, Khaminluang German : Curcuma, Indischer, Safran

Sinhala : Kaha

Indonesian: Kunyit, Kunir, Daunkunyit

Chinese : Yu Chin Specific Characters[8]

Flowers: Yellow

Rhizome: The useful part is rhizome and it is

golden-yellow within, used for dyeing.

Uses: It is effective drug for jaundice, worms,

Prameha and poisoning.

Taxonomical position of *Haridra*^[9]

Kingdom – Plantae – plants

Subkingdom –Viridiplantae- green plant Infrakingdom –Streptophyta- land plant

Super division -Embryophyta

Division –Tracheophyta-vascular plant Subdivision –Spermatophytina- seed plant

Class - Magnoliopsida

Super order – Lilianae- monocots

Order – Zingiberales

Family –Zingiberaceae/ Scitaminae Genus –*Curcuma L.*- hidden lily

Species -longa

Binomial name - Curcuma longa Linn.

Pharmacognosy

Morphological descriptions[10]

Roots/tubers- Root stock large, ovoid; sessile tubers thick, cylindrical, bright yellow inside.

Leaves- Long petiole; oblong, narrow at the base.

Flower- Bracts pale green; flowers as long as bracts, pale green; flowers during rainy seasons.

Distribution and habitat[11]

Plant is a native of South Asia and is cultivated extensively throughout warmer parts of the world, including India.

Macroscopic and microscopic features of rhizome^[12]

Macroscopic- Rhizomes ovate, oblong or pyriform (round turmeric) or cylindrical, often short branched (long turmeric), former about half as broad as long, latter 2-5cm long and about 1-1.8cm thick, externally yellowish to yellowish-brown with root scars and annulations of leaf bases, fracture horny, fractured surface orange to reddish brown, central cylinder twice as broad as cortex: odour and taste characteristic.

Microscopic: Transverse section of rhizome shows epidermis with thick-walled, cubical cells of various dimensions, cortex characterised by the presence of mostly thin-walled rounded parenchyma cells scattered collateral vascular bundles, a few layers of cork developed under epidermis and scattered oleo-resin cells with brownish contents; cork generally composed of 4-6 layers of thin-walled, brick-shaped parenchyma, cells of ground tissue contain starch grains of 4-15 μ in diameter, oil cell with suberised walls containing either orange-yellow globules of volatile oil or amorphous resinous matter, vessels mainly spirally thickened, a few reticulate and annular.

Part of use[13]: Kanda (Rhizome)

Dose^[14]: 1-3gm of the drug in powder form.

Anupana^[15]: Dhatri rasa and Madhu or Guḍuchi Swarasa or Amlaki swarasa or Kashaya of Citraka, Triphala, Darvi and Kalinga.

Traditional use: Traditionally it is used as spices, holy events like marriage, sacred thread ceremony etc.

Phyto-chemistry^[16]

The major chemical constituents are curcuminoids (approx.6%), the yellow colouring principles of which curcumin constitutes 50-60%; essential oil (2-7%) with high content of bisabolane derivatives.

Major chemical constituents: Curcumin, demethoxycurcumin and bisdemethoxy curcumin collectively known as curcuminoids (3-6%) are major polyphenolic compounds in turmeric

rhizomes. The main colouring principle of turmeric rhizome was isolated in 19th century and named as Curcumin. Its chemical structure was determined by Roughley and Whiting (1973).

Other Phenolic and Non-phenolic Compounds: Other phenolic compounds present in turmeric 1-hvdroxy-1, 7-bis (4-hvdroxyrhizome are 3methoxyphenyl)-(6E)-6-heptene-3, 5-dione; 1-(4-5-dimethoxyphenyl)-7-(4hydroxy-3hydroxy-3, methoxyphenyl)-(1E, 6E)-1, 6heptadiene-3, 4-dione etc. Some other non phenolic compounds named as curlone, α-turmerone; β-turmerone; terpinolene etc. The water soluble peptide is named as turmerin with an amino acid composition as aspartic acid/ aspargine, glutamic acid/glutamine, serine, glysine, proline, alanine, tvrosine. methionine, leucine, isoleucine and phenylalanine in the ratio: 1:2:3:8:1:1:1:3:2:6:3:4:5:3

Volatile oil: The pale yellow to orange-yellow volatile oil (4-6%) obtained from turmeric consists of a number of mono- and sesquiterpenes. The sesquiterpenes were named as curcumin one dehydrocurdione; (4S, 5S)-germacrone 4, 5-epoxide; bisabola 3, 10-diene 2-one; arturmerone etc.

Adulterants and Substitutes[17]

Curcuma longa is rarely adulterated or substituted. However, fingerprint profiles using TLC and GLC can distinguish the drug from other species of Curcuma. Curcuma longa is a substitute for Berberis aristata (Dāruharidrā).

Pharmacological Effect

Curcumin, its main active constituent, is as powerful and antioxidant as vitamins C, E and Beta-Carotene, making turmeric usage a consumer choice for cancer prevention, liver protection and premature aging (Rasayana). Several published studies also show that turmeric inhibits the growth of several different types of cancer cells (as Lekhaniya). Various studies have shown that curcumin is non-toxic to humans. Turmeric is effective in reducing post-surgical inflammation (Sothahara). It has excellent effect in wound healing (Vrana ropak). It protects from respiratory tract infections (effect on Shwasa and Kasa). Curcumin inhibits the growth of Helicobacter pylori, which causes gastric ulcers and has been linked with gastric carcinoma (effect on Aruchi, Grahani and Krimi). Curcumin can bind with heavy metals such as cadmium and lead, thereby reducing the toxicity (Vishaghna) of these heavy metals. This property of curcumin explains its protective action to the brain. The various analytical shows its anti-bacterial effect, insecticidal effect, antifungal effect and antiparasitic effect (*Krimighni*); cholagogue and antihepatotoxic effect (effect on *Udara roga* and *Grahani*), hepato-protective effect, anti-inflammatory effect (effect on *Sotha*), neuro-protective activity, anti-fertility effect, antiarthritic effect (effect on *Avighata* and *Adhyavata*), hypo-

lipidemic effect (*Medaghna*), antihistaminic effect, potent antioxidant (*Rasayana*) and antidiabetic activity effect (effect on *Prameha*). Above all it has high cosmetic value to enhance lustre of skin (*Strinam vaibhusana*) and also treating various skin disorders (effect on *Twak roga*).

Classical Review of Haridra

Table 1: Shows the categorisation of Haridra in Brihatrayi

Name of Samhita	Categorization of <i>Haridra</i>
Caraka Samhita	1. Lekhaniya Mahakashaya
	2. Kusthaghna Mahakashaya
	3. Visaghna Mahakashaya
	4. Sirovirecana dravya
	5. Apatarpanaausadha
	6. Tikta Skandha
	7. Vamana dravya
Susruta Samhita	1. Vacadi gana
	2. Haridradi gana
	3. Mustadi gana
	4. Vata samsamana
	5. Slesma samsamana
2	6. Lakshadi gana
8	7 <mark>. Tikta varga</mark>
Astanga Hrdayam	1 <mark>. H</mark> ari <mark>dr</mark> adigana
[]	2. Mustadigana
	3. Vacaharidradigana

Table 2: Shows the Categorisation of *Haridra* in Nighantus

Name of Nighantu	Categorisation of <i>Haridra</i>	
Dhanvantari nighantu	Guduchyadi Varga	
Sodhala nighantu	Guduchyadi Varga	
Madana pal nighantu	Abhayadi Varga	
Kaiyadev nighantu	Aushadhi Varga	
Bhava prakash nighantu	Haritakyadi Varga	
Raj nighantu	Pippalyadi Varga	
Saligrama nighantu	Ashta varga	
Priya nighantu	Shatapuspadi Varga	
Adarsha nighantu	Ardrakadi Varga	

Synonyms of Haridra with Justification

Table 3: Shows Synonyms of the Drug Haridra

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Synonyms	D.N.	So. N.	M.N.	K.N.	B.P.N.	R.N.	Shan. N	Sh. N.	P.N.
Pitika	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pinga	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rajani	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	-
Ranjini	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nisha	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	+

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Mangalya +	Mangalya	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
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Lakshmi +	Lakshmi	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Bhadra +	Bhadra	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Shipha +	Shipha	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Sopha +	Sopha	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Shobhona +	Shobhona	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Subhaga +	Subhaga	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Shyama +	Shyama	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Jayantika +	Jayantika	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Lomasamulika +	Lomasamulika	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
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Vaishya	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Kanchani	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	+
Pindabhadra	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Pitangi	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Yuvati	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Hemaragini	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Kshanada	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Mehaghni	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Pitavarna	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	+
Krimighni	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Haladi	-	-	-	-	+	1	1	-	-
Yoshitpriya	-	-	-	-	+	1	-	-	-
Hattavilasini	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-

Iustification^[18]

Haridra- Indicative of its colour i.e., the faded greenish discoloration like the skin of a patient suffering from *Halimaka*.

Kanchani- A small herb with rhizomes having golden yellow colour in it.

Krimighni- Effective herb in worm infestation

Nisha- As beautiful as moon-lit night

Pindaharidra- Different from Daruharidra

Pita- A small herb with yellow rhizomes and flowers.

Mangalya- Rhizomes used in all auspicious occasions.

Mehaghni- As an effective herb in Prameha

Yositpriya- High cosmetic value to women.

Ranjini- Specially rhizomes used for dyeing clothes etc.

Lomasamulika- The rhizomes are hairy

Varavarnini- Good looking rhizomes

Varnavilasini- High cosmetic value to women

Vishaghni- As an effective herb in poisoning

Hattavilasini- So much attractive that it can draw attention by its bright colour.

Vaishya- Very much common in market and easily available

Haladi- Commonly named as Haldi

Different varieties of Haridra^[19]

There are mainly 4 varieties of *Haridra* found in *Brihatrayi*, *Laghutrayi* and *Nighantus*. These are as follows.

I. Haridra (Curcuma longa)

II. Amragandhi Haridra or Karpur haridra (Curcuma amada)

III. Daruharidra (Berberis aristata)

IV. Vanaharidra (Curcuma aromatica)

Example of Important Formulations

Curna: Patoladya Churnam, Rajaniaadi Churna, Bhunimbaadi Churnam etc.

Kasaya: Nishakatakaadi kashaya, Varaadikashaya,

Mahatiktakkashaya etc. **Avaleha:** Haridrakhand

Gutika: Chandraprabha vati, Punarnava mandoor,

Vasantakusumakar rasa etc.

Ghrita: Jatyadi ghrita, Triphala ghrita, Phala ghrita, Maha Kalyanak Ghrita, Mahatiktak ghrita, Panchatikta guggulu ghrita etc.

Taila: Chandanadi taila, Jatyadi taila, Vajrak taila

etc.

Ksar: Vashistha Rashayan

Asava-arista: Dashamulaarista, Kanakvindaaristam,

Mulaashava, Pippalyasava etc.

Guggulu: Chandraprabha guggulu

Ayurvedic Pharmacological Properties in Different Ayurvedic Classical Texts

Table 4: Shows the Rasa of Haridra in different Ayurvedic classical text

Rasa	C.S.	S.S.	A.H.	D.N.	So.N.	M.N.	K.N.	B.P.N.	R.N.	Shan. N	Sh.N.	P.N.
Katu	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	-
Tikta	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Table 5: Shows the Guna of Haridra in different Ayurvedic classical text

Guna	C.S.	S.S.	A.H.	D.N.	So.N.	M.N.	K.N.	B.P.N.	R.N.	Shan. N	Sh.N.	P.N.
Ruksha	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	-
Ushna	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-

Table 6: Shows the Virya of Haridra in different Ayurvedic classical text

Virya	C.S.	S.S.	A.H.	D.N.	So.N.	M.N.	K.N.	B.P.N.	R.N.	Shan. N	Sh.N.	P.N.
Ushna	+	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	+

Table 7: Shows the Vipaka of Haridra in different Ayurvedic classical text

Vipaka	C.S.	S.S.	A.H.	D.N.	So.N.	M.N.	K.N.	B.P.N.	R.N.	Shan. N	Sh.N.	P.N.
Katu	+	-	-	•	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 8: Shows the Dosakarmata of Haridra in different Ayurvedic classical text

Dosa Karmata	C.S.	S.S.	A.H.	D.N.	So.N.	M.N.	K.N.	B.P.N.	R.N.	Shan. N	Sh.N.	P.N.
Pitta samak	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	-
Kapha-pitta hara	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-
Kapha-vata nut	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Kapha-vata-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
Asra nut												
Kaphasamak	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tridoshasamak	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 9: Shows the Karma of Haridra in different Ayurvedic classical text

Karma	C.S.	S.S.	A.H.	D.N.	So.N.	M.N.	K.N.	B.P.N.	R.N.	Shan. N	Sh.N.	P.N.
Varnya	-			-			+	+	+	-	+	-
Vishodhani		+	+	+		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lekhaniya	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shirovirecaka	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mangalya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Strinam vaibhusana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
Medaghna	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stanyadosa nirharak	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vrana ropaka	+	+	+	•	•	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mutramarga vishodhana	+	+	-	•	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	•
Rasayana	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 10: Rogaghnata or therapeutic indication of Haridra in different Ayurvedic classical text

Rogaghnata	C.S.	S.S.	A.H.	D.N.	So.N.	M.N.	K.N.	B.P.N.	R.N.	Shan. N	Sh.N.	P.N.
Kotha	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Kandu	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-
Prameha	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+
Twak roga	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Vrana	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Sotha	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	-

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							(ouppr.	- 7				
Pandu	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	-
Krimi	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
Visha	-	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-
Pinas	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
Aruci	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
Apachi	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-
Shitapitta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Avighata	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Daha	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adhyavata	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Visarpa	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netra roga	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Raktapitta	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shvasa	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kasa	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arbuda	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unmada	-	+	-	-	-	•	-	-	-	-	-	•
Apasmara	+	+	-	-	5		3	-	-	-	-	-
Arsha	+	+	-	- /				-	-	-	-	•
Grahani	+	•	-	-8	19:	No.		} -	-	-	-	•
Vidradhi	1	•	+	-} (E I	680		-	-	-	-	•
Udara roga	+	•	+	-}		-	S	3 -	-	-	-	-

CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, the present review is indicative of multiple uses of *Haridra* in different clinical conditions and diseases. According to different Ayurvedic texts, it has *Katu-tikta rasa*, *Ruksha-ushna guna*, *Ushna virya* and *Katu vipaka*. Though *Haridra* is mainly *Pittasamak*, it also acts as *Tridoshasamak* as told by Acharya Vagbhata. By its *Rasapanchak*, *Haridra* has multidimensional activity. After all, *Haridra* has multiple effects, from ancient period to recent days being a golden drug in Ayurveda.

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