

**MEDICINAL USES OF *PUNARNAVA (BOERHAAVIA DIFFUSA LINN.)*  
BASED ON *BRIHATTRAYI***

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**ABSTRACT**

*Ayurveda* is the oldest system of medicine in the world originating in India. Although the contemporary *Ayurveda* is now greatly updated, its ancient classical knowledge has survived through two sets of authentic original texts written initially in *Sanskrita* now translated in many languages. The first set is called *Brihatrayi* or great trio because they are big books and were compiled much earlier than the *Laghutrayi* or lesser trio. The present work aims to discuss medicinal uses of *Punarnava (Boerhaavia diffusa Linn.)* in *Brihatrayi*. *Punarnava* is an important herbal drug, has been used successfully by many more

*Ayurvedic* practitioners from very bigning in *Pandu* (Anemia), *Shotha* (Swelling/inflammation), *Shopha* (Swelling), *Hridaroga* (Cardiac diseases), *Kasa* (Cough), *Arsha* (Hemorrhoids), *Vrana* (Wound), *Urahkshata* (Pulmonary cavitations), *Shoola*(Colic) ect.

**KEYWORDS:** *Ayurveda, Punarnava, Brihatrayi, Pandu, Shotha, Arsha* etc.

**INTRODUCTION**

*Ayurveda* is the ancient science of life. Its antiquity goes back to the *Vedas*. It is believed that right in the beginning of human race it was realized that in order to make the human race survive and flourish it was necessary to promote the mind, the body and the speech (communication). And for this purpose *Ayurveda* was developed to take care of the body and biological health. *Ayurveda* is the oldest repository of Indian system of medicine in the world. Although the contemporary *Ayurveda* is now greatly updated, its ancient classical knowledge

has survived through two sets of authentic original texts written initially in *Sanskrita* now translated in many languages. The first set is called *Brihatrayi* or great trio (*Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita* And *Ashtanga Hridaya*) because they are big books and were compiled much earlier than the *Laghutrayi* or lesser trio.<sup>[1]</sup>

*Punarnava* (*Boerhaavia diffusa* Linn.) belong to family Nyctaginaceae, it is diffuse, slender, sparsely pubescent, creeping-ascending herbs of variable size, upto 50 cm long. Leaves coriaceous, in unequal pairs, oblong-ovate or lanceolate, acute or obtuse at apex rounded-cordate below, petiole upto 1cm mostly in group of 4-6, at the end of short peduncles perianth white, red or pink, constricted in middle, glandular-hairy. Stamens 3, slightly exerted, filaments pink, anther yellow, stigma white, capitates. Fruits less than 4mm long obovoid or subellipsoid, round above, slightly cuneate below.<sup>[2]</sup>

Currently global attention is being increasingly focused on rediscovering and developing the indigenous system of medicine for Primary Health Care. In the course of thousands of year, *Ayurveda* continued to exist, its basic principles never changed, because they are derived from the universal laws of nature which are true. *Ayurveda* is said to be *Anadi* (One which has no known beginning) and *Shashvata* (one which has no end or it is eternal). This contradicts with modern scientific paradigm, where new theories often render previous understanding completely obsolete within a short period of time. *Ayurveda* provides knowledge of etiology, symptomatology and therapeutics, best way for both the healthy and the sick, tri-aphorismic (*trishutra*) continuing from the time immemorial. The significance of drugs in medical science possesses its key role in clinical management of diseases.<sup>[3]</sup>

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### *Charaka Samhita* (1000 BC-4<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D.)<sup>[4]</sup>

In all *ayurvedic samhita granthas* *Charak samhita* is the oldest *samhita*. Its tantrakarta was *Acharya Agnivesh* (1000 BC), *pratisanskarta* was *Acharya Charak* (200 BC) and completed by *Acharya Dridhabal* (4<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D.). In *Charak Samhita* *Punarnava* is used for the treatment of several diseases as *Pandu* (Anemia), *Shotha* (Swelling/inflammation), *Shopha* (Swelling), *Hridroga* (Diseases of CVS), *Kasa* (Cough), *Arsha* (Hemorrhoids), *Vrana* (Wound), *Urahkshata* (Pulmonary cavitations), *Shoola*(Colic) ect. In these diseases *Punarnava* has been used in different compound formulation which are in form of *Churna*, *Ghrita*, *Taila*, *Avaleha* etc. The preparation and indications are mentioned in the following table:

Table no. 1:-

S. NO.	PREPARATIONS/ DOSES FORMS	INDICATIONS/ USES	REFERENCES
1.	<i>Asthapana Vasti Dravya</i>	<i>Udavarta &amp; Vibandha</i>	C.Su.2/12
2.	<i>Svedopaga mahakashaya</i>	<i>Svedana karma</i>	C.Su.4/8/22
3.	<i>Anuvasnopag mahakashaya</i>	<i>Anuvasana Vasti</i>	C.Su.4/8/26
4.	<i>Kasahar mahakashaya</i>	<i>Kasa roga</i>	C.Su.4/8/36
5.	<i>Vayasthapana mahakashaya</i>	<i>Vayasthapana</i>	C.Su.4/8/50
6.	<i>Vamandravyakalpa sangrah</i>	<i>Vamana karma</i>	C.Vi.8/135
7.	<i>Virechanadravyakalpa samgrah</i>	<i>Virechana karma</i>	C.Vi.8/136
8.	<i>Madhura skandha</i>	<i>Asthapana Vasti</i>	C.Vi.8/139
9.	<i>Prathama Brahmarasayana</i>	<i>Rasayana karma</i>	C.Ci.1/43
10.	<i>Dvitiya Brahmarasayana</i>	<i>Rasayana karma</i>	C.Ci.1/58
11.	<i>Chyavanprasha</i>	<i>Rasayana karma</i>	C.Ci.1/64
12.	<i>Amalaka Ghrita</i>	<i>Rasayana karma</i>	C.Ci.1-2/4
13.	<i>19-Baladi Rasayana Yoga</i>	<i>Rasayana karma</i>	C.Ci.1-2/12
14.	<i>Indrokta rasayana yoga</i>	<i>Rasayana karma</i>	C.Ci.1-4/6
15.	<i>Brihaniya Gutika</i>	<i>Vajikarana karma</i>	C.Ci.2-1/26
16.	<i>Shaka (vegetable)</i>	<i>Jvara Roga</i>	C.Ci.3/189
17.	<i>Agurvadi Taila</i>	<i>Shita Jvara Roga</i>	C.Ci.3/267
18.	<i>Kushtha Nashak Yoga</i>	<i>Vata-kaphaja Kushtha Roga</i>	C.Ci.7/125
19.	<i>Pradeha</i>	<i>Yakshama roga</i>	C.Ci.8/79
20.	<i>Rasna Ghrita</i>	<i>Yakshama roga</i>	C.Ci.8/170
21.	<i>Utsadana</i>	<i>Yakshama roga</i>	C.Ci.3/175
22.	<i>Kwatha</i>	<i>Kshat-kshina</i>	C.Ci.11/26
23.	<i>Amrita Grita</i>	<i>Kshat-kshina</i>	C.Ci.11/36
24.	<i>Dvitiya Sarpiguna</i>	<i>Kshat-kshina</i>	C.Ci.11/56
25.	<i>Chaturtha Sarpiguna</i>	<i>Kshat-kshina</i>	C.Ci.11/66
26.	<i>Kwatha</i>	<i>Kaphaja Shotha</i>	C.Ci.12/22
27.	<i>Kwatha</i>	<i>Vatika Shotha</i>	C.Ci.12/23
29.	<i>Kwatha</i>	<i>Vata-Pittaja Shotha</i>	C.Ci.12/25
29.	<i>Punarnavaddharishta</i>	<i>Kshvayathu</i>	C.Ci.12/34
30.	<i>Samanya Yoga</i>	<i>Vatika Shotha</i>	C.Ci.12/73
31.	<i>Parisheka</i>	<i>Udar Roga</i>	C.Ci.13/109
32.	<i>Punarnava Mandura</i>	<i>Pandu Roga</i>	C.Ci.16/93
33.	<i>Vyoshaddha Ghrita</i>	<i>Pandu Roga</i>	C.Ci.16/119
34.	<i>Kantakari Ghrita</i>	<i>Kasa Roga</i>	C.Ci.18/127
35.	<i>Jivantyadi Leha</i>	<i>Kasa Roga</i>	C.Ci.18/177
36.	<i>Kakandadi Yoga</i>	<i>Visha Chikitsa</i>	C.Ci.23/53
37.	<i>Sthiradi Ghrita</i>	<i>Pratiruddha Vata</i>	C.Ci.26/23
38.	<i>Virechana Yoga</i>	<i>Udavarta</i>	C.Ci.26/24
39.	<i>Mishraka Sneha</i>	<i>Vataja Mutrakriccha</i>	C.Ci.26/46
40.	<i>Punarnavadi Yoga</i>	<i>Ashmari &amp; Sharkara Roga</i>	C.Ci.26/63
14.	<i>Karpasa Mutradi Yoga</i>	<i>Dvindaja &amp; Sannipataja Ashmarijanya Mutrakriccha</i>	C.Ci.26/70
42.	<i>Punarnavadi Taila</i>	<i>Vataja Hridroga</i>	C.Ci.26/82
43.	<i>Mahamayura Ghrita</i>	<i>Vataja Shiroroga</i>	C.Ci.26/170
44.	<i>Jivaniya Ghrita</i>	<i>Vatashonita roga</i>	C.Ci.29/61

45.	<i>Jivaniya Ghrita</i>	<i>Vatashonita roga</i>	C.Ci.29/64
46.	<i>Jivakadi Mahasneha</i>	<i>Vatashonita roga</i>	C.Ci.29/73
47.	<i>Amritaddha Taila</i>	<i>Vatashonita roga</i>	C.Ci.29/103
48.	<i>Kashmaryadi Ghrita</i>	<i>Vataja Yoni Roga</i>	C.Ci.30/53
49.	<i>Dhamargava Yoga</i>	<i>Mansika Roga</i>	C.Ka.4/16
50.	<i>Erand Muladi Niruha Vasti</i>	<i>Vata Roga</i>	C.Si.3/39
51.	<i>Punarnavadi Niruha Vasti</i>	<i>Vata Roga</i>	C.Si.3/65
52.	<i>Dashamuladi Anuvasana Taila</i>	<i>Vata Roga</i>	C.Si.4/4
53.	<i>Uttara Vasti/Niruha Vasti</i>	<i>Marmaghata</i>	C.Si.9/8
54.	<i>Kapha Nashaka Vasti</i>	<i>Kapha Roga</i>	C.Si.10/23
55.	<i>Parishrava Nashaka Vasti</i>	<i>Parishrava Roga</i>	C.Si.10/32
56.	<i>Niruha Vasti</i>	<i>Sada-atura Rogi</i>	C.Si.11/32
57.	<i>Mustadi Yapana Vasti</i>	<i>Yapana Vasti</i>	C.Si.12/15-1
58.	<i>Yapana Vasti</i>	<i>Yapana Vasti</i>	C.Si.12/15-2
59.	<i>Vasti</i>	<i>Niruha Vasti</i>	C.Si.12/15-6

**Abreviations:** C.- Charaka, Su.- Sutra sthana, Vi.- Vimana sthana, Ci.- Chikitsa sthana, Ka.- Kalpa sthana, Si.- Siddhi sthana.

### **Sushruta Samhita (1000 BC-5<sup>th</sup> Cent. A.D.)<sup>[5]</sup>**

Adyopdeshta of this samhita was Lord Dhanvantari (2350 B.C.), tantrakarta was Acharya Vriddha Sushruta (1000-1500B.C.), pratisanskarta was Acharya Sushruta (2<sup>nd</sup> A.D.), punah pratisanskarta was Acharya Nagarjuna (5<sup>th</sup> Cent. A.D.). This Samhita is mainly concerned with Shalya & Shalakyta tantra, In this samhita Punarnava is kept under Vidarigandhadi gana, Samshamniya Varga & Tikta Varga, And in compound formulations for treatment of various diseases in form of Taila, Ghrita Nasya, Lepa etc. The preparation and indications are mentioned in the following table:

**Table no. 2:-**

S. NO.	PREPARATIONS/ DOSES FORMS	INDICATIONS/ USES	REFERENCES
1.	<i>Vidarigandhadi gana</i>	<i>Pitta-Vata Nashaka, Shosha, Gulma etc.</i>	S.Su.38/4
2.	<i>Sanshamniya Varga</i>	<i>Vata Sanshamana</i>	S.Su.39/7
3.	<i>Madhura Varga</i>	<i>Madhura Rasa Karma</i>	S.Su.42/18
4.	<i>Pippalyadi Dravya</i>	<i>Vata- Kapha Shamaka</i>	S.Su.46/221
5.	<i>Shaka Varga</i>	<i>Shotha Nashana</i>	S.Su.46/255
6.	<i>Punarnavadi Lepa</i>	<i>Vata pradhana Vatarakta</i>	S.Ci.5/7
7.	<i>Punarnava Kalka</i>	<i>Kapha pradhana Vatarakta</i>	S.Ci.5/10
8.	<i>Punarnava Mula</i>	<i>Arsha</i>	S.Ci.6/13
9.	<i>Kwatha</i>	<i>Pittaja Ashmari</i>	S.Ci.7/11
10.	<i>Dhanvantara Ghrita</i>	<i>Prameha Pidika</i>	S.Ci.12/15
11.	<i>Punarnava Kalka</i>	<i>Udara Roga</i>	S.Ci.14/10
12.	<i>Bala Taila</i>	<i>Sutika Roga</i>	S.Ci.15/33

13.	<i>Lepa</i>	<i>Vataja Galganda</i>	S.Ci.18/45
14.	<i>Parisheka</i>	<i>Vataja Updansha</i>	S.Ci.19/28
15.	<i>Taila</i>	<i>Vidarika</i>	S.Ci.20/12
16.	<i>Lepa</i>	<i>Krimidanta</i>	S.Ci.22/39
17.	<i>Anupana (Kwatha)</i>	<i>Shotha</i>	S.Ci.23/12
18.	<i>Saireyakadi Taila</i>	<i>Kesha Ranjana</i>	S.Ci.25/32
19.	<i>Bhulikadi Taila (Anuvasanartha)</i>	<i>Vata Vikar</i>	S.Ci.37/19
20.	<i>Mustadi Asthapana Vasti</i>	<i>Vatarakta, Prameha, Shotha, Arsha etc.</i>	S.Ci.38/106
21.	<i>Lepa</i>	<i>Visha jushta Mukha</i>	S.Ka.1/61
22.	<i>Yavagu</i>	<i>Vegantara Visha</i>	S.Ka.2/46
23.	<i>Eksara Yoga</i>	<i>Sarpa Visha</i>	S.Ka.5/85
24.	<i>Swarasa</i>	<i>Kapila-Mushika Dashta</i>	S.Ka.7/23
25.	<i>Ghrita</i>	<i>Kpkila-Mushika Dashta</i>	S.Ka.7/24
26.	<i>Unmatta Shawadi Dashta Chikitsa Yoga</i>	<i>Unmatta Shwadi Dashta Chikitsa</i>	S.Ka.7/52
27.	<i>Nadi Sveda</i>	<i>Kaphaja &amp; Vataja Karnashula</i>	S.U.21/6
28.	<i>Baladitaila Nashya</i>	<i>Kaphaja Pratishyaya</i>	S.U.24/32
29.	<i>Lepa</i>	<i>Shankhaka Roga</i>	S.U.26/40
30.	<i>Sechana Karma</i>	<i>Vrana in Revati Balgraha</i>	S.U.31/3
31.	<i>Dugdha Paka</i>	<i>Sarva Jwra Roga</i>	S.U.39/202
32.	<i>Utsadana</i>	<i>Rajyakshama</i>	S.U.41/44
33.	<i>Ghrita</i>	<i>Rajyakshama</i>	S.U.41/46
34.	<i>Dvipanchmuli Ghrita</i>	<i>Rajyakshama</i>	S.U.41/48
35.	<i>Vrishchivaddarishta</i>	<i>Gulma Roga</i>	S.U.42/47
36.	<i>Varshabhvyadi Peya</i>	<i>Madatyaya Roga</i>	S.U.47/46
37.	<i>Subahadi Ghrita</i>	<i>Shvasa Roga</i>	S.U.51/23
38.	<i>Mulakadi Ghrita</i>	<i>Udavarta Roga</i>	S.U.55/46
39.	<i>Phalgvadi Yoga</i>	<i>Sannipataja Mutrakriccha</i>	S.U.59/25

**Abbreviations:** S.- Sushruta, Su.- Sutra sthana, Ci.- Chikitsa sthana, Ka.- Kalpa sthana, U.- Uttara sthana.

#### ***Ashtanga Hridaya (7<sup>th</sup> Cent. A.D.)<sup>[6]</sup>***

This treatise was written by Acharya Vagbhatta and has a systemic description of Ashtanga Ayurveda.

Vagbhatta has used the drug 'punarnava' in compound formulations for the treatment of various diseases. The drug has been used in the form of Ghrita, Taila, Lepa, Vasti etc. As given in Following table:

Table no. 3:-

S. NO.	PREPARATIONS/ DOSES FORMS	INDICATIONS/ USES	REFERENCES
1.	<i>Punarnava Shaka</i>	<i>Shopha, Kapha-Vata Roga</i>	A.H.Su.6/97
2.	<i>Madhyama Panchamula</i>	<i>Kapha-Vata roga</i>	A.H.Su.6/169
3.	<i>Bala Taila</i>	<i>Moodha garbha</i>	A.H.Sa.2/49
4.	<i>Siddha Dugdha</i>	<i>Jwara &amp; Shopha Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.1/115
5.	<i>Punarnavadi Ghrita</i>	<i>Kasa Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.3/58
6.	<i>Kantakari Ghrita</i>	<i>Kasa Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.3/61
7.	<i>Siddha Ghrita</i>	<i>Rakta Shthiwana Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.3/84
8.	<i>Amritaprash Ghrita</i>	<i>Kshata Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.3/94
9.	<i>Nagabaladi Ghrita</i>	<i>Pittarakta, Kshata, Kshaya etc.</i>	A.H.Ci.3/121
10.	<i>Rasnadi Ghrita</i>	<i>Shosha Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.5/24
11.	<i>Lepa</i>	<i>Sansargaja Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.5/68
12.	<i>Udhvartana</i>	<i>Yakshma Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.5/78
13.	<i>Siddha Taila</i>	<i>Vataja Hridroga</i>	A.H.Ci.6/27
14.	<i>Mahasneha Ghritapaka</i>	<i>Hridroga</i>	A.H.Ci.6/39
15.	<i>Lepa</i>	<i>Vasti-Shula</i>	A.H.Ci.8/11
16.	<i>Parisheka-Avagahana</i>	<i>Vinamutra Pratighata</i>	A.H.Ci.8/12
17.	<i>Shulanashaka Taila</i>	<i>Shula in Mutraghata</i>	A.H.Ci.11/2
18.	<i>Ghrita</i>	<i>Pitta-ashmari</i>	A.H.Ci.11/23
19.	<i>Bhrahmi-muladi pana</i>	<i>Ashmari Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.11/33
20.	<i>Ghrita</i>	<i>Prameha Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.12/19
21.	<i>Sukumara Taila</i>	<i>Vardhma-Vridyadi Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.13/41
22.	<i>Dadhika Ghrita</i>	<i>Vataja Gulma</i>	A.H.Ci.14/13
23.	<i>Parisheka</i>	<i>Udar Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.15/49
24.	<i>Ghrita</i>	<i>Mrttika Bhakshanajanya Pandu</i>	A.H.Ci.16/36
25.	<i>Churna</i>	<i>Shotha Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.17/2
26.	<i>Lepa</i>	<i>Shotha Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.17/25
27.	<i>Lepa</i>	<i>Vata-Kaphajanya Kushtha Roga</i>	A.H.Ci.19/87
28.	<i>Swarasa</i>	<i>Unmada Roga</i>	A.H.Ka.1/39
29.	<i>Vasti</i>	<i>Vata-Kapha Roga</i>	A.H.Ka.4/7
30.	<i>Yapana Vasti</i>	<i>Vatarakta Roga</i>	A.H.Ka.4/37
31.	<i>Anuvasana Vasti</i>	<i>Vata Roga</i>	A.H.Ka.4/54
32.	<i>Ghrita</i>	<i>Mrttikabhakshanajanya Shishu Roga</i>	A.H.U.2/76
33.	<i>Lepa</i>	<i>Vataja Galaganda Roga</i>	A.H.U.22/66
34.	<i>Mahamayura Ghrita</i>	<i>Shwasa, Kasa, &amp; Ardita Roga etc.</i>	A.H.U.24/54
35.	<i>Kashamaryadi Ghrita</i>	<i>Yoni Roga</i>	A.H.U.34/28
36.	<i>Yavagu</i>	<i>SarvaVisha</i>	A.H.U.35/22
37.	<i>Mani</i>	<i>SarvaVisha</i>	A.H.U.36/91
38.	<i>Kwatha</i>	<i>Mushika Dansha Visha</i>	A.H.U.38/27
39.	<i>Swarasa</i>	<i>Kukkura Dansha</i>	A.H.U.38/37
40.	<i>Chyavanprasha</i>	<i>Rasayana</i>	A.H.U.39/34
41.	<i>Kalka</i>	<i>Jara Roga</i>	A.H.U.39/154
42.	<i>Vrishya Yoga</i>	<i>Vajikarana</i>	A.H.U.40/14

**Abbreviations:** A.H.- *Ashtanga Hridaya*, Su.- *Sutra sthana*, Sa.- *Sharira sthana*, Ci.- *Chikitsa sthana*, Ka.- *Kalpa sthana*, U.- *Uttara sthana*.

## DISCUSSION

According to WHO about 80% percent of the world population is dependent on the traditional system of medicine, it is essential to intensify the study of medicinal plants. History of drug can be studied under *Vaidic kala*, *Upanishad*, *Purana*, *Samhita*, *Nighantu* and *Adhunik kala*. *Punarnava* (*Boerhaavia diffusa* Linn.) is a popular Prostratic herb, which is used by traditional practioner to cure various ailments. Present study revealed the help of literature i.e *samhita* of *brihatrayi* we will reach to medicine very easily and take the benefit by the traditional medicines. This has happened due to the different rationale used in grouping of the substances. This offers a tremendous scope for research in order to explore the therapeutic application of a substance in different regions and era, in the same manner *Punarnava* was also a popular drug at that time. It is effective in different diseases viz. *pandu*(anaemia), *shotha*(swelling/inflammation), *shopha*(swelling), *hridroga*(cardiac diseases), *kasa*(cough), *arsha*(haemorrhoids), *vrana*(wound), *urakhshata* (pulmonry cavitation), *shoola*(colic) etc.

## CONCLUSION

The present study review on medicinal uses of *Punarnava* (*Boerhaavia diffusa* Linn.) based on *brihatrayi*. In these *samhitas* *Punarnava* is used in different diseases like *Shotha*, *Shopha*, *Visha*, *Arsha*, *Pandu* & *Yoni roga* etc. The different parts of this herb i.e. *mool*, *beeja*, *panchanga* & *patra shaka* are used in different formulations like- *Prathama Brahmarasayana*, *Chyavaprasha*, *Indrokta rasayana*, *Brihaniya gutika*, *Agurvadi taila*, *Amrita ghrita*, *Punarnavadyarishta*, *Punarnava mandura*, *Kantakari ghrita*, *Jivantyadi ghrita*, *Punarnavadi taila*, *Mahamayura ghrita*, *Kasmariyadi ghrita* etc. On this basis it is obvious that *Punarnava* was used in traditionally in various diseases since time immemorial.

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