

THERAPEUTIC POTENTIAL OF VATSANABH (*ACONITUM FEROX WALL EX SERINGE.*)

***Dr. Gajanan D. Chatuphale, M.D. (Agadtantra), PGDEMS, DYA, PhD (Scholar)**

Assistant Professor, Department of Agadtantra, Govt. Ayurved College, Vadodara, Gujarat.

Article Received on
21 Dec. 2018,

Revised on 11 Jan. 2019,
Accepted on 01 Feb. 2019

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20192-14218

*Corresponding Author

Dr. Gajanan D.

Chatuphale

Assistant Professor,
Department of Agadtantra,
Govt. Ayurved College,
Vadodara, Gujarat.

ABSTRACT

Vatsanabh (*Aconitum ferox Wall ex Seringe.*) is most commonly used plant in traditional remedies of not only in India but also in other eastern countries. Vatsanabh has all properties described for poison and hence synonym as Visha; still it is administered as medicine skilfully after certain processes. Vatsanabh is a key ingredient in many formulations. It is used after purification; Tankana is also added in combination to minimize possible toxic effects of Vatsanabh. Formulations containing Vatsanabh are Sootashekhar rasa, Tribhuvankirti rasa, Shankha vati, Sanjivani vati, Mahashankha vati, etc.

This article aims towards exploring therapeutic utility of Vatsanabh mentioned in various areas of Ayurveda and modern science.

Vatsanabh (*Aconitum ferox Wall ex Seringe.*); is a visha (Poison) according to Ayurveda and according to modern science; it is included in one of the most poisonous plants known till today to mankind but used widely in Ayurveda treatment in various diseases. Rather it is considered as best drug in treatment various diseases or preparation of various formulations.

Detoxification (Shodhan) of Vatsanabh

Detoxification is mentioned in various liquids-either by soaking or boiling for 3 hours. These liquids are as follows.

- Goat milk
- Cow urine
- Cow milk
- Water

- Buffalo dung

Maran of Vatsanabh

तुल्येन टडकणेनैव द्विगुणेनोषणेनच ।

विषं संयोजितं शुद्धं मृतं भवति सर्वथा ॥

यो.र.

Pure Vatsanabh is mixed with borax in equal and powdered black pepper in double quantity and macerated; loses its poisonous properties.

समटडकणसमिष्टं तद्विषम् मृतमुच्यते ।

योजयेत् सर्वरोगेषु न विकारं करोति च ॥

आ.प्र.६/६०

It is done by mixing Vatsanabh in equal quantity of Tankan (Borax). It does not produce any type of poisonous symptoms.

Therapeutic dose

कलांशतो रक्तिकाया वस्वशप्रमितं विषं ।

विमलं विनियुञ्जीत बलकालाद्यपेक्षया ॥

र.तं.२४/६६

By considering all other factors (as age, desha, kala, prakruti etc.) Vatsanabh should be administered in a dose of 1/16 to 1/8 ratti (7 to 15mg).

Properties and actions according to Nighantu

वत्सनाभोतिमधुरःसोष्णोवातकफापहः ।

कण्ठरुक्सन्निपातघ्नःपित्तसन्तापकारकः ॥

राजनिघण्टु

- Guna : Ruksha, Teekshna, Laghu, Vyavayi, Vikashi
- Virya : Ushna
- Rasa : Madhur
- Vipaka : Madhura

- Karma: Balya, Kaphaghna, Brihana, Rasayana, Yogavahi, Madakari, Katu, Tikta, Kashay.
- Therapeutic uses: Kushtha, Shotha, Shwas, Kasa, Pleeha, Udara, Madhumeha, Bhagandar, Gulma, Pandu, Vrana, Arsha, Tridhoshghna.

Properties and actions of *Vatsanabh* according to *Rasatarangini*

विषं तु कटुकं तिक्तमुष्णं चैव कषायकम् ।

योगवाहि परं चैतन्महोत्कृष्टं रसायनम् ॥

त्रिदोषघ्नं विशेषेण मतं वातबलासनुत् ।

दीपनं शीतशमनं बृहणं बलवर्द्धनम् ॥

अग्निमान्द्यप्रशमनं प्लीहोदरनिर्हणम् ।

वातरक्तापहं चैव श्वासकासविधूननम् ॥

गुदामयग्रहणिकागुल्मनिर्दलनं परम् ।

कुष्ठपाण्डुरज्वरहरं त्वामवातप्रणाशनम् ॥

विनिहन्ति विशेषेण तिमिरं च निशान्धताम् ।

अभिष्यन्दं नेत्रशोथं कर्णशोथश्च दारुणम् ॥

आखुवृश्चिकसर्पाणां विषं चैवाविलम्बितम् ॥

र.त.२४/२६-३१

Rasa- Tikta, Katu, kashay.

Veerya- Ushna.

Properties- Yogavahi, Rasayan, Tridoshaghna, Deepan, Bruhana, Balya, Tridoshaghna.

Therapeutic uses- Agnimandya, Pleehodar, Vatarakta, Shwas, Kas, Gudamay (Diseases related to perianal region), Gulma, Kushtha, Pandu, Jwar, Aamwat, Timir, Night blindness, Abhishyand, Oedema of eyes and ears, Earache, Headache, Lower backache, Akhuvisha, Vrushchika visha, Sarpavisha.

रसे रसायनादौ च वत्सनाभः प्रशस्यते ॥

रसतरंगिनि २४/८

Of the nine Vishas; Vatsanabh is considered as best for Rasayan and Rasakriya.

Contraindications for administrating poison (Vatsanabh)

न बालेष्वतिवृद्धेषु रोगिणीगर्भिणीषु ।
 न चातिक्षीणगात्रेषु यक्ष्मलक्ष्मयुते न च ॥
 न क्रोधिते न च भ्रान्ते हृदौर्बल्ये विशेषतः ।
 वत्सनाभविषं वैद्यः प्रायशो न प्रयोजयेत् ॥
 एतेष्वपि प्रयोक्तव्येऽवश्यं खलु विधानवित् ।
 यत्नतोह्यल्पकालार्थं युञ्जीतात्यल्पमात्रया ॥
 र.त. २४/६१,६३

Poison (Vatsanabh) should not be administered in those who are very young, very old, diseased, pregnant women, suffering from Rajayakshma, who are in anger, tired and specially in having weakened heart.

If there is necessity of use of poison then it should only be administered with caution, in small quantity and for short duration only.

मासत्रयप्रयोगेण कुष्ठानि अष्ट हरेत् विषम् ।
 षण्मासस्य प्रयोगेण कामरूपो भवेन्नरः ॥
 संवत्सरप्रयोगेण सर्वरोगान् व्यपोहति ।
 र.र.स. २९

Consuming Vatsanabh in prescribed way continuously for three months cures eight types of Kushtha, consuming for six months increases sexual stamina while consuming for 1 year cures all types of diseases.

नानारसौषधैर्ये तु दुष्टा यान्तीह नो गदाः ।
 ते नश्यन्ति विषे दत्ते शीघ्रं वातकफोद्धवाः ॥
 आयुर्वेद प्रकाश

When diseases remains uncured even after use of mineral medicines (Rasaudhadhi) then Visha should be added in the treatment to treat such diseases quickly. Use of Visha in treatment is especially effective in diseases due to Vata and Pittadosha.

अन्ते वृश्चिक दष्टानां समुदीर्णे भृशम् विषे ।
विषेण आलेपयेत् दंशम् स्थावरेण यथा उचितम् ॥
अ.सं.उ. ४३/७३

If *Vrischika visha* does not get cured by all other treatment measures; the site of the sting should be pasted by a *Sthawar visha* (*Vatsanabh*).

According to modern science

Chemical Constituents- It contains the alkaloids Aconitine, Pseudoaconitine, Chasmaconitine, Indaconitine, Hypoaconitine, Mesoaconitine etc.

Uses

- The tuber is very popular in Chinese medicine for the treatment of various ailments. The root is usually processed by drying, soaking or boiling, which significantly reduces its toxicity. Herbal decoctions of aconite are generally prepared by soaking the roots in water or saturated lime water and then boiling. This causes hydrolysis of aconite alkaloids to less toxic benzyaconine and aconine derivatives.
- Formerly aconite found mentioned in the British pharmacopeia (Until 1953), but today it is only used in allopathic medicine as a proarrhythmic agent in animal studies to test the efficacy of antiarrhythmic agents.

Formulations of *Vatsanabh* with their indications

1. Mrityunjay rasa- Vataj jwar, Phuphusshotha (Inflammation of lungs), Pravahika, Various types of Jwar.
2. Hinguleshwar rasa- Aamvat, Vatajwar.
3. Panchamrut rasa- Diseases of various systems situated at various sites in the body, Jwar, Atisar, Shotha, Jalodar, Shirashool, Peenas, Galagraha, Nasaroga, Kantharoga, Diseases due to kaphadosha.
4. Anandbhirav rasa-Pravahika, Jwar, Atisar.
5. Shivtandav rasa-Diseases due to all three doshas, fainting.
6. Jaya Vatee- Prameh, Kas, Pandu, Raktapitta.
7. Kaphaketu rasa-Pratishyay, Kas, Kantharog, Galagraha, Karnarog, Pratamak.
8. Tamraparpati- Grahani, Pandu, Prameh, Kushtha.
9. Sanjivani vati- Ajeerna, Gulma, Visuchika, Sarpadamsha, Sannipataj jwar.

10. Tribhuvan kirti rasa- Vata kaph jwar.

11. Sootshekhar rasa- Amlapitta.

Rejuvenation therapies using Vatsanabh (Rasatarangini 24/114-120)

- 1. Visha Rasayan (Rasatarangini 24/114-120)** - it acts as Balya, Vrushya, Varnya and cures many diseases. By Consuming this formulation continuously for two months person achieves divine vision and long life. It increases digestive fire, cures diseases of Yakrut and Pleeha, cures Ajeerna, Anah, Shool. It acts as excellent aphrodisiac.
- 2. Amrut Rasayan (Rasatarangini 24/121-130)** - it cures many diseases, increases digestive fire, acts as a Rasayan. Cures Kas, Shwas, Kshay, Klaibya, Atisar, Pravahika, Skin diseases, Grahani, Increases quality of semen, Increases memory, cures all types of Prameh.

Few important oral formulations of Vatsanabh (Rasatarangini 24/131-140)

1. Pure *Vatsanabh* with Sunthee, Marich, Pippali, Tamrabhasma cures Vataj shool and gulma.
2. Pure *Vatsanabh* root powder, Padmak, Ushir, Laksha if consumed with rice water cures Raktapitta.
3. Pure *Vatsanabh* root powder, Vacha, Chandan consumed with honey cures fever.
4. Pure *Vatsanabh* root powder, Shatavari, Draksha, Vidari, Kavach consumed with honey acts as aphrodisiac.
5. Pure *Vatsanabh* root powder, Haridra, Gokshur, Draksha if consumed with decoction of Gokshur cures Mutrakruchra.
6. Pure *Vatsanabh* root powder consumed with decoction of Trayantee, root of Vayasi and Khadir cures Kushtha.
7. Pure *Vatsanabh* root powder consumed with Pashanbhed, Shilajeet and Yavakshar continuously for few days cures Mutrashmari.
8. Pure *Vatsanabh* root powder with Sunthee, Marich, Sarikakshar cures Gulma.
9. Pure *Vatsanabh* root powder consumed with Vidang cures Krumi.
10. Pure *Vatsanabh* root powder consumed with Yavakshar, Sajjikshar, Tankankshar and root powder of Pippali cures Pleeha.

Other important formulations used externally (Rasatarangini 24/141-150)

Sr.No.	Formulations	Drug Dosage form	Indications
1.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder mixed with equal quantity of sugar and macerated in juice of Beejpur	Anjan	Kach
2.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder mixed with Haridra, Daruharidra, Pippali, Krushnanjan	Anjan	Kach
3.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder macerated in juice of Amalaki for 21 times and then mixed with equal quantity of Shankha bhasma	Anjan	Timir
4.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder macerated in cow urine for 7 times and then mixed with Pippali powder	Anjan	Kach
5.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder macerated in cow urine for 7 times and then mixed with Hirak bhasma and again macerated in human breast milk for 7 times	Anjan	Kach
6.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder mixed with Chandan, Manjishtha, Saptaparna, Vacha, Leaves of Arka, Nimba, Malati and mixing with Hartal and Manashil	Local application	Non healing ulcers due to Kushtha
7.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder macerated in juice of ginger	Applying in ears	Earache
8.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder macerated in juice of Bhrungaraj and tubers of Banana	Anjan	Netrapushpa
9.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder macerated in juice of Bhrungaraj	Anjan	Night blindness

Vishaprabha vartika (Rasatarangini 24/151-162).

Sr.No.	Formulations	Drug Dosage form	Indications
1.	Local application in eyes after macerating in water	Anjan	Shukla. Arma, Mamsapilla
2.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder with flowers of Shirish	Oral	Akhuvisha
3.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder macerated in tubers of banana and mixed with ghee	Local application and oral administration	Sarpavisha
4.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder with buttermilk	Orally	Akhuvisha
5.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder macerated in Sesame oil	Local application	Vrushchik visha
6.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder macerated in milky sap of Arka	Local application	Loota visha
7.	Pure Vatsanabh root powder mixed Kushth, Ela, Bakuchi, Jatamansi, Devadaru, Tagar and macerated in water	Local application as paste	All types of Visha

DISCUSSION

Though Vatsanabh is a potent poison it can be used as medicine. Following can be few justifications for this.

- Many diseases mentioned Ayurved Samhitas are characterised by a component of something that refuses to undergo Paka or digestion. This Apaki component gives such diseases a resemblance of Vishajanya Vyadhi. Normally, a disease is managed with drugs that possess qualities opposite to those that caused the disease.

In disease conditions with higher Visha component, we employ another Visha instead of employing the Viparitguna. This exception becomes inevitable because Vyavayi and Vikasi gunas of the Vishadravya or in case of disease can be matched only by another Vishadravya.

The notable point here is that the Vishadravya employed as a drug, even if Ushna doesn't aggravate potency of disease or Visha.

e.g. Administration of Vatsanabh in Janagam visha and Visuchika.

- **Yogavahi property of Visha**

गृह्णाति योगवाहि द्रव्यं संसर्गिवस्तुगुणान् ।

पच्यमानं यथैतन्मधुजलतैलाज्यसूतलोहादिः ॥

भावप्रकाश

A Dravya (drug) which is being digested with other Dravya (drug), gains all the properties of the other drug is named as Yogavahi. (According to Sharangadhar Samhita; Visha is having Yogavahi property).

As Visha is having Yogavahi property; it is commonly mixed with other dravyas and used in formulations to have desired action.

e.g. Use of Vatsanabh in Mutrakruhra/Mutrashamari with Pashanbhed and Yavakshar.

योगादपि विषं तीक्ष्णं उत्तमं भेषजं भवेत् ।

भेषजं चापि दुर्युक्तं तीक्ष्णं संपद्यते विषं ॥

च सू. १/१२६

Even acute poison is converted into an excellent medicine by the right method of preparation; while even a good medicine may act as an acute poison if improperly administered.

युक्तियुक्तम् विषम् ज्ञेयम् प्राणदायि रसायनम् ।
 योगवाहि त्रिदोषघ्नम् बृहणम् वीर्यवर्धनम् ॥
 ये दुर्गुणा विषे अशुद्धे ते स्युर्हीना विशोधनात् ।
 तस्माद् विषम् प्रयोगेषु शोधयित्वा प्रयोजयेत् ॥
 रसजलनिधि ३/७

Visha, if taken in the prescribed way, is an increaser of vitality and curer and preventer of diseases and senility. It is an increaser of the properties, good or evil, of a thing which is taken with it. It pacifies the three Doshas, is nutritious and increases semen.

The demerits of salutary poisons are removed by their purification (in a prescribed way). Poisons are therefore, to be duly purified, before they are used as medicine.

मात्रया भक्षितं देवि! विषमप्यमृतायते ।
 मात्राधिकं वरारोहे ह्यमृतं हि विषं भवेत् ॥
 रसरत्नसमुच्चय २९/२६

Even if a Visha taken in a proper dose acts as nectar (Amrut) while nectar (Amrut) if taken in excess acts as a poison.

CONCLUSION

Use of Vatsanabh as a medicine in Ayurved treatment is of a prime importance. However therapeutic potential and utility of Vatsanabh should be much more studied in the form of preclinical and clinical trials is the need of hour.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Charaka Samhita, Shri Ravidutta tripathi, Chowkhambha Sanskrit pratishthan Varanasi, Reprint, 2009.
2. Yogaratnakara, Vd. Laxmipati Shastri, Shri brahmashankar shashtri, Chowkhambha Orientalia Varanasi, 7th Edn, 1999.
3. Bhavaprakash Nighantu, K.C.Chunekar, Pandey, Chowkhambha Bharati Academy Varanasi, Reprint, 2010.

4. Aayurvediya Rasashastra, Dr. Chandrabhooshan Jha, Reprint edition 2010, Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi.
5. Rasatarangini, Sadanand Shastri, Edited by, Pandit Kashinath Shastree, 11th edition, Reprint 1982, publisher-Motilal Banarasidas Delhi.
6. Modern medical toxicology, V V Pillay, 4th edition 2013, Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers (P) Ltd, New Delhi.
7. Shaligram nighantubhooshanam (7th & 8th part of Bruhatnighanturatnakar), Lala shaligramjee vaishya, edition 2011, Khemraj Shrikrishnadass publication, Mumbai.
8. Dravyaguna vijan (Vol-2), Acharya Priyavrat sharma, Reprint-2006, Chaukhambha bharati academy, Varanasi.