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RASA YOGAS IN YAKRIT VIKARA: A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Background: Lifestyle-induced disorders are increasing rapidly, with chronic liver disease (CLD) emerging as a major health concern. Although CLD is not described as a single disease entity in classical Ayurveda, its clinical manifestations can be correlated with Yakrit Vikara. Rasashastra describes various Rasa Yogas with potential therapeutic relevance in disorders involving Yakrit, Pitta, Rakta, and Agni.

Objective: To review the Ayurvedic concept of Yakrit Vikara, identify relevant Rasa Yogas, and explore their therapeutic potential in lifestyle-associated chronic liver disorders.

Methods: A conceptual review was carried out using classical Ayurvedic texts, Rasashastra literature, and available contemporary pharmacological and clinical studies. Relevant Rasa Yogas were reviewed for their classical indications, ingredients, therapeutic properties, and probable mode of action.

Results: The reviewed Rasa Yogas showed potential relevance in the management of Yakrit Vikara through their reported effects on Agni, Dosha and Srotas. Available contemporary evidence on selected ingredients and formulations suggests possible hepatoprotective, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and metabolic activities.

Conclusion: Rasa Yogas may have therapeutic relevance in Yakrit Vikara and offer a potential Ayurvedic approach to lifestyle-associated chronic liver disorders. However, further standardized pharmacological and well-designed clinical studies are required to establish their efficacy and safety.

Keywords: Lifestyle induced disorder, Chronic liver disease, Rasashastra, Rasayogas, Yakrit vikara

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INTRODUCTION

Lifestyle-induced disorders have become a major health concern in the modern era due to sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy dietary patterns, psychological stress, inadequate sleep, and excessive consumption of alcohol and other harmful substances. Among these disorders, chronic liver disease (CLD) represents a significant clinical problem, contributing to substantial morbidity and mortality.

Yakrit is one of the important organs described in Ayurveda and plays a significant role in the maintenance of normal physiological functions, particularly in relation to rakta dhatu, pitta, agni and metabolic processes. Yakrit is situated at the right side inside the abdomen, it is the seat of ranjaka pitta and is produced from shonita (blood) which is the moola of raktavaha srothas. Disturbance in dosha, dhatu and agni may therefore result in impairment of hepatic function and manifest as a various pathological conditions[1].

Chronic liver disease (CLD) is a progressive deterioration of liver functions for more than six months, which includes synthesis of clotting factors, other proteins, detoxification of harmful products of metabolism, and excretion of bile. CLD is a continuous process of inflammation, destruction, and regeneration of liver parenchyma, which leads to fibrosis and cirrhosis. The spectrum of etiologies is broad for chronic liver disease, which includes toxins, alcohol abuse for a prolonged time, infection, autoimmune diseases, genetic and metabolic disorders.[2]

Rasa Yogas, classical herbo-mineral formulations described in Ayurvedic pharmaceutics, may offer a supportive therapeutic approach through their traditional properties and targeted action.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design:

A narrative review of the literature was undertaken to critically examine the Ayurvedic understanding of Yakrit Vikara and evaluate the potential therapeutic relevance of selected Rasa Yogas in chronic liver disease (CLD), with reference to available classical and contemporary scientific evidence.

Materials:

The literature was collected from classical Ayurvedic texts, authoritative compendia of Rasa Shastra, and contemporary scientific literature. Classical references were obtained from texts including Charaka Samhita, Madhava Nidana, Bhavaprakasha, Yogaratnakara, Bhaishajya Ratnavali, Rasa Ratna Samuccaya, Rasa Yogasagara and other relevant Ayurvedic pharmaceutics and therapeutic texts. Information regarding the composition, Rasa, Guna, Virya, Vipaka, Dosha, Karma, indications, dosage, and therapeutic applications of selected Rasa Yogas were documented from these sources. Modern literature was searched through electronic databases including PubMed, Google Scholar etc

NIDANA OF YAKRIT VIKARA

Yakrit vikara is caused due to Madhya atipana (excessive consumption of alcohol), vegavarodha (suppression of natural urges), ati ushna, guru anna sevana (excessive intake of hot, pungent and incompatible foods), divaswapna (day time sleep), ratrijagarana (night vigil), ativyavaya (excessive sexual activity), abhighata (trauma/ injury), carrying heavy loads and excessive walking and other strenuous physical activities.[3]

Ingestion of foods which are vidahi and abhisyandi habitually for long periods brings about great vitiation of rakta and kapha which may leads to yakrit vikara. Because of these etiological factors there will be enlargement of liver, the patient suffers from Manda jwara (mild fever), kshina bala (diminished vitality), mandagni (weak digestive power), ati pandu (severe pallor) along with vriddhi of kapha and pitta doshas.[4]

LAKSHANAS OF YAKRIT VIKARA

According to Madavakara, the lakshanas of yakrit vikara are explained in two avasthas i.e mlana avasta (atrophic state) and vriddhidashaya (enlarged state) of yakrit.

Mlana avasta lakshana includes mala vibandha (constipation), alpa pitta (diminished secretion of bile), adhika trishna (excessive thirst), avila mutra (turbid urine), dehasya kardama sama prabha (mud like discoloration),pandu (anaemia), adhmana (abdominal distention), avasada (depression), vamana (vomiting), agnimandhya (diminished digestive fire), ashya tiktataha (bitterness of mouth), jihva lipta (tongue coating), udghara (belching), katina nadi (hardness of pulse), muscular spasm, severe pain in the right side of abdomen and hrillasa (nausea).[5]

The clinical features of vriddhidashaya (enlarged state) of yakrit are pain in the chest/ rib region in right side, pain / discomfort in right shoulder, pain extending towards right arm, mala vivarnata (discoloration of stool), kasa (cough), jwara (fever), tikta asyata (bitterness in the mouth), aruchi (anorexia), ratka mutrata (hematuria), balahani (loss of strength), baddha purisha (constipation), yellowish discoloration of eyes, relief of symptoms by lying down, insomnia, kamala (jaundice), toda (pricking pain), bheda (severe pain), daha (burning sensation), shosha (wasting), thrishna (thirst).).

In the advanced stage of yakrit vriddhi there will be abscess formation in the liver which is a grave and potentially fatal complication and the progress will be very poor with only rare chances of survival.[6]

According to Bhavaprakasha, the lakshanas of yakrit vikara are explained based on the involvement of Dosha i.e;

Klama (exhaustion without any work), brama (giddiness), vidaha (burning sensation), vivarnya (discoloration), gatra gourava (heaviness of the body), moha (delusion), raktodara (reddish discoloration of abdomen) are the characteristic manifestations of yakrit roga resulting from the vitiation of rakta dosha.[7]

The symptoms like jwara (fever), pipasa (thirst), daha (burning sensation), moha (delusion), peeta gatra (yellowish discoloration of body) are especially seen due to enlargement of liver by the vitiation of pitta.

Manda vyata (mild pain), sthula (thick), Katina (hard), gourava (heavy) along with arochaka (loss of taste) are the characteristic clinical features of kaphaja yakrit roga.

Nityaadhmana koshta (abdomen found always bloated/ flatulence), nityaudavarta pidita (persistent upward movement of vata) and vedana (pain) are the symptoms of vata origin yakrit roga.

When the symptoms of all three doshas are found, such an enlargement of yakrit becomes incurable.[8]

MANAGEMENT OF YAKRIT VIKARA

Classical Ayurvedic texts do not describe a distinct line of treatment exclusively for yakrit vikara. Therefore the management of yakrit vikara should be planned based on involvement of dosha, dushya, srotas and samprapti. According to Acharya Charaka[9] the treatment principle for yakrit vikara is same as raktapitta, as yakrit is consider the mula stana of raktavaha srotas.

The management includes:

- ·Raktapittahara chikitsa
- ·Virechana
- ·Upavasa
- ·Raktamokshana

According to Bhaishajya ratnavali, after proper snehana and swedana karma ratkamokshana/ siravyadha should be performed in a patient after taking curd with food. For venesection the left arm is preferred for spleen related enlargement while the right arm is chosen for liver enlargement. During venesection the liver region should be massaged forcefully for the elimination of vitiated blood.[10]

Table 1: RASAYOGAS IN YAKRIT VIKARA

Yoga	Ingredients	Dose	Anupana
Arogyavardhini vati11	Shuddha Parada (Mercury), shuddha Gandaka (Sulphur), Abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), Lauha bhasma (Ash of Iron), Tamra bhasma (Ash of Copper), haritaki (Terminalia chebula), vibhitaki (Terminalia bellirica), amalaki (Emblica officinalis), shuddha shilajatu (Asphaltum punjabinum), shuddha guggulu (Commiphora mukul), eranda (Ricinus communis), katuki (Picrorhiza kurroa) , nimba swarasa (Juice of Azadirachta indica)	250-500mg	Ardhraka swarasa (Zingiber officinale juice), madhu (Honey), nimba swarasa (Juice of Azadirachta indica), water or milk

Lokanatha rasa[12]	Shuddha Parada, (Mercury), shuddha Gandaka (Sulphur), Abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), Lauha bhasma (Ash of Iron), Tamra bhasma (Ash of Copper), Varatika bhasma (Ash of Cowrie shells) bhavana with nagavalli patra swarasa (Juice of Piper betel)	375mg	Pippali churna (Powder of Piper longum), & madhu (Honey), or haritaki churna (Powder of Terminalia chebula) & guda (Jaggery) or jeeraka churna & guda (Jaggery)
Bhrihat Lokanatha rasa[13]	Shuddha Parada (Mercury), shuddha Gandaka (Sulphur), Abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), ghritakumari swarasa (Aloevera juice), Lauha bhasma (Ash of Iron), Tamra bhasma (Ash of Copper), Varatika bhasma (Ash of Cowrie shells), kakamaci swarasa/ Kashaya (Solanum nigrum juice/ decoction)	250mg	Madhu (Honey)
Plihari rasa[14]	Shuddha Haratala (Orpiment), swarna bhasma(Ash of Gold), mrgacharma bhasma (Ash of Deer horn), Abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), Tamra bhasma (Ash of Copper), churna of nimbu mula twak (Citrus limon bark powder), jala (Water)	500mg	Madhu (Honey)

Plihashardula rasa[15]	Shuddha parada (Mercury), shuddha gandhaka (Sulphur), shunti (Zingiber officinale), maricha (Piper nigrum), pippali (Piper longum), tamra bhasma (Ash of Copper), shuddha manashila (Realgar), varata bhasma (Ash of Cowrie shells), shuddha tutta (Blue vitriol), shuddha hingu (Asafoetida), lauha bhasma (Ash of Iron), jayanti mula (Sesbania sesban), rohitaka twak (Tecomella undulata). Yavakshara (Hordeum vulgare), shuddha tankana (Borax), saindhava lavana (Rock salt/ Sodium chloride), vida lavana (Ammonium chloride), chitrakamula (Plumbago zeylenica), jayapala (Croton tiglium)	125-250mg	Madhu (Honey) & pippali churna (Powder of Piper longum)
Plihari vatika [16]	Sahasara, abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), shuddha hirakasisa (Green vitriol), lashuna (Garlic), dronapushpi swarasa (Leucas aspera)	750mg	Jala (Water)

Lauhamrityunjaya rasa[17]	Shuddha parada (Mercury), shuddha gandhaka (Sulphur), lauha bhasma (Ash of Iron), abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), shuddha manahshila (Realgar), tamra bhasma (Ash of Copper), shuddha vishamushti (kupilu) (Nux vomica), varata bhasma (Ash of Cowrie shells), shuddha nila tuttha (Blue vitriol), shankha bhasma (Ash of Conch shells), rasanjana, jatiphala (Myristica fragrans), katuki, yavakshara (Potassium carbonate), sarjakshara (Sodium bicarbonate), shuddha dattura beeja (Datura metel), jayapala beeja (Croton tiglium), shunti (Zingiber officinale), maricha (Piper nigrum), pippali (Piper longum), saindhava (Rock salt/ Sodium chloride), shuddha hingu (Asafoetida), suryavarta (Bhringaraja) swarasa (Eclipta alba juice), bilva patra swarasa (Aegle marmelos)	250mg	Jala (Water)

Chitrakadi lauham[18]	Chitraka (Plumbago zeylenica), nagara (Zingiber officinale), vasa (Adhatoda vasica), guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia), shalaparni (Desmodium gangeticum), tala pushpa kshara (Borassus flabellifer alkali), apamarga (Achyranthes aspera), manaknanda (Alocasia indica), lauha bhasma (Ash of Iron), abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), pippali (Piper longum), tamra bhasma (Ash of Copper), yava kshara (Potassium carbonate), pancha lavana (salt), gomutra (cow urine), madhu (Honey)	1gm	Jala (Water)
Yakritpleehari lauha[19]	Hingulottha parade (Mercury), shuddha gandhaka (Sulphur), lauha bhasma (Ash of Iron), abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), tamra bhasma (Ash of Copper), shuddha manahshila (Realgar), haridra (Curcuma longa), jayapala (Croton tiglium), shuddha tankana (Borax), shuddha shilajatu (Asphaltum punjabinum), danti (Baliospermum montanum), trivrit (Operculina turpethum), chitraka (Plumbago zeylanica), nirgundi (Vitex negundo), pippali (Piper longum), maricha (Piper nigrum), shunti (Zingiber officinale), bhringaraja (Eclipta alba)	375mg	Jala (Water)

Yakridari lauham[20]	Lauha bhasma (Ash of Iron), abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), tamra bhasma (Ash of Copper), nimbu mula twak (Citrus limon), mrigacarma bhasma (Ash of Deer horn)	1125mg	Jala (Water) Adjuvant as per the requirement
Bhrihat Yakridari lauham[21]	Shuddha parada (Mercury), shuddha gandhaka (Sulphur), abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), pippali (Piper longum), maricha (Piper nigrum), shunti (Zingiber officinale), katuki, trayamana (Gentiana kurroo), ativisha (Aconitum heterophyllum), pata (Cissampelos pareira), nimba twak (Azadirachta indica), haritaki (Terminalia chebula), chitraka (Plumbago zeylanica), parpata (Fumaria indica), musta (Cyperus rotundus), lauha bhasma (Ash of Iron), guduchi swarasa/ kashaya (juice of Tinospora cordifolia)	375gm	Ardraka swarasa (Juice of Zingiber officinale)

Mahamrityunjaya lauham[22]	Shuddha parada (Mercury), shuddha gandhaka (Sulphur), lauha bhasma (Ash of Iron), abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), tamra bhasma (Ash of Copper), sarja kshara (Sodium bicarbonate), yava kshara (Potassium carbonate), saindhava (Sodium chloride), vida lavana (Potassium chloride), karpadika bhasma (Ash of cowrie shell), shankha bhasma (Ash of conch shell), chitraka mula (Plumbago zeylanica), shuddha manahshila (Realgar), haratala (Orpiment), hingu (Asafoetida), katuki (Picrorhiza kurroa), rohitaka (Tecomenna undulate), chincha kshara (Tamarindus indica alkali), indrayava (Holarrhena antidysenterica), dhavalankhatha (Woodfordia fruiticosa), apamarga kshara (Achyranthes aspera), tala jata (Borassus flabellifer), tadapushpa kshara (Catharanthus roseus), amlavetasa (Garcinia pedunculata), haridra (Curcuma longa), daruharidra (Berberis aristata), priyangu (Callicarpa macrophylla), indrayava, haritaki, ajamoda (Carum roxburghianum), yavani (Trachyspermum ammi), tuttha (Blue vitriol), sharapunka (Tephrosia purpurea), rasanjana (Berberis aristata), ardraka swarasa (juice of Zingiber officinale), guduchi swarasa/ kashaya (juice/ decoction of Tinospora cordifolia), madhu (Honey)	1gm	Adjuvant as per the requirement

Sarveshvara lauham[23]	Shuddha parada (Mercury) , shuddha gandhaka (Sulphur),, lauha bhasma (Ash of Iron), abhraka bhasma (Ash of Mica), tamra bhasma (Ash of Copper), swarnamakshika bhasma (Ash of copper pyrite), jayapala (Croton tiglium), chitraka, manakanda, suranakanda (Amorphophallus paeoniifolius), ghantakarna (crotalaria pallida) pippalimula , haritaki(Terminalia chebula), vibhitaki (Terminalia bellirica), amalaki (Emblica officinalis), pippali (Piper longum), maricha (Piper nigrum), shunti (Zingiber officinale), trivrit, kharamanjari (Achyranthes aspera), dandotpala (wrightia tinctoria), vrischikali (Tragia involucrata), kulisha mula (Euphorbia neriifolia), nagadantika (Baliospermum montanum), suryavarta (helianthus annuus), ardraka swarasa (juice of Zingiber officinale)	1gm	Madhu (Honey), Jala (water)

Yakritplihodarahara lauham[24]	Lauha bhasma (ash of iron), abhraka bhasma (ash of mica), rasa sindhura (red mercuric sulphide), triphala, jala (water), goghrita (ghee), shatavari swarasa/ kashaya (Asparagus racemosus), ksheera, manakanda, chavya (Piper chaba), vayuvidanga (Emblia ribes), lodhra (Symplocus racemosa), sharapunkha (Tephrosia purpurea), pata, chitraka, shunti (Zingiber officinale), pancha lavana, yava kshara (Potassium carbonate), vridhadaraka (Argyreia speciosa), yavani (Trachyspermum ammi), snuhi (Euphorbia neriifolia), manakanda swarasa/ kashaya (Juice/ Decoction Alocasia indica), ghantakarna (crotalaria pallida), suranakanda (Amorphophallus paeoniifolius),	As per the requirement	Adjuvant as per the requirement
Yakritplihodarari lauham[25]	Swarna bhasma (Ash of gold), raupya bhasma (ash of silver), tamra bhasma (ash of copper), vanga bhasma (ash of tin), abhraka bhasma (ash of mica), swarnamakshika bhasma (ash of copper pyrite), lauha bhasma (ash of iron), ardraka sawarasa (juice of Zingiber officinale), shephali swarasa (juice of Nyctanthes arvor-tristis), bilva swarasa (juice of aegle marmelos), kiratatikta kwatha (decoction of Swertia chirayita), tulasi swarasa (juice of Oscimum tenuiflorum)	375mg	Parpata kwatha (Decoction of Fumaria indica)

Mahadravaka rasa (Mahan) [26]	Kshara of vasa (Adhatoda vasica alkali), chitraka (Plumbago zeylanica), apamarga (Achyranthes aspera), chincha (Tamarindus indica), kushmanda nalika (Benincasa hispida), snuhi (Euphorbia neriifolia), tala, punarnava (Boerhavia diffusa), vetra (Calamus rotang), nimbu swarasa (juice of Citrus limon), yava kshara, spatika (quartz), nishadala (Ammonium chloride), saindhava, tankana, kasisa, mudra shankha (conch shell), darumocha (Arsenic trioxide), phenaka (Sapindus trifoliatus)	1-2 drops	Adjuvant as per the requirement

RESEARCH UPDATES

A study that evaluated the hepato-protective effects of Arogyavardhini rasa or Vati on paracetamol (PCM)-induced liver damage in rats showed that Arogyavardhini rasa prevented the hepatotoxicity and the protection of liver tissue from PCM-induced hepatotoxicity by supporting the histo-pathological examinations27.

Katuki, being one of the main ingredient of the Arogyavardhini vati has also been studied to assess its effect in liver disorders. Katuki (Picrorrhiza kurroa)- Kutaki is bitter in taste, cooling and removal of excessive fire energy from the body, best of removal of excessive Pitta from the body via colon. Katuki helps in restoration of Liver functions by overcoming fatty liver changes. Research on animal studies suggested Picrorrhiza kurroa effective in hepatitis B infection and promising effect on bilirubin, SGOT, SGPT, preventing liver toxicity and improves hepatic glycogen preservation. It also promotes liver regenerating activities by restoring cytochrome28.

Although several Rasayogas mentioned in Ayurvedic classics for the management of Yakrit vikara have been described and some have been subjected to preliminary research, substantial scope remains for further scientific investigations. Further studies should focus on generating systemic evidence regarding their therapeutic efficacy, safety, pharmacological actions and clinical applicability in Yakrit vikara.

Safety Consideration: Since several Rasa Yogas contain processed metals and minerals, the review also considered the importance of appropriate pharmaceutical processing, Shodhana, quality control, analytical standardization, dosage, and safety evaluation. Formulations containing potentially toxic ingredients were discussed only in the context of properly processed classical preparations and available evidence.

DISCUSSION

Lifestyle-induced disorders have become increasingly important because of sedentary behavior, excessive or inappropriate food intake, obesity, metabolic disturbances, alcohol consumption, stress and irregular sleep can adversely affect hepatic metabolism.

The liver (Yakrit) is closely associated with Ranjaka Pitta and Raktavaha Srotas. Disturbance in Agni due to improper Ahara-Vihara may lead to impaired metabolism and accumulation of undesirable metabolic products. Progression of Dosha-Dushya Sammurchana may subsequently affect Rakta Dhatu and hepatic function. Recent Ayurvedic literature discusses chronic liver disorders through concepts such as Yakrit Dushti, Pitta Dushti, Raktavaha Srotas involvement and disturbance of Agni.

Although much herbal yogas have been mentioned for the chikitsa (treatment) of yakrit vikara, Rasaoushadhis plays a major part because of Alpamaatropayogitva (requirement of very small dose), kshipramarogyadhayitva (instant effectiveness) and Yogavahi (synergistic) property.

Most of the yogas which are mentioned above contains Shuddha parada, shuddha gandhaka, lauha bhasma, abhraka bhasma, tamra bhasma as major ingredients. The metals and minerals present in these yogas possess Tikta (bitter) and Kashaya (astringent) Rasa (taste), Ruksha (dryness) and Laghu (light) Guna, anushna (cold/ hot potency) Virya, Katu(pungent) Vipaka. Almost all ingredients are Tridoshahara and exhibits Karma like Yakrituttejaka (liver-stimulating), Rasayana (rejuvenative) Deepana (Carminative), Pachana (Digestive) and Balya (strengthening) that help in the management of the disease.

CONCLUSION

Yakrit vikara encompasses a wide spectrum of hepatic disorders described in Ayurveda, which can be meaningfully correlated with various stages of chronic liver diseases in contemporary medical science.

Rasa Yogas described in Ayurvedic therapeutics offer a potential supportive approach in the management of lifestyle-induced disorders, particularly chronic liver disease. Their therapeutic action may be interpreted through the Ayurvedic principles of Agni Deepana, Ama Pachana, Doṣa Samatva, and Srotas Shodhana, which collectively aim to restore physiological balance and improve metabolic functioning. In the context of chronic liver disease, appropriately selected formulations may contribute to improving digestion, metabolism, and overall hepatic health.

For the management of yakrit vikara many herbal and herbo-mineral formulations in different dosage forms are enlisted in Ayurveda texts. Among all the dosage forms, Rasaushadhis have an upper hand due to its quicker action and less dosage. By use of these drugs as a single drug or in combinations one can not only control but also manage the disease well.

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