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A Critical Review on *Go-Ghrita*, *Shata Dhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasra Dhouta Ghrita*

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ABSTRACT

Traditional medical system has always played an important role in the maintenance of health of mankind. Modern medicine has been drawing inputs from these traditional systems since their very beginning. *Samskara* in Ayurveda, is a process of transformation of inherent attributes of a substance. This is created by dilution, application of heat, cleansing, churning, storing in a specific place, maturing, flavoring, impregnation, preservation, container etc. Ancient scholars considered that *Ghrita* is able to perform multiple actions if processed accordingly. On the base of this, many *Samskaras* are employed for *Ghrita* and subsequently various pharmacological actions are observed. *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* are also an outcome of that keen observation. *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* are two Ayurvedic preparations, which are prepared by washing cow ghee for hundred and thousand times respectively. They are considered as best alleviators of *Pitta Dosh*a and burning sensation, in the treatments of wound healing. On the basis of detailed literary review, it was understood that, *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* should be prepared by pressure washing of *Ghrita* with water. These preparations are indicated for *Dahashamana* action. Both of them have the properties as that of oil in water kind of emulsion.

Key words: *Samskara*, *Ghrita*, *Shatdhouta Ghrita*, *Sahasradhouta Ghrita*.

INTRODUCTION

Samskara^[1] in Ayurveda, is a process of transformation of inherent attributes of a substance. This is created by dilution, application of heat, cleansing, churning, storing in a specific place, maturing, flavoring, impregnation, preservation, container etc. Every *Samskara* could not be employed to any *Dravya*, selection of proper *Samskara* for any

Dravya will depend on *Mahabhuta* predominance and configuration of *Mahabhutas* of that *Dravya*. This specificity in selecting ideal *Samskara* for *Dravyas*, was the key factor behind formulating an effective dosage form in classical Ayurvedic texts. Ancient scholars considered that *Ghrita* is able to do thousands of functions, if processed accordingly. On the base of this, many *Samskaras* are employed for *Ghrita* and they could obtain many pharmacological actions from it. *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta* are also an outcome of that keen observation. Here if *Ghrita* is washed for hundred times or thousand times, that can also contribute some therapeutic effect to it. These *Ghritas* are considered as good alleviators of burning sensation and *Pitta Dosh*a.

In current practice of *Ayurveda*, it is considered that, they are ideal drug of choice in the case of burn wound. *Ghrita* is a known drug for its *Ropana Guna*.

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REVIEW ON GO-GHRITA

In India, clarified butter is called as *Ghrita*. It is the most precious substance provided by the most sacred beast on earth. *Ghrita* is the chief form of cooking oil in any Indian regional cuisines, used medicinally and plays a part in some Hindu religious ceremonies. Thus, *Ghrita* has been so highly regarded for so many things, for so long. When we say *Ghrita*, it mainly denotes *Goghrita* (cow ghee). It is considered as best among all types of *Ghrita*.

Mythology of Ghrita

In Hindu mythology, *Prajapathi* - lord of creatures, created *Ghrita* by rubbing or "churning" his hands together and then poured it in to fire to engender his progeny. Whenever the Vedic ritual was performed by pouring *Ghrita* in to fire, it was a re-enactment of creation. Butter in mythologies is a symbol of semen, churning represents the sexual act, and the formation of child in its mother's womb. (Reference)

Vedic period

During Vedic era people had the knowledge of *Chatush Sneha*. The description of *Ghrita*, *Taila* etc. are available in Vedic literature. According to Vedic analogy *Ghrita* is hidden in milk, like the divine lord in creation. The Vedas call *Ghrita* the first and the most essential of all foods and *Ghrita* is a central element of Vedic culture. The great theme of the Vedas is *Yajna* (sacrifice) and *Ghrita* is the essential offering to *Agni* (fire) in all *Yagnas*. *Agni* is the mouth of the gods through *Agni* offerings are made to Gods. *Ghrita* is the food that feeds them. The God, *Agni*, the first word deity of Rig Veda is known as *Hutabhu* (The devourer of *Ghrita*). In *Yajurveda* the term like *Havi* and *Ajya* were given for *Ghrita*.

Brahmana period

In *Shatapad Brahmana* for denoting *Ghrita*, three words were used viz, *Ajya*, *Ghrita* and *Ayuth* and its specific uses were also mentioned. In *Ethareya Brahmana*, *Ghrita* was denoted by following words – *Navaneeta*, *Ajya*, *Ghrita* and *Ayuth* and its specific uses were also mentioned.

Upanishad period

In *Brahadaranyokopanishad* the references of *Ghrita Kalpana* were available.

Samhita Period

This period is considered as the golden period for multiple utility of *Ghrita*. In *Brihatrayee*, *Ghrita* flourished due to its immense use for different purposes ranging from external applications to internal administration through different routes.

Susrutha Samhita

In *Susrutha Samhita*, a separate *Varga* called *Ghrita Varga*^[2] is available, *Purana Sarpi*, *Maha Ghrita*, *Kumbha Ghrita*, are some of the types of *Ghrita* as per this *Samhita*. *Ghrita* qualities are also highlighted in detail, in this treatise. In *Susrutha Chikitsa Sthana Acharya* dealt with *Sneha Mahatwa*, *Sneha Bheda*,^[3] *Snehopayoga*, *Pakavidhi*^[4] etc. *Susrutha* gives description regarding *Ghrita* which is made out of *Ksheera* i.e. *Ksheerotha Ghrita*.^[5] The properties of *Ksheerotha Ghrita* is also well explained in *Susrutha Samhita*.

Charaka Samhita

Elaborate description of *Sneha Yoni* i.e. sources of oils and fats, types of *Sneha*, properties of *Ghrita* and *Taila* etc. are mentioned in detail in this treatise. *Charaka* has described various aspects of *Ghrita* in different contexts. *Ghrita* as per *Charaka Samhita*, one among the *Dravyas* in *Nithyasevaniyadravya*^[6] and he considered *Ksheeraghrithabhyasa* for daily basis as best *Rasayana*.^[7] *Ghrita* is considered as best among *Chathush Sneha* due to its *Samskarasya Anuvartana Guna*^[8] *Ghrita Guna*, *Karma* etc. he explained in the context of *Snehana Karma*. Later he added much information about *Ghrita* in the context of *Ksheera Varga*. Logic of systematic usage of *Ghrita* for better therapeutic effect is available in *Jwara Chikitsa* of *Charaka Samhita*.^[9] Wide usage of *Ghrita* is mentioned in *Unmada Chikitsa* and *Kushta Chikitsa Adhyaya*. In this context *Acharya Charaka* explains about *Purana Ghrita*, *Prapurana Ghrita* with their organoleptic properties and therapeutic properties.^[10]

Ashtanga Samgraha and Ashtanga Hrudaya

In both treatises, detailed description of *Ghrita* is available in the context of *Drava Dravya Adhyaya*. He highlighted that the *Vrana Shodhana Ropana* action is more with *Purana Ghrita*.^[11]

Haritha Samhita

Qualities of *Ghrita* and their specific indication have been mentioned in *Ghrita Varga*.^[12]

Bhavaprakasha

In the context of *Ghrita Varga*, he explains about synonyms, properties of *Ghrita*. He also explains some of the types of *Ghrita* like *Haiyangavinam*, *Navina Ghrita*, *Puran Ghrita* etc. and their properties.^[13]

Sharangadhara Samhitha

Detailed description about *Sneha Kalpana* is available in this *Samhita*. Various *Ghrita Yogas* are discussed in this context.^[14]

Dhanvantari Nighantu

Author has given a different *Varga* to include all types of *Ghrita*. Description of 8 types of *Ghrita* is available here. Various synonyms has been contributed by this scholar to *Ghrita*.^[15]

Bhaishajya Rathnavali

Govinda Das Sen has introduced *Murchana Karma* for *Ghrita* and *Taila*.^[16]

Special properties with Ghrita

Though *Ghrita* is *Sheeta Virya*, it is *Agnideepaka* in nature. *Ghrita* is superior among *Sneha* due the property "*Samskarasayanuvartanat*". When we analyze the meaning of this word, where *Anu* refers that the properties which are going to be acquired by *Samskara* will follow the main property of the *Ghrita* as the explanation goes '*Svagnavartanasya Paschat Samskaragunavartanamucyate*'. This means *Ghrita* does not give up its own properties even if it is mixed up with substances possessing other properties. With its own qualities intact, it has the capacity to transform itself so as to imbibe the qualities of other substances added to it.

Pharmaceutical importance of Ghrita

- *Ghrita* is one of the inevitable component in many pharmaceutical procedures. It is utilized in various forms in pharmaceuticals.
- *Ghrita* is used as *Sneha Dravya* in *Sneha Kalpana*. It helps in extraction of lipid soluble active principles from the drugs. It transforms *Ghrita's* therapeutic values to the *Dravya* and enhances the drug absorption.
- *Ghrita* is used in many *Avaleha* preparation, which helps in proper mixing of *Leha* and better absorption.
- *Ghrita* is used for the *Shodhana* of drugs like *Gandhaka*, *Hingu* etc.
- For the preservation of *Guggulu Kalpana*, *Ghrita* is used.
- It is used in *Bhajana Samskara* i.e. *Ghrita* will be completely applied over the inner surface of the vessel used for *Sandhana* process during *Asavarishta* preparations.
- It is a component in *Kruta Yusha* and *Krutha Mamsarasa*.

Pharmacological action of Ghrita

It contains approximately 8% lower saturated fatty acids which makes it easily digestible. These are the most edible fat and which are not found in any other edible oil or fat. It contains Vitamins, in which Vit. A and Vit. E are anti-oxidants and are helpful in reducing ketone bodies, helpful in preventing oxidative injury to the body. Vit. A keeps epithelial tissue of the body intact, keeps the outer lining of the eyeball moist and prevents blindness. Essential fatty acids promote proper growth of the human body.

The melting point of *Ghrita* is 35°C which is less than the normal temperatures of the human body. Its digestibility coefficient or rate of absorption is 96% which is highest of all oils and fats. Since active ingredients are mixed with *Ghrita* they are easily digested and absorbed.

Lipophilic action of *Ghrita* facilitates transportation to a target organ and final delivery inside the cells,

because cell membrane also contains lipid. This lipophilic action of *Ghrita* facilitates entry of the formulation into the cell and its delivery to the mitochondria, microsome and nuclear membrane. *Ghrita* contains beta-carotene and Vit. E both are known anti-oxidants.

Shata Dhouta Ghrita and Sahasra Dhouta Ghrita

Shata Dhouta Ghrita and *Sahasra Dhouta Ghrita* literally mean that *Ghrita* washed for hundred times and thousand times respectively. Though in *Samhitas* explanations regarding these preparations are appeared as one word like *Shata* or *Sahasra Dhouta Ghrita*, it was the commentators who had expanded these terms.^{[17],[18]}

The literature of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* in various classical books of Ayurveda

Susrutha Samhita

- *Shatadhouta Ghrita Lepana* on area of bite after *Jaloukavacharana* is explained.^[19]
- While narrating the *Chikitsa* of *Jwara* with *Daha*, usage of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* is mentioned.

Charaka Samhita

- Usage of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* is explained in *Sharirasthanas* eighth chapter while dealing with treatment for *Garbhasrava*.^[20]
- *Sahasradhouta Ghrita Abhyanga* is explained in the context of *Jwara* with *Daha*.
- Description regarding the usage of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* with *Nyagrodha* etc. drugs is available in *Pittaja Visarpa Chikitsa*.^[21]

Ashtanga Sangraha

- *Shatadhouta Ghrita* along with *Kshirivruksha* as *Lepa* is advised to use in *Vataraktha*.

Ashtanga Hrudhaya

- *Shatadhouta Ghrita Lepana* is explained for *agni visarpa*.^[22]
- *Sahasradhouta Ghrita Lepana* is recommended for *Abyanga* in *Jwara* with *Daha*.^[23]

Sharangadhara Samhita

- In *Sharangadhara Samhita*, *Lepa* explained for *Vatarakata* contains *Shatadhouta Ghrita*.^[24]
- Procedure of *Tarpana* with *Shatadhouta Ghrita* is available in *Netraprasadana Karmaani Adhyaya* of *Uttarakhanda*.^[25]

Cakradutta

- Usage of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* is available in *Daaha Chikitsa Adhyaya*.^[26]

Yogaratanakara

- *Muhur Muhur Lepana* of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* is explained for all types of *Visarpa*.^[27]
- *Lepana* of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* with *Pancavalka* is recommended in the context of *Visarpa Chikitsa*.

Vaidhyaka Shabdha Sindhu

- In this book the method of preparation and therapeutic utility of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* is available.^[28]

Process involved in converting *Ghrita* in to *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita*

Bhajana Samskara

This is the *Samskara* which helps in explaining the role of vessel, which is used for the preparation of a product. In the explanation of the preparation of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* or *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* specification of particular vessel is not available. Later scholars of *Bhaishajya Kalpana* had preferred to use *Kamsya Patra* for the preparation of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* or *Sahasradhouta Ghrita*.^[29] The criteria to select *Kamsya Patra* is its *Kushtagna* property. It is considered that this property of *Kamsya Patra* can transfer into the *Ghrita* which undergoes *Dhouta Karma*.

Toya Sannikarsha

It is the main process to be utilized in this study. *Toya* is the synonym of water. This *Samskara* facilitates a proper interaction between the drugs and water. *Jala Mahabhuta* is required to soften the hardness present

in *Parthiva Dravyas*. *Jala Mahabhuta*, also penetrates into *Parthiva Dravya* and loosens the molecular bonding, thereby accumulating in space present in between molecules. The *Jala*, which supposed to be used here is *Sheeta Jala* having a consideration that, it improves the *Sheeta Guna* of *Ghrita*. Increased *Sheeta Guna* is the main expected attribute from *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita*.

The quantity of water to be added

“*Yaavati Majjati Taavachitodhake Ghritam Prakshipya Hastena Mardayedh*”. Arunadatta comments that the water which is going to be added to *Ghrita*, for the preparation of *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* should be able to immerse the *Ghrita*. This can be considered for *Shatadhouta Ghrita* also. This suggests that there is no specified quantity of water for this preparation and it can be decided based on the quantity of *Ghrita* used.

Dhouta Karma

Literal meaning of *Dhouta* is washed, washed off, cleaned, purified etc. Chief technical procedure which is going to employ to *Ghrita* in the preparation of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* is *Dhouta Karma*. Commentators like Arunadatta, Adamalla used the term like ‘*Prakshalana*’ for *Dhouta*. Arunadatta considered ‘*Hastena Mardhayet*’ in the context of *Sahasradhouta Ghrita*. So *Dhouta Karma* comes under *Mardana Samskara*. This indicates that good pressure should be applied by hand during each washing.

Pharmacological action of Shatadhouta Ghrita and Sahasradhouta Ghrita

The therapeutic usage of *Shata* or *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* is described under the treatments of certain symptoms in *Brahatrayi* or *Lagutrayi*. Ancient Scholars advice the external application of these *Ghritas* in various conditions. Later author of *Vaidhyakashabdhasindhu* has highlighted the therapeutic properties as ‘*Vata Pitta Daha Kshata Nasha*’. A detail analysis about pharmacological action of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* in *Samhitas*, reveals that these are mainly useful as

Daha Shamaka which is to be applied topically.

DISCUSSION

Shatadhouta and Sahasradhouta Ghrita

Though detail descriptions regarding these formulations are very less, all the Ayurvedic scholars have unanimously accepted these formulations for *Daha Shamana* action. The main pharmaceutical process, which is utilized for the preparation of *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* is, *Dhouta Karma* with water. The vessel which is to be taken for preparation is *Kamsya* (bronze) *Patra*. Though the specification regarding this kind of vessel is not available for this preparation, but due to *Kushtagna* property of *Kamsya Patra*, it is selected.

Importance of Dhouta Karma and Jala

The two main objectives of converting *Ghrita* into *Shatadhouta Ghrita* or *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* are.

- To achieve a better pharmaceutical form without the interaction of *Agni*, for an effective topical application i.e. with ideal consistency.
- Pharmacologically to obtain more *Sheeta Guna* than *Ghrita* without adding any *Dravya* and without the interaction with *Agni*.

How *Shatadhouta Ghrita* or *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* are better with reference to above mentioned objectives can be discussed, if we analyse plain *Ghrita* with that respect. The main pharmaceutical point to be noted here is, the above mentioned objectives should be attained without *Agni Sannikarsha*. *Ghrita* is a typical *Dravya* due to its special property that, it is solid in room temperature and gets liquefied when it gets warm. This special nature of *Ghrita* is due to its typical *Panchamahabutha* combination. i.e. *Ghrita* is *Sheeta*, *Snigdha* and *Agneya*. So there is a proper balance between *Agni Mahabutha* and *Jala Mahabutha*, where in solid state the *Sheeta Guna* of *Jala Mahabutha* controls *Ghrita* and in liquid state, it is by *Ushna Guna* of *Agni Mahabutha*. But these *Mahabuthas* never counteract each other in *Ghrita*. This can be said like, the chemical property of *Ghrita* may not change if physical nature gets changed.

With this background let us analyze *Ghrita* with reference to *lepa*. Here if *Ghrita* is applied externally in the form of a *Sneha Kalpana*, no matter about the consistency or absorbability as *Agni Sannikarsha* was happened and that will help easy penetration of the active principles through the skin. But if *Ghrita* is taken as a base for *Lepana*, where it is going to be mixed with other drugs then, consistency matters a lot. As the *Lepa* should remain for long duration so that the active principles get penetrated through skin. So we may have to add more quantity of *Sukshma Churnas* to achieve an acceptable consistency, as *Ghrita* may not help much for better consistency due to its physical nature. This will cause discomfort in preparation and application of *Lepa* with *Ghrita*.

How a preparation like *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* will resolve this problem. It is prepared by pressure washing of *Ghrita* with water.

Literally *Ghrita* is not soluble in water. Now how this process of washing can be justified. The intention of performing a pressure washing for minimum hundred times may be an answer for that. This kind of process may facilitate the general property of *Jala Mahabhuta* to penetrate into *Parthiva Dravya* and loosens the molecular bonding, thereby accumulating in space present in between molecules. Here there is a big importance for that as the *Sheeta Guna* of *Jala Mahabhuta* in *Ghrita* is responsible for the solid consistency of *Ghrita*. So the water which is going to be entered into *Ghrita* by pressure washing may mask the *Agneya Bhava* of *Ghrita* which is responsible for its liquefying nature.

By that *Ghrita* can attain a permanent solid form in *Shatadhouta Ghrita* or *Sahasradhouta Ghrita*. To achieve this property, one or two washing may not be sufficient, and scholars were particular regarding the number, that is minimum hundred times. This method of making *Jala* to enter into *Ghrita* may help to increase the *Sheeta Guna* of *Ghrita*. Now the *Snigdha Guna* of *Ghrita* turns its property towards holding the *Jala* which is entered to it. With the help of this process *Ghrita* achieves a better consistency and *Daha Shamaka* property. This in turn helps for easy topical

application and easy mixing of other *Dravyas*.

CONCLUSION

Shatadhouta Ghrita and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* are formulated to increase the *Sheeta Guna* of *Ghrita*. *Dhouta* is the main pharmaceutical process which is adopted here. It should be a pressure washing with water. The water which is to be added should be able to immerse the *Ghrita*. Thirty minutes should be considered as time duration for one washing to maintain uniform duration of washing. Here consideration is, *Sheeta Jala* should be used for washing. The obtained products have good consistency for better topical application. Here *Ghrita* becomes able to hold the *Jala*, by that *Sheeta Guna* of *Ghrita* increases. *Shatadhouta Ghrita* and *Sahasradhouta Ghrita* can be considered as type of oil in water kind of emulsion.

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