



Review Article

REVIEW OF MEDICINAL PLANTS ACTING AS VRUSHYA (APHRODISIAC ACTIVITY) W.R.T
BHAVPRAKASH NIGHANTU

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an ancient science and it has a Holistic approach. There are eight branches of Ayurveda mentioned in "Ashtang Ayurved". One of them being *Vrush-Chikitsa (Vajikarana Tantra)*. The branch deals with *Alpa Shukra, Kshina Shukra, Vishushka Retasa, Utpatti, Pushthi* and *Vruddhi of Shukra Dhatu* which can be correlated with modern terminologies such as Oligospermia, Asthenozoospermia, Teratozoospermia, Hypospermia (all are indicative of Defective Seminal parameters) along with ejaculatory defects and helps in spermatogenesis. Thus 'Vrushya' indicates the substance by virtue of which a person is capable to act sexually like 'Vrisha' (bull). *Vrushya* has been described as '*Shukrajanaka*' which can be correlated to spermatogenesis. Whereas, *Vajikarana* is mentioned as '*Shukra Pravartanam*' which can be defined as ejaculation which helps in the release of semen from the body. There are many Ayurvedic herbs which have the property of '*Vrushya*'. Infertility is a serious health issue worldwide, affecting approximately 8 -10% of couples worldwide. 40-50% is due to "Male factor" infertility and as many as 2% of all men will exhibit suboptimal sperm parameters. The problem of infertility exists in this day and age and one of the most prominent things of Ayurveda is that a separate branch has been mentioned in "Ashtang Ayurved", so it is of utmost importance for us as practitioners to find the medicinal plants acting on *Shukra Dhatu* to tackle this problem. The attempt of this study is to highlight the plants mentioned as *Vrushya* in *Bhavprakash Nighantu*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is an ancient science and has a Holistic approach. Ayurveda has a unique way of understanding the disease and its management. There are eight branches of Ayurveda mentioned in "Ashtang Ayurved". One of them being *Vrush-Chikitsa (Vajikarana Tantra)*^[1]. The branch deals with *Alpa Shukra, Kshina Shukra, Vishushka Retasa, Utpatti, Pushthi* and *Vruddhi of Shukra Dhatu* which can be correlated with modern terminologies such as Oligospermia, Asthenozoospermia, Teratozoospermia, Hypospermia (all are indicative of Defective Seminal parameters) along with ejaculatory defects and helping in spermatogenesis.

The term *Vrushya* has been widely used in Ayurvedic texts in relation to various seminal parameters, aphrodisiac and sexual activity. The word *Vrushya* literally means '*Vrisha*' which stands for the animal, 'Bull'. Also meaning very strong and potent. Thus '*Vrushya*' indicates the substance by virtue of which a person is capable to act sexually like '*Vrisha*' (Bull). There are many Ayurvedic herbs which have the property of '*Vrushya*'. The term *Vrushya* also been used as a synonym for *Vajikarana* at some places ^[2]. Infertility is a serious health issue worldwide, affecting approximately 8 -10% of couples worldwide. 40-50% is due to "Male factor" infertility and as many as 2% of all men will exhibit suboptimal sperm parameters.

Infertility in males can be caused by various factors relating from low sperm count, abnormal sperm, erectile dysfunction (impotency), hypospermia, teratozoospermia, undescended testes, varicocele etc ^[3]. A person who is not able to reproduce an offspring was considered as socially unacceptable. And even now it is invaluable for a male to maintain his dynasty ^[4]. So

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it is important for all the Ayurvedic physicians to explore the science of *Vajikarana* and be able to tackle the problem.

The attempt of this study is to highlight the plants mentioned as *Vrushya* in *Bhavprakash Nighantu*.

AIM

Review the Medicinal plants mentioned as *Vrushya* w.r.t *Bhavprakash Nighantu*.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study the concept of *Vrushya* and *Vajikarana*.
- 2) To review medicinal plants mentioned as *Vrushya* in *Bhavprakash Nighantu*

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Review was done from classical texts like *Charak Samhita*, *Sushrut Samhita*, *Sharangdhara Samhita*, *Bhavprakash Nighantu*, modern text books, published articles and internet.

Shukra Dhatu and Strotas

'*Dhatu*' word is derived from '*Dhru*' root word of *Sanskrit*. That which does *Dharana* (holding together) is *Dhatu*. So, all *Dhatus* make the body and hold the body together.

Ayurveda explains about 7 *Dhatus* which form the physical body are *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Medha*, *Asthi*, *Majja* and *Shukra*.

Vrushya and Vajikarana

□ वृष्यः

सद्यः शुक्रकरं यच्च तद्वृष्यं स्याद् यथा पयः।

देहस्थूलकरं यच्च बृंहणं तद् यथाऽमिषम् ॥ शा.सं ४/१५ [5]

वृष्य शुक्रजनकं, वाजीकरण शुक्र प्रवर्तनम् । सु.सू 45/49 [6]

(डल्हण टिका)

Vrushya has been described as '*Shukrajanaka*' which can be correlated to spermatogenesis

Whereas *Vajikarana* is mentioned as '*Shukra Pravartanam*'.

The term *Vrushya* has been widely used in Ayurvedic texts in relation to various Seminal parameters, Aphrodisiac and Sexual activity.

The word *Vrushya* literally means '*Vrisha*' which stands for the animal, 'Bull'. Also meaning very strong and potent. Thus '*Vrushya*' indicates the substance by virtue of which a person is capable to act sexually like '*Vrisha*' (Bull). The term *Vrushya* also been used as a synonym for *Vajikarana* at some places.

शारंगधर व्याख्या:

1) वृष्यः

सद्यः शुक्रकरं यच्च तद्वृष्यं स्याद् यथा पयः। शा.सं ४/१५

The drug which rapidly enhances semen production is called as *Vrushya* and the example is milk.

2) शुक्रलः [7]

स्माच्छुक्रस्य वृद्धिः स्याच्छुक्रलं हि तदुच्यते ।

यथाश्रवगंधा मुसली शर्करा च शतावरी ॥ शा.सं 4/16

Drugs which increases the quantity of *Shukra* are *Shukral* (semenogogues) for example; *Ashwagandha*, *Musali*, *Sharkara* and *Shatavari*.

3) शुक्रजनक & रेचकः [8]

दुग्धं माषाश्च भल्लातफलमज्जा मलानि ।

प्रवर्तकानि कथयन्ते जनकानि च रेतसः ॥ शा.सं 4/17

Dugdha, *Udid* (*Masha*), *Bhallataka-phalamajja* and *Amalaki* not only increases semen but also helps in ejaculating it out.

4) वाजीकरणः [9]

यस्माद् द्रव्याद्भवेत्स्त्रीषु हर्षो वाजीकरं च तत् ।

यथा नागबलाद्याः स्युर्बीजं च कपिकच्छुजम् ॥ शा.सं 4/14

Drugs which increases sexual desire are *Vajikara* (Aphrodisiacs); for example *Nagabala* and *Kapikacchu bija*.

भावप्रकाश व्याख्या:

1) शुक्रप्रवर्तक, शुक्रस्तम्भक, शुक्रक्षयकरः [10]

प्रवर्तिनी स्त्री शुक्रस्य रेचनं बृहतीफलम् ।

जातीफलं स्तम्भकं स्यात्कालिङ्गं क्षयकारि च ॥ भा .पुर्वखंड मिश्रवर्ग 228

A female helps in ejaculation, fruits of *Bruhati* increases the passage, and *Jatiphala* withholds it longer, while *Kalinga* reduces semen.

2) शुक्रलः [11]

यस्माच्छुक्रस्य वृद्धिः स्याच्छुक्रलं हि तदुच्यते ।

यथा नागबलाद्याः स्युर्बीजं च कपिकच्छुजम् ॥ भा .पुर्वखंड मिश्रवर्ग 226

The drugs which promotes or increases the semen production is called *shukral* (semenogogues) and the example are, *Nagabala* and *Kapikacchu bija*.

3) वाजीकरणः [12]

यस्माद् द्रव्याद्भवेत्स्त्रीषु हर्षो वाजीकरं हि तत् ।

यथाश्रवगंधा मुसली शर्करा च शतावरी ॥ भा.पुर्वखंड मिश्रवर्ग 225

The drug which heightens libido is called as *Vajikarana* and the examples are, *Ashwagandha*, *Musali*, *Sharkara* and *Shatavari*.

4) शुक्रजनक, शुक्ररेचकः [13]

दुग्धं माषाश्च भल्लातफलमज्जामलानि च ।

एतानि जनकानि स्यु रेचकानि च रेतसः ॥ भा.पुर्वखंड मिश्रवर्ग 227

Dugdha (milk), *Udid* (*Masha*), *Bhallataka-phalamajja* and *Amalaki* not only increases semen but also helps in ejaculating it out.

Classification of *Vrushya Dravya* [14]

Acharya Chakrapani in his commentary mentions types of *Vrushya* as *Shukra Vruddhikara*, *Shukrasrutikara* and *ShukraSruti Vruddhikara*. This can simply stated as Spermatogenesis and Semenogogue, enhancing the semen production and sperm. *Shukrasrutikara* can be correlated to ejaculation and *Sruti Vriddhikara* can be Semenogogue and ejaculation. Whereas, *Acharya Dalhana* has also classified *Vrushya* as *Shukrajanaka* (semen gouge) *Shukrapravartaka* (ejaculation) and *ShukraJanapravartak* (semen production and ejaculation).

Chakrapani	Dalhana	Sharangdhara
Shukravridhdikara	Shukrajanaka	Shukrala
Shukrasrutikara	Shukrapravartaka	Shukrajanaka
Shukrasrutivridhdikara	Shukrajanakpravartak	Shukrarechaka
-	-	Shukrasthambhak
-	-	Shukrashoshaka

Vrushya Dravya mentioned in Bhavprakash Haritakyadivarga

Dravaya	Latin Name	Rasa	Vipaka	Virya	Shukravaha Strotas	Varga
Aamlaki	<i>Embelica officinalis</i>	Panchras (Lavanrahit)	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Haritakyadi
Jiraka	<i>Cuminum cyminum</i>	Katu	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Haritakyadi
Lashun	<i>Allium sativum</i>	Katu	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Haritakyadi
Shunthi	<i>Zinziber officinale</i>	Katu	Madhur	Ushna	Vrushya	Haritakyadi
Pippali	<i>Piper longum</i>	Katu	Madhur	Ushna	Vrushya	Haritakyadi
Vanshalochan	<i>Bambusa arunadinacia</i>	Madhur, Kashay	Madhur	Shit	Vrushya	Haritakyadi
Bhallataka	<i>Semecarpus anacardium</i>	Madhur, Kashay	-	Ushna	Vrushya	Haritakyadi
KhasKhas Beej	<i>Papaver somniferum</i>	Katu	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Haritakyadi
Saindhav	<i>Sodii chloridum</i>	Lavan, Madhur	Madhur	Shit	Vrushya	Haritakyadi

Karpuradivarga

Dravaya	Latin Name	Rasa	Vipaka	Virya	Shukravaha strotas	Varga
Karpur	<i>Cinnamomum camphor</i>	Tikta, Katu, Madhur	Katu	Shith	Vrushya	Karpuradi
Guggul	<i>Commiphora mukul</i>	Tikta, Katu	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Karpuradi
Silhak	<i>Liquidamber orientalis</i>	Tikta, Katu, Madhur	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Karpuradi
Lata Kasturi	<i>Hibiscus abelmoscheus</i>	Tikta, Madhur	Katu	Shit	Vrushya	Karpuradi
Rakt Chandan	<i>Pterocarpus santalinus</i>	Madhur, Tikta	Madhur	Shit	Vrushya	Karpuradi

Guduchyadivarga

Dravaya	Latin Name	Rasa	Vipaka	Virya	Shukravaha-strotas	Varga
Gokshur	<i>Tribulus Terrestris</i>	Madhur	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Gambharii	<i>Gmelina arborea</i>	Tikta, Kashaya, Madhur	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Arka	<i>Calotropis procera</i>	Katu, Tikta	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Gunja	<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Tikta, Kashaya	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Prushniparni	<i>Uraria picta</i>	Madhur	Madhur	Ushna	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Gandhaprasarni	<i>Paederia foetida</i>	Tikta	-	Ushna	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Kapikachhu	<i>Mucuna pruriens</i>	Madhur, Tikta	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Mansrohini	<i>Soymida febrifuga</i>	Tikta, Kashaya	-	Shith	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Bhadramunja	<i>Saccharum munja</i>	Madhur, Kashaya	-	Shith	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Musali	<i>Curculigo orchioides</i>	Madhur	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Shatavari	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>	Madhur, Tikta	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Kokilaksha	<i>Hygrophilia spinosa</i>	Madhur, Amla, Tikta	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Shankapushpi	<i>Convolvulus pluricaulis</i>	Kashaya	-	Ushna	Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Dugdika	<i>Euphorbia hirta</i>	Madhur	-		Vrushya	Guduchyadi
Patalgarudi	<i>Cocculus hirsutus</i>	Tikta	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Guduchyadi

Pushpavarga

Dravaya	Latin Name	Rasa	Vipaka	Virya	Shukravaha strotas	Varga
Kamal	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>	Kashaya, Madhur, Tikta	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Pushpavarga
Damanaka	<i>Artemisia nilagirica</i>	Tikta, Kashaya	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Pushpavarga
Kubja (Kuja)	<i>Rosa moschata</i>	Madhur, Kashaya	Katu	Shith	Vrushya	Pushpavarga

Vatadivarga

Dravaya	Latin Name	Rasa	Vipaka	Virya	Shukravaha strotas	Varga
Palash	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	Katu, Tikta, Kashaya	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Vatadivarga
Shalmali (Mochrasa)	<i>Salmalia malabarica</i>	Kashaya	Katu	Shith	Vrushya	Vatadivarga
Tuni (Toona)	<i>Cedrela toona Roxb.</i>	Kashaya, Madhur, Tikta	Katu	Shith	Vrushya	Vatadivarga

Shaakavarga

Dravaya	Latin Name	Rasa	Vipaka	Virya	Shukravahastrotas	Varga
Patol	<i>Trichosanthes dioica</i>	Tikta	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Shaakavarga
Kasamarda	<i>Cassia occidentalis</i>	Tikta, Madhur	Katu	Ushna	Vrushya	Shaakavarga
Kushmanda	<i>Benincasa hispida</i>	Madhur	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Shaakavarga

Aamradiphalavarga

Dravaya	Latin Name	Rasa	Vipaka	Virya	Shukravaha strotas	Varga
Aamra (Pakva)	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Madhur, Kashaya	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Priyal	<i>Buchanania lanzan</i>	Madhur	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Shrungataka	<i>Trapa natans</i>	Madhur, Kashaya	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Aamratak (Pakva)	<i>Spondias mangifera</i>	kashaya, Madhur	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Rajadan	<i>Mimusops hexandra</i>	-	-	-	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Padmabeej	-	Madhur, Tikta	-	Shith	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Vatad (Badam)	<i>Prunus amygdalus</i>	Madhur	-	Ushna	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Panas (Katahar)	<i>Artocarpus integrifolia</i>	Madhur	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Lakucha	<i>Artocarpus Lakoocha</i>	Madhur, Amla, Tikta	Madhur	Ushna	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Kadali	<i>Musa sapientum</i>	Madhur	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Kharbuja	<i>Cucumis melo</i>	Madhur	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Nashapati	<i>Pyrus communis</i>	Madhur	-	Shith	Vrushya	Aamradiphala
Draksha	<i>Vitis vinifera</i>	Madhur, Kashaya	Madhur	Shith	Vrushya	Aamradiphala

DISCUSSION

Bhavprakash Nighantu consists of 23 *Vargas* among which various drugs are being mentioned as *Vrushya*. Medicinal plants which have been mentioned as *Vrushya* are 52 in *Bhavprakash*.

9 in *Haritakyadivarga*, 5 in *Karpuradivarga*, 16 in *Guduchyadivarga*, 3 in *Pushpavarga*, 3 in *Vatadivarga*, 3 in *Shaakavarga*, 13 in *Aamradiphalavarga*. Only *Vrushya* mentioned plants have been taken into consideration. 23 plants are *Ushna* in *Virya* and 29 are *Shith*. *Ushna Virya dravya* works as *Shukrapravartaka* or *Shukrarechak* increasing the power of Ejaculation and libido. While *Shith Virya dravya* works as *Shukrajanaka* or *Shukrala* increasing the semen quantity and enhancing the sperm count. *Vajikarana* Drugs increases sexual desire and libido.

Vrushya is a wide terminology which has both *Shukrajanaka* and *Shukrapravartaka* property.

Mode of Action

The above listed table has 25 *Darvya* as *Madhur Pradhan* rasa and 25 are either *Katu pradhan* or *Tikta, Kashaya rasa pradhan*. *Madhur rasa* is known for *Balya, Prinana, Jivan, Tarpan, Shthairyakar*. It has following properties such as *Snigdha, Shit* and *Guru*. It provides nourishment to all the *Sapta Dhatu* and increases the *Shukra Dhatu (Shukrabhivardhan)*. *Madhur rasa* having *Guna* such as *Snigdha, Shit Virya* and *Guru* can be used in conditions like *Vata Dushita Shukra* and *Pitta dushti Shukra*. All the *Dravya* having *Madhur rasa, Madhur Vipaka, and Shit Virya* can be

used in such conditions when the *Shukra Dhatu* is affected by *Doshas (Vata & Pitta)*.

Katu rasa has properties of being *Laghu* (light), *Ushna* (hot), and *Ruksha* (dry). *Tikta rasa* has properties *Ruksha* (dry), *Shit* (cold), *Laghu* (light). Both *Tikta* and *Katu rasa* have similar properties. More dominantly having *Ruksha* and *Laghu guna* which can be useful in *Kaphaja Shukra dushti* where semen affected by *Kapha* is extremely slimy and obstructs the channel of semen (ejaculatory duct). By means of *Tikta Katu Rasa, Katu Vipaka, Ushna Veerya* and *Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshana guna* it improves the *Shukra Dhatu Agni*. By virtue of this it nourishes the *Shukra Dhatu*. It can be useful in *Kapha* dominant *Shukravaha Strotas Dushti*.

Kashaya rasa is *Ruksha, Shit* and *Guru* and having a very specific property of *Stambhana* it may be useful in condition such as pre-mature ejaculation.

Ushna, Tikshana, and Katu rasa dravya are known to be *Kamottejaka* (stimulate the sexual desire). Some of the *Dravya* mentioned in *Karpuradivarga* and *Pushpavarga* are *Sughandhi* (fragrance) which can stimulate the CNS and act on *Mana* (mind) to increase the sexual desire.

CONCLUSION

Infertility is a major health issue in the present world. Drugs acting on *Shukra Dhatu* can be a way of management to tackle this problem. Various drugs have been mentioned in the *Nighantu*. But to identify the condition of *Shukra Dhatu dushti* and to apply the approach accordingly in clinical practices will of great use. 25 *Dravya* are *Madhur pradhan* and 25 are *Katu, Tikta* or *Kashaya pradhan rasa*. 23 *Dravya* are *Ushna* and 29 are *Shit* in *Virya*. *Vrushya* is a very broad terminology.

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