

A Critical Review on the Efficacy of Bhasmas in Apasmara w.s.r to Rasa Tarangini

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ABSTRACT

Apasmara is a chronic neuropsychiatric disorder described in Ayurveda, Acharya Charaka describes Apasmara as the condition associated with physical symptoms such as bibhatsa cheshta (alarming movements, the involuntary movements during the seizures) and psychological symptoms like smriti-buddhi samplava (loss /perversion of memory and cognition) and tamah pravesh (temporary loss of consciousness). Epilepsy can be correlated to Apasmara, described in the classics of Ayurveda as the transient appearance of unconsciousness with loathsome expression due to derangement of memory, intelligence, and mind.

In this article an attempt is made to collect the details of Bhasma used in Apasmara according to Rasa Tarangini and to analyze the mode of action of these individual bhasmas.

KEYWORDS: Apasmara, Epilepsy, Bhasmas.

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INTRODUCTION

Apasmara one of the eight Mahagadas described in Ayurveda is characterized by episodic loss of consciousness, abnormal movements, frothing from the mouth & psychological disturbance.

The pathology is primarily due to vitiated vata & kapha doshas along with obstruction of consciousness due to predominance of Rajo and tamo guna.

Epilepsy affects ~ 50 million people worldwide. As per WHO², it is estimated that up to 70% of people living with epilepsy could live seizure-free if properly diagnosed and treated.

Modern medicine identifies epilepsy as neurological disorder marked by recurrent seizures due to abnormal neuronal discharges.

While antiepileptic drugs (AED's) are primarily a line of treatment, they often come with limitations such as drug resistance and cognitive side effects.

Management of Apasmara:

Ayurveda has described the following line of management for Apasmara namely the nidana parivarjana (removal of etiological factors),

samshodhana (purification procedures), bahiparimarjana (external applications), samshamana (palliative therapy), vegakaalina (treatment during attack of seizure), rasayana (rejuvenation therapy) and satvavajaya (Psychotherapy). The samshodhana chikitsa includes oral use of different single and compound Herbo-mineral formulation for the management of the disease.

In the treatment of Apasmara there is vegakaalina and vegantarakaalina chikitsa. Vegakaalina chikitsa includes Anjana (collyrium), Nasya (nasal therapy), Dhupana (fumigation) and Siravyadha (bloodletting). Vegantarakaalina chikitsa includes rasa yogas.

Rasashastra offers a holistic and potent therapeutic approach through bhasmas specially processed metallic & mineral formulations.

Bhasma, is a ayurvedic metallic/mineral preparation, treated with herbal juices or decoction and exposed for certain quantum of heat as per puta system of Ayurveda, which itself is well known in Indian subcontinent since 7th century A.D. and widely recommended for the treatment of many disease

conditions. Bhasmas are claimed to be biologically produced nanoparticles.

Nanoparticles covers the diverse area of matters at dimensions between approximately 1 to 100 nanometers. Nanoparticles has enormous applications in drug delivery field. Nano drug delivery systems can reduce the drug consumption and side-effects by lowering the deposition of the active agent in the non targeted sites and has more bio availability.

Classical formulations for Apasmara often include Bhasmas like Swarna bhasma, Rajata bhasma, Tamra bhasma, Swarna Makshika bhasma, Haratala bhasma, Manashila bhasma.

These bhasmas all believed to restore mental equilibrium enhance cognitive function, pacify vitiated doshas.

BHASMAS INDICATED IN APASMARA ACCORDING TO RASA TARANGINI

Sl.no.	BHASMA	DOSE
01	Swarna bhasma ³	1/8 -1/4 ratti
02	Rajata bhasma ⁴	1/4 - 01 ratti
03	Tamra bhasma ⁵	1/8- 1/2 ratti
04	Swarna Makshika bhasma ⁶	1/2- 2 ratti
05	Haratala bhasma ⁷	1/4 - 1/2 ratti
06	Manashila bhasma ⁸	1/32 - 1/16 ratti

DISCUSSION

Probable mode of action

1. Swarna Bhasma

Medhya: Swarna bhasma enhances intellect memory & concentration which impaired in Apasmara.

It known to contain nano-particles⁹ that can cross the blood brain barrier, enabling direct CNS effects.

ojovardhaka: By promoting ojas, Swarna bhasma strengthens mind - body complex & builds resistance to stress induced neurological conditions.

Rasayana: Enhances dhatu Bala and supports longevity and vitality which indirectly Stabilizes the nervous system and prevents seizures recurrence.

2. Rajata Bhasma

Rajata bhasma likely acts in Apasmara by pacifying vata & kapha doshas, calming nervous system & enhances ojas.

It may provide neuroprotective and analgesic¹⁰ effect in apasmara

3. Tamra Bhasma

Tamra bhasma likely acts in Apasmara by balancing vata - kapha doshas enhancing memory & intellect, Improving mitochondrial scavenging free radicals¹¹

A lab study in rats (0.5mg /100g dose) measured over 7-30 days showed significant antioxidant effects preservation of glutathione, augmentation of the SOD activity (superoxide dismutase) crucial in mitigating seizure related oxidative neuronal damage.

4. Swarna Makshika

It is an important Rasaushadhi used in various Manasika vikaras including Apasmara.

It considered tridoshagna, medhya balya & has unique neuroprotective, metabolic and Antioxidant action¹² in apasmara.

5. Haratala bhasma

Haratala has katu rasa it removes Ama (endotoxins), possibly lowers neuronal excitability and preventing seizure triggers.

*Because of snigdha guna helps in pacification of Vata and support myelin sheath repair and synaptic integrity, aiding stable neural firing.

*Haratala bhasma is having a definite demonstrable anticonvulsant action as ascribed by experimental study conducted on Albino rats (In vivo method).¹³

6. Manashila bhasma

Rasa Tarangini mentions Manashila as a potent ingredient in Anjana for Apasmara, often combined with Saindhava, honey, kapota vitt.

It is indicated particularly where Kapha and Tama are predominant.

Often referred to as part of "Teekshna Anjana Prayoga"-used in emergencies to revive consciousness

When used as Anjana, Manashila Bhasma acts on the optic-brain pathway, stimulates cranial reflexes, clears Kapha-Tama, and activates the nervous system, making it effective in restoring consciousness and controlling seizures in Apasmara.

This reflects a deep understanding in Ayurveda of neuro-ophthalmic reflexes and targeted drug delivery.

Above selected bhasmas exhibit vata -kapha shamaka, Medhya, Manasrogahara actions making them suitable for Apasmara Management.

Preliminary pharmacological studies on Swarna bhasma & Swarna makshika bhasma demonstrate antioxidant & neuro protective effects.

Manashila & Haratala shows promising safety profiles after proper shodhana

CONCLUSION

The traditional rationale for using these bhasmas in Apasmara is strong and early scientific evidence supports their neuropharmacological potential.

However, clinical trials and standardization of processing methods are essential to ensure the safety and efficacy in Apasmara treatment.

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