



Available online on 15 Sep, 2023 at <http://www.hjhs.co.in/index.php/hjhs>

Himalayan Journal of Health Sciences

Published by Himalayan Group of Professional Institutions

Associated with Himalayan Institute of Pharmacy

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Review Article

Open Access

An Ayurveda Review on *Shothahara Mahakashaya Dravya* and their Therapeutic Properties

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Abstract

Shothahara Mahakashaya refers to a collection of medicinal ingredients that exhibit therapeutic effects against *Shotha Roga*. *Shotha* is a condition characterized by swelling anywhere in the body, which can be equated with the term oedema in modern medicine. *Acharya Charak* has delineated *Shothahara Mahakashaya* as one of the group among the fifty *Mahakashaya Ganas*. The components comprising *Shothahara Mahakashaya* are *Patala*, *Bilva*, *Shyonaka*, *Agnimantha*, *Kashmariya*, *Brihati*, *Shalaparni*, *Kantakari*, *Prishaniparni* and *Goksura*. These plants, offer potent effect in its own right, while acts synergistically when combined to produce enhanced therapeutic outcomes. They share common characteristics such as having a *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa*, *Ushna Virya*, *Katu Vipaka*, *Ruksha-Laghu Guna* and *Tridoshaghna* properties. These properties contributed towards the *Shothahara* effect of these drugs. This article presented a review on *Shothahara Mahakashaya Dravya* and their therapeutic properties.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Dravyaguna, *Shothahara*, *Mahakashaya*

Article Info: Received 01 Aug 2023; Review Completed 12 Aug 2023; Accepted 16 Aug. 2023



Cite this article as:

Yemalwad AA, Thakkarwad RL. An Ayurveda Review on *Shothahara Mahakashaya Dravya* and their Therapeutic Properties. Himalayan J H Sci [Internet]. 2023 Aug 15 [cited 2023 Aug 15]; 8(3):16-18. Available from: <http://www.hjhs.co.in/index.php/hjhs/article/view/178>

DOI: 10.22270/hjhs.v8i3.178

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1. Introduction

Ayurveda, the traditional and time-tested Indian system of medicine, offers a comprehensive approach to addressing various aspects of life, encompassing both physiological and pathological perspectives. *Shothahara Mahakashaya*, a collection of medicines, which combat

against *Shotha Roga*. These drugs effectively alleviate the symptoms of *Shotha Roga* due to their inherent qualities. (1-3) These drugs possess specific properties as depicted in **Figure 1**. *Shothahara Mahakashaya* plants renowned for their efficacy in case of oedema and swelling, this grouping includes following medicines:

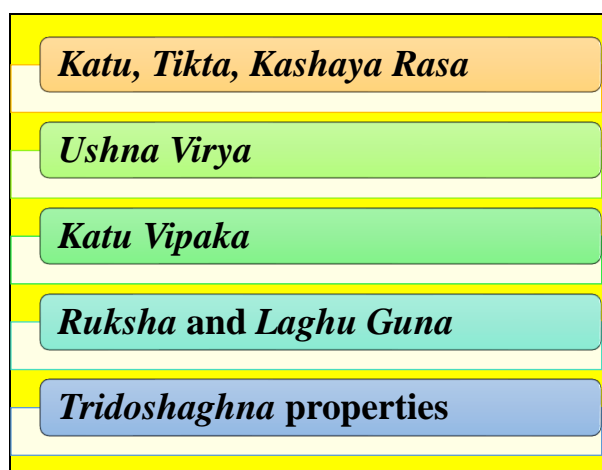


Figure 1. General properties of *Shothahara Mahakashaya* Drugs

- *Patala*
- *Agnimantha*
- *Bilva*
- *Shyonaka*
- *Kashmariya*
- *Kantakari*
- *Brihati*
- *Shalaparni*
- *Prishaniparni*
- *Goksura*

Shothahara Mahakashaya substances act against *Vataj Shotha*, *Pittaj Shotha* and *Kaphaj Shotha*. These ten substances are collectively known as *Dashamoola*. *Shothahara Mahakashaya* exhibits properties such as bitter and astringent taste, warmth potency, dryness and lightness characteristics thus impart *Tridoshaghna* property primarily targeting *Vata dosha*.

Shothahara Mahakashaya substances contain beneficial compounds like alkaloids, lignans and flavonoids, etc. All ten of these components possess the capacity to effectively treat *Shotha roga*, aiding in the restoration of normal physiological functioning in affected tissues and organs. (3-6) These drugs offer following therapeutic benefits:

- ✓ Primarily pacify vitiated *Vata dosha* and brings *Kapha dosha* back to its normal state.
- ✓ These drugs impact the *Dhatus*, *Rasa*, *Mamsa* and *Asthi*.
- ✓ Effects of these drugs extend to various organs, including nerves, muscles, bones and joints.
- ✓ These drugs primary indicated for the treatment of *Vata* disorders.

2. Biological Action and Indications of *Shothahara Mahakashaya* Drugs:

- For *Vataja Shotha*, where *Vata Dosha* is chiefly imbalanced, therapeutic remedies such as *Shalparni* and *Gambhari* are utilized. These substances possess *Guru* and *Snighdha Guna*; facilitate pacification of *Vata* (*Vata Shamana* effect) by virtue of their properties.
- In the case of *Pitta Pradhan Shotha* where *Pitta Dosha* predominates, *Gokhura* and *Bilva* are employed. They are chosen for their *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa*, *Katu Vipaka* and *Sheet Virya* attributes. These drugs also help to balances *Pitta Dosha* along with *Vata Shamana* effect.
- *Patala* and *Kantakari* employed for treating *Kaphaja Shotha*, where *Kapha Dosha* is primarily involved. These herbs possess *Laghu*, *Ushna* and *Ruksha Guna*, *Katu* and *Tikta Rasa* along with *Katu Vipaka*, which counteract *Kapha* imbalances.

- The treatment of all types of *Shotha* is customized based on the predominant *Dosha*, and medicinal plants are selected to balance the *Dosha* by virtue of their contrasting *Rasa*, *Virya*, *Guna* and *Vipaka*.

All these medicinal substances contain beneficial compounds such as alkaloids and flavonoids which help in reducing edema. *Shothahara Mahakashaya* plays a role in restoring normal physiological functions in affected tissues and organs. Its *Dosha karma* primarily targets *Vata dosha* while helping to normalize *Kapha dosha*. These drugs potentiate various *Dhatus* including *Rasa*, *Mamsa* and *Asthi*. These drugs also support functioning of nerves, muscles, bones, and joints, etc.

Its primary indication is for the treatment of *Vata* disorders, physicians can choose the most suitable drug from this group rationality. It's important to note that each ingredient of *Shothahara Mahakashaya* is part of *Dashmool* which is an Ayurvedic formulation used as anti-inflammatory agent.

According to *Acharya Charak*, the medicines in the *Shothhar Gan* possess *Ushna Virya* and *Tridoshaghna* properties, which aid in the digestion of *Ama* and enhance *Agni*. This process helps to alleviate *Strotorodh*, acting as both *Deepanpachan* and *Aampachan*. Additionally, *Dashamula* is commonly utilized in various conditions, including pyrexia, asthma, chronic cough and different types of *Vata* disorders, paralysis, heart diseases and infertility, etc. These ingredients also employed as a component of *Basti* therapy in *Panchkarma*. (5-7)

Shothahara Mahakashaya plays a pivotal role in restoring normal physiological functions within affected organs and tissues. *Shotha* are essentially *Tridoshaja* in nature but are categorized and treated based on their predominant *Dosha* involvement. Within the *Shothahara Mahakashaya* certain drugs primarily pacify *Vata*, some address *Pitta* imbalances, while others mitigate *Kapha dosha*. When these diverse drugs of the *Shothahara Mahakashaya* are combined, they collectively harmonize all three *Doshas* and disrupt the progression of *Doshic* imbalance. These drugs are used for the treatment of various types of *Shotha* and also used for the prevention and treatment of other pathological conditions. (6-8)

3. Conclusion

Shothahara Mahakashaya comprises a group of medicines designed to combat *Shotha roga*, a condition that can be correlated with modern medicine's concept of edema and swelling. These medicines are described under the category of *Mahakashaya Ganas* as *Shothahara Mahakashaya*. It includes ingredients such as: *Patala*, *Bilva*, *Agnimantha*, *Syonaka*, *Kantakari*, *Brihati*, *Kashmariya*, *Shalaparni*, *Goksura* and *Prishaniparni*. These plants work synergistically to enhance their therapeutic effects and are also effective when used individually. They possess properties such as *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa*, *Ushna Virya*, *Katu Vipaka*, *Ruksha* and *Laghu Guna* and *Tridoshaghna* properties, these properties helps to pacify vitiated *Vata dosha* thus imparts therapeutic benefits in case of *Shotha* and related conditions.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our gratitude to Himalayan Journal of Health Sciences who gave us the opportunity to publish the article.

Financial Disclosure statement: The authors received no specific funding for this work.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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