



Review Article

**Garavisha: an introspection**

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Article Received on: 07/11/2022 Accepted on: 13/01/2023.

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**ABSTRACT:**

**BACKGROUND:** *Visha* means poison, it causes fear to all living being by making organism grievously ill. Its functioning leads to death in certain cases. It creates depression and sorrow in mind & body. *Garavisha* is one of the forms of poison which is formed after combination of two or more poisonous or non-poisonous substances. *Acharya Sushruta* and *Acharya Vagbhata* had explained it as the poison which is formulated by the combination of *Virudha aushadhi bhasma*, waste products of human beings & low potency toxic formulations which when administered may produces illness and may result to the persons death.

**METHODS:** Literature search included *Laghutrayi*, *Brihatrayi*, Classical textbooks of Ayurveda and recent manuscripts published on *Garavisha*.

**CONCLUSION:** Understanding the concept of *Garavisha* proves to be needful in this era to treat various health conditions. Thus, this article edifies the concept of *Garavisha* its signs and symptoms, line off treatment along with significance in present days etc.

**KEY WORDS:** *Agadtantra*, *Garavisha*, *Visha*.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Ayurveda is gaining a vast interest in terms of preventive and curative aspect. Variety of health conditions including its source, manifestations, treatment and complications are well explained in classics of Ayurveda. Understating the classical concepts helps clinicians to come out with better results.

*Agadtantra* is a branch of Ayurveda which is in practice since time age-old. *Agadtantra* not only explains about *Sthavara* and *Jangama Visha* (Natural toxins) but also gives equal importance to artificial toxins which is named as *Garavisha*. *Garavisha* is well explained in all classics and traditional books of Ayurveda. Acharyas have different views on concept defining of *Garavisha*. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned *Garavisha* under *Sanyogaja Visha*.<sup>[1]</sup> Whereas *Acharya Vagbhata* cited it as *Kritrima Visha*.<sup>[2]</sup>

The word *Gara* is derived from the word *Gru* with suffix "ach" which means to dig-luted or could be dig-luted. Meaning of word *Garais* poison, *Garavisha* is prepared artificially by the mixture of various substances which causes various diseases<sup>[3]</sup>. Since it takes some time for this type of poison to get metabolized it doesn't cause instantaneous death of a person.<sup>[4,5]</sup> *Acharya Charaka* defined *Garavisha* as *Kalantar-vipaki* means it takes a long-time to digest so it does not show serious fatal toxicity but produces many diseases.<sup>[6]</sup> Most of these manifestations of *Garavisha* are commonly observed during day-to-day practice.

Now a days we are getting exposed to variety of artificial toxins that can be correlated to *Garavisha*. Which includes adulterants, artificial sweeteners, preservative, pesticidal

residues, over use of cosmetics, environmental pollutants etc. Disorderly use of all these resources leads to development of various toxicity. Hence Present manuscript enlightens and refresh the classical knowledge of *Garavisha* and its present significance. As it is the need of the hour to understand properly about all the possible toxicities and to know the ways to prevent and treat the health adversities caused.

## MATERIALS & METHODS:

Detailed in-depth literature review was done from *Laghutrayi*, *Brihatrayi* and classical texts of Ayurveda. Various database used were

google, google scholar, Pub-med to access research documents available concerning same topic. Common phrases searched to get through the topic were *Garavisha*, Current scenario of *Garavisha*, Contemporary significance, recent studies on *Garavisha*, Artificial poisons. Findings of literature review are elucidated in following part.

### Formation of *Garavisha*<sup>[7, 8]</sup>

Classical texts define formation of *Garavisha* from Body parts or body waste of poisonous animals or humans, combination of incompatible drugs and low potent poisonous drugs combinations.

**Table No. 1: Manifestations of *Garavisha***

Sr. No.	Manifestations	Ch.Chi. <sup>[9]</sup>	A.H.U. <sup>[10]</sup>	A.S.U. <sup>[11]</sup>	Y.R. <sup>[12]</sup>	B.P. <sup>[13]</sup>	M. Ni. <sup>[14]</sup>
	<i>Pandu</i> (Anaemia)	+	+	+	+	+	+
	<i>Krushata</i> (Emaciation)	+	+	+	+	+	+
	<i>Alpagni / Mandagni</i> (Reduced appetite)	+	+	+	+	+	+
	<i>Marmapradhaman</i> (Palpitation)	+	-	-	+	+	+
	<i>Adhman</i> (Flatulence)	+	+	+	+	+	+
	<i>Shwayathu Hastapada/ Hastashotha/ Shopha</i> (Oedema)	+	+	+	+	+	+
	<i>Jathar</i> (Ascites)	+	-	-	-	+	+
	<i>Grahanidosha</i> (Sprue Syndrome)	+	-	-	-	+	+
	<i>Yakshama</i> (Tuberculosis)	+	-	-	-	+	+
	<i>Gulma</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+
	<i>Swapnaviparyay</i>	+	+	+	-	-	-
	<i>Hatendriya</i> (Lassitude)	+	+	-	-	-	-
	<i>Kasa/Shwasa</i> (Cough/ Dyspnoea)	-	+	+	-	-	-
	<i>Jwara</i> (Fever)	-	+	+	-	-	+
	<i>Ardit</i> (Facial palsy)	-	-	+	-	-	-
	<i>Chinta</i>	-	+	-	-	-	-
	<i>Yakrut-pliha Vrddhi</i> (Hepato-Spleeno magaly)	-	+	+	-	-	-
	<i>Vakdaurbalya / Daurbalya</i>	-	+	+	-	-	-
	<i>Alas</i> (Laziness)	-	+	+	-	-	-
	<i>Kshaya / Dhatukshaya</i>	+	+	+	-	+	+
	<i>Shushkapadkara</i>	-	+	+	-	-	-
	<i>Swapnachintaparayana</i>	-	-	+	-	-	-
	<i>Pratiloma Vayu</i>	-	-	+	-	-	-
	<i>Mahodara</i>	-	-	+	-	-	-
	<i>Anyayadhi</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+

### Other Psychological Manifestations:<sup>[15]</sup>

In dreams person sees wild animals like *Gomayu*, *Marjar*, *Nakul*, *Vyal*, *Wanar* (monkeys). Dried rivers and dried trees. See himself as without ears or nose, see himself as fair if he is dark in complexion and vice versa.

### Garavisha Chikitsa:

*Garavisha* is often ingested unknowingly hence the person doesn't feel anything immediately and even delayed onset of symptoms makes treatment bit difficult. It can be treated only after the onset of the symptoms accordingly. Careful history taking will suggest the intake of

poisoning and physician may begin the treatment accordingly.

### Important measures of treating *Garavisha*:

#### *Vamana Karma*:<sup>[16]</sup>

*Vamana* is performed by *Usingtamra churna* along with *Madhu* (honey) is beneficial. For *Hrudaya Shuddhi Vamana* is followed by administration of *Swarna Bhasmaat* dose of 1 *Shana* (3 gm.) along with honey.

*Acharyas* had also noted various formulations for treating *Garavisha* that can be used after *Shodhana* or prior *Shodhana* in less severe cases.

**Table No. 2: Formulations for treating *Garavisha***

Ch. Chi <sup>[17][18]</sup>	<i>Vishaghna Nagdantyadi Ghrita</i> <i>Amrut Ghrita</i>
A. S. U. <sup>[19]</sup>	<i>Vrusha</i> , <i>Nimba</i> , <i>Patola</i> , <i>Abhaya siddha Ghrita</i> <i>Haridra</i> , <i>Nakuli</i> , <i>Jati siddha Ghrita</i> <i>Nagdanti</i> , <i>Trivrutdanti</i> , <i>Dravanti</i> , <i>Snukpaya siddha Ghrita</i>
A.H.U. <sup>[20]</sup>	<i>Sharkara Suvarnadi Leha</i> - <i>Suvarna makshika</i> and <i>Swarna churna</i> when given with sugar & honey.
Y. R. <sup>[21]</sup>	<i>Sharkara Suvarnadi Leha</i> <i>Putanjivamajja Yoga</i> <i>Gruhadhumadi Yoga</i> <i>Paravatadi Hima</i> <i>Garanashak Rasa</i>

### *Garavishajanya Vyadhi Chikitsa*:<sup>[22]</sup>

In *Ashtanga Sangraha* *Acharya* had mentioned

the treatment of various conditions associated with *Garavisha*.

**Table No. 3: Formulations for Specific Conditions**

<b>Vyadhi</b>	<b>Chikitsa</b>
<i>Mandagni</i> (Reduced appetite)	<i>Moorva</i> , <i>Amruta</i> , <i>Tagar</i> , <i>Pippali</i> , <i>Patola</i> , <i>Chavya</i> , <i>Chitraka</i> , <i>Vacha Musta</i> and <i>Vidanga churna</i> with <i>anupana</i> of <i>Takra</i> , <i>Koshnambu</i> or <i>Dadhimastu</i> etc.
<i>Kasa/ Shwasa</i> (Cough/ <i>Dyspnoea</i> )	<i>Ghritbhrishta Vayasi mansa</i> <i>Triphala swarasa</i> with <i>Bharangi</i> , <i>Nagara</i> , <i>Shirisha kwatha</i> and <i>Madhu</i>
<i>Twaka Vikara</i> (Skin Diseases)	<i>Churna lepa</i> - <i>Harenu</i> , <i>Chandana</i> , <i>Shyama</i> , <i>Nalada</i> <i>Udvartana</i> - <i>Manjishtha</i> , <i>Apamarga</i> , <i>Nimba</i> , <i>Rajani</i> , <i>Ashwtha</i> , <i>Chandana</i> <i>churna Udvartana</i>
<i>Krushata/ Kshaya</i>	<i>Abhyanga</i> , <i>Udvartana</i> , <i>Kshirasarpi Pana</i> etc.

### Contemporary Aspect of *Garavisha*:

#### Physiological Concept:<sup>[23]</sup>

Haptens are small molecules that combine with

large protein to form hapten-carrier adduct. Previous manuscript expresses the similarities in character of *Garavisha* and hapten-carrier adduct which behaves as an allergen and produces hypersensitivity.

**Table No. 4: Factors acting as Garavisha in Current Scenario: [24]**

Sr. No.	Factors acting as Garavisha	Effects
	Food additives – BHA (butylated hydroxyanisole), BHT (butylated hydroxytoluene), MSG (Monosodium glutamate), Trans fats	Behavioural disorders, various carcinomas, cardiovascular and renal diseases
	Carbonated and soft drinks–Aspartame	Carcinogenic effects
	Cosmetics – Sodium lauryl sulphate	Carcinogenic effects
	Nail care products – Dibutyl phthalate	Endocrine disrupter
	Doxorubicin, Fluorouracil, Mitomycin, Cyclophosphamide	Cardiotoxicity [25]
	NSAID'S, Proton pump inhibitors, angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors	Nephrotoxicity due to increased oxidative stress. [26]
	Pesticides	Endocrine disorder, Carcinoma, Cardiovascular diseases, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, Embryonic developmental disorders. [27]
	Environmental Pollutants– Dioxins	Short term Exposure – Skin lesions, Darkening of Skin, Altered Liver Functions Long Term Effects – Impaired Immunity, Disturbed Endocrine and Reproductive Functions, Carcinomas. [28]

**Table No. 5: Assessment of Patient Can Be Done as Following**

Sr. No.	General Examination
	What are the present Complaints with duration?
	Ashtawidha Parikshana
	Accessment of Agni and bala
	Sleep pattern and duration
	Eating Habits
	Consumption of therapeutic drugs with duration
	Excessive use of over-the-counter Drugs
	Occupational exposure of specific toxins

**Table No. 6: Specific Points to Be Accessed**

Sr. No.	Accessment of Specific Factors	Grades		
		I	II	III
	Pandu			
	Krushata			
	Mandagni			
	Palpitation			
	Adhman			
	Hastapadshotha			
	Swapnaviparyay			
	Kasa			
	Shwasa			
	Chinta			
	Daurbalya			
	Alasa			
	Dhatukshaya			

**Table No. 7: Presence of Anya Vyadhi**

Sr. No.	Vyadhi	Yes/No
	<i>Jathar</i> (Ascites)	
	<i>Grahanidosha</i> (Sprue Syndrome)	
	<i>Yakshama</i> (Tuberculosis)	
	<i>Gulma</i>	
	<i>Jwara</i> (Fever)	
	<i>Ardit</i> (Facial palsy)	
	<i>Yakrut-pliha Vrddhi</i> (Hepato-Spleeno magaly)	

Severity of Garavisha and choice of treatment can be done as per the gradations and presence of associated diseases.

### DISCUSSION:

Prime aim of Ayurveda is maintaining health of a healthy individual and treating health conditions accordingly. First aim can be achieved by understanding the factors acting as *Garavisha* (artificial poisons) and preventing or limiting its exposure. Treatment of various health conditions related to *Garavisha* can be done by understanding its manifestations and keen history taking.

*Acharya Charaka* defined the prashnapariksha that should be done while assessing the patient of *Garavisha*. It should include the questions like when, with whom and what had patient taken orally. Nowadays we can modify these questionnaires by keeping in mind about changing life style and eating habits of patients. We encounter number of patients suffering from bloating, reduced appetite, anaemia, lack of sleep, inability to concentrate etc. Another major concern is non - responding dermatological ailments that is also mostly related to *Garavisha*. Hence going through basics of *Garavisha* will help clinicians to find out the root cause behind the health condition of patients.

Acharyas had also mentioned various *Kalpas* indicated in *Garavisha* that makes the course of treatment easier and can be used in patients who are contraindicated for *Vamanakarma*.

### Treatment of Diseases Associated with *Garavisha* in Current Scenario:

#### Behavioural Disorders:

These are incorporated due to over consumption of food containing additives like BHA, BHT, MSG and Trans fats. These agents in terms

vitiates *Tridoshas* due to which *Manovaha strotasa* gets obstructed and creates different behavioural problems. *Acharya Charaka* explains the usefulness of *Amrita Ghrita* in *Unmada*, *Apasmara* and *Bhutagraha vyadhi* that can be co-related with behavioural disorders with prior *Shodhana*.

#### Carcinogenic Diseases:

Ayurveda explains *Mandagni* as a cause behind every disease. Excessive consumption of *Mithya ahara vihara* like red meat, fatty food will cause *Agnidushti*. Due to *Dushtagni* there will be improper *pachana* of *rasa dhatu* and will lead to formation of *Aama*. *Aama* is responsible for strotorodha leading to *vatavrudhi*. Vitiated *Vata Dosha* vitiates other dosha and *Mala* because *Vata* is said to be promoter of all body functions. Hence at cellular level there will be deranged cell metabolism which will result in excessive and uncontrolled cell proliferation.

It can be managed by employing *Vamana* to pacify Vitiated *Doshas* followed by using drugs that will help to cure *Dhatwagni Mandya* ex. *Moorvadi Churna*. As it contains Drugs having *Deepana*, *Pachana*, *Anulomana*, *Raktashodhaka* and *Vishaghna* properties.

#### Endocrine Disorders:

One of the commonest endocrine disorders nowadays is Thyroid disorder viz, Hypothyroidism. Consumption of vegetables having pesticidal residues affects *Jatharagni* and *Dhatwagni* causing *Agnimandya*. *Agnimandya* results into *Rasadushti* and *Kapha Prakopa*. Thyroid gland is mainly responsible for metabolic activities which are properties of *Jatharagni* and *Dhatwagni*. *Vamana* is indicated in *Rasadushti* and *Nagdanti*, *Trivrutdanti*, *Dravanti*, *Snukpaya siddha Ghrita* will help to manage excessive weight gain due to fluid retention as all drugs are *Rechaka*.

**Cardiotoxicity:** One can perform *Vamana* according to *Arhata* of patient followed by *Sharkara Suvarnadi Leha*. *Suvarna* along with honey will act as *Balya* and *Rasayana* for cardiac functions.

## CONCLUSION:

In present era we humans are getting exposed to various forms of *Garavisha* knowingly or unknowingly. Which are responsible to cause many diseases and disorders, which are in terms turning towards non-curable conditions. These diseases can be easily tackled out with the help of traditional knowledge of Ayurveda. Hence present review concludes *Garavisha* as an important, accommodating and influential tool in understanding, preventing and treating various health conditions.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** None

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**Cite this article as:**

Geeta G. Asolkar, Anuja A. Wadadekar, Jayant J. Phadke, Garavisha: an introspection, PDEAS Int. J. R. Ayu. & A. Sc., 5(1); Feb 2023, p. 22-28.