Raasna Guggulu In Gridhrasi: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Gridhrasi (Sciatica) has been described as one of the Vata Vyadhi by Acharyas and is included under 80 types of Nanatmaja Vata Vyadhi described by Acharya Charaka. One of the most common symptoms of Gridhrasi is Ruka (low back pain of radiating type), which is very common in today’s era due to improper lifestyle and various other reasons i.e., due to trauma, other diseases, etc. Various formulations have been described by Acharyas for the management of Gridhrasi, and among them, Raasna Guggulu is directly indicated for the treatment of Gridhrasi by many Acharyas. Raasna Guggulu is very effective in the treatment of Gridhrasi, as in Gridhrasi there occurs vitiation of Vata and Kapha Dosha, and both the drugs (present in Raasna Guggulu i.e., Raasna and Guggulu) are described as best by Acharyas for the pacification of vitiated Vata and Kapha Dosha respectively. This article aims at helping in understanding the therapeutic benefits of Raasna Guggulu in the management of Gridhrasi in detail, based on Rasa Panchaka (i.e., Rasa, Guna, Veerya, Vipaka, and Prabhava), Karma (i.e., Shothahara, Vedana Sthapana, etc.) and chemical constituents of its contents.

Keywords: Gridhrasi, Raasna Guggulu

INTRODUCTION

Gridhrasi is characterized by the onset of Ruka (pain), Toda (pricking pain), Stambha (stiffness), and Spandana (pulsation) initially in Sphika (buttock) and then radiating distally to the posterior aspect of Kati (waist), Prishtha (back), Uru (thigh), Janu (knee), Jangha (calf) up to Pada (foot). It is of two types based on Dosha involved i.e., Vataja and Vata-Kaphaja, but have dominance of Vata Dosha. In Ayurveda, various methods are described for the treatment of Gridhrasi (Sciatica) i.e., Bheshaja (various formulations) and various other therapeutic procedures like Snehana, Swedana, Raktamokshana, Agnikarma, Basti Karma, etc. Raasna Guggulu is one of the formulations given by Acharyas in the treatment of Gridhrasi (Sciatica). Many Acharyas have directly indicated it in the management of Gridhrasi (Sciatica) (as described in Table. no.1). As it has been mentioned by our Acharyas (Aptopdesha), so its action and efficacy are undoubtful in the treatment of Gridhrasi.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Name of Textbook</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>Gada Nigraha⁶ (Vatak)</td>
<td>Kaya Chikitsa Khanda, Vata Rogaadhi, 18/146</td>
</tr>
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<td>2)</td>
<td>Vrinda Madhava⁷ (Vatika)</td>
<td>Vata Vyadhi Chikitsa, 22/73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table No.1
Drug review

Raasna Guggulu is an important formulation described by ancient Acharyas for the treatment of diseases, which have dominance of Vata Dosha and is specially indicated in the treatment of Gridhrasi. It has been mentioned by many Acharyas as mentioned above, with different names i.e., Raasna Guggulu by Chakradatta in the form of Gudika, Raasnadya Guggulu by Yoga Ratnakar in the form of Vatak, etc. but all Acharyas have described same constituents of Raasna Guggulu i.e., Raasna and Guggulu.

Contents and method of preparation of Raasna Guggulu - The constituents of Raasna Guggulu are Raasna and Guggulu only (as described in Table no. 2). According to Acharyas, Raasna Guggulu is prepared by mixing one Pala (i.e., four Karsha - 48gm) of Raasna with five Karsha (60gm) of Shuddha Guggulu. After collection and verification of raw drugs i.e., Raasna and Guggulu, their impurities should be removed. Then fine powder of Raasna Panchanga is obtained after filtering its grinded powder form through a sieve of number 120. Then Shodhana of Guggulu is done, using Dola Yantra Swedana Vidhi in Kwatha Dravyas described by Acharyas like Triphala Kwatha, Nirgundi Patra Kwatha, etc. After collecting Shuddha Guggulu, Raasna Panchanga fine powder is added to it in a ratio of 4:5 i.e., 4 parts of Raasna and 5 parts of Guggulu. Then both are pounded together and Mardana (Trituration) is done in Kharal Yantra (Mortar and Pestle) to make it a uniform mixture. Then after Mardana (Trituration), it is dried in Tray drier. The dry form obtained after drying is again filtered using a sieve to obtain a fine powder. The fine powder is used for making tablets of 500mg each using tablet making machine and then collect the tablets and store in an airtight container.

The dose of Raasna Guggulu is 1-2Masha (i.e., 1-2 gm as one Masha is equal to one gm) so, tablets of 500mg each can be made using Raasna and Guggulu in a ratio of 4:5 and should be given orally, two tablets twice a day with lukewarm water.

Raasna (Pluchea lanceolata) Raasna belongs to the Asteraceae family and is an erect, stiff herb or undershrub, which usually grows gregariously in dry barren wastelands and is distributed in Punjab, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Bengal. Its Mula (root), Patra (leaf), and Panchanga (whole plant) can be used for medicinal use according to the requirements of Vaidya.

Rasa Panchaka (Ayurvedic Pharmacological Properties) of Pluchea lanceolata– The drug is Tikta (bitter) in Rasa, Guru in Guna, Ushana in Veerya, Katu (pungent) in Vipaka, and has Vata and Kapha Dosha Shamaka action. It pacifies vitiated Vata Dosha due to its Guru Guna and Ushana Veerya, and Kapha Dosha due to its Tikta Rasa and Katu Vipaka. It has other properties/actions like Shoola
Prashamana, Sheeta Prashamana, Vedana Shhapana, Rakta Shodhaka, Veerya and Rasayana Karma along with Vata and Kapha Dosha Shamaka action.

Acharya Charaka has described Raasna in Agray Prakrana and describes it as best (Agray Dravya) for Vata Shaman. Acharya Sushruta included it under Arkadi Gana and Sleshma Shamana Varga. Arkadi Gana Dravya have Kaphaghana (Pacificies Kapha Dosha) properties. Acharya Vagbhatta also included it under Arkadi Gana having Kaphaghana (Pacificies Kapha Dosha) properties. In Ras Tarangani, it has been included in Vatahara Gana and Kaphahara Gana Dravyas. According to AFI, it has Shoola Prashamana and Vedana Shthapan Karma so it will help by the pacification of the most common symptom of Gridhrasi.

Phytochemicals and Pharmacological Actions of Pluacea lanceolata – The plant of Raasna have many active chemical constituents i.e., Sterol Glycosides, Taraxasterol, Sitosterols, etc. (as described in Table no. 3). It has many Pharmacological actions due to aforesaid chemical constituents i.e., Anti-inflammatory, Anti-œdema, Spasmolytic and Analgesic.

Guggulu (Commiphora wightii (Arnott) Bhandari) – Guggulu belongs to the Burseraceae family and is a small tree or shrub having a height of 1.2 to 1.8 m, which is found on the banks of the Ganga at Mayagunj, Bhagalpur, Bihar, Orrisa, in arid rocky tracts of Rajasthan, Khandesh, Deccan, Bellary and Mysore. Its Niryas (Gum oleoresin) is used for its medicinal use, which makes milky emulsion in hot water and it burns readily. When fresh, it is viscid and golden coloured having an aromatic odour, bitter and astringent in taste.

Rasa Panchaka (Ayurvedic Pharmacological Properties) of Commiphora wightii (Arnott) Bhandari – Guggulu is Tikta (bitter) and Katu (pungent) in Rasa. It has different properties (Guna) according to its state, Purana Guggulu (old) has Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshana, Vishada, Sara, Sukshma, Sugandhi Guna and Nava Guggulu (new) have Snigdha and Pichchhila Guna. It is Ushana in Veerya, Katu in Vipaka, and has Vata and Kapha Dosha Shamaka action. It pacifies vitiated Vata Dosha due to its Ushana Veerya, and due to its Tikta and Katu Rasa; Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshana, Vishada and SaraGuna; Katu Vipaka and Ushana Veerya pacifies vitiated Kapha Dosha. Along with its Vata and Kapha Dosha Shamaka action, it has Shothahara, Vedana Shthapan, Vrana Ropana, Nadibalya, Deepana, Anulomana, Rakta Vardhaka, Rakta Prasadan and Durgandhahara Karma.

Acharya Sushruta included it under Ealaadi Gana, Katu Varga, and Dhupana Dravya. Ealaadi Gana Dravya has Vatasleshmahara (Pacificies Vata and Kapha Dosha) properties. Acharya Vagbhatta has also included it under Ealaadi Gana having Vata-kapha Nashaka properties. According to AFI, it has Vedana Shthapan Karma so it will help by pacification of the most common symptom of Gridhrasi.

Phytochemicals and Pharmacological Actions of Commiphora wightii (Arnott) Bhandari – The Niryas (Gum oleoresin) of plant Guggulu is used for making formulations and it has a complex mixture of chemical constituents i.e., Steroids, Diterpenoids, Aliphatic Esters, Carbohydrates, varieties of inorganic ions and amino acids. Niryas of Guggulu contains Lignans, Sesamin, Pluviatilol, Monocyclic Diterpenoids, Guggulsterol, etc. (as described in Table no. 3). It has many Pharmacological actions due
to aforesaid chemical constituents i.e., Anti-inflammatory, Ca\(^{2+}\) antagonist activity, Hypolipidemic, Anti-viral, Antibacterial, Atherosclerotic, Anti-arthritic, Anti-rheumatic, etc.

**Table No. 2 (Contents of Raasna Guggulu)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Raasna</th>
<th>Guggulu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scientific Name</strong></td>
<td><em>Pluchea lanceolata</em></td>
<td><em>Commiphora wightii</em> (Arnott) Bhandari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
<td>Asteraceae</td>
<td>Burseraceae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rasa</strong></td>
<td>Tikta</td>
<td>Tikta, Katu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guna</strong></td>
<td>Guru</td>
<td>Purana Guggulu (old) - Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshana, Vishada, Sara, Sukshma, Sugandhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Nava Guggulu</em> (new) - Snigdha, Pichchhila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Veerya</strong></td>
<td>Ushna</td>
<td>Ushna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vipaka</strong></td>
<td>Katu</td>
<td>Katu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doshaghanta</strong></td>
<td>Vatakapha Shamaka</td>
<td>Vatakapha Shamaka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table No. 3 (Phytochemicals constituents and Pharmacological actions of Raasna Guggulu Ingredients)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Phytochemicals constituents</th>
<th>Pharmacological actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raasna (Pluchea lanceolata)</td>
<td>Sterol Glycosides, Taraxasterol, B and Y- Sitosterols, Flavone Glycoside, Neolupenol, Pentacyclic Triterpene, Choline Chloride, Pluchine</td>
<td>Anti-inflammatory, Anti-oedema, Spasmolytic, Analgesic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guggulu (Commiphora wightii (Arnott) Bhandari)</td>
<td>Lignans, Sesamin, Pluviatilol, Guggullignans I and II, Myricyl Alcohol, B-Sitosterol, Series of long-chain Polyo Esters derived from Homologous Tetros (Guggultetrols), and Ferulic Acid (D-Xylo-Guggultetrol- 16 to 22 Ferulate), Monocyclic Diterpenoids, Z-Guggulsterol, Guggulsterol VI, Two Hypolipidemic Agents, Viz., Z- and E-Guggulsterones (4, 17(20)-Pregnadien- 3, 16- Diones), etc.</td>
<td>Anti-inflammatory, Ca(^{2+}) antagonist activity, Hypolipidemic, Anti-viral, Antibacterial, Atherosclerotic, Anti-arthritic, Anti-rheumatic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DISCUSSION**

Raasna Guggulu is very effective in the treatment of Gridhrasi, as it has been described by our ancient Acharyas (Aaptopdesh) so its efficacy is undoubted in the management of Gridhrasi. Raasna and Guggulu, both have Vata and Kapha Dosha pacification properties due to their Rasa, Guna, Veerya and Vipaka. In Gridhrasi vitiation of Vata Dosha (dominant) along with Kapha Dosha occurs. So, Raasna and Guggulu will help in the pacification of various symptoms of Gridhrasi by the pacification of vitiated Vata and Kapha Dosha. Both Raasna and Guggulu have Tikta Rasa, so due to its Sleshma-
upshosa\textsuperscript{30} (Reducing \textit{Kapha Dosha}) it will aid in relieving symptoms like \textit{Tandra}, \textit{Gaurava}, and \textit{Arochaka} as these occur due to the vitiation of \textit{Kapha Dosha}. Similarly, \textit{Katu Rasa} of \textit{Guggulu} will act by reducing \textit{Kapha Dosha} (\textit{Sleshmanam Shamyati})\textsuperscript{31} and by its \textit{Vrmanavasadyati} properties it will help in reducing pain and other symptoms of sciatica by reducing tissue injury and promoting the local tissue healing process. By the action of its \textit{Guna}, \textit{Raasna} has \textit{Guru Guna} and it has been described by Acharyas that \textit{Guru Guna} has \textit{Bhruhana}\textsuperscript{25} (nourishes \textit{Dhatu}) properties so, it will help in removing \textit{Kshaya Janya Vata Dushti} and will aid in healing process of local damaged tissue and by increasing muscle strength (in Lower back). \textit{Guggulu} due to its \textit{Laghu} and \textit{Ruksha Guna} will cause the pacification of \textit{Kapha Dosha}; \textit{Tikshana} and \textit{Sara Guna} will cause the pacification of both \textit{Vata} and \textit{Kapha Dosha}. Moreover, as told by Acharya Sushruta, \textit{Laghu Guna} has \textit{Ropana}\textsuperscript{32} properties, so it will help in rebuilding damaged tissue and can reach deeper tissues at the cellular level due to its \textit{Sukshma Guna}. By the action of its potency (\textit{Veerya}), both \textit{Raasna} and \textit{Guggulu} have \textit{Ushana Veerya}, which have \textit{Vata} and \textit{Kapha Shamaka Karma}. Its action can be understood as, Acharyas have described \textit{Ushana} causes \textit{Swedana}, \textit{Vilayana} (to melt) and \textit{Pachana}\textsuperscript{24} so, due to these actions, it removes \textit{Srotas Dusti} caused due \textit{Kapha Dosha} and will lead to \textit{Anuloma Gati} of \textit{Vata Dosha} leading to the pacification of symptoms like \textit{Ruka}, \textit{Toda}, \textit{Stambha}, \textit{Spandana}, etc. \textit{Guggulu} due to its \textit{Deepana Karma} will help in relieving \textit{Arochaka}, which occurs due to \textit{Agnimandya}. The potency of \textit{Raasna Guggulu} can be further enhanced by using \textit{Shuddha Guggulu}, whose \textit{Shodhana} is done using \textit{Vata-Kapha Nashaka Dravyas} described by Acharyas like \textit{Nirgundi Patra Swarasa}, \textit{Triphala Kwatha}, etc. \textit{Raasna} has \textit{Anti-inflammatory}, \textit{Antioedema}, \textit{Spasmolytic} and \textit{Analgesic}, so it will help in the pacification of pain due to its \textit{Anti-inflammatory} and \textit{Analgesic} properties and will relieve stiffness due to its \textit{spasmolytic} properties. Similarly, \textit{Guggulu} will help in relieving symptoms due to its pharmacological properties like \textit{Anti-inflammatory}, \textit{Ca}^{2+} antagonist activity, \textit{Hypolipidemic}, \textit{Anti-arthritic}, etc.

CONCLUSION

\textit{Gridhrasi} is caused due to the dominance of \textit{Vata} and \textit{Kapha Doshas} and constituents of \textit{Raasna Guggulu} i.e., \textit{Raasna} and \textit{Guggulu}, are best for the pacification of \textit{Vata} and \textit{Kapha Dosha} respectively, as described by Acharyas.

\begin{verse}
\textit{रास्ना वातहरणाम्} \ श्रेष्ठं \।
\textit{गुग्गुलु अनितलेकरणाम्} \ श्रेष्ठं \।
\end{verse}

It can be concluded that \textit{Raasna Guggulu} will be effective in the treatment of \textit{Gridhrasi} due to aforesaid properties along with some lifestyle modifications, as improper postures while doing daily routine activities, which play an important role in the manifestation of its symptoms.

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