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Review Article

DADIMADI GHRITA: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF A CLASSICAL AYURVEDIC POLYHERBAL FORMULATION

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ABSTRACT

Bhaishajya Kalpana is a branch of Ayurveda that deals with the preparation of herbal and herbo-mineral medicines. Among the four types of *Sneha Kalpana,* namely *Ghrita, Taila*, *Vasa*, and *Majja, Ghrita* (ghee) is considered the most superior. It has the ability to absorb the medicinal properties of the drugs added to it and retain them without losing its own qualities. Because of this, *Ghrita* is widely used as an effective dosage form in Ayurvedic medicine. *Dadimadi Ghrita* is a classical Ayurvedic polyherbal *Ghrita* formulation described in various classical texts, including *Charaka Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya,* and *Bhaishajya Ratnavali.* It is indicated in the management of *Pandu Roga* (anemic disorder) and has also been recommended for other disease conditions. Considering its classical significance and therapeutic utility, this review aims to compile and discuss its ingredients, pharmacological properties, and therapeutic applications.

INTRODUCTION

The Ayurvedic system employs a wide range of formulations prepared from medicinal plants, minerals, and, in selected cases, substances of animal origin. These formulations are processed using classical pharmaceutical techniques to maximize their therapeutic effectiveness. The selection of a medicine is based on a thorough assessment of the patient's *Prakriti* (constitution), the predominance or imbalance of the *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*), and the nature of the disease. The principles governing diagnosis and treatment are derived from the unique concepts of Ayurveda, which differ from those of conventional medicine.

The therapeutic effectiveness of any formulation depends on its efficient digestion, absorption, and distribution to the site of action. Within *Ghrita* formulations, ghee acts as an effective vehicle, facilitating the absorption and bioavailability of the incorporated therapeutic constituents.

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Its lipophilic nature promotes better absorption and facilitates the transport of these constituents across biological membranes, enabling efficient delivery to target tissues and cells.[1]

Dadimadi Ghrita is a classical Ayurvedic polyherbal *Ghrita* formulation described in several authoritative Ayurvedic texts. It is primarily mentioned in the *Pandu Chikitsa* chapters of *Charaka Samhita* [2] and *Ashtanga Hridaya*.[3] The formulation is also described in *Bhaishajya Ratnavali*[4] and *Bhavaprakasha* [5] under *Prameha Chikitsa*, highlighting its broader therapeutic applications. Although references are available in multiple classical texts, the formulation most commonly used in contemporary clinical practice is based on the descriptions provided in *Charaka Samhita* and *Ashtanga Hridaya*.

Dadimadi Ghrita is prepared using five herbal ingredients processed with *Ghrita* and water according to the classical method of *Ghrita Kalpana*. Based on its ingredient profile, the formulation is intended to pacify *Kapha–Vata* predominance, enhance digestion and metabolism (*Deepana–Pachana*), and support the management of *Pandu Roga* (anemic disorder).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to evaluate the formulation with special emphasis on the following aspects:

- Various classical references of *Dadimadi ghrita.*
- Ingredients of *Dadimadi ghrita*.
- Pharmacodynamic properties and phyto-constituents of the individual herbal ingredients.

Since the Ayurvedic Formulary of India (AFI)[6] cites the *Ashtanga Hridaya* as the source, the formulation described in the *Pandu Chikitsa* chapter of the *Ashtanga Hridaya* was selected for the present study.

Table 1: Ingredients of *Dadimadi ghrita*

S.no.	Drug	Botanical name	Part used	Quantity
1	*Dadima* [7]	*Punica granatum*	Seed	1 *Kudava*
2	*Dhanyaka*[8]	*Coriandrum sativum*	Fruit	½ *Kudava*
3	*Chitraka*[9]	*Plumbago zeylanica*	Root	1 *Pala*
4	*Sringavera*[10] *(Shunti)*	*Zingiber officinale*	Rhizome	1 *Pala*
5	*Pippali*[11]	*Piper longum*	Fruit	½ *Pala*
6	*Ghrita*	-	-	20 *Pala*
7	Water	-	-	1 *Adaka*

Method of Preparation

Sneha Kalpana involves the use of *Kalka Dravya, Sneha Dravya,* and *Drava Dravya*. Although a 1:4:16 ratio is generally followed,[12] *Dadimadi Ghrita* is prepared using the specific quantities mentioned in the classical text.

Kalka dravyas are: *Dadima, Dhanyaka, Chitraka, Shunti* and *Pippali.*

Sneha dravya: Ghrita

Drava dravya: Water

Procedure: A wide-open vessel was taken, *Ghrita* was added and heated on mild flame. Upon mild heating, the *Kalka* which was mixed with the water was slowly added and was stirred continuously. Heating was continued until the formulation reached the *Madhyama Paka* stage, as indicated by the formation of a well-rolled *Varti* of suitable consistency.

For *Pana* (oral administration) and *Vasti* (enema), heating is continued until the *Madhyama Paka* stage, resulting in a moderately cooked preparation with appropriate consistency and stability for internal use. For *Nasya* (nasal administration), the heating process is stopped at the *Mridu Paka* stage, where the formulation remains soft, retains some moisture, and spreads easily. [13]

Table 2: Ingredients of *Dadimadi ghrita* in various classical textbooks

S.no.	Ingredients	*Ashtanga Hridaya*	*Caraka Samhitha*	*Bhaishajya Ratnavali*	*Bhavaprakasha*
1	*Dadima*	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	*Dhanyaka*	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	*Chitraka*	✓	✓	-	-
4	*Shunti*	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	*Pippali*	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	*Vidanga*	-	-	✓	✓
7	*Haridra*	-	-	✓	✓
8	*Chavika*	-	-	✓	✓
9	*Ajaji*	-	-	✓	✓
10	*Haritaki*	-	-	✓	✓
11	*Amalaki*	-	-	✓	✓
12	*Vibhitaki*	-	-	✓	✓
13	*Trikantaka*	-	-	✓	✓
14	*Yavani*	-	-	✓	✓
15	*Vrikshamla*	-	-	✓	✓

16	*Kola*	-	-	✓	✓
17	*Lodra*	-	-	-	✓
18	*Chapala (Pippali moola)*	-	-	✓	-
19	*Saindhava*	-	-	✓	✓
20	*Ghrita*	✓	✓	✓	✓
21	Water	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 3: Pharmacodynamic properties of *Dadimadi ghrita*[14]

S.no.	***Drug***	***Rasa***	***Guna***	***Veerya***	***Vipaka***	***Doshakarma***
1	*Dadima*	*Amla, Madhura, Kashaya*	*Laghu, Snigdha*	*Ushna*	*Madhura*	*Tridoshahara*
2	*Dhanyaka*	*Madhura, Katu, Tikta*	*Laghu, Snigdha*	*Ushna*	*Madhura*	*Tridoshahara*
3	*Chitraka*	*Katu*	*Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna*	*Ushna*	*Katu*	*Kapha vata hara*
4	*Shunti*	*Katu*	*Laghu, Snigdha*	*Ushna*	*Madhura*	*Vata kapha hara*
5	*Pippali*	*Katu, Tikta, Madhura*	*Snigdha, Laghu*	*Anushna*	*Madhura*	*Tridoshahara*

Table 4: Phytoconstituents and Pharmacological properties of *Dadimadi ghrita*[14]

S.no	Drug	Phytoconstituents	Pharmacological properties	Therapeutic action
1	*Dadima*	Glucose, fructose, riboflavin, vitamin C	Astringent, anti-helminthic, stomachic	*Hridya, Varcho vibandhaniya, Arochaka hara, Rakta pitta hara*
2	*Dhanyaka*	Coriandrol, tannin, vitamin A, geraniol	Carminative, Stomachic, diuretic	*Mutrala, Atisara hara, Hridya, Ajirna hara*
3	*Chitraka*	Plumbagin, chitranone, catechol	Appetiser, digestant	*Sothahara, Grahani roga hara, Soolahara*
4	*Shunti*	Starch, camphene, gingerin	Digestive, carminative, stomachic	*Anulomana, Hridya, Pandu hara*
5	*Pippali*	Piperine, pipernonaline, piplartine	Appetizer, vermifuge, carminative	*Hridya, Prameha hara, Krimi hara, Pliharoga hara*

OBSERVATIONS

- **Predominance of *Katu rasa* (4 drugs)**
  Katu rasa predominates in the formulation, promoting *Agni* (digestive fire), enhancing digestion and metabolism, reducing *Kapha*, and facilitating *Srotoshodhana* (channel cleansing). These properties indicate its primary role in improving digestive and metabolic functions.
- **Considerable presence of *Madhura Rasa* (3 drugs)**
  Madhura rasa provides nourishing and strengthening effects, supports tissue health, and balances the pungent nature of the formulation, enhancing its suitability for internal administration with *Ghrita*.
- *Tikta Rasa* contributes *Pitta* pacification, *Ama* reduction, and anti-inflammatory effects, while *Amla rasa* enhances digestion and palatability, and *Kashaya rasa* supports absorption and tissue integrity. Although present in smaller proportions, these *Rasas* complement the formulation's overall therapeutic profile.
- **Predominance of *Laghu Guna* (5 drugs)**
  Laghu guna predominates, promoting lightness, easy digestion, enhanced metabolism, and supporting *Deepana* and *Pachana*.
- **Considerable presence of *Snigdha Guna* (4 drugs)**
  Snigdha guna imparts unctuous and nourishing properties, supporting tissue nourishment while balancing the formulation.
- **Limited presence of *Ruksha* and *Tikshna guna* (1 drug each)**
  These *Gunas* aid *Kapha* reduction, *Srotoshodhana* (channel cleansing), and digestive function, complementing the overall therapeutic action.
- **Predominance of *Ushna veerya* (4 drugs):** Supports digestion, metabolism, and the pacification of *Vata* and *Kapha*.
- **Predominance of *Madhura Vipaka* (4 drugs)** Contributes to *Brimhana* (nourishment), *Balya* (strengthening), and supports *Vata* and *Pitta* balance while promoting tissue nourishment.

- The majority of ingredients help maintain overall *doshic* balance, indicating broad therapeutic applicability. The presence of *Vata-Kaphahara* drugs complements the formulation by promoting digestion and alleviating *Vata* and *Kapha* predominance.

DISCUSSION

Dadimadi Ghrita is described in the *Pandu Chikitsa* of the *Charaka Samhita* and *Ashtanga Hridaya*. The formulation is indicated in *Hrid Roga, Pandu, Gulma, Arsha, Pliha Roga, Vata-Kapha Roga, Shwasa, Kasa*, and for *Deepana*. It is also indicated for *Mudha Vata Anulomana* and is considered beneficial in difficult labour (*Dukhaprasava*) and infertility (*Vandhyatva*), reflecting its diverse therapeutic applications. In contrast, *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* and *Bhavaprakasha* include *Dadimadi Ghrita* in *Prameha Chikitsa* and recommend it for the management of *Prameha, Mutraghata, Asmari, Mutrakrichra, Vibandha, Anaha, Soola, Kamala,* and *Jwara*. The ingredients and therapeutic indications of this formulation differ from those documented in the *Charaka Samhita* and *Ashtanga Hridaya.*

The therapeutic indications of *Dadimadi Ghrita* can be explained by the collective pharmacodynamic properties of its ingredients. The formulation predominantly comprises drugs with *Madhura, Tikta,* and *Katu rasa, Snigdha* and *Laghu guna, Ushna virya,* and *Madhura vipaka,* making it suitable for disorders associated with impaired digestion, *Vata-Kapha* aggravation, and tissue depletion.

Dadima contributes *Deepana*, *Pachana*, *Grahi*, and *Hridya* properties, supporting its use in *Pandu, Hrid Roga*, and gastrointestinal disorders.

Chitraka, Shunthi, Pippali, and *Chavya* enhance digestive fire, digest *Ama*, improve metabolism, and promote *Vata anulomana*, thereby supporting its use as a *Deepana* formulation and its use in *Gulma, Vata-Kapha Roga*, and related conditions.

Their *Kapha-Vatahara* and *Srotoshodhana* actions also support the management of *Shwasa* and *Kasa*. *Ghrita*, by virtue of its nourishing, *Brimhana*, and *Yogavahi* properties, enhances drug delivery while promoting tissue nourishment and pacifying *Vata*, thereby supporting its use in *Pandu, Pliha Roga*, *Mudha vata anulomana, Dukhaprasava*, and *Vandhyatva*. Thus, the synergistic combination of digestive stimulants and nourishing components provides a rational basis for the broad therapeutic applications of *Dadimadi Ghrita* described in the classical texts.

The therapeutic indications of the *Dadimadi Ghrita* described in *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* and *Bhavaprakasha* can be explained by the combined pharmacodynamic properties of its constituent drugs. *Dadima, Dhanyaka, Shunthi, Pippali, Chavika, Chapala (Pippali moola), Ajaji,* and *Yavani* possess *Deepana, Pachana, Kaphahara*, and *Vata anulomana* properties, promoting proper digestion and metabolism. *Haridra, Vidanga, Triphala* (*Haritaki*, *Amalaki*, and *Vibhitaki*), *Trikantaka, Lodhra*, and *Vrikshamla* aid in maintaining normal urinary function, reducing inflammation, and eliminating accumulated *Kapha* and *Meda*. *Saindhava* supports *Srotoshodhana* and relieves *Anaha* and *Vibandha*.

CONCLUSION

Dadimadi Ghrita is a classical Ayurvedic *Ghrita* preparation described in multiple authoritative texts, with variations in its composition and therapeutic indications reflecting its adaptation to different clinical contexts. A comparative appraisal of these textual references provides a comprehensive understanding of the formulation and its therapeutic scope in Ayurvedic practice. This review compiles and critically evaluates the available literature on *Dadimadi Ghrita*, serving as a valuable reference for academicians, researchers, and clinicians. Further pharmaceutical, pharmacological, and well-designed clinical studies are needed to establish its therapeutic efficacy and strengthen the evidence supporting its integration into contemporary healthcare.

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