



## Review Article

### PRAGMATIC USAGE OF HARITAKI (*TERMINALIA CHEBULA* RETZ): AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE VIS-À-VIS CURRENT PRACTICE

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#### ABSTRACT

*Haritaki* (Chebulic myrobalan-*Terminalia chebula* Retz (Combretaceae Family) denotes “a fruit having dark greenish yellow colour, which drives away diseases” The widely acclaimed Ayurvedic drug is the best wholesome substance and safe for bodily passages (*haritaki pathyanam*). *Haritaki* enjoys wide patronage in Tibetan medicine also which is known as A-ru-ra and praised with the adjective Sman-mchog-rgyal-pa (the king of best medicines). *Haritaki* in day to day life by judicious combinations of different adjuvants will be a boon for the person who consumes it. Though the Ayurvedic texts provide decent options such as *Rituharitaki* (Seasonal use of *Haritaki* with selective adjuvant), specific indications and contra indications, may practitioners as well as others do not pay much attention to them. This has led to the underutilization of this wonderful fruit drug. It is the time to take fresh look at the Ayurvedic perspective of pragmatic usage of *Haritaki* in the light of current therapeutic evidence, pharmaceutical practices.

**KEY WORDS:** *Haritaki*, *Terminalia chebula* Retz., pragmatic usage, Current therapeutic evidence.

#### INTRODUCTION

*Haritaki* consists of the pericarp of mature fruits of *Terminalia chebula* Retz. (Fam. Combretaceae), a moderate sized or large tree found throughout India, chiefly in deciduous forests and areas of light rainfall, but occasionally also in slightly moist forests, upto about 1500 m elevation, throughout India, flowers appear from April, August and fruits ripen from October-January.<sup>[1]</sup> It is one of the three fruits of *Triphala* and a universally acclaimed Ayurvedic medicine world over. The very first quartet of chapters of *Carakasamhita*, *Cikitsasthana* begins with the title “*Abhayamalakiyarasayanapada*”<sup>[2]</sup> where the term *Abhaya* means *Haritaki*, apart from this almost all the famous *Dravyaguna Nighantu* (Lexicons) have a chapter titled “*Haritakyadivarga*” indicating the therapeutic importance of it among Ayurvedic faculty. About seven varieties of this wonderful fruit along with instructions of how to use are widely discussed under these sections. The drug is the best wholesome substance and safe for bodily passages<sup>[3]</sup>. *Haritaki* enjoys wide patronage in Tibetan medicine and is known as A-ru-ra and

praised with the adjective Sman-mchog-rgyal-pa (the king of best medicines)<sup>[4]</sup>.

The term *Haritaki* denotes “a fruit having dark greenish yellow colour, which drives away diseases”. It is also known as *Abhaya* (Very safe to use), *Avyatha* (cures pain), *Pathya* (safe for bodily passages), *Kayastha* (which provides strength to body), *Putana* (eliminates waste), *Haimavati* (grows on Himalayas), *Cetaki* (Helps to attain clear mind by cleansing channels), *Shreyasi* (Takes care of the person who ingests it) and *Shiva* (Provides all good things) in Sanskrit<sup>[5]</sup>.

#### Vernacular names<sup>[6]</sup>

|          |   |  |
|----------|---|--|
| Sanskrit | : | <i>Abhaya, Kayastha, shiva, Pathya, Vijaya</i> (Not Bhang) |
| Asamese  | : | <i>Shilikha</i>  |
| Bengali  | : | <i>Haritaki</i>  |
| English  | : | <i>Myrobalan</i>   |
| Gujrati  | : | <i>Hirido, Himaja, Pulo-harda</i>                          |
| Hindi    | : | <i>Harre, Harad, Harar</i>                                 |
| Kannada  | : | <i>Alalekai</i>  |
| Kashmiri | : | <i>Halela</i>  |

Malayalam : Katukka  
 Marathi : Hirda, Haritaki, Harda, Hireda  
 Oriya : Harida  
 Punjabi : Halela, Harar  
 Tamil : Kadukkai

*dashaimani*<sup>[10]</sup>, *Hikkanigraha dashaimani*<sup>[11]</sup>,  
*Kasahara dashaimani*<sup>[12]</sup>, *Jvarahara dashaimani*<sup>[13]</sup>,  
*Prajasthapana dashaimani*<sup>[14]</sup>, *Vayahsthapana dashaimani*<sup>[15]</sup>,  
*Mustadi gana*<sup>[16]</sup>, *Triphala*<sup>[17]</sup>,  
*Amalakyadi gana*<sup>[18]</sup> *Virecanopaga*<sup>[19]</sup>.

Commentary on the Tibetan name of *Haritaki* A-ru-ra provides an interesting insight. The first syllable A denotes that it is the best of medicines to handle the deranged Doshas, Ru suggests that fruit consist of flesh (pericarp), bone (stone) and skin (epicarp) and ra is a similie comparing the shape of *Haritaki* fruit with that of Rhinoceros and has its effect on all the seven Dhatu (tissues) <sup>[7]</sup>.

*Terminalia* = proceeding from the extremity at the end; *chebula*= distorted from of the word kabul<sup>[8]</sup>.

The drug is equated with nectar drops fallen from heaven while it was consumed by *Indra*. Bhavaprakasha narrates this story in reverence as a dialogue between Ashivini kumara and *Daksha*.

*Haritaki* mentioned in Samhitas various groups, *Kushtagna dashaimani*<sup>[9]</sup>, *Virecanopag*

*Haritaki* fruit comes bundled with five rasa viz., rind - *Madhura* (sweet), ridges - *Amla* (sour), stalk - *Tikta* (bitter), membrane - *Katu* (pungent), seed/stone - *Kashaya* (astringent). Owing to this formidable combination of five Rasas the whole fruit is capable of managing all the three *Doshas*. It has *Ruksha* (dryness producing), guru (causing heaviness) properties. The *Virya* is *Ushna* (in contrast to *Amalaki* - *Embelica officinalis*) and *Vipaka* (taste at the end of digestion) is *Madhura* (sweet).

### Synonyms

Abhaya, Amruta, Avyatha, Bhisagvara, Cetaki, Cetanika, Devi, Divya, Haimavati, Jaya, Jivanika, Jivanti, Jivapriya, Jivya, Kayastha, Pathya, Pranada, Prapathya, Putana, Rohini, Shiva, Shreyasi, Vayastha, Vijaya<sup>[20, 21]</sup>.

### Important Karma (therapeutic activities) <sup>[22]</sup> vis-à-vis current research leads

| Karma (therapeutic activity) | Research lead   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Rasayana                     | <p><b>Antioxidant and free radical scavenging activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The leaves, bark and fruit of <i>T. chebula</i> demonstrated high antioxidant activity due to presence of phenolics<sup>[23]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> (Aqueous extract) exhibited xanthine/xanthine oxidase inhibition, 2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH) radicals scavenging activity<sup>[24]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> (aqueous extract) Inhibits free radical induced hemolysis, nitric oxide release from lipopolysaccharide stimulated murine macrophages<sup>[25]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. Chebula</i> (aqueous extract) has strong antioxidant activity due to inhibition of radiation induced lipid peroxidation, which is observed in rat liver microsomes at different doses<sup>[26]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. Chebula</i> (methanolic extract) found to inhibit lipid peroxide formation and to scavenge hydroxyl and superoxide radicals <i>in vitro</i><sup>[27]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. Chebula</i> (Acetone extract) has stronger antioxidant activity than alpha<sup>[28]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> (Gallic acid and chebulagic acid, isolated from fruit extract) blocked cytotoxic T lymphocyte (CTL)-mediated cytotoxicity. Granule exocytosis in response to anti-CD3 stimulation was also blocked by the above phytochemicals at the equivalent concentrations<sup>[29]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> (ethanol extract) inhibited oxidative stress and the age-dependent shortening of the telomeric DNA length<sup>[30]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> gall were tested for antioxidative and tyrosinase inhibition activities as well as for proliferative and MMP-2 inhibition activities on early aging</li> </ul> |

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|  | <p>human skin fibroblasts to evaluate <i>in vitro</i> anti-aging activity. The cold water extract of <i>T. chebula</i> gall indicated the highest stimulation index (SI) on normal human fibroblast proliferation. The extract also demonstrated MMP-2 inhibition on fibroblasts 1.37 times more potent than ascorbic acid. The study confirmed the traditional use of <i>T. chebula</i> gall in many Thai medicinal plant recipes for longevity<sup>[31]</sup>.</p> <p><b>Cytoprotective activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> extract on the age dependent shortening of the telomere length as shown by the Southern Blots of the terminal restriction fragments of DNA extracted from sub-culture passages<sup>[32]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ It exhibited the development of duodenal ulcers and appeared to exert a cytoprotective effect on the gastric mucosa <i>in vitro</i><sup>[33]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ oxidative stress and inhibitory effect on cellular aging of its fruits have also been documented<sup>[34]</sup>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Anticarcinogenic activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Crude extract of <i>T. chebula</i> fruit have chebulinic acid, tannic acid and ellagic acid, which are found to be the most growth inhibitory phenolics of <i>T. chebula</i><sup>[35]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> fruit (Ethanol extract) inhibited cell proliferation and induced cell death in a dose dependent manner in several malignant cell lines including human (MCF-7) and mouse (S115) breast cancer cell line, human osteosarcoma cell line (HOS-1), human prostate cancer cell (PC-3) and a non-tumorigenic immortalized human prostate cell line (PNT1A) <sup>[36]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> bark and fruit powder (acetone extract) has constituents with promising anticarcinogenic activity<sup>[37]</sup>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Antimutagenic, radioprotective and chemopreventive activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> (aqueous extract and hydrolyzable tannins) demonstrated Antimutagenic activity in <i>Salmonella typhimurium</i>.<sup>[38]</sup></li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> (aqueous extract) breaks formati Gamma radiation induced strand in plasmid PBR322 DNA<sup>[39]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> reduces irradiation effects in mice, human lymphocytes while undergoing the gamma radiation- <i>in vitro</i><sup>[40]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> showed chemopreventive effect on nickel chloride -induced renal oxidative stress, toxicity and cell proliferation response in male Wistar rats<sup>[41]</sup>.</li> </ul> |
| Cakshushya   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> seeds (chloroform extract) in a quantity of 100, 200 and 300 mg/kg body weight produced dose-dependent reduction in blood glucose of diabetic rats in both short term and long term study (300 mg/kg body weight for 8 weeks). Further, remarkable renoprotective activity was also observed in <i>T. chebula</i> treated rats<sup>[42]</sup>.</li> </ul>   |
| Dipana / Anulomana, Vibandha Aruci, Udavarta, Gulma, Arsha | <p><b>Purgative property</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Purgative action of an oil fraction from <i>T. chebula</i> has been reported<sup>[43]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> increases the stools and has got property of evacuating the bowel completely demonstrated in a short term clinical trials carried out on patients with simple constipation<sup>[44]</sup>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Gastrointestinal motility improving and anti-ulcerogenic activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> fruit has been shown to increase gastric emptying time<sup>[45]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ Antiulcerogenic activity of <i>T. chebula</i> appeared to be balanced with a protective effect on the gastrointestinal mucosa, with the improvement in the secretory status of Brunner's gland involved in the protection against duodenal ulcer<sup>[46]</sup>.</li> </ul>   |

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|                            | <p><b>Antispasmodic activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>In vivo</i> and <i>in vitro</i> studies on <i>T. chebula</i> demonstrated its 'anti-vata' or 'anti-spasmodic' properties by the reduction of abnormal blood pressure as well as intestinal spasms. This confirm its traditional usefulness for spastic colon and other intestinal disorders<sup>[47]</sup>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Antiulcerogenic activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Animals pretreated at 200 and 500 mg/kg body weight with hydroalcoholic extract of <i>T. chebula</i> showed reduction in lesion index, total affected area and percentage of lesion in comparison with control groups in the aspirin, ethanol and cold restraint stress-induced ulcer models. The <i>T. chebula</i> extract increased mucus production in aspirin and ethanol-induced ulcer models and showed antisecretory activity in pylorus ligated model leading to a reduction in the gastric juice volume, free acidity, total acidity, and significantly increased gastric pH<sup>[48]</sup>.</li> </ul>  |
| Udararoga                  | <p><b>Hepatoprotective activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> fruits showed strong hepatoprotective activity through antioxidant effect in isolated rat hepatocytes<sup>[49]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> was found to prevent the hepatotoxicity caused by the administration of rifampicin, isoniazid and pyrazinamide (combination) in sub-chronic model (12 weeks)<sup>[50]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> fruit (95% ethanolic extract) showed hepatoprotective activity against anti-tuberculosis (anti-TB) drug-induced toxicity which could be attributed to its prominent anti-oxidative and membrane stabilizing activities<sup>[51]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ Protective effects of an aqueous extract of <i>T. chebula</i> fruit on the tert-butyl hydroperoxide-induced oxidative injury was observed in cultured rat primary hepatocytes and rat liver<sup>[52,53]</sup>.</li> </ul>   |
| Hrudya /Pandu/<br>Hrudroga | <p><b>Cardioprotective activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> demonstrated cardioprotective activity in isolated frog heart model<sup>[54]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> fruits (500 mg/kg body weight) was investigated in isoproterenol induced myocardial damage in rats. It was reported that the pretreatment with <i>T chebula</i> extract had cardioprotective effect due to the lysosomal membrane stabilization preventing myocardial necrosis and inhibition of alterations in the heart mitochondrial ultrastructure and function in the experimental rats<sup>[55-67]</sup>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Hypolipidemic and hypocholesterolemic activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Hypolipidemic activity of <i>T. chebula</i> extract against experimentally induced atherosclerosis have been recorded<sup>[58]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ Combination of aqueous extract of <i>Terminalia chebula</i> and Gaumutra possessed hypocholesterelomic activity against cholesterol-induced hypercholesterolemia and atherosclerosis in rabbits<sup>[59]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> extract administration showed hypolipidaemic activity against experimentally induced atherosclerosis and hypocholesterolemic activity against cholesterol-induced hypercholesterolemia and atherosclerosis<sup>[60]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ Triphala formulation was found to have hypolipidaemic effects on the experimentally induced hypercholesteremic rats<sup>[61]</sup>.</li> </ul> |
| Shotha                     | <p><b>Anti-inflammatory and anti-arthritis activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Terminalia chebula hydroalcoholic extract (TCHE) demonstrated Anti-arthritis and disease modifying activity of <i>Terminalia chebula</i> Retz. in experimental</li> </ul>  |

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|                            | <p>models<sup>[62]</sup>.</p> <p><b>Wound healing activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Topical administration of an alcoholic extract of <i>T. chebula</i> leaves on the healing of rat dermal wounds showed that <i>T. chebula</i> treated wounds healed faster as indicated by improved rates of contraction and decreased period of epithelialization<sup>[63]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> (ethanol extract) against the indomethacin-induced stomach ulceration was reported<sup>[64]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ Tannins extracted from immature fruits of <i>T. chebula</i> inhibited <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> and <i>Klebsiella Pneumonia in vitro</i> and promoted cutaneous wound healing in rats due to a powerful anti-bacterial and angiogenic activity of the extract<sup>[65]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ The wound healing activity of ethanolic extract of fruits of <i>T. chebula</i> in the form of an ointment with two concentrations (5% and 10% w/w ointment of bark extract in simple ointment base) showed significant response in excision and incision models in albino rats compared to controls<sup>[66]</sup>.</li> </ul>  |
| Vishmajvara/<br>Jirnajvara | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ anti plasmodial activity against <i>Plasmodium falciparum</i><sup>[67]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> (water extract) showed antiplasmodial activity <i>in vitro</i> by its ability to inhibit the uptake of [3H] hypoxanthine into the <i>Plasmodium falciparum</i> K1 multidrug-resistant strain and <i>in vivo</i><sup>[68]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ Acetone seed extract of <i>T. chebula</i> was also found to have good antiplasmodial activity in a study<sup>[69]</sup>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Antiviral activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It protects epithelial cells against influenza A virus, supporting its traditional use for aiding in recovery from acute respiratory infections<sup>[70]</sup>.</li> </ul>  |
| Prameha                    | <p><b>Antidiabetic and renoprotective activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> fruit and seeds exhibited dose dependent reduction in blood glucose of streptozotocin induced diabetic rats both in short term and long term study and also had renoprotective activity<sup>[71,72]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ Oral administration of 75% methanolic extract of <i>T. chebula</i> (100 mg/kg body weight) reduced the blood sugar level in normal and alloxan diabetic rats significantly within 4 h. Continued daily administration of the drug produced a sustained effect<sup>[73]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ Oral administration of ethanolic extract of fruits of <i>T. chebula</i> (200 mg/kg body weight for 30 days) reduced the levels of blood glucose and glycosylated hemoglobin in streptozotocin (STZ)-induced experimental diabetic rats<sup>[74]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> (200 mg/kg body weight for two months) reduced the elevated blood glucose and increase in glycosylated hemoglobin. The same dose also showed a marked improvement in controlling the elevated blood lipids as well as decreased serum insulin levels. The <i>in vitro</i> studies with pancreatic islets showed that the insulin release was nearly two times more than that in untreated diabetic animals. The treatment did not have any unfavorable effect on liver and kidney function tests<sup>[75]</sup>.</li> </ul> |
| Shiroroga<br>(dantaroga)   | <p><b>Anticaries activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> (aqueous extract) strongly inhibited the growth, sucrose induced adherence and glucan induced aggregation of <i>Streptococcus mutans</i>. Mouth rinsing with a 10% solution of the extract inhibited the salivary bacterial count and glycolysis of salivary bacteria for upto 90 min post rinsing<sup>[76,77]</sup>.</li> <li>➤ <i>T. chebula</i> demonstrated preventive action on dental caries<sup>[78]</sup>.</li> </ul>   |

### IMPORTANT FORMULATIONS

| Name of the formulation  | Indication(s)  | Dose                                     |
|--|--|--|
| <i>Abhayarishta</i> <sup>[80]</sup><br>(Bhaishajyaratnavali,<br>Arshorogadhikara: 105-<br>110)                 | <i>Arsha</i> (Haemorrhoids), <i>Udara</i> (Diseases of abdomen / enlargement of abdomen), <i>Mutra Vibandha</i> (Retention of urine), <i>Agnimandya</i> (Digestive impairment), <i>Varcovibandha</i> (Impaction due to Hard stools)  | 12 to 24 ml                              |
| <i>Agastya Haritaki Rasayana</i> <sup>[81]</sup><br>(Ashtangahrudaya,<br>Cikitsasthana, Adhyaya 3:<br>125-130) | <i>Hikka</i> (Hiccup), <i>Kasa</i> (Cough), <i>Shvasa</i> (Dyspnoea/Asthma), <i>Kshaya</i> (Pthisis), <i>Vishamajvara</i> (Intermittent fever), <i>Vali Palita</i> (Wrinkles in skin and graying of hair), Used as <i>Rasayana</i> (Nutrient to body and mind with adapto-immuno-neuro-endocrino-modulator properties)   | 6 to 12 g with Warm water or Milk        |
| <i>Citraka Haritaki</i> <sup>[82]</sup><br>(Bhaishajyaratnavali,<br>Nasarogadhikara: 31-33)                    | <i>Gulma</i> (Abdominal lump), <i>Udavarta</i> (Condition in which there is upward movement of vayu), <i>Pinasa</i> (Chronic rhinitis/sinusitis), <i>Kasa</i> (Cough), <i>Shvasa</i> (Dyspnoea/Asthma), <i>Arsha</i> (Haemorrhoids), <i>Agnimandya</i> (Digestive impairment), <i>Kshaya</i> (Pthisis), <i>Krumi</i> (Helminthiasis/Worm infestation)  | 6 - 12 g with milk.                      |
| <i>Danti Haritaki</i> <sup>[83]</sup><br>(Ashtangahrudaya,<br>Cikitsasthana, Adhyaya14:<br>92-96)              | <i>Grahani</i> (Malabsorption syndrome), <i>Gulma</i> (Abdominal lump), <i>Arocaka</i> (Tastelessness), <i>Anaha</i> (Distension of abdomen due to obstruction to passage of urine and stools), <i>Pliharoga</i> (Splenic disease), <i>Vishamajvara</i> (Intermittent fever), <i>Kamala</i> (Jaundice), <i>Hrudroga</i> (Heart disease), <i>Arsha</i> (Haemorrhoids), <i>Shopha</i> (Oedema), <i>Gara</i> (Slow / accumulated poison), <i>Udara</i> (Diseases of abdomen / enlargement of abdomen), <i>Kushtha</i> (Diseases of skin), <i>Utklesha</i> (Nausea), <i>Pandu</i> (Anaemia), Used as <i>Virecaka</i> (Purgative) | 1/2 to 1 Haritaki and 12 to 24g. of Leha |
| <i>Dashamula Haritaki</i> <sup>[84]</sup><br>(Ashtangahrudaya,<br>Cikitsasthana, Adhyaya 17:<br>14 -16)        | <i>Shopha</i> (Oedema), <i>Arocaka</i> (Tastelessness), <i>Gara-Udararoga</i> (Abdominal disorder due to slow / accumulated poison), <i>Gulma</i> (Abdominal lump), <i>Pliha Roga</i> (Splenic disease), <i>Vaivarnya</i> (Discolouration), <i>Mutrakrucchra</i> (Dysuria), <i>Shukra Dosha</i> (Vitiation of semen), <i>Shvasa</i> (Dyspnoea/Asthma), <i>Jvara</i> (Fever), <i>Meha</i> (Excessive flow of urine), <i>Karshya</i> (Emaciation), <i>Raktapitta</i> (Bleeding disorder), <i>Amavata</i> (Rheumatism)  | 6 to 12 g with Water, Milk               |
| <i>Brahma Rasayana</i> <sup>[85]</sup><br>(Ashtangahrudaya,<br>Uttarasthana, Adhyaya 39 :<br>15-23)            | <i>Tandra</i> (Lassitude), <i>Shrama</i> (Fatigue/lethargy), <i>Klama</i> (Tiredness without exertion/Langour), <i>Manodaurbalya</i> (Mental weakness), <i>Jara</i> (Senility/Progeriasis), <i>Vali Palita</i> (Wrinkles in skin and graying of hair), <i>Smrutibhrama</i> (Impairment of memory)  | 12g with Milk                            |
| <i>Triphala Curna</i> <sup>[86]</sup><br>(Bhavaprakasha,<br>Haritakyadi Varga : 41- 42)                        | <i>Anaha</i> (Distension of abdomen due to obstruction to passage of urine and stools), <i>Prameha</i> (Urinary disorders), <i>Netraroga</i> (Eye disorder), <i>Kaphapittaroga</i> (Disease due to <i>Kapha dosha</i> and <i>Pitta dosha</i> ), <i>Kushtha</i> (Diseases of skin), <i>Mandagni</i> (Impaired digestive fire), <i>Aruci</i> (Tastelessness), <i>Vishamajvara</i> (Intermittent fever).  | 3 to 6 g                                 |
| <i>Triphaladi Taila</i> <sup>[87]</sup><br>(Sahasrayoga,<br>Tailaprakarana : 44)                               | <i>Shiroroga</i> (Disease of head), <i>Pratishyaya</i> (Coryza), <i>Khalitya</i> (Alopecia), <i>Palitya</i> (Graying of hair, particularly of scalp), <i>Keshashata</i> (Loss of hair), <i>Urdhvajatrugata Roga</i>  | Used externally for Abhyanga             |

|   |   |                      |
|---|---|----------------------|
|   | (Disorders of body parts above clavicle)  |                      |
| Abhaya Lavana <sup>[88]</sup><br>(Bhaishajyaratnavali,<br>Plihayakrudrogadhikara:<br>35-43) | <i>Anaha</i> (Distension of abdomen due to obstruction to passage of urine and stools), <i>Gulma</i> (Abdominal lump), <i>Yakrutplihodara</i> (Disease of liver and spleen), <i>Hrudroga</i> (Heart disease), <i>Ashthila</i> (Prostatic Hyperplasia), <i>Mandagni</i> (Impaired digestive fire), <i>Shirahshula</i> (Headache), <i>Sharkara</i> (Gravel in urine), <i>Ashmari</i> (Calculus) | 1 to 2 g             |
| <i>Pathyadi Lepa</i> <sup>[89]</sup><br>(Yogaratanakara,<br>Kushthadhikara : Page<br>682)   | <i>Kushtha</i> (Diseases of skin)   | External application |

### Best quality of *Haritaki* dry fruit

Best variety of *Haritaki* has smooth texture, bulky, heavy and drowns in water. Roughly it weighs 20 grams equivalent to two *Karsha*. This type of dry *Haritaki* is considered as best for medicinal usage<sup>[90]</sup>.

### Usage

The drug is significantly prescribed in therapeutic as well as preventive use and process of restorative or alterative indication (*Rasayana karma*), and it is classically recommended as *Ritu haritaki* for using the drug during the course of different seasons viz., *Varsha* (Rains) – *Saindhavalavana* (Rock salt), *Sharad Ritu* (Autumn)- *Sarkara* (sugar), *Hemanta* (Cold/winter)-*Shunti* (Dry Ginger), *Sishira* (late winter early spring)- *Pippali* (long pepper), *Vasanta* (Spring)- *Madhu* (honey) and *Grishma* (Summer)- *Guda* (Jaggery)<sup>[91]</sup>.

The drug is stomochic (*Agnivardhana*) on chewing (*Carvita*), it is laxative (*Malashodhana*) on licking (*Peshita*) astringent (*Sangrahi*) on boiling (*Swinna*) and alleviating three *Doshas* (*Tridoshanut*) on frying (*Bhrishta*). Taken along with food it enhances mental ability, alleviates the ill effects of aggravated *Pitta*, *Kapha* and *Vata* and restores the free flow of urine, faeces and sweat. Taking the fruit after food ensure removal of defects due to faulty food intake<sup>[92]</sup>.

The fruit consumed along with *Lavana* (salt) mitigates *Kapha*, with sugar-*Pitta* and with ghee *Vata*. The combination of *Haritaki* with Jaggery is considered best as it takes care of all the three disturbed *Doshas*<sup>[93]</sup>.

1. 2-3 g of *Haritaki* powder mixed with equal amount of jiggery before consuming food is

very good for Persons suffering with *Arshas* (Hemorrhoids).

2. Chronic colitis *Haritaki* powder with hot water is advised.
3. Licking *Haritaki* powder mixed with honey is good to prevent or control motion sickness and vomitings.
4. Prescribing *Haritaki* powder with Jaggery is good to manage *Vatarakta* (Descriptive arthropathies).
5. *Haritaki* Seed powder mixed with hot milk is good for treating Urinary Calculi.
6. *Haritaki* acts as General Tonic promoting strength and vigor when used with Ghee. The best method to achieve this is to first fry *Haritaki* Fruits in Ghee followed by powdering of the same. The leftover ghee after frying has to be kept aside (not to be discarded). The *Haritaki* powder prepared after frying in ghee is to be mixed with the left over ghee and to be taken twice a day.
7. *Haritaki* decoction mixed with boiled milk is very useful to manage *madatyaya* (Hangover).
8. *Haritaki* powder mixed with equal quantity of Ghee is prescribed for managing Colicky abdominal pain due to *Pittaja shula* (Acid peptic disorders). The same results can be achieved with combination of *Draksha* (Dry Grapes) and *Haritaki* powder.
9. Use of *Erandataila* (castor oil) with *Haritaki* powder is recommended for all types of rheumatological conditions. (*Shodhala Nighantu*).
10. Applying the paste of Fine *Haritaki* powder mixed with fresh turmeric rhizome juice manages Chippa (Nail bed infection, Whitlow).

### CONTRAINDICATIONS

The fruit is not recommended for regular use for people who are suffering with fatigue,

tired, weight loss, dry parched skin, not having physical strength (weak). *Haritaki* is contraindicated during *Pitta prakopa* state, *Garbhini* (pregnancy), during acute fever, person who has undergone *Raktamokshana* (blood letting)<sup>[94]</sup>.

In summary use of *Haritaki* in day to day life by judicious combinations of different adjuvants will be a boon for the person who consumes it. All Ayurveda physicians and people who follow Ayurvedic way of life must exploit the advantages offered by this wonderful drug. The mantra for sure success in Ayurveda practice lies in making the best out of well established, genuine drugs like *Haritaki* than trying to go after very rarely available ones. The author wishes to remind you the words from *Carakasamhita* which state that use of *Haritaki* results in *Shivam* i.e everything good and in the interest of the user.

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