



ROLE OF AYURVEDA IN DENTAL PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

In Ayurveda, dental health is held to be very individualistic varying with each person's constitution and kala-parinama. The body constitution is classified based on the predominance of one or more of the three doshas- vata, pitta, and kapha. The dominance dosha in both the individual and nature determines health care in ayurveda, including dental health. The botanicals in the Ayurvedic material medica (Dravyaguna) have been proven to be safe and effective, through several hundred to several thousand years of use. The exploration of botanicals used in traditional medicine may lead to the development of novel preventive or therapeutic strategies for oral health. This scientific evidence based review is focused on the possible role of Ayurveda in the executive of various dental disorders.

INTRODUCTION

Oral diseases continue to be a major health problem world-wide. Dental caries and periodontal diseases are amongst the most important global oral health problems, although other conditions like oral and pharyngeal cancers and oral tissue lesions are also of significant concern [1]. Teeth are very precious organ of the body, governing lot of functions like chewing, speech control, giving shape to the mouth and the most important of all is to maintain the beauty of the face, once they are destroyed, they cannot regrow [2].

Diseases of the oral cavity were known to the Indians since ancient times and much was written about them by Sushruta, Charaka and Vaghbatta [3]. Even in ancient times, Indians never liked to use the brushes made of animal hairs. Ayurveda is the ancient Indian system of health-care and longevity. It involves a holistic view of man, his health and illness. According to the *Shalakyatantra* (one of the branches of Ayurveda), 65 varieties of oral diseases can arise in seven anatomic locations-8 on the lips, 15 on the alveolar margin, 8 in

connection with the teeth, 5 on the tongue, 9 on the palate, 17 in the oropharynx and 3 in a generalized form [4].

Though dentistry was not a specialized branch of ayurveda, it was included in its system of surgery. In some Asian and African countries, 80% of the population depends on traditional medicine for primary health care. Herbal treatments are the most popular form of traditional medicine, and are highly lucrative in the International market [5]. In India; plant wealth is greatly exploited for its therapeutic potential and medicinal efficacy to cure dental diseases. The botanicals in the ayurvedic medicine have been proven to be safe and effective, through several hundred to several thousand years of use [6].

Oral Problems and Various Ayurvedic Solutions

As most of the oral diseases are due to bacterial infections and it has been well-documented that medicinal plants confer considerable anti-bacterial activity against various microorganisms including bacteria's responsible for dental caries [7]. The procedure and the drugs useful for oral health are very well described in Ayurvedic literature. The anti-bacterial activity of medicinal plants are due to the presence of potential bioactive compounds, which help to reduce bacterial load in the oral cavity and thus prevent the formation of plaque, dental caries and

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ulcers. Use of indigenous plants in oral health and hygiene has a long history in different parts of the world. The spice extracts, Cinnamon bark oil, Papua mace extract and clove oil were reported to inhibit the growth of many oral bacteria.

Sanguinaria is an alkaloid extract from Rhizome of the *Sanguinaria canadensis*, it has been reported to possess a broad spectrum antibacterial activity against a variety of oral bacteria [8]. Antibacterial activity of some plant species like *Melia azadirachta*, *Calotropis gigantean*, *Leucas aspera*, *Vitex negundo* and others have been tested [9].

General mouth care

Most herbalists and natural healers recommend using warming, astringent, connective tissue healing herbs to enhance and maintain oral health. These herbs can be used as a rinse or applied as packs. Michael Tierra in (Planetary Herbology' Lotus 1988) suggests that a daily mouth wash made from Chaparral will prevent dental caries. Ayurvedic herbalist - Melanic Sachs in Ayurvedic Beauty Care' (Lotus 1994) suggests a gum massage with a mixture containing five parts of alum powder, two parts of rock salt powder, three parts of black pepper powder and one part of turmeric root powder [10].

Dantha pupputuka (Periapical or Dentoalveolar abscess)

Kapha and Raktha dosha. Treatment involves: raktha mokshana, application of kshara, pancha lavana preparation in salt and madhu for massaging over the gums; kavala; ghee and snigdha bhojan [11].

Sheetada (Gingivitis)

Treatment involves - Swedana (seating therapy); Rakthamokshan (bloodletting) with alabu, gati; rubbed with coarse powder (dantha gharshana choorna); gandoosha or kavalagraha (gargle or mouthwash) with musta, arjuna twacha, triphala priyanga rasanjan and shunti [12].

Dental caries

Azadirachta indica mouth wash is reported to inhibit the growth of *S.mutans* and carious lesions.30 Root of *Moringa pterygosperma* is recommended in the treatment of soreness of mouth and throat and pain in gums due to dental caries. It is also been used as an abortifacient, rubefacient and counter irritant [13].

Herber et al reported the results of a survey, use of some plants in treatment of dental caries, for example – dried whole plant *Calotropis gigantean* (Asclepiadaceae) is burnt to ash which is used to massage the tooth and gums after brushing twice a day for curing plaque, caries and pyorrhea. Perilla seed extract has been shown to possess antimicrobial activity against oral cariogenic *Streptococci* and periodontopathic *Prophyromonas gingivalis* [14].

Bleeding gums

Treatment involves - Cleaning teeth with twig of neem, banyan, babul and holy basil. Massage gums with alum mixed mustard oil daily and rinse mouth with water mixed with alum. Chewing leaves of guava tree stops bleeding from gums. Increased sufficient amount of roughage, lemon, citrus fruits and green vegetables in diet [10].

Mouth sores

Commonly called 'canker sores'. The herb Gotu kola (*Centella asiatica*) is quite effective, it is widely known to heal wounds and promote connective tissue growth. Dose is one ounce dry weight of herb per day, brewed as tea. Rinse mouth with alum, milk of magnesia and cinchona bark. Most understanding herbal remedy is Licorice root, a potent anti-inflammatory and tissue healer. Put a pinch of powder on the sore or suck a Lozene made from DGL (deglycyrrhizinated licorice) [15].

Pittaja Jihwa Kastaka (Chronic glossitis)

Rakthamokshana. Treatment involves – Rubbing surface of tongue with leaves of Gojihwa or Shephalika; pratisarana with kakolyadi madhura sheetha dravyas; kakolyadi dravya milk with sneha siddha, sneha narayam; pittahara ahara and vihara [16].

Saushira (ANUG)

Kapha, sitta and raktha doshas. Treatment involves – raktha mokshana; pratisarana with lodra, musta, shatapushpi, triphala, rasanjan, patong, phalapushpa and katphala with madhu; nasya with medicated ghritha prepared with sariva, neelakamala yasti madhu, lodra, agara and chandan with 10 times volume of milk, ghritha [17].

Yellow and Filty teeth

50 gm of keeker wood, roasted alum 20gm and namak lahori 10gm grind together and powder rub on teeth. Twigs of neem, babul and banyan tree and holy basil tree [18].

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda, the oldest medical science originating from Indian subcontinent, has been practiced since the 12th century BC. Its objective is to accomplish physical, mental, social and spiritual well- being by adopting preventive, health promoting and the traditional knowledge of Ayurveda should be integrated with modern entity. For this, the active principles of plants should be incorporated into modern oral health-care practices and dentists should be encouraged to use natural remedies in various oral health treatments. As well as we can take the help of some Ayurvedic procedures such as Kawal Gandush. Combinable use of Ayurvedic drugs will make dentistry much safer, affordable and more accessible for the lower socioeconomic groups in society holistic



approach towards life. The exploration of botanicals used in traditional medicine may lead to the development of novel preventive or therapeutic strategies for oral health.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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