

URINE IN ANCIENT AYURVEDIC LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

In āyurveda each and every substance in the world is mentioned useful as a therapeutic agent. This led to the study of the qualities and effects of all the substances and their classification into different groups.

In materia medica, qualities and effects of urine of specially eight animals and of human beings are mentioned. Carakasamhita does not mention human urine. Among the urine of animals and human beings differentiation of male and female animals is also made by the commentators which suggests their keen observation. Among all, the urine of cow is the best.

In Carakasamhitā more stress is given to the knowledge of drugs. 'A drug which is not known is certainly harmful, when administered, like poison, a weapon, fire or thunderbolt and the one which is known is (wholesome) like nectar.' Thus the knowledge of drug is very important and drugs are unlimited. In the view of ancient sages and propounders of āyurveda, there is no substance in the world, which is not useful as medicine. This obviously suggests the vastness of the subject of materia medica and also made the sages to support the physician without adequate knowledge of identification of drugs. Agniveśa prefers a physician who knows the use of drugs than who knows the identification. He also says that the knowledge only of the drugs by their names and identification is of no use.

The importance of drugs and the possibility of each and every substance in the world being useful in the maintenance of health led to the study of variety of substances available and in use to human beings. This had also led to different classifications of substances based on their effects, availability, quality etc. The ancients were

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also prompted to find out the qualities and effects of each and every item they came into contact with.

All these details, required for such a vast number of substances, made the ancient sages to classify them into different categories based on the origin, effects etc. One of such classifications divides all the substances under three categories, namely jaṅgama (movable-indicating animal products) audbhida (indicating vegetable products) and pārthiva (obtained from earth-indicating mineral products).

The different varieties of substances under these three categories are listed under the following groups in Carakasamhitā :

Animal products : Honey of different types, milk and milk products, bile, fats (or muscle tissue), blood, flesh, faeces, urine, skin, semen, bone, ligament, horn, nail, hoof, hair of the head and body and ox-bile.

Mineral products : Gold, five lohas (silver, copper, iron, lead and tin) alongwith their byproducts (different types of bitumen) silica, red arsenic, yellow arsenic, salt, red chalk and collyrium.

Vegetable products : The herbs are again classified into four types : vanaspati (plants bearing fruit without flowering) vānaspatya (plants having flowers and fruits) oṣadhi (plants that die out after the fruits mature) vīrudh (plants like creepers and bushes spreading on ground). The different parts of plants used are: root, heart-wood, secretions (resins), stalk, juice, tender leaves, alkaline preparations, latex, fruits, flowers ash, oil, thorns, leaves, adventitious roots, rhizomes and sprouts.

The mention of these different parts of substances shows the deep and intricate study by the ancients, of each and every item for its therapeutic purposes. This verily justifies their statement that there is no substance in the world which has no therapeutic value.

Urine : It is interesting that our ancients did not hesitate to study the effects and qualities of urine and faeces and to use them as medicine whenever necessary. A study on urine is presented in this article.

Carakasamhitā describes the qualities of the urine of eight animals as very important. The animals are : sheep, goat, cow, buffalo, elephant, camel, horse and ass. A question has also been raised as to the sex of these animals. Some of the animals mentioned are in masculine and some in feminine. In Sanskrit the gender of a noun has no relation to the sex of the person or animal it denotes. A noun denoting a male or female may be in masculine, feminine or neuter gender. This may suggest that the urine of the animal of either sex can be used. But the commentator Cakrapāṇi analysed as follows :

Among the eight animals mentioned, in case of the first two i. e. sheep and goat, female sex is to be understood. Since the bodies of female animals are comparatively light, the urine is also light and it is advisable to use the urine of female animals only.

Carakasamhitā did not refer to the urine of human beings. In Suśrutasamhitā also, the urine of the above eight animals is described, with some in masculine and some in feminine gender. Dalhaṇa gave a different interpretation with regard to the sex. He advised to use the urine of females in case of cow, buffalo, goat and sheep and of males in case of elephant, horse, ass and camel. Suśrutasamhitā mentions human urine also and Dalhaṇa prefers that of males.

The portions where the urine might have been dealt with are lost in Kāśyapasamhitā and Bhelasamhitā. However, it may be presumed that these two sages also described it; but with regard to human urine we cannot presume anything in the absence of any material.

In Aṣṭāṅgasan̄graha urine of human beings and that of the eight animals finds place; there is no indication about the sex and commentator Indu also did not discuss the question of sex. Hemādri, the commentator of Aṣṭāṅgah̄daya followed Dalhaṇa. Unlike Aṣṭāṅgasan̄graha, Aṣṭāṅgah̄daya did not mention human urine and hence Hemādri also had no chance of giving his interpretation with regard to human urine.

The treatise which is now available with the name of Hārītasamhitā also deals with the urine of eight animals and of human beings. Nothing is mentioned about the sex of the animals but it describes the

urine of cow and bull separately. It is mentioned that even among bulls the urine of castrated bulls is lighter in quality than ordinary ones, and likewise the urine of animals (obviously females) which had given birth is more thick in quality than of the ones which had not. However, with regard to other animals separate qualities based on sex do not find place. Some more details also crept in Hārītasamhitā. Urine of goat and cow etc is good for oral use; of sheep, buffalo and horse is good for use in medicated oils; of elephant is useful in ointments and that of camel and ass is useful in preparation of oils and nasyas (nasal insufflation).

Among all the animals, the use of urine of cow appears to be more common and is the best. The qualities and effects of cow's urine as described in the Samhitās are given below :

Urine of cow is slightly sweet ; it also alleviates doṣas (humours); it is bactericidal, and cures kuṣṭha (obstinate skin diseases including leprosy) —Carakasamhitā Sūtra I—101.

The urine of cow is kaṭu (pungent), sharp, hot, and does not increase vāta humour, since it is slightly alkaline ; it is light, increases digestive fire, is good for intellect, increases pitta and subsides kapha and vāta. The urine of cow is to be administered where administration of urine is indicated in diseases like abdominal pain, abdominal tumour, diseases of abdomen including ascites, ānāha (constipation), purgation and āsthāpana.

Suśrutasaṃhitā—Sūtra 45—220, 221.

The urine of cow, goat, sheep, she-buffalo, elephant, horse, camel and ass increases pitta and is rūkṣa (dry), sharp, and hot ; it has a kaṭu (pungent) taste alongwith salt ; it cures kṛmi (worms-bactericidal), śopha (oedema), udara (diseases of abdomen including ascites), ānāha (constipation), śūla (abdominal tumour), aruci (anorexia), poison, śvitra (leucoderma), kuṣṭha (skin diseases including leprosy) and arśas (piles); it is useful in purgation, āsthāpana, anointment, and fomentation etc; it is dīpana (increases the digestive fire), pācana (digests the food) and is bhedi. Among all urines, urine of cow is the best.

Aṣṭāṅgasaṅgraha Sūtra VI—235-237.

सारांश

प्राचीन आयुर्वेद साहित्य में मूत्र

ले० सी० आर० आर० शर्मा

तथा

बि० रामाराव

आयुर्वेद में सृष्टि के प्रत्येक पदार्थ को चिकित्सायोगी कक्षा गया है। यही कारण है कि सभी पदार्थों के गुणधर्म एवं प्रकार, भेद इत्यादि का आयुर्वेद में बड़ा व्यापक अध्ययन किया गया है।

द्रव्यगुणशास्त्र में विशेषकर अष्टमूत्रों तथा मानवमूत्र के गुणधर्म एवं प्रभाव का उल्लेख मिलता है। चरक संहिता में मानवमूत्र का उल्लेख नहीं है। टीकाकारों ने अष्टमूत्रों तथा मानवमूत्र में आवश्यकतानुसार स्त्री और पुरुष के भेद एवं उसकी उपयोग की दृष्टि से प्राथमिकता भी निर्धारित की है जो कि उनके गहन अन्वेषण एवं अनुभव का द्योतक है। सभी मूत्रों में गाय का मूत्र सर्वश्रेष्ठ है।