

A DETAILED DESCRIPTION ON SURSADI GANA - A REVIEW ARTICLE

Dr. Hemant Bhardwaj*¹, Dr. Pratibha² and Dr. Omprakash Sharma³¹PG Scholar Deptt of Dravyaguna.²Assit. Professor Deptt of Dravyaguna.³Professor Deptt of Dravyaguna Sriganganagar College of Ayurvedic Science & Hospital, Tanta University, Sriganganagar – 335001, India.

*Corresponding Author: Dr. Hemant Bhardwaj

PG Scholar Deptt of Dravyaguna.

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ABSTRACT

Group of Herbs described as *Gana* in *Samihata* and *Vargas* in *Nighantu*. *Surasadi gana* is one out of 37 *Ganas* mentioned in Sushruta Samhita, with 22 Herbs in it. This article made an effort to review the importance and utility of few Herbs of *Surasadi gana*. Most of the Herbs in this *Gana* are with *Katu rasa* (pungent) and *Ushna veerya* (hot potency). They are indicated in *Kapha* diseases, viz. *Kasa* (cough), *Shwasa* (asthma), *Pratishyaya* (cold), *Kushtha* (skin disorders), *Krumi* (worm/ infection) and *Vrana* (wound). The Herbs from *Surasadi gana* even though having many indications in Ayurveda, the specific action is on respiratory tract.

KEYWORD: *Surasadi, Gana, Krumi*.

INTRODUCTION

In ancient treatises of Ayurveda, the grouped herbs are called as either *Vargas* or *Ganas*. This grouping or classification was based upon their pharmacological properties as well as dietary usage. Etymologically, the *varga* and *gana* will provide the same meaning. Sushruta has mentioned 37 *Gana* of Herbs; here in each group the herbs are included with similarity in pharmacological properties. Even though he has mentioned multiple indications for each group but named the group on the basis of its first herb ingredient, which is thought as the prime in the listed. For example-*Aragwadhadhi*, *Salasaradi*, *Varunadi* etc.

Surasadi gana is the eighth group out of 37 mentioned in Sushruta. This *Gana* contains 22 plants as *Surasa*, *Shweta surasa*, *Phaninjaka*, *Arjaka*, *Bhustruna*, *Sugandhaka*, *Sumukha*, *Kalamala*, *Kutheraka*, *Kasamarda*, *Kshavaka*, *Kharapushpa*, *Vidanga*, *Kataphala*, *Surasi*, *Nirgundi*, *Kulahala*, *Undurukarnika*, *Phanji*, *Prachibala*, *Kakamachi*, *Vishamushtika*. This group pacifies *Kapha* and indicated in cough, asthma, cold, skin disorders, worm/ infection and wound.etc. Out of 22, 8 to 9 herbs are usually known as *Tulasadi* varieties or appear to be different species of the Labiateae family with similarity in usage or purpose. In this article a small effort is made to express the utility and importance of selected herbs.

1. *Surasa*2. *Shweta Surasa*

Surasa and *Suras* are the synonyms of *Tulasi*. *Surasadwaya* (two *Surasa*) are the *Krushna pushpa* (black flower) and *shweta pushpa* (white flower) *Tulasi* and the word *Surasah* and *Surasa* are used for white and black *tulasi* respectively. The word *Tulasi* is not found in Vedic or *Bruhatrayi* literature. In *nighantu*, *Madanapal nighantu*, mentioned first time the word *Tulasi* and Synonym *Surasa* for it which has been followed later by *Bhavamishra*.

Ocimum sanctum Linn. of Labiaceae (Labiatae) is known as *tulsi* which is an erect, much branched, softly hairy, annual herb. It is found throughout India and in kitchen gardens, as holy Basil. *Tulsi* plant is with green leaves known as *sri tulsi* and with purple leaves is known as *Krishna tulsi*. It has antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, abortifacient, antispasmodic, anti-cataract, antipyretic, gastric anti-ulcer activity, anti-inflammatory, anti-mutegenic, anti-tumour, anti-genotoxic, anti-coagulase, nematocidal, larvicidal, antioxidant, anticancer, hypotensive properties.

3. *Phanijhaka*

Phanijhaka is commonly known as *Marubaka* or *phanija* is *Origanum majorana* Linn. (Lamiaceae). Agnivesha spelled it as *Marava* and *Arunadatta* considered as *Marichaka* or *Tikshnagandha*. It is an aromatic plant found in the garden throughout India. It has two types on the basis of flower colour. The white

variety is used for medicine and indicated in amenorrhea, cold, wound, liver disorders, and infectious condition where in the black variety is used for worshipping Lord Shiva.

4. Arjaka

Arjaka is synonymy as *Barbari* called locally as *Vanatulasi* is of three types- *Krushna* (black), *Shweta* (white) and *Vatapatra*, where in the *Arjaka* is the *Shweta* variety of it. It is mentioned as *Shweta-Kutheraka*, *Kharapatra* and *Barbari*. According to Dalhana it is a white variety of *Kutheraka*, similar to *Barbari* (*Barbarikakaro*) with short flowering shoots, small leaves and without any aroma. The description resembles to *Orthosiphon pallidus* Royle, popularly called as *Damajari*, *Nagandha Bavari* and *Ajagura*. This is said to be useful in diabetes, dyspnoea and fever.

5. Bhustruna: *Bhutika*, *Bhustruna*, *Sugandhaka* and *Jambira* they are believed to be applicable to aromatic plants other than the grasses. *Bhustruna* (*bhu struna*) means which is covered the ground either by aroma or spread in bunches. It is clear that *Bhustruna* is different from *Katruna*, *Jambira*, *Dhyamaka*, *Rohisha*, it may be *Hyptis suaveolens* Poit. In Bihar it is known as *Bhunsari* (*Bhustruna*) and *Gangatulasi* in orisa. Most probably it is *Gudaka* or *Tumbaru* of Dalhana.

6. Sugandhaka: *Sugandhaka* is either *Dronapushpi* or *Bruhat sugandhi truna*. It is cleared that there are no grasses (*Truna*) in *Surasadi gana*. It is an aromatic, annual, hairy pubescent herb as like as *Tulasi* and belongs to Lamiaceae family. So that *Sugandhaka* is *Dronapushpi* i.e. *Leucas cephalotes* Spreng. This is found in rainy season and whole plant used for medicine. It has antipyretic, expectorant, depurative, anthelmintic, carminative diagestive action.

7. Sumukha: It is *Rajika*. *Brassica juncea* Linn. is the *Sumukha* belongs to Cruciferae family. It is an annual growing perennial erect herb. This herb cultivated throughout India in the farm. The seed useful in urinary discharge, helminthiasis, skin disease, fever, piles and stomach ache. Application of leaves is good for gout and rheumatism.

8. Kalamala/ Kalamalika: *Kalamala* identified as *Krushnamallika* or *Barbarika*. It is also known as *Krushnarjaka*. It is an *Ocimum basilicum* Linn. belongs to Laminaceae. This herb found in aired region of India. Whole plant and seeds used for medicine and indicated in diarrhoea, scorpion bite, purities, wound etc.

9. Kutheraka: It is identified with *barbarika* which is an *ocimum* species. *Surasadi gana* has also been called *kutheradi gana*. It is a perennial aromatic herb and known as *krushna pushpa vana tulasi*. *Orthosiphon pallidus* Royle belongs to family Laminaceae.

10. Kasamarda: *Cassia occidentalis* Linn. belongs to caesalpiniaceae family. This herb found all over India on road side as weed. It is not mentioned in any *gana* of *Charaka* but included in *Surasadi gana* and mentioned the synonym *Kasaghna* (eliminate cough).

11. Kshavaka: It is similar to *phanijjhaka* and produces the sneezing so that the named as *Chhikkika*. It is mentioned in *shirovirechanopaga* and *katuskandha gana* and used in *shiroroga*, and also used for *Atisara*, *Visuchika*. *Centipeda minima* Linn. is an annual procumbent shrub belongs to asteraceae family. This is available in temperate region in India.

12. Kharapushpa: Even though *kharapushpa* is the synonym of *Barbari*, and identified it as *Marubaka* (*Origanum majorana* Linn.) or variety of *Kshavaka*.

13. Vidanga: *Embelia ribes* Burm.f. is a large scandent shrub belongs to Myrsinaceae family. It is the best for helminthiasis hence *Krumighna*, *Jantunashana* are the synonym and included in *Surasadi gana*. This is useful in psychological disorders, fever, dental caries, asthma, bronchitis. Seeds are used for local application in ringworm and other skin diseases, root in gastro intestinal problems and leaves in skin, throat and mouth problems *kayaphala* is *Myrica esculenta* Buch. Ham and belongs to Myrsinaceae family. This ever green tree found at Himalaya range. Though the name is *kataphala* bark used for medicine. If it is taken in high dose produces vomiting. It is indicated in fever, asthma, bronchitis, urinary discharge, chronic dysentery, ulcer, carminative, eye diseases.

14. Surasi: It is identified as *Bilvanasi* i.e. *Limonia crenulata* Roxb. or *Clausena pentaphylla* DC. But others considered it as white variety of *Nirgundi*. *Vitex negundo* Linn. is the botanical name of it and belongs to verbenaceae family. This shrub is available throughout India. The leaves are useful in rheumatism, arthritis, catarrhal fever, cephalgia, sprains, orchitis, syphilis, inflammations and ulcers. The bark is useful in odontalgia, verminosis and ophthalmic disorders. The flowers are useful in diarrhoea, cholera, fever, haemorrhages, hepatopathy and cardiac disorders. Leaves and bark are useful in scorpion stings. Seeds are considered useful in eye diseases in form of *anjan*.

15. Nirgundi: It is a blue variety of *Nirgundi*. Botanical name, properties and uses are same as *Surasi*.

16. Kulahala: It is a *Mundika sphaeranthus indicus* Linn. It is a spreading annual herb, which obtains in winter and used as intelligence promoter and indicated in dysurea, helminthiasis / infection, Filariasis, cough, fever, haemorrhoids. Leaves are used as nerve tonic and flowers for blood purification in skin diseases.

17. Undurukarnika: *Ipomea reniformis* Chois. is a procumbent herb belongs to Convolvulaceae family. It is

included in *Krumighna dashemani*. It is useful in kidney, bladder, lungs, uterus, abdomen diseases, helminthiasis, and fever.

18. Phanji: It is a synonym of *Bharangi Clerodendrum serratum* Spreng. This herb belongs to verbenaceae family with white or blue flowers. It is indicated in helminthiasis, cough, asthma, bronchitis, flatulence, and dyspepsia. In cephalgia and ophthalmia external application of leaves are very useful. Root is useful in respiratory and gastro intestinal diseases

19. Prachibala: This is identified as *Matsyakshi, Kakajangha, Jalapippali*. All these are the synonym of *Prachibala*. It may be *Vitex peduncularis* Wall. This is available at Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Where tribal people are used it for *Vishama jwara* i.e. Black water fever. Because of trifoliate leaf it is also known as *Varuna* in some region.

20. Kakamachi: *Solanum nigrum* Linn, is an annual, erect nearly glabrous herb with white flowers, found all over India and belongs to Solanaceae family. It is included in Tikta skandha gana (group of bitter test drug). It is useful in rheumatism, cough, asthma, bronchitis, wounds, ulcers, flatulence, and dyspepsia. A decoction of plant depresses the central nervous system and reflexes of the spinal cord and has influence on cardiac activity and in regulation of blood pressure. Leaves are used as poultice for rheumatic and gouty joints and skin diseases. A decoction of berries and flowers is useful in cough, erysipelas, rat bite, bronchitis, pulmonary tuberculosis, fever, diarrhoea, ophthalmopathy and hydrophobia. Seeds are useful in giddiness, inflammations and skin diseases. The root bark is useful in diseases of ear, eye, nose and hepatitis. The leaves and berries are especially important as a cure for gastric ulcer.

21. Vishamushtika: It is the *Mahanimba (Melia azedarach* Linn.) belongs to meliaceae family. It is used for treatment of piles and the traditional healers are used the fruits of it for the same. For headache and uterine pain in post partum period, flowers are tied on affected area. The root, leaf, flower and seed are useful in skin, reproductive, respiratory tract diseases, worm infestation and gum in splenic enlargement.

DISCUSSION

All the plants from *Surasadi gana* are herbs, Out of twenty two 8-9 drugs are called varieties of *Tulasi* or appear to be different species of the family Labiateae (Lamiaceae). *Phanijjhaka, Sumukha, Kalamala* and *Kharapushpa* are considered the *Barbari*. If these are the *Barbari*, then it is not possible all these drugs mentioned in one group. That means these are different. But this group named on the name of *Surasadi* i.e. *Tulasi*. *Tulasi* this name is not found in *Samhitas*. This name is available in *nighntus*. *Surasadi (KrushnaTulasi)* and *Shweta surasadi (Shweta Tulasi)* both are *Ocimum*

sanctum Linn. *Phanijjhaka* is considered as *marubaka (Origanum majorana* Linn.). *Arjaka* is *Orthosiphon pallidus* Royle known as *Shweta Parnasa* or *Shweta vanatulasi* or *Shweta kutheraka*. *Bhustruna* is similar to *Dronapushpi*, it clears that it is herb not grass. It may be *Hyptis suaveolens* Poit. This is also known as *Vanatulasi* in Vidarbha region and used against mosquitoes. *Sugandhaka* is a *Dronapushpi (Leucas cephalotes* Spreng.). *Sumukha* is *Rajika (Brassica juncea* Linn.), *Kalamala* is *Ocimum basilicum* Linn. and *Kutheraka Orthosiphon pallidus* Royle. As per its name as *Kasamarda (Cassia occidentalis* Linn.) used in cough. *Centipeda minima* Linn. is also used in *kaphaj shiroroga* for *shirovirechana*. *Kharapushpa* may be *Origanum majorana* Linn. But it is already come as third drug in quotation. Similarly Black and white variety of holy basil, Blue and white variety of five-leaved chaste tree are botanically same, *Kharapushpa and Phanijjhaka may be botanically same*. Majority of drugs are herbs in nature from this group, except *Surasadi, Nirgundi (Vitex negundo* Linn), *Prachibala (Vitex peduncularis* Wall.) and *Vidanga (Embelia ribes* Burm.f.) are shrub. Whereas *Kayaphala (Myrica esculenta* Buch. Ham), and *Vishamushtika (Melia azedarach* Linn.) are tree. *Kulahala (Mundika sphaeranthus indicus* Linn.) may be show the efficacy in urinary tract infection because it is indicated in disurea and *Bharangi (Clerodendrum serratum* Spreng) in respiratory tract. *Kakamachi (Solanum nigrum* Linn.) has played very important role in liver disorder so that it can also used in infectious liver diseases.

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