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Rasaushadhis in Apasmara: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Apasmara is one among the *manovikara* which is caused due to vitiation of both *sharirika* and *manasikadoshas*. Symptoms of *Apasmara* includes sudden feeling of giddiness or fainting, feeling of entering into darkness, rotation of eyeballs, convulsions in limbs and falling down unconsciousness with stretched limbs. It is also associated with tongue bite, keeping the eyes wide open or fixed gazing and frothing from mouth. Symptomatology and causative factors of *Apasmara* can be considered similar to that of Epilepsy. In this article an attempt is made to collect the details of *Rasaushadhi* used in *Apasmara* and to analyze the mode of action of these individual *bhasmas* and formulations based on their ingredients and efficacy at the level of *dosha*, *samprapti* and *lakshanas*.

KEYWORDS

Apasmara, Epilepsy, *Rasaushadhi*, *Bhasmas*



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INTRODUCTION

Apasmara is a *manovikara* known to mankind since the time of *Acharya Charaka*. In this disease remembrance and knowledge of nature of things are lost, so it is called *Apasmara*.

Apasmara is defined as *apagama* of *Smriti* (memory) with *Bibhatsachesta* (loathsome activity) due to derangement of *Dhi* and *Satva*. *Apasmara* is the transient appearance of unconsciousness associated with loathsome activities due to perversion of memory, intellect and other psychic faculties¹. Because of theetiological factors, vitiation of *sharirika doshas* along with *manasika doshas- rajas* and *tamas* occurs and get accumulated in *Hrudaya*. This accumulation blocks the *sanjnavahasrotas* and leads to damage of memory and intellect and finally manifests as *Apasmara*.

Prodromal symptoms² include palpitation, emptiness, perspiration, worry, fainting, delusion, hallucination and loss of sleep. General symptoms³ of *Apasmara* includes sudden feeling of giddiness or fainting, feeling of entering into darkness, rotation of eyeballs, convulsions in limbs and falling down unconsciousness with stretched limbs. It is also associated with tongue bite, keeping the eyes wide open or fixed gazing and frothing from mouth. On the basis of doshic involvement and

symptomatology it is of four types⁴ namely *Vataja*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja* and *Sannipataja*.

Apasmara can be correlated to Epilepsy; it is a paroxysmal discharge of cerebral neurons sufficient to cause clinically detectable events that are apparent either to the subject or the observer⁵. A seizure is due to abnormal, excessive, hyper synchronous discharges from an aggregate of Central Nervous System(CNS) neurons. Epilepsy describes a condition in which a person has recurrent seizures due to chronic underlying process. Prevalence of Epilepsy in European countries is about 0.5% while in developing countries it is up to five times higher than developed countries⁶.

Management of *Apasmara*

Ayurveda has described the following line of management for *Apasmara*⁷ namely the *nidana parivarjana*(removal of etiological factors), *samshodhana*(purification procedures), *bahiparimarjana* (external applications), *samshamana*(palliative therapy), *vegakaalina*(treatment during attack of seizure), *rasayana*(rejuvenation therapy) and *satvavajaya*(Pshychotherapy).

The *samshodhana chikitsa* includes oral use of different single and compound Herbo-mineral formulation for the management of the disease.

In the treatment⁸ of *Apasmara* there is *vegakaalina* and *vegantarakaalina chikitsa*. *Vegakaalina chikitsa* includes *Anjana*



(collyrium), *Nasya* (nasal therapy), *Dhupana* (fumigation) and *Siravyadha* (bloodletting). *Vegantarakaalina chikitsa* includes *rasa yogas* like *Smritisagara rasa*, *Manasamitra vati*, *Chaturbhuj rasa*, etc.

Anjana Yogas

1) **Sanjnaprabodha Varti**⁹: *Shuddha Sphatika*(Potashalum), *Shudha Tuttha*(Blue vitriol), *Maricha*(Piper nigrum), *Nimbu beeja*(seeds of *Citrus limon*)

2) **Unmadabanjani rasa**¹⁰: *Shuddha Manahshila*(Realgar), *Saindhava lavana* (Rock salt), *Vacha*(*Acorus calamus*),

Hingu(*Ferula foetida*),

Shunti(*Zingiber officinale*), *Maricha*(Piper nigrum), *Pippali*(Piper longum) and triturated with *Gomutra*(Cow's urine).

Nasya Yoga:

Swasakutara rasa¹¹: *Shuddha Parada*(Mercury), *Shuddha Gandhaka*(Sulphur), *Tankana*(Borax), *Manahshila*(Realgar), *Shuddha Vatsanabha*(*Aconitum ferox*), *Shunti*(*Zingiber officinale*), *Maricha*(Piper nigrum), *Pippali*(Piper longum).

Table 1 *Bhasmas* indicated in *Apasmara*

<i>Bhasma</i>	Dose
<i>Swarna Bhasma</i> ¹² (Ash of Gold)	15-60 mg
<i>Rajata Bhasma</i> ¹³ (Ash of Silver)	15-60 mg
<i>Haratala Bhasma</i> ¹⁴ (Ash of Yellow orpiment)	125-250 mg
<i>SwarnaMakshika Bhasma</i> ¹⁵ (Ash of Chalcopyrite)	125-250 mg
<i>Kousheyashma Bhasma</i> ¹⁶ (Ash of Asbestos)	125-250mg

Table 2 *Rasa Yogas*

<i>Yoga</i>	<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Dose</i>	<i>Anupana</i>
Smritisagara rasa ¹⁷	<i>Shuddha Parada</i> (Mercury), <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i> (Sulphur), <i>Shuddha Haratala</i> (Orpiment), <i>Shuddha Manashila</i> (Realgar), <i>Tamra bhasma</i> (Ash of Copper), 21 times <i>Bhavana</i> with <i>Vacha</i> (<i>Acorus calamus</i>) and <i>Bhrahmi</i> (<i>Bacopa monneri</i>) <i>Swarasa</i> (juice) – 1 <i>Bhavana</i> with <i>Jyotishmathi</i> (<i>Celastrus paniculatus</i>) <i>taila</i>	125-250 mg	<i>Ghrita</i> (ghee) <i>Ksheera</i> (milk)
Manasamitravati ¹⁸	<i>Swarna bhasma</i> (Ash of Gold), <i>Tamra bhasma</i> (Ash of Copper), <i>Mukta bhasma</i> (Ash of Pearl), <i>Kalaloha bhasma</i> (Ash of Iron), <i>Rajata bhasma</i> (Ash of Silver), <i>Bala</i> (<i>Sida cordifolia</i>) , <i>Nagabala</i> (<i>Grewia hirsuta</i>), <i>Shankapushpi</i> (<i>Convolvulus pluricaulis</i>), <i>Vacha</i> (<i>Acorus calamus</i>), <i>Bilva</i> (<i>Aegle marmelos</i>), <i>Amalaki</i> (<i>Emblica officinalis</i>), <i>Vibhitaki</i> (<i>Terminalia belerica</i>), <i>Haritaki</i> (<i>Terminalia chebula</i>) <i>bhavana</i> with <i>Bhrahmi</i> (<i>Bacopa monneri</i>) <i>swarasa</i> , <i>Shankapushpi</i> (<i>Convolvulus pluricaulis</i>) <i>kashaya</i> , <i>Vacha</i> (<i>Acorus calamus</i>) <i>kashaya</i> (decoction)	125-250 mg	<i>Ksheera</i> (milk)
Chaturbhuj rasa ¹⁹	<i>Rasasindura</i> , <i>Swarna bhasma</i> (Ash of Gold), <i>Shuddha Manahshila</i> (Realgar), <i>Shuddha Haratala</i> (Orpiment), <i>Kasturi</i> (Deer Musk), <i>Kumari</i> (<i>Aloe vera</i>) <i>swarasa</i> for <i>Bhavana</i> (trituration)	125mg	<i>Ardaka swarasa</i> (juice of <i>Zingiber officinale</i>), <i>Madhu</i> (Honey)
Indrabhramhavati ²⁰	<i>Rasasindura</i> , <i>Abhraka bhasma</i> (Ash of Mica), <i>Tikshnaloha bhasma</i> (Ash of Iron), <i>Rajata bhasma</i>	250 mg	<i>Madhu</i> (Honey),



	(Ash of Silver), <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i> (Sulphur), <i>Swarnamakshika bhasma</i> (Ash of Copper pyrite), <i>Shuddha Vatsanabha</i> (Aconitum ferox), <i>Nagakesara</i> (<i>Mesua ferrea</i>) <i>bhavana</i> with <i>Snuhiksheera</i> (<i>Euphorbia ligularia</i>) , <i>Chitrakamula</i> (<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i>) <i>kwatha</i> , <i>Erandapatra</i> (<i>Ricinus communis</i>) <i>rasa</i> , <i>Vacha</i> (<i>Acorus calamus</i>) <i>kwatha</i> , <i>Nirgundi</i> (<i>Vitex negundo</i>) <i>swarasa</i>		<i>Ardaka swarasa</i> (juice of Zingiber officinale)
<i>Bhutabairava rasa</i>²¹	<i>Rasasindura</i> , <i>Tamrabhasma</i> (Ash of Copper), <i>Lohabhasma</i> (Ash of Iron), <i>Shuddha Manashila</i> (Realgar), <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i> (Sulphur), <i>Shuddha Haratala</i> (Orpiment), <i>Rasanjana</i> (Extract of Barberis aristata) with <i>Nara mutra</i> (Human's urine)	625mg	<i>Madhu</i> (Honey)
<i>Chaturmukha rasa</i>²²	<i>Shuddha Parada</i> (Mercury), <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i> (Sulphur), <i>Loha</i> (Iron), <i>Abhraka</i> (Mica) and <i>Hemabhasma</i> (Ash of Gold), <i>Ghritakumari</i> pulp (<i>Aloevera</i>), <i>Erandapatra</i> (<i>Ricinus communis</i>)	625mg	<i>Madhu</i> (Honey) and <i>Triphala churna</i>
<i>Apasmaranashana rasa</i>²³	<i>Shuddha Parada</i> (Mercury), <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i> (Sulphur), <i>Shuddha Manahshila</i> (Realgar), <i>Shuddha Tuttha</i> (Blue vitriol), <i>Kanthalohabhasma</i> (Iron), <i>Swarnabhasma</i> (Gold), <i>Haridra</i> (<i>Curcuma longa</i>) <i>churna</i> , <i>Jyotishmati beeja</i> (<i>Celastrus paniculatus</i>) <i>churna</i>	375mg	<i>Chagamutra</i> (Goat's urine)
<i>Navangavatika</i>²⁴	<i>Swarnabhasma</i> (Gold), <i>Rajatabhasma</i> (Silver), <i>Tamrabhasma</i> (Copper), <i>Nagabhasma</i> (Lead), <i>Abhrakabhasma</i> (Ash of Mica), <i>Srotonjana</i> (Stibnite), <i>Shuddha Manashila</i> (Realgar), <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i> (Sulphur), <i>Rasasindura</i>	125mg	<i>Madhu</i> (Honey), <i>Trikatu</i> or <i>Vacha churna</i> (powder of <i>Acorus calamus</i>)
<i>Unmadabhanjana rasa</i>²⁵	<i>Shuddha Abhraka</i> (Ash of Mica), <i>Pravala</i> (Ash of Coral), <i>Rupya</i> (Ash of Silver) and <i>Vanga</i> (Ash of Tin) <i>bhasmas</i> , <i>Shunti</i> (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>), <i>Maricha</i> (<i>Piper nigrum</i>), <i>Pippali</i> (<i>Piper longum</i>), <i>Amalaki</i> (<i>Embellica officinalis</i>), <i>Vibhitaki</i> (<i>Terminalia bellerica</i>), <i>Haritaki</i> (<i>Terminalia chebula</i>), <i>Devadaru</i> (<i>Cedrus deodara</i>), <i>Vidanga</i> (<i>Embelia ribes</i>), <i>Katuki</i> (<i>Picrorhiza scrophulariiflora</i>), <i>Kantakari</i> (<i>Solanum surattense</i>), <i>Yastimadhu</i> (<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>), <i>Indrayava</i> (<i>Holarrhena pubescens</i>), <i>Chitrakamula</i> (<i>Plumbago indica</i>), <i>Balamula</i> (<i>Sida cordifolia</i>), <i>Sigrubeeja</i> (<i>Moringa oleifera</i>), <i>Trivrit</i> (<i>Operculina turpethum</i>)	375 mg	Adjuvant as per the requirement
<i>Sutabhasmaprayoga</i>²⁶	<i>Paradabhasma</i> (Ash of Mercury), <i>Shankapushpi</i> (<i>Convolvulus pluricaulis</i>), <i>Vacha</i> (<i>Acorus calamus</i>), <i>Brahmi</i> (<i>Bacopa monneri</i>)	250 mg	<i>Madhu</i> (Honey)
<i>Vatakulantaka rasa</i>²⁷	<i>Kasturi</i> (Deer musk), <i>Shuddha Manashila</i> (Realgar), <i>Shuddha Parada</i> (Mercury), <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i> (Sulphur), <i>Nagakesara</i> (<i>Mesua ferrea</i>), <i>Jatiphala</i> (<i>Myristica fragrans</i>), <i>Lavanga</i> (<i>Syzygium aromaticum</i>)	250 mg	<i>Madhu</i> (Honey)
<i>Apasmarari rasa</i>²⁸	<i>Shuddha Parada</i> (Mercury), <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i> (Sulphur), <i>Shuddha Tuttha</i> (Blue vitriol)	125 mg	<i>Ghrita</i> (Ghee), <i>Yusha</i>
<i>Unmadagajakesari rasa</i>²⁹	<i>Shuddha Parada</i> (Mercury), <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i> (Sulphur), <i>Shuddha Manahshila</i> (Realgar),	125 mg	<i>Ghrita</i> (Ghee)



	<i>Dhaturabeeja</i> (<i>Datura stramonium</i>), <i>Bhrahmi</i> (<i>Bacopa monneri</i>) <i>swarasa</i> (juice)		
<i>Trikatrayadyaloham</i>³⁰	<i>Lohabhasma</i> (Ash of Iron), <i>Amalaki</i> (<i>Emblica officinalis</i>), <i>Pippali</i> (<i>Piper longum</i>), <i>Chitrakamula</i> (<i>Plumbago indica</i>), <i>Jeevaniyagana dravyas</i>	1-2 g	<i>Ghrita</i> (Ghee)
<i>Chandabhairava rasa</i>³¹	<i>Rasasindura</i> , <i>Shuddha Manashila</i> (Realgar), <i>Shuddha Haratala</i> (Orpiment), <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i> (Sulphur), <i>Tamrabhasma</i> (Ash of Copper), <i>Lohabhasma</i> (Ash of Iron), <i>Rasanjana</i> (Extract of <i>Barberis aristata</i>)- trituration with <i>Gomutra</i> (Cow's urine)	625 mg	<i>Madhu</i> (Honey)
<i>Anandabhairava rasa</i>³²	<i>Shuddha Hingula</i> (Cinnabar), <i>Shuddha Tankana</i> (Borax), <i>Shuddha Gandhaka</i> (Sulphur), <i>Shunti</i> (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>), <i>Maricha</i> (<i>Piper nigrum</i>), <i>Pippali</i> (<i>Piper longum</i>), <i>Visha</i> (<i>Aconitum ferox</i>)	625 mg	<i>Madhu</i> (Honey)

DISCUSSION

Apasmara is a *shareeramano adhistitha* (disease of psycho somatic) *manasaroga* and has episodic manifestation as its salient feature. Based on this feature it can be correlated to Epilepsy, as same episodic seizures are seen.

Although much herbal *yogas* have been mentioned for the *chikitsa* (treatment) of *Apasmara*, *Rasaoushadhis* play a major part because of *Alpamaatropayogitva* (requirement of very small dose), *kshipramarogyadhayitva* (instant effectiveness) and *Yogavahi* (synergistic) property³³.

Treatment of *Apasmara* includes *vegakalina* and *vegantarakalina* approach. In *vegakalina*, the patient loses consciousness, and hence to regain consciousness; *anjana*(collyrium) and *nasya*(nasal therapy) are helpful. The *rasa dravya* present in these *yogas* will enter into

minute channels of brain and helps in regaining conscious.

Bhasmas like *Swarnabhasma* (Ash of Gold), *Rajatabhasma* (Ash of Silver), *Swarnamakshikabhasma* (Ash of Copper pyrite), *Haratalabhasma* (Ash of Orpiment) and *Kousheyashmabhasma* (Ash of Asbestos) are specially indicated in *Apasmara* as they act on *sanjnavahasrotas*. *Parada* (Mercury), *Gandhaka* (Sulphur), *Swarna* (Gold), *Swarnamakshika* (Copper pyrite), *Haratala* (Orpiment), *Kousheyashma* (Asbestos), *Abhraka* (Mica), *Tamra* (Copper), *Loha* (Iron), *Manashila* (Realgar) are the major mineral drugs that have action on *Apasmara*. Most of the *yogas* which are mentioned above contain these metals and minerals as major ingredients.

The metals and minerals present in these *yogas* possess *Madhura* (sweet), *Tikta* (bitter) and *Kashaya* (astringent) *Rasa*



(taste), *Snigdha* (unctuous) and *Laghu* (light)*Guna*, *Sheeta* (cold potency)*Virya*, *Madhura*(sweet) and *Katu*(pungent) *Vipaka*. Almost all ingredients are *Tridosahara* and exhibits *Karma* like *Medya* (increases memory), *Rasayana* (rejuvenative) and *Balya* (strengthening) that help in the management of the disease.

CONCLUSION

Apasmara is a known disorder since ancient times and *Ayurveda* gives a detailed description including etiology, pathogenesis and management. For the management of *Apasmara* many herbal and herbo-mineral formulations in different dosage forms are enlisted in *Ayurveda* texts. Among all the dosage forms, *Rasaushadhis* have an upper hand due to its quicker action and less dosage. By use of these drugs as a single drug or in combinations one can not only control but also manage the disease well.



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