

REVIEW ARTICLE

A Review of *Punarnava* based on Literature available in classical Ayurvedic Text *Samhitas* and *Nighantu*

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is very vast in terms of knowledge which is widely spread all over the earth. Its main focal point is prevention of disease and management of various diseases. While reviewing this traditional knowledge of Ayurvedic medicine, one comes across a very important herb *Punarnava* (*Boerhavia diffusa*). It is a herb which is found throughout India. This herb has gained its importance in various formulations and it is effective in diseases like *Shotha* (inflammation) and *Pandu* (Anemia). In this article, the compilation is made from various classical Ayurvedic books about the drug *punarnava*. Its guna, action, and various synonyms from various books are also mentioned. The review indicates that this medicinal drug has references in various ancient and modern texts. As this plant was very useful in past but today it is only a drug of choice but can be beneficial for future so there is scope for research in this drug.

Key Words *Ayurvedic, Punarnava, Pandu, Shotha, guna*

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INTRODUCTION

Classical ayurvedic texts can be classified into two different types, one that are related to treatment part and another that are related to information regarding the ayurvedic herbs. *Samhitas* and *Nighantus* are one of them. *Punarnava* is a plant that is having various medicinal properties. *Punarnava* has various health benefits and its uses have been found in our Ancient literature. *Punarnava* is nothing but the combination of two words i.e. *Punar* and *nava* which means becoming new, combined meaning

of the word *punarnava* can be the herb that Rejuvenates. This is said because the aerial part of the plant dries up in summer and regenerates in rainy seasons, and as per Ayurveda *Punarnava* literally rejuvenates the whole body part of the plant. *Punarnava* is of two types *Shweta Punarnava* and *Rakt Punarnava*. *Punarnava* is found in almost all regions of India. *Punarnava* belong to family *Nyctaginaceae*, commonly known as Spreading Hogweed or Pigweed. The interest in ayurvedic medicine are mainly because this medicines are having very less

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harmful effects as compare to the modern medicines.

REVIEW IN CLASSICAL TEXT

1. Charak Samhita: Acharya Charak has mentioned Punarnava in Swedopaga dravya, Vayasthapan, Kshara varga, Anuvasanopaga Gana. The roots of punarnava are helpful in kushtha vyadhi¹. the roots are used in combination with dadhi manda in kushta vyadhi.

2. Sushrut Samhita: Sushrut has mentioned this drug in Vidarigandhadhi gana² and shaak varga³. Punarnava mool is used in the diseases like Pittaj Ashmari⁴ and shotha⁵. In mooshaka visha⁶ chikitsa Punarnava Mool kwath with shunthi is used, Shweta punarnava mool with honey is used in alarka chikitsa, Shweta punarnava mool with dhatur seeds powder and water is used in Jwara Chikitsa.

3. Ashtang Sangraha: Punarnava is mentioned in Kshaar Mahakashaya⁷ and Shaak Varga⁸, Vayasthapan Mahakashya⁹ Punarnava mool is effective in Madaty, Ghrita which is prepared in decoction of punarnava, milk, and Yashtimadhu kalka is used as Rasayana.

4. Amarkosha (5th cent. A.D.)¹⁰: The Author of the book amarkosha is Amar Singh. He has written this book in 3 Khanda. First Khanda have 10 chapters explained in it and Second Khanda have another 10 chapters explained in it and Third Khanda have 5 chapters explained in amarkosh. The whole subject has described the synonyms of punarnava. Punarnava is included in

the 'Vanausadhi Varga' of Bhumyadi khanda with Synonyms Punarnava & Shothaghni.

5. Nighantu Sushruta (6th Cent. A.D.)¹¹: Nighantu sushruta is formulated on Sushruta samhita. In this Nighantu 'Punarnava' is included in Vidharigandhadi Gana' with the synonyms as Punarnava, Vrishchiva, Dirghavarshabhu, Shvetamula, Raktavrinda, Kathillaka, Vaishakha, Shinati, Kshudravarshabhu, Rishabhketu, Mahavarshabhu

6. Nighantu Ashtanga (8th Cent. A.D.)¹²: Nighantu Ashtanga is written by Acharya Vagbhata. On the foundation of ancient granthas i.e. Ashtanga sangraha and ashtanga hridaya, Acharya Vagbhata have explained many groups of drugs among which some of the drugs are explained in Viprakirna Varga. In Nighantu Ashtanga 'Punarnava' is included in 'Vidarigandhadi Gana' which has mentioned synonyms as Punarnava, Vrishchiva, Shvetamulaka, Dirghapatra, Vikasa, Kathillaka, Sunadik, Raktapushpa, Vishakha, Mandalacchada, Varshaketu, Varshabhu.

7. Sharangdhara (13th cent. A.D.)¹³: Punarnava Rasanjan is mentioned to be used in Netra Kandu, Netrastrava, Timir roga and Ratundhi.

8. Dhanvantari Nighantu (10th - 13th Cent. A.D.)¹⁴: In this Nighantu 'Punarnava' is included in 'Guduchyadi Varga' with the synonyms Punarnava, krura, Saddhomandalapatraka, Shvetamula, Varshaketu & Mahavarshabhu. It has following properties i.e.

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in guna-karma, and indicated in Shotha, Raktapradar, Pandu roga.

9. Nighantu Shodhala (12th Cent. A.D.)¹⁵: Shodhala Nighantu is written by Acharya Shodhala. Nighantu Shodhala is explained into 2 parts.

1. *Namasangraha*- which consist of synonyms of the drugs.

2. *Gunasangraha*- which deals with action and properties of the drugs.

In Shodhala nighantu 'Punarnava' is included in 'Guduchyadi Varga' with synonyms in Namasangraha part i.e. Punarnava, Shophaghni, Viksa, Raktapushpika, Varshaketu, Varshabhu, Mahavarshabhu, Shivatika, Sarini, Pravrsayani and Guna in Gunasangraha i.e. Ushna in virya, Kapha & Vata nashak dosha-karma, Bhedana & Rasayana in guna-karma, and it indicated in Durnama (Hemorrhoids), Vardhama, Shopha, Udara rog.

10. Nighantu Hridayadipaka (13th Cent. A.D.)¹⁶: The writer of this book is Bopadeva who is the son of Keshava. Hridayadipaka is divided into eight Vargas. In this Nighantu 'Punarnava' has been mentioned in 'Dvipadi Varga', with its synonyms Punarnava, Vrishchiva, Varshabhu, Shivatika.

11. (Sadrasa Nighantu or Abhidhanaratnamala)(13th Cent. A.D.)¹⁷: In Abhidhanaratnamala 'Punarnava' is described in 'Katudravya Skandha'. Following are paryay of punarnava i.e. Varshabhu, Dirghapatra, Vikasa, Kathillaka, Sunadika, Raktapushpa, Visala, Mandalacchada.

12. Madhava-dravyaguna (13th Cent. A.D.)¹⁸: In Madhava dravyaguna 'Punarnava' is described in 'Vividh-aushadi Varga'. Punarnava is Ushna virya and Rasayana in guna- karma.

13. Madanpala Nighatuu (14th Cent. A.D.)¹⁹: Punarnava is mentioned in Pratham Varga of "Abhayadi varga". Madanapala has mentioned following synonyms i.e. Aruna, Tikta, Raktapushpa, Katillaka, Kruraka, Kshudravarshabhu, Varshaketu & Shivatika. It has following properties mentioned - Katu, Tikta in rasa, Katu in vipaka, & Shita in virya, Vata karaka & rakta-pitta nashaka in dosh- karma, and has Shopha-anilavrina-shleshma har, Ruchya, Rasayana, , Grahi guna-karma.

14. Kaiyadev Nighantu (Pathyapathya Vibodhaka) (15th Cent. A.D.)²⁰: 'Punarnava' is described in "Aushadhi Varga" with following synonyms i.e. Punarnava, Punarbhu, Sada, Mandalapatraka, Shvetamula, Varshabhu, Raktapatraka, Shophaghni, Jatila, Saddhyovishoshi, Dirghapatraka. Regarding its properties i.e. Madhur, Tikta, Kashaya, Katu & Kshariya in rasa, Ushna in virya, Ruksh in guna, Vatakapha nashaka in dosha-karma, Saraka, Shotha nashaka in guna-karma and indicated in Arsha, Vrina, Pandu, Visha, & Udar rog.

15. Bhavaprakasha Nighantu (16th Cent. A.D.)²¹: This book is written by Bhavamishra. 'Punarnava' is mentioned in 'Guduchyadi Varga' with synonyms. Two varieties of punarnava have been mentioned separately in Bhavprakash Nighantu. These are shveta punarnava and rakta

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punarnava. Synonyms of both the types are mentioned.

i. Shveta Punarnava synonyms are shvetamoola, shothagni, dirghapatrika. It has katu kashaya taste and used in pandu roga, shotha, udarrog.

ii. Rakta punarnava synonyms are Raktapushpa, Shilatika, Shothaghni, Kshudravarshabhu, Varshaketu, Kathillaka.

It is Tikta in rasa, Katu in vipaka, Shita in virya & Laghu karma, Vata-karaka, Kapha- Pitta-Rakta-Vikar Nashaka in dosha-karma in guna, Grahi in guna. It is Malasangrahaka in action and is used in kapha, pitta, rakta disorder. It is also mentioned to be used in sandhivata. Punarnava kwath with kalka of kapur and shunthi is given for 7 days in eye disorder.

16. Gunaratnamala (16th Cent. A.D.)²²:

Gunaratnamala is written by Bhavamishra. 'Punarnava' is described in 'Guduchyadi Varga'. Its synonyms are Raktapushpapunarnava, Shilatika, Shothaghni, Kshudravarshabhu, Varshaketu, Kathillaka. It is Tikta in rasa, Katu in vipaka, Shita in virya & Laghu, Grahi in guna and Vata- vardhaka, Kapha,Pitta,Rakta-Vikar Nashaka in dosha-karma. Punarnava is also mentioned in Shaka Varga with Synonyms Punarnava, Raktapushpa, Shivatika & Shothaghni. Its Patra- shaka is Tikta in ras, Ruksha in Guna, Kapha shamaka in dosha-karma, Netrya (Chakshushya) in guna-karma and indicated in Shotha, Pandu, Kshaya, Shvasa, Jvara & Hridaroga.

17. Rajanighantu (Nighantu Raja, Abhidhana Chudamani) (17th Cent. A.D.)²³:

This book is written by Narhari Pandit, This book is particularly based on the Dhanwantari nighantu. It has 23 chapters in it. 'Punarnava' is described in 'Parpatadi varga' with the Synonyms Raktapunarnava, Krura, Mandalpatrika, Raktakanda, Varshketu, Lohita, Raktapatrika, Vaishakhi, Raktavarshabhu, Shophaghni, Raktapushpika, Viksvara, Vishaghni, Pravrishenya, Sarini, Varshabhav, Shorapatra, It is Tikta in rasa & pitta Nashaka in dosha-karma, Sarana in guna-karma and indicated in Shopha, Raktapradara Pandu rog.

18. **Adhunika Kala:** 'Punarnava' is explained in text books of modern periods such as Dravya guna vigyan by Dr.P.V.Sharma, Priya nighantu, Shankar nighantu, Ayurvedic material medica, Wealth of India and other books written by recent Acharyas, which provide information about its habit, habitat, morphology, chemical composition etc.

19. Adarsha Nighantu (20th Cent. A.D.)²⁴:

This book was published in Gujarat, its author, is Vaidya Bapalalji. In Adarsa nighantu 'Punarnava' is described in 'Punarnavadi Varga' with the synonyms Raktapunarnava, Vishakha, Katilla, Kathila, Shothaghni, Mahavarsabhu. It is Katu, Tikta, Kashaya in ras, Katu in vipaka Ushna in virya & Kapha-Vata nashaka in dosha-karma. Upukta anga is mentioned as Mool, Patra, and Panchanga. The dose evaluated is 1-2 tola (1 tola = 12 gms) used in shoth and jalodara.

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20. Priya Nighantu (20th Cent. A.D.)²⁵:

Acharya P.V. Sharma in his book Priya Nighantu has described 'Punarnava' in 'Shatpushpadi Varga' & indicated in Shotha, Pandu, Kamla, Hridaroga, Mutrakriccha & Udar rog.

21. Nighantu Shankar (20th Cent. A.D.)²⁶:

In Shankar Nighantu 'Punarnava' is described in 'Dwitiya Bhag'. It is Katu in rasa, Saraka in guna, Pitta shamaka in dosh-karma, and it is indicated in Shotha, Raktapradar, & Pandu vicar.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda is originated from Vedic time period. Its main focus is on prevention and cure of diseases in diseased person as well as maintaining of health in healthy person. It provides good treatment for diseases. Punarnava is one of them, based on classical texts this compilation is made to help future researches.

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