

Ritu Haritaki in Ayurveda: A Conceptual Study

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ABSTRACT

Ritu is also known as season in modern science. The *Ritu* is a period of some days or months which is marked by changes in weather, growing vegetation e.g.- green and leafy vegetables generally grows in *Shishir- Hemant Ritu* (winter season), and changes in body is marked by the strength of *Agni* (digestive power) and *Bala* (strength of body), by the fluctuation in the state of *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha Dosha*, to regulates these above condition people must follow *Ritu Charya* (seasonal regimen). There is a perfect guideline given by our *Acharyas* in the context of *Ritu* (season). In this line *Ritu Haritaki* is also helpful to maintain homeostatic condition of *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha Doshas*, to maintain the strengthening of body and *JatharAgni*. As *Acharyas* says that *MandAgni* is the root cause of all diseases. In this article there is description about *Ritu Haritaki* and its benefits and how it works.

Key words: *Haritaki, Ritu, RituCharya, Season*

INTRODUCTION

Ritu means (season) and *Charya* means (guidelines), it is a seasonal guidelines for living, According to our *Acharyas* movement of sun is responsible for the different types of *Ritu* (season), this divides a year into two parts one is *Uttarayan* And second one is *Dakshinayan*. Both Ayans have 6-6 months and 3-3 *Ritu*, In *Uttarayan* (*Shishira, Basant, Grishma*) and in *Dakshinayan* (*Varsha, Sharad, Hemant*).

The prime principle of Ayurveda science is *Swasthyashya Swasthya Rakshanam* (maintain the health of healthy), To fulfil this purpose Ayurved Classics have been mentioned *DinCharya* (Daily regimen)

and *Ritu Charya* (Seasonal regimen), *Ritu Haritaki* is a part of *Ritu Charya*, when season wise *Haritaki* powder is taking with different adjuvant is called *Ritu Haritaki*. There are seven types of *Haritaki* described in Ayurveda, names are *Vijaya, Rohini, Putana, Amrata, Abhaya, Jivanti* and *chetaki*. They all have different therapeutic effects like *Amrata* is used in purgation, *Abhaya* in ophthalmic disorders, *Rohini* for healing ulcers, *Putana* for topical application, *Vijaya* and *Jivanti* can be used in all type of diseased condition and *Chetaki* is a type of *Haritaki* which are highly effective for purgation, if any person only passes by the shade of the tree they purgate immediately. In the text of *Charaka Samhita* *ACharya* clearly mentioned about food which is regularly used by person in his daily routine life there are *Haritaki* is the one of these food article which should be taken regularly. So in this article there is a small description about *Haritaki* and its benefits according to seasonal regimen.

Ritu Haritaki: To attain the vitalizing action of *Haritaki*, It should be taken with different additives which enhances the effectiveness of *Haritaki* according to season *Ritu Haritaki* is as follows-

Shishir Ritu (late winter) - with pippali

Vasant Ritu (spring)-with honey

Grisham Ritu (summer) - jiggery

Varsha Ritu (Monsoon, Rainy)-rock salt

Sarad Ritu (autumn)-Sugar

Hemant Ritu (late autumn or early winter)-dried ginger

Haritaki (*Terminalia Chebula*) has five savours sweet, bitter, sour, pungent, astringent, it is free from briny taste (saline). *Haritaki* naturally hot in potency stimulates

the digestive fire due to its carminative effect; it prevents the formation of gas in the digestive tract also helpful in relieving gas in easier way.

Rasa Panchak of *Haritaki*:-

Rasa (taste) - Except saline all tastes (*Rasa*) are present

Guna (properties) - Laghu (light), Ruksha (dry)

Virya (potency) – Ushana (Hot)

Vipaka (post digestion effect) - *Madhura* (Sweet)

Prabhav (benefits) - is helpful to cures Kustha (skin diseases including leprosy), Gulma (phantom tumour), Udavarta (upward movement of air in abdomen), Pandu (anemia), Arsh (haemorrhoids) chronic and irregular fever, Premeha (urinary disease including diabetes mellitus), Anaha (abdominal distension), Jaundice, Bronchial Asthma, vomiting, impotency also use in many more diseases.

Contraindication to take *Haritaki* : Who is suffering from indigestion, taking dry and spicy food for a long time, physically weak people who have low strength and immunity due to excessive and regular sexual activities, alcohol consumption and intake of poison, in the condition of excessive hunger, thirst and heat stroke *Haritaki* should not used.

Special properties of different form of *Haritaki* : If chewed it stimulates appetite, increased digestive fire, if it takes in powdered form it has laxative effect, boiled *Haritaki* has anti diarrhoeal effect, fried *Haritaki* pacifies Tri*Dosha*, *Haritaki* with meals is beneficial for intellectual power and for the better perception from the sense organ and after meals it cures disease due to wrong dietary habits and imbalance in three biological humours (Tridosh), takes with rock salt helpful in alleviating *Kapha*, with sugar helpful in alleviating *Pitta*, with ghee helpful in alleviating *Vata*.

Shishir Ritu

It is the first *Ritu* of Aadan-Kala, including Hindi month Magha-FalGuna approximately mid January to mid march is consider as *Shishir Ritu*. In this *Ritu* environment become cold and dry due to clouds, winds and rains. The strength of the person is high in level, Jathr*Agni* remains in a powerful state. Usually during this *Ritu Kapha Dosha* deposition takes place. As follows *Ritu Haritaki*, *Haritaki* should be taken with Pippali, both are Ushna (hot) in potency, due to this property they pacifies *Kapha* and Snigdha *Guna* of Pippali pacifies *Vata*. *Haritaki* and Pippali both are having the rejuvenation properties, it is helpful in longevity of life, maintenance of health in healthy person and gives strength to body and increases intellectual power and memory. Common cold, Flu, Bronchitis, strep throat and Norovirus(winter vomiting bug) are the common diseases in occurs in *Shishir* (winter) *Ritu*. According to the Ayurveda sciences these kinds of diseases also known as Urdhwajatru-Gata Vyadi (Diseases which occurs in upper clavicular region) this area is already *Kapha* dominant area, and in *Shishir Ritu Kapha* is more prominent, *Haritaki* and Pippali is indicated in Kasa(coughing), Tamak Swash(Bronchial Asthma), *Kapha* Praseka(salivation), Chardi(Vomiting), Hikka(hic-cough), Ajirna(Indigestion),Pandu(Anemia), Krimi Roga(Intestinal worms) due to Dipana, Pachana, Rochana and *Dosha* Parshamana(Balancing between three *Doshas*) Properties.

Vasant Ritu

It is the second *Ritu* of Aadan- Kala, including Hindi months Chiatra-Vaishakh approximately mid march to mid may is consider as *Vasant Ritu*. The season of flowering, new leaves, germination of seeds over all rejuvenation of Nature. There is a pleasant and calm environment. During this season diminution of Jathr*Agni* occurs due to liquefaction of *Kapha Dosha*, which was accumulated in *Hemant Ritu* by the intense sunrays. Body strength is medium in *Vasant*

Ritu. According to *Ritu Haritaki* manner, In *Vasant Ritu*, *Haritaki* should be taken with *Madhu* (honey). *Madhu* is having the *lekhana* (scraping), *Grahi* (moisture absorption capacity), *Deepan* (digestive), *Vranaropana* (healing wounds), *Rochana*(appetizer) properties and *Haritaki* is having *Laghu* (light), *Ruksha* (dry), *Ushna* (hot) and *Anulomana* (regulation of the provocation and suppression of natural urges) properties which pacifies *Kapha* and prevents from the Common diseases of *Vasant Ritu* like asthma, rhinovirus, flu, gastroenteritis, strep throat, allergic conjunctivitis like condition which are mainly occurs due to vitiated *Kapha*. *Madhu* minutely enters in the channels and clears them and also *Yogvahi* in nature (Carries the properties of associated adjuvant) this increases the potency of combination.

Grishma Ritu

It is the third *Ritu* of Aadan-Kala including Hindi months Jyestha-Aashadha approximately mid May to mid July is considered as *Grishma Ritu*. There is very hot and dry weather due to strong and penetrating sun rays which evaporates the moisture of earth the strength of the person becomes very low. In this season *Pitta Dosh*a increases and environmental heat leads to diminution of *JatharAgni*. Dehydration, heat stroke, chickenpox, mumps, measles, diarrhoea, typhoid, Sunburns are the common diseases found in *Grishma Ritu*(summer season) these diseases mainly due to vitiated *Pitta Dosh*a. *Haritaki* should be taken with *Guda* (jaggery) in this season, *Guda* (jaggery) must be old or stored, because only this type of *Guda* (jaggery) pacifies *Pitta* and *Vata* , increases digestive fire, does not block the channels and also *RaktapRasadak*(Vitalizes Blood or improves haemoglobin), *Mutrashodhan* (clears urine), and *Haritaki* is also light, digestive, appetizing in nature so this combination are beneficial in above conditions.

Varsha Ritu

It is a first *Ritu* of Visarga –Kala including Hindi months Shrawan-Bhadrapada approximately mid July to mid September is consider as *Varsha Ritu*. In Aadan-Kala *JatharAgni* already in low state and in *Varsha Ritu* there is vitiation of all three *Doshas* that's why *JatharAgni* become more decreases. Water vapour which is coming out from the earth is responsible for vitiation of all *Doshas* and rainy water vitiates *Vata* and *Kapha*. The rain is responsible for the acidity in water and vitiates *Pitta* and *Kapha*. People have to use general diet and regimens are recommended in *Varsha Ritu*. As per *Ritu Haritaki*, during this season *Haritaki* should be taken with *Saindhav Lawana*. Common diseases of *Varsha Ritu* are influenza, cholera, typhoid, hepatitis A, Dengue, Malaria occurrence of these diseases mainly due to contaminated water. *Haritaki* and *Saindhav Lawana* having the *TriDoshamak* (pacifying capacity of all three *Doshas*) properties. *Haritaki* pacifies *Kapha* and *Pitta* by its *Madhura*(sweet), *Tikta*(Bitter) and *Kshaya*(astringent) taste and also balances the *Vata* due to its *Amla*(sour) taste. It is not increasing *Vata* and *Pitta Doshas* by its pungent and sour taste because of its *Prabhav*(unspecified action) and *Saidhava Lawana* is having cold potency so pacifies *Pitta Dosh*a, Due to salty taste it pacifies *Vata Dosh*a and Chest congestion(due to sputum accumulation) relives by *Saindhav Lawana* hence it is pacifies *Kapha Dosh*a too. So there is a perfect combination for rainy season.

Sharad Ritu

It is the second *Ritu* of Visarga Kala including Hindi months Aswina- Kartik approximately mid September to mid November is consider as *Sharad Ritu*. The body which is habitual for rain and cold environment then sudden exposure of sun rays causes the aggravation of *Pitta Dosh*a in *Sharad Ritu*. In this season extreme temperature and humidity is present in the environment, water of lakes, rivers and

ponds is pure and intoxicated by due to rise of Agastya star. Strength of body is medium *JatharAgni* also in medium stat. *Haritaki* should be preferred with Sarkara (sugar) or Mishri in Sharad *Ritu*. *Haritaki* pacifies Pitta by its *Madhura* (sweet), Tikta (bitter) and Kashaya (astringent) taste, Sarkara due to its Sheeta(cold) potency and *Madhura* (sweet) taste, is also helpful in pacifying Pitta *Dosha*. Allergies, skin disorders, burning sensation, sore throat, acute ear infection, common cold, flu etc. are the common diseases which manifests in Sharad *Ritu* due to vitiated Pitta and *Kapha*. *Haritaki* is indicated in Kasa (cough), *Tamak Swasha* (bronchial asthma) mainly in *Kaphaj* disorder and Mishri is indicated in Pitta dominant disorders like *Daha* (burning sensation), *Raktagata Vikar* (bleeding disorders).

Hemant Ritu

It is the last *Ritu* of Visarga-Kala including Hindi months Margshirsha-Posha approximately mid November to mid January considers as *Hemant Ritu*. Cold weather with cold winds becomes resistant the internal *Agni* in its place, so *Agni* (digestive power) become more powerful to digest any kind of food. People should take heavy, rich and nourished diet in more quantity like Cow milk and its products (butter, ghee etc.), sugarcane and its product (jiggery, sugar etc.) If people do not follow the heavy and nourished diet than *JatharAgni* affects the body and consumes the tissues that increase *Vata Dosha*. *Haritaki* should be taken with Shunthi (dried ginger), *Vata* is already aggravated due to cold weather during this *Ritu*, *Haritaki* and Shunthi both are hot in potency and having sweet taste which is helpful in balancing the *Vata Dosha*. Diseases of this *Ritu* are mainly occurs due to vitiated *Vata* and *Kapha Dosha* like common cold, sore throat,, arthritis, dry and cracking skin, asthma, bronchitis, migraine, pain in joints. *Haritaki* and Shunthi combination of both drugs are beneficial in *Kaphaj* and *Vataj* Vikar by the properties of

them which are Laghu (light), Ruksha (dry), Ushana (hot).

CONCLUSION

Everyone wants a healthy life but in present Era it is hard to maintain the healthy life due to faulty diet habits and life style. There are many methods in Ayurveda to regulates the healthy status of life like *DinaCharya* (daily regimen), *RituCharya* (seasonal regimen), *sadvritta* (good habits), *Aachar Rasayan* (to maintain social health) etc. *Ritu Haritaki* is the one of among them. It is said that “As is the grain so is the mind”. *Haritaki* producing the wholesome effect (the ones that helps to stay healthy) “*Haritaki Pathayanam*”. In *Ritu Haritaki*, *Haritaki* is recommended with different adjuvant in different season like pippali, jiggery, dried ginger etc., Adjuvant is an ingredient which modifies and enhances the strength and the qualities of principal ingredient.

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