

PHARMACODYNAMICS OF NAVAYAS CHURNA: A DETAILED EXPLORATION OF ITS THERAPEUTIC MECHANISMS AND APPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND

Ayurveda is one of the oldest branches of knowledge and a system of philosophical principles. Ayurvedic practitioners have effectively used numerous classical formulations to treat a wide range of ailments. In many cases, detailed information about their mechanisms of action is still lacking. *Navayas Churna* is one of them. It is a herbo-metallic preparation (*Rasaushadhi*) commonly used by Ayurvedic practitioners.

According to the World Health Organization, Ayurvedic medicines fall under the category of traditional medicine. These medicines are used for the prevention of illness, diagnosis, treatment and promotion of health.

Understanding the pharmacodynamics of Ayurvedic drugs is essential for the scientific validation of their traditional uses. It helps to explain how these formulations interact with the body and ensures safety by predicting potential side effects. This knowledge also aids in optimizing formulations, guiding evidence-based drug development and meeting global regulatory standards. Especially for complex preparations, such as herb-metallic compounds, pharmacodynamic insights are crucial for integrating Ayurveda into modern healthcare.

The present study aims to compile the available literature regarding the pharmacodynamics, therapeutic mechanism, actions and properties of the *Navayas Churna*.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, *Rasaushadhi*, *Navayas Churna*, Pharmacodynamic

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the traditional medical science of India, not only focuses on diagnosing and treating diseases but also emphasizes maintaining health through proper lifestyle practices. Its holistic approach aims at both curing ailments and promoting long-term wellness. Ayurvedic practitioners are empowered to choose the most appropriate therapeutic methods to achieve these goals. According to the World Health Organization, approximately 70% of the population in developing countries relies on herbal or traditional medicine for their primary healthcare needs^[1]. Traditional systems like Ayurveda are also gaining popularity in developed nations. In India, Ayurveda has been practiced since the Vedic period, with a wide variety of formulations that are considered safe, effective and associated with fewer side effects^{[2][3]}

Ancient Ayurvedic scholars emphasized that a physician's success largely depends on their in-depth knowledge of medicinal substances. Ayurveda advocates the use of both plant and mineral-based remedies for managing various health conditions ^[4]. The pharmacodynamics of Ayurvedic drugs is crucial for explaining how they act at the molecular, cellular and systemic levels, impacting key physiological processes such as metabolism, immune function and blood formation.

Pharmacodynamic insights play a vital role in developing evidence-based Ayurvedic or integrative formulations, especially for managing chronic and lifestyle-related diseases. The action of a drug in the body is believed to be governed by the five fundamental principles known as *Rasa Panchaka* - namely *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* and *Prabhava*. These factors, individually or collectively, influence the body by balancing the doshas, correcting *Dathu Pradooshana* and supporting overall health, *Swasthahitha*.

Navayas Churna is a classical Ayurvedic herbo-mineral formulation, traditionally used for its potent therapeutic properties. The name itself holds significance - *Nava* refers to the nine ingredients used in its composition, while *Ayas* denotes iron, indicating the inclusion of processed iron in the form of *Loha Bhasma*. This formulation combines nine medicinal herbs with *Loha bhasma*, creating a synergistic blend that enhances its efficacy in treating a wide range of disorders. *Navayas Churna* is primarily indicated in the management of *Pandu* (Anemia) due to its hematinic and blood-purifying properties. In addition, it is widely used in treating *Hridroga*, *Bhagandara*, *Shotha*, *Kustha*, *Udara*, *Arsha*, *Mandagni*, *Aruchi* and *Krimi Roga*. This formulation is described in detail by *Acharya Sharangadhara* in the *Churna Kalpana Adhyaya* of the *Sharangadhara Samhita*, an authoritative classical text on Ayurvedic pharmaceuticals. The unique combination of herbs and mineral components in *Navayas Churna* reflects the traditional principle of combining ingredients to enhance both efficacy and safety of formulation. ^[5]

AIM & OBJECTVES

AIM

To review the pharmacodynamics, therapeutic mechanism and applications of *Navayas Churna*.

10 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to review the therapeutic actions of *Navayas Churna* by examining the individual functions of its ingredients and exploring their pharmacodynamic properties. This analysis aims to provide a deeper understanding of how the combined components work synergistically to exert their medicinal effects, thereby supporting the formulation's traditional uses and guiding future research.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Literary resources, including classical texts and contemporary studies, have been studied extensively. All relevant information available from both traditional literature and online sources has been gathered and thoroughly analyzed to facilitate a comprehensive and conclusive discussion.

Sr No	Ingredient	Botanical Name	Family	Quantity
1	Chitrak	Plumbago zeylanica	Plumbaginaceae	1 part
2	Haritaki	Terminalia chebula	Combretaceae	1 part
3	Amalaki	Embelica officinalis	Euphorbiaceae	1 part
4	Bibhitak	Terminalia bellerica	Combretaceae	1 part
5	Musta	Cyperus rotundus	Cyperaceae	1 part
6	Vidanga	Embelia ribes	Myrsinaceae	1 part
7	Shunthi	Zingiber officinale	Zingiberaceae	1 part
8	Maricha	Piper nigrum Linn.	Piperaceae	1 part
9	Pippali	Piper longum Linn.	Piperaceae	1 part
10	Loha Bhasma	-	-	9 parts

Table 1 Ingredients of *Navayas Churna*

Method of preparation of *Navayas Churna*

- All the herbal ingredients listed in Table 1 were thoroughly cleaned to remove any foreign materials.
- Individually powdered until they pass through a 100 no. Mesh sieve.
- The required quantities of each powdered herb were accurately weighed.
- All ingredients were mixed thoroughly to ensure a homogeneous blend.
- An equal amount of *Lauha Bhasma* was then added to this mixture.
- Trituration was carried out to get a homogeneous mixture.

Anupana – *Madhu* (honey), *Ghrita* (ghee), *Gomutra*, *Takra* (buttermilk)

Sr No	Ingredient	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka
1	Chitrak ^[6]	Katu	Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna	Ushna	Katu
2	Haritaki ^[7]	Lavanavarjita Pancharasa	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Madhur
3	Amalaki ^[8]	Lavanavarjita Pancharasa	Laghu, Ruksha, Shita	Shita	Madhur
4	Bibhitak ^[9]	Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Madhur
5	Musta ^[10]	Tikta, Katu, Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Shita	Katu

6	Vidanga ^[12]	Katu, Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna	Ushna	Katu
7	Shunthi ^[12]	Katu, Tikta	Ruksha, Laghu, Tikshna	Ushna	Katu
8	Maricha ^[13]	Katu, Tikta	Laghu, Tikshna	Ushna	Katu
9	Pippali ^[14]	Katu	Laghu, Snigdha, Tikshna	Anushna Shita	Madhur
10	Loha Bhasma ^[15]	Tikta, Madhur, Kashaya	Guru, Ruksha	Shita	Madhur

Table 2: Constituents of Navayasa Churna with Rasa (Taste), Guna (Attribute), Virya (Potency), Vipaka (Internal biotransformation of drug)

Sr No	Ingredient	Doshaghната	Karma
1	Chitrak	Kapha Vat Shamaka	Lekhan, Uttejaka, Deepan, Pachan, Saraka, Grahi, Rasayan, Krumighana, Shothahara, Kaphghana, Kanthya, Jwaraghana, Arshoghana,
2	Haritaki	Tridosahar	Shothahara, Vedanasthapak, Vranropaka, Anulomaka, Mrudurechaka, Kushthaghana, Jwaraghana, Deepan, Pachan, Krumighana, Rasayan, Hrudy, Shothahara
3	Amalaki	Tridosahar	Dahaprashamak, Chakshushya, Deepan, Anulomaka, Rochan, Hrudy, Shonisthapan, Jwaraghana, Kushthaghana, Rasayan, Aruchi, Shothaghana,
4	Bibhitak	Tridosahar	Shothahara, Vedanasthapak, Deepak, Anulomaka, Krumighana, Arshoghana, Raktastambhaka, Jwaraghana
5	Musta	Kapha Pitta Shamak	Twachadoshahar, Shothahara, Lekhan, Deepan, Pachan, Medhya, Raktaprasadak, Mutrala, Balya, Vishaghana, Jwaraghana, Aruci, Ajirna, Krumighana,
6	Vidanga	Kapha Vat Shamak	Jantughana, Kushthaghana, Deepan, Pachan, Anulomak, Raktashodhak, Mutrajanana, Varnya, Rasayan, Balya
7	Shunthi	Kapha Vat Shamak	Shothahara, Vedanashamak, Deepan, Pachan, Rochan, Arshoghana, Shulaprashamana, Hrudy, Shothahara, Raktashodhaka, Jwaraghana,
8	Maricha	Vat Kapha Shamak	Lekhan, Balya, Deepan, Pachan, Krumighana, Kushtaghana, Ajirnahar, Hrudy, Jwaraghana
9	Pippali	Pittashamaka	Krumighana, Deepan, Pachan, Shulahara, Raktavardhaka, Kushtaghana, Rasayan, Jwaraghana, Hrudy, Paduhara
10	Loha Bhasma	Tridosaghna	Rasayan, Vishaghana, Pandughana, Shulaghana, Krumighana, Kushthaghana, Shothaghana, Hrudy, Arshoghana,

Table 3 Ingredients of Navayas Churna with their Doshaghната (Action on Dosha) and Karma (Functions)

Sr No	Ingredient	Therapeutic Action
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1	<i>Chitrak</i>	4 anti-diabetic, wound healing, anti-carcinogenic activity, contraceptive effect, hepato-protective, anthelmintic, anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory. [16]
2	<i>Haritaki</i>	6 antimicrobial, hepatoprotective, anti-mutagenic, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anti-diabetic, anti-proliferative, radio-protective, cardio-protective [17]
3	<i>Amalaki</i>	immune-modulating, anti-diabetic, memory enhancement, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, hepatoprotective [18]
4	<i>Bibhitak</i>	antioxidant, laxative, antidiabetic, analgesic, anti-helminthic, anti-pyritic properties, antiulcer, antifungal, antibacterial and anti-hypertensive [19]
5	<i>Musta</i>	stomachic, anthelmintic, emmenagogue, astringent, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antipyretic, galactagogue, carminative, antidiabetic, cytoprotective, antimutagenic and analgesic [20]
6	<i>Vidanga</i>	hepatoprotective, antidiabetic, anthelmintic, diuretic, laxative antioxidant, anti-bacterial [21]
7	<i>Shunthi</i>	anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial action, anti-oxidative effect, bronchodilator, antimicrobial action [22]
8	<i>Maricha</i>	5 antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antifungal, hepatoprotective, antioxidant, anticancer, antimicrobial, antihypertensive, antiasthma, insecticidal, antithyroid, wound healing activities [23]
9	<i>Pippali</i>	antimicrobial, antiplatelet, antihyperlipidemic, analgesic, anticancer, antioxidant, antiamebic, hepatoprotective, anti-inflammatory, coronary vasodilation, bioavailability-enhancing, immunomodulatory, adulticidal, melanin-inhibiting, antidepressant, antifertility, antiobesity, larvicidal, radioprotective, cardioprotective, antifungal [24]
10	<i>Loha Bhasma</i>	anti-anemia, aphrodisiac, emmenagogue, stimulant, anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, astringent, hematogenic, anti-ageing, analgesic, antipyretic [25]

Table 4 Ingredients of *Navayas Churna* with their therapeutic actions

Analysis as per *Guna*

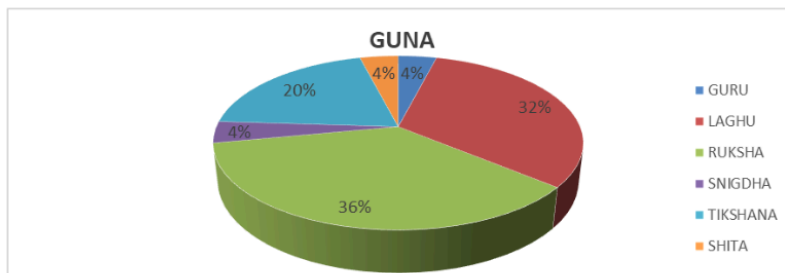
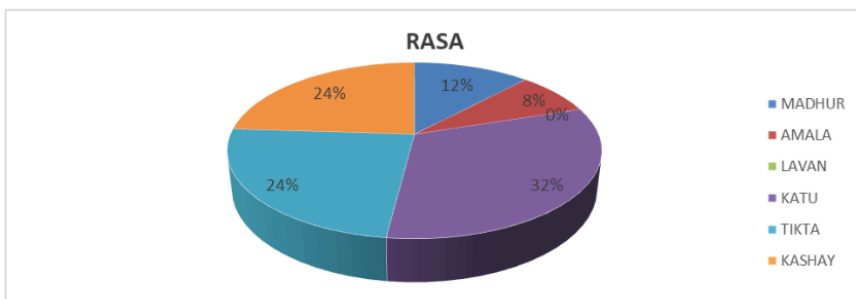


Table 2 indicates that *Ruksha Guna* dominates the composition with 36%, followed by *Laghu Guna* at 32% and *Tikshana Guna* at 20%. The remaining *Gunas Guru*, *Snigdha* and *Shita* each constitute 4% of the composition.

Ruksha is *Kaphanashak*, *Shoshana*, *Laghu* is *Laghavakaraka*, *Vranaropaka*, *Utsahavardhaka* and *Sphurtikar*. *Tikshana* is *Shodhana*, *Lekhan Gunatamaka*. *Guru* is *Brihana*, *Truptikar*. *Snigdha* is *Kledana*, *Balya*, *Varnya* and *Snehamardavakar*. *Shita* is *Stambhana*, *Murcha*, *Dah*, *Trushna* and *Swedanashaka*.^[26]

Analysis as per *Rasa*



In *Navayas Churna*, the major *Rasa* is *Katu*, forming 32% of the composition.

Tikta and *Kashaya* each account for 24%, while

Madhur is 12% and *Amla* is 8%.

Lavana Rasa is entirely not present in its composition

According to *Acharya Charak*, *katu rasa* has *stotas shodhana*, *Kandunashana* and *Vrana Avasadaka* properties.

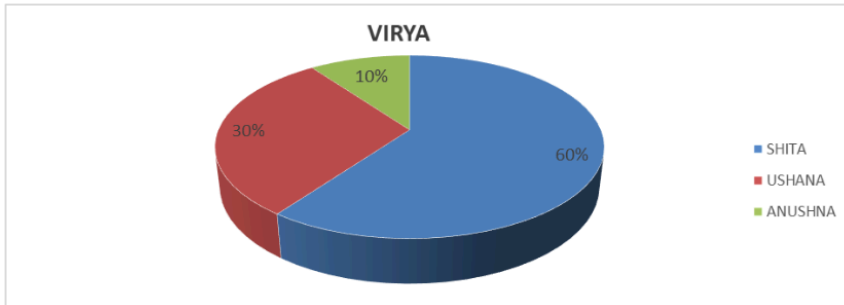
Kashaya Rasa is characterized by *Sandhankar*, *Snashamaka* and *Sangrahi Gunas*, along with actions like *Sleshma*, *Pitta*, and *Rakta Prashamaka*.

Tikta Rasa shows *Deepak*, *Pachaka*, *Lekhana*, *Mansaposhaka*, *Jwaraghana*, *Vishaghana*, *Krumighana* and *Kandughana* effects.

Madhura Rasa is *Saptadhatuposhaka*, *Indriya Prasadak*, *Balavarnakar*, *Ayushya Vardhaka*, and acts as *Pitta*, *Visha*, *Trushna* and *Daha Prashamanaka*, it is *Balya*, *Jivaniya* and *Tarpaniya*.

Together, these attributes aid in *Samprapti Vighatan* as indicated in the *Phalshruti* of *Navayas Churna*.^[27]

Analysis as per *Virya*

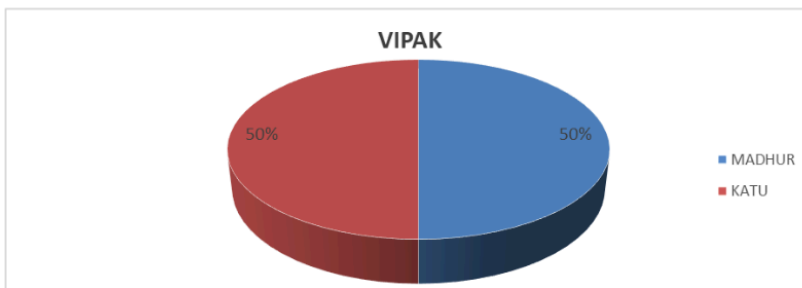


According to Table 2, the analysis of *Virya* shows *Shita Virya* constitutes 60%, *Ushna Virya* 30%, and *Anushana Shita Virya* 10% in the composition.

Ushna Virya exhibits *Vatakaphashaman*, *Pittajanana*, *Dahan*, *Pachan*, *Swedana*, *Vilayana* and *Laghu* properties.

Shita Virya provides *Prasadan*, *Sthrikaran* *Vishyandan* *Jivaniya* and *Balya* properties.

Analysis as per Vipak



As per Table 2, based on the *Vipak* analysis, *Madhur* and *Katu* each account for 50% of the composition.

Analysis as per Doshaghanata

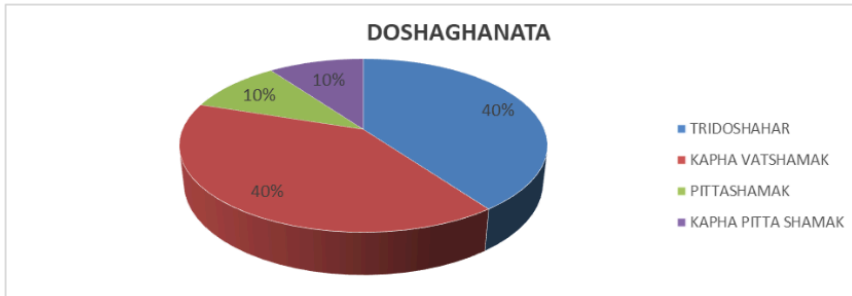
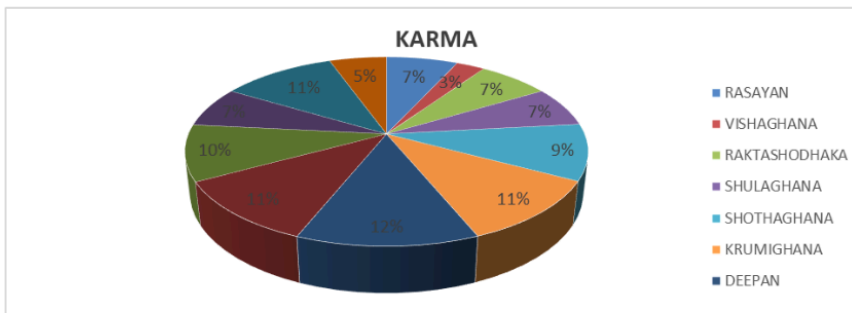


Table 3 indicates that *Navayas Churna* consists of 40% *Kapha Vatshamak*, 40% *Tridosahar* and 10% each of *Pittashamak* and *Kaphapitta Shamak* properties.

Analysis as per Karma



The analysis reveals that *Deepan* constitutes 12.32%, while *Krumighana*, *Pachan* and *Jwaraghana* account for 10.95%. *Shotaghana* and *Kushtaghana* comprise 9.58%.

Rasayan, *Raktashodhana*, *Hrudya* and *Shulaghana Karma* collectively make up 6.84%, *Arshoghana Karma* is 5.48% and *Vishaghana Karma* contributes 2.73%.

DISCUSSION

In today's world, however, there is a growing interest in Ayurveda for its timeless principles, highlighting the importance of demonstrating their relevance in the modern age. It is crucial to revisit the traditional remedies to encounter the various challenges. *Navayas Churna* being one such remedy that needs exploration, and this is why it has been selected for review. *Navayas Churna* is composed of nine herbal ingredients and one mineral component, as previously mentioned.

According to Ayurvedic literature, the therapeutic indications (*Rogadhikar*) for *Navayas Churna* include *Pandu*, *Hridroga*, *Bhagandara*, *Shotha*, *Kustha*, *Udara*, *Arsha*, *Mandagni*, *Aruchi* and *Krimi Roga*.

Here, now will discuss how the ingredients of *Navayas Churna* help in the *Samprapti Vighatana* (breaking the process of disease formation) of the above diseases through their properties

Pandu

Navayasa Churna is an effective Ayurvedic formulation for managing *Pandu* (anemia), primarily by increasing serum ferritin and hemoglobin levels. *Amalaki* is a rich source of iron and vitamin C, which enhances iron absorption. *Haritaki* is rich in minerals and vitamin C and acts as a potent *Rasayana* that nourishes all *Dhatus*.^[28] *Musta* has manganese and copper present, which help the metabolism of iron and synthesis of Hemoglobin.^[29] *Lauha Bhasma* supports the regeneration of hemoglobin.^[30] *Trikatu* enhances the bioavailability of nutrients^[31] while *Vidanga* combats parasitic infections, a common cause of anemia, and supports digestion, liver function and blood health through its *deepana*, *anulomana*, *hridya* and *shonitasthapana* actions. Together, these ingredients work to correct all types of anemia and promote overall vitality.

Hridaroga

The chief ingredient in *Navayasa Churna* is *Loha Bhasma*, which primarily acts on the *Rakta Dhatu* by increasing hemoglobin levels. This nourishes the heart through oxygenation. Many ingredients in this formulation also possess *Rasayana* properties, which help rejuvenate and strengthen cardiac function. As the blood becomes purified, the efficiency of the heart improves, helping to prevent further complications. Additionally, the ingredients exhibit antioxidant properties that reduce oxidative stress on cardiac tissues, protecting the heart from degenerative changes.

Aruchi and Mandagni

Since *Ama* (toxins) is widely recognized as the root cause of most diseases, initiating treatment with *Deepan* and *Pachan* therapies is essential for effective disease management. According to the analysis of *Karma*, nearly all the ingredients in the formulation possess *Deepan* and *Pachan* properties, which help eliminate *Ama* from the body. Additionally, *Triphala* acts as a mild laxative, alleviating constipation and subsequently relieving symptoms associated with *Strotas*

Avarodha. *Katu* is the predominant *Rasa* in this preparation, which also plays a vital role in correcting *Strotas Shodhan* means clearance of minute channels in the body. Furthermore, *Trikatu* and *Trushna* stimulate the liver, promoting bile secretion, which is essential for the digestion and absorption of fats. The combined properties help eliminate *Ama* and strengthen *Agni*, enabling effective disease management. The key ingredients of this formulation synergistically support *Agni*, facilitating *Samprapti Vighatan* for overall disease.

Arsha and Bhagandar

As we discussed, *Ama* is root cause of most diseases. In the case of *Arsha* and *Bhagandara*, the accumulation of *Ama* in the gastrointestinal tract plays a crucial role in disease manifestation. Hence, the main line of treatment is *Deepana* and *Pachana*. *Navayasa Churna* promotes *Agni-dipana* and enhances digestive efficiency. This not only improves overall digestion but also prevents the formation of hard stools, which is a major aggravating factor in *Arsha*. *Navayas Churna* reduces constipation. Also acts as *Tri Doshahara*. In *Arsha*, vitiated *Pitta Dosh* leads to *Rakta-strva* and *shotha*, vitiated *Kapha Dosh* contributes to *Picchila strva* and vitiated *Vata* causes *Shula*. The *Tridosahara* effect of this formulation helps to balance all three *Doshas*, thereby alleviating the primary symptoms associated with *Arsha* and *Bhagandara*. The contents of *Navayasa Churna* are *Vraṇaropaka* and *Rasayana*, which help to heal fissures. In the condition of *Bhagandara*, where *Puya* formation is common, *Navayasa Loha* helps eliminate *Ama*, purify the *Rakta Dhātu* and maintain its healthy state. Many of the constituents also exhibit *Shothaghna* and *Vyadhikshamatva-vardhaka* actions, which further assist in reducing inflammation and enhancing the body's natural defense mechanisms to combat the symptoms of *Arsha* and *Bhagandara*.

Navayasa Churna, through its *Dipana*, *Pachana*, *Tridosahara*, *Ama-nashaka*, *Vraṇaropaka*, *Rasayana* and *Rakta-prasadaka* properties, provides comprehensive management in *Arsha* and *Bhagandara*, addressing both the root cause and symptomatic relief.

Udar

In *Udara Vyadhi*, vitiated *Kapha* and *Pitta Dosh* lead to fluid accumulation and inflammation. *Navayasa Churna*, with its *Tikta* and *Katu Rasa*, pacifies these *Dosh*s and helps reduce inflammation. In *Jalodara*, *Ama* is a key factor. *Amanash* occurs due to the *Deepana*, *Pachana* action of *Navayasa Churna*. *Lekhana*, *Ruksha*, and *Laghu* properties help eliminate excess *Kapha Medas*, toxins, and abdominal fluid and prevent recurrence.

Shotha

The formulation also exhibits *Shothaghna*, hepatoprotective, antimicrobial, antioxidant, and antibacterial effects. These support liver function, reduce swelling, and fight infections. By enhancing *Dhatu-agni* and immunity, it promotes tissue repair and prevents chronic inflammation.

Kushtha

In the pathogenesis of *Kushta Vyadhi*, Ayurveda highlights seven key factors that become vitiated: *Rakta*, *Lasika*, *Mamsa*, *Twacha* and the *Tridosha*. Among these, *Rakta Dhatu* and *Tridosha* play a central role in disease manifestation. *Navayasa Churna* effectively manages *Rakta Dushti* and balances all three *Doshas* due to its well-formulated composition. By purifying *Rakta Dhatu* and correcting imbalances of *Dosha*, it helps relieve core symptoms of *Kushta*, such as *Kandu*, *Vaivarnya*, *Lalima*, *Strava* and *Jadatva*.

The dominance of *Katu* and *Tikta Rasa* in this formulation enhances its *Shodhana* and *Ropana* effects. These Rasas cleanse the *Twacha*, eliminate *Dosha* and *Ama*, and promote healthy skin regeneration. *Navayasa Churna* helps to heal *Kushta Vyadhi* through systemic and local effects, hence recurrence is prevented and long-term relief is gained.

Krumi

Abnormal digestion and impaired metabolism create a conducive environment for the development and proliferation of *Krumi*. In this context, the formulation known as *Navayasa Churna* contains a predominance of *Katu* and *Tikta Rasa*, both of which are traditionally recognized for their *Krumighna* properties. The eradication of *Krumi* from the body through these herbs leads to significant improvement in appetite. As digestion improves, the nutritional absorption in the gut is enhanced, resulting in better nourishment of bodily tissues and overall strengthening of the body. Through a synergistic combination of *Deepana*, *Pachana*, *Krumighna* and blood-purifying actions, *Navayasa Churna* targets eliminating *Krumi* and also restores digestive balance and promotes systemic health.

CONCLUSION

The formulation of *Navayasa Churna* includes *dravyas* endowed with various properties which can break down the manifestation process of the *Rogas* mentioned in the *Phalashruti*, such as *Pandu*, *Hridroga*, *Bhagandara*, *Shotha*, *Kustha*, *Udara*, *Arsha*, *Mandagni*, *Aruchi* and *Krimi Roga*. The wise selection of *dravyas*, based on *Acharya Yukti*, proves to be highly relevant in the current era. The drugs used in the combination help to manage the multiple diseases. The herbo-mineral components in such formulations are biocompatible and possess particles small enough to enter the bloodstream efficiently. This enhances their therapeutic potential.

The formulation, after entering the bloodstream, exhibits various actions on the target cells and achieves the results as explained above.

The combined study of traditional medicines with modern technology signifies a transformative era in healthcare, where traditional Ayurvedic wisdom converges with modern scientific understanding, offering effective and natural solutions to contemporary health challenges.

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