

REVIEW OF SOME REMEDIES OF ALCOHOLISM AS PER SIDDHA LITERATURE

Rajalakshmi. P*

Centre for Advanced Research in Indian System of Medicine (CARISM), SASTRA University, Thanjavur, Tamilnadu, India

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ABSTRACT

Alcoholism, One getting habituated to the alcohol irrespective of socio- economic factors is one of the present burning problems of the society. Various factors will get affected with the intake of alcohol like health, social, mental and economical factors, which directly influences on the growth of the person as well as society. A review of the types of alcohol, the effect of them on health and their remedies as per Siddha literature is dealt in this context.

KEYWORDS: Alcohol, Remedies, Siddha

***Corresponding author**

Dr. P. Rajalakshmi, Assistant Professor-1, Centre for Advanced Research in Indian System of Medicine (CARISM), SASTRA University, Thanjavur, Tamilnadu, India E Mail: drrajibsms@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Since the time immemorial Tamil, has flourished and has been the mother of sixty four excellent arts, which are incompatible with the most advanced technologies. Tamil medicine (Siddha medicine), has a vast diversified knowledge in cause and curative effects of diseases.

The forefathers of these Siddha medicines, Siddars, have developed a unique pattern of medicinal preparation in the name of Kunapadam. Pathological methods are explained in Noi naadal, Physiological classifications are said in Udal tattuvam, anatomical explanation in Angathipatham, Rejuvenative therapy in Kaya karpham, Immuno modulatory therapy in Yogasanas & Pranayamas, diagnostic methods are said in Nadi paritcha. Pediatric treatment in Balavagadam which, deals with the pathogenesis of fertilization and development of foetus, and also methods of developing a healthy child. Toxicology and antidotes are dealt in the name of Nanjunool. Massages in Thokkanam, applying pressure upon the certain vital parts and conservative treatment for fractures and body pain in Varmam¹.

Alcohol, in the name of "Erisarayam" is widely used in therapeutics in Siddha system of medicine. Sweetish fluid called toddy, collected from the coconut tree or palm tree sap is fermented into an alcoholic beverage or into vinegar. Various types of alcohol, their preparatory methods and measures to follow to counter act the adverse effects are explained in detail¹.

Note: Vata, Pitta, Kapha are the three humors.

VARIETIES**Coconut Toddy (*Coccus nusifera*)**

It is drawn from flowers of coconut tree (*Coccus nusifera*). It acts as a laxative and has stimulant effect. It reduces the stress and increases enthusiasm. It can be used as a general tonic for pregnant women before fermentation.

Palmyra Toddy (*Borassus flabelifer*)

It acts as a stimulant and Antiphlogistic (reduces inflammation or fever). Good for distilling arrack. Reduces body tiredness and is a good aphrodisiac.

Dates Toddy (*Phoenix sylvestris*)

It is called wild date toddy prepared commonly in Mysore. Certain quantity of the sweet juice is exposed to the sun and fermented, that becomes toddy. The therapeutic dose is 168ml. It is the coolest of all beverages.

Prickly Pear Toddy (*Opuntia dillenii*)

It is collected from flower of the plant. It is purgative and refrigerant. It cures pitha diseases.

Sago Palm Toddy (*Metroxylon sagu*)

The toddy prepared from the flowers of the Sago palm is the inferior variety of all the toddy preparations used in the Malabar Coast. It acts as a laxative. It acts as a general tonic when consumed every morning².

Fig Toddy (*Ficus racemosa*)

Fig toddy is collected from the root of the *Ficus racemosa* tree. Fig toddy is mixed with sugar or banana fruit, consumed every morning cures bone disorders,

Pitta diseases and excessive thirst. It purifies the blood and gives cooling effect to the body.

Margosa Toddy (*Azadiracta indica*)

It is obtained from Neem plant. It reduces stomachache and gives strength to body. It is used in chronic fever, venereal diseases and other Vata related conditions.

Peepal Toddy (*Ficus religiosa*)

It is collected from root of the tree. It is used to cure peptic ulcer, other abdomen problems.

Rice Toddy (*Oriza sativa*)

Rice is half cooked, sealed and kept in under ground. After fermentation it is taken out and used. This is called Rice toddy. It induces kapha diseases³.

COLLECTION OF TODDY

The toddy is saccharine juice obtained by the excision of the spadix or young flowering shoot of the Palmyra, coconut, date and other palms. The earthen pots are tied to the stem by toddy-drawers (shanaurs) and juice which exudes gets collected into the earthen pots.

The above collected drink serves as a pleasant and wholesome drink when taken in fresh from the tree in early hours i.e. before sunrise. When it gets exposed to air; it undergoes fermentation process and becomes the common intoxicating drink of the lower classes. It is also used to prepare sugar, vinegar etc. The toddy, prepared particularly from the coconut is used by bakers as a leaven for raising bread. Therapeutically it is prescribed for women who desire to conceive. Other toddy's which are drawn from the bark of Margosa (Neem), fig (Banyan) and other trees are very much used therapeutically (Mentioned above).

Alcoholism, addiction to alcohol is explained in the name of "Kudiverinoi" in Siddha literature. Mathathium is the synonym for it. Four stages of alcoholism, symptoms and medicinal remedies basing upon the three factors Vatham, Pittam and Kapham are explained in detail by Dr. Kuppusamy Mudaliyar, 1954 in his book Siddha Maruthavam¹.

Definition

When a person consumes excess alcohol, fermented fruit juices or toddy effected with less alertness and uncontrollable speech is called alcoholism¹.

Properties

It possesses sour or pungent taste, easily evaporates in air, dry and light in nature⁴.

First Stage

Intake of alcohol initially gives cheerful mind, makes one to over enthusiastic, feel them happy and sharp, remembers the old memories. It increases body heat, stamina, sexual desires. It helps in digestion and acts as an appetizer. People loose his conscious and he starts dancing and singing.

Second Stage

In this stage the people becomes weak mentally and physically, loose the knowledge and good characters. Temporarily disturbed Psychological behavior can be observed and becomes normal after the sleep.

Third Stage

In this stage symptoms of both the above stages can be seen except sleep depending on the quantity of alcohol consumed. The person behaves irresponsibly, don't have any knowledge of the things what they are doing. They don't keep anything confidential and talk open heartedly.

Fourth Stage

In this stage the people loose their stamina completely. They are unable to walk themselves. Symptoms like bradypnoea (slow pulse rate), Hyperthermia (elevated body temperature), sweating all over the body sometimes leading to death can be seen.

MEDICINES

Note

The names mentioned within the bracket are Tamil name of the plant.

First Stage

Syzygium Cumini fruit juice (Naval pazha charu), Honey and Ginger juice are mixed in equal quantities and given at dose of 300 ml till the complete recovery.

Fried Cumin seeds are added with a measure of 175 ml of honey and lemon juice and boiled for five minutes. The above mixture is consumed a dose of 100ml five times a day.

Sugar cane juice, Cumin seed, *Elettaria cardomomum* (Ela) and Ginger are powdered and used.

Lemon flower is crushed and added with Fermented rice water is well blended and filtered. This can be consumed in quantity of 85 ml to reduce the thirst.

Each 35gms of *Trichosanthes cucumerina* (Peipudal), *Luffa cylindarica* (Peipeerkku), *Mollugo cerviana* (Parpatakam), *Tinospora cardiopholia* (Seenthil) are boiled in 800 ml of water and reduced to 100 ml of decoction. It is to be consumed by adding equal quantity of sugar cane juice. It is also used in other conditions like Nausea and vomiting also.

200 ml of the Grape juice is blended with dry dates fruits, *Ziziphus jujuba* fruit (Elanthai pazham) and filtered. This can be used for five times a day.

Grape juice, Fermented rice water, Pomegranate fruit juice, *Oxalis corniculata* juice (Puliyarai saaru) *Averrhoa carambola* (Thamarathankai saaru) juice each 82.5 ml mixed with each 5gms of *Cinnamomum zeylanicum* (Lavanga pattai), *Myristica officinalis* fruit (Jathikkai), *Myristica officinalis* leaf (Jatipatri) in powder form are blended and filtered. It is prescribed in a dose of 100 ml⁴.

If the patient has body heat or burning sensation of body, cool water bath is advised. Oil bath also advised.

Second Stage

Centella asiatica (Vallari), *Oxalis corniculata* juice (Puliyarai saaru), Dates, *Ficus racemosa* (Atthi) Skinned Ginger, Black Pepper, Long Pepper, *Terminalia chebula*, *Terminalia bellerica*, *Emblica officinalis*, Lavangam (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*), Lavanga pattai (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*), Ela (*Elletaria cardomum*)⁷ are taken in equal quantity and decoction is prepared with all the above drugs. 175 ml of decoction is consumed 6-times a day.

Each 70gms of Skinned Ginger, *Adathoda vasica*, *Androraphis paniculata*, (*Trichosanthes cucumerina* (Peipudal), *Azadirachta indica* bark, Coriander seed are mixed with Fermented rice water, Pomogranate fruit juice, and Butter milk equal quantity are boiled to reduce it by four. It is prescribed in a dose of 175 ml two times a day.

Each 500ml of Cow's ghee, Milk and Goat's meat (Kadai iraichi) are boiled. To this a fine paste of the above drugs (after grinding with milk), pepper, cumin seed, *Cinnamomum zeylanicum* (Lavanga pattai), *Myristica officinalis* (Jathikkai) each 4gms are added and boiled till it turns to oil form. It is taken in a dose of 16 ml, two times a day.

Use ulunthu thylam (oil prepared from black gram) for body massage.

Third Stage

Ginger juice-180 ml, long pepper powder-8 gm and Black pepper powder-8 gm are mixed and prescribe three times a day.

Soup prepared from Goats bone, ginger, black pepper, *Cinnamomum zeylanicum* (Lavangam) is consumed two times a day.

Chitra mutti thylam (Oil prepared from *Sida cordifolia*), Arakku thylam (Prepared oil from trees resins) or Sukku thylam (oil prepared from dried ginger) are advised for body massage⁵.

CONCLUSION

Since centuries intake of Alcohol is in practice and it has been considered as a costly habit and is restricted to

higher group of society. It has been practiced as a hall mark for the higher economic group like kings, landlords etc. It is also used in therapeutics as an anesthetic agent during the period of wars in wound operating conditions. There is much evidence in Indian system of medicine regarding the usage of Alcohol while performing the aruvai sigichai (operative procedures in Siddha system) procedures to anesthetize the patients.

Now days the charm of intake of alcohol become bad habit of every group of society irrespective of the economic and social status. Alcohol intake becomes so prevalent that it is one of the reasons for pathetic conditions of the Indian families who are below poverty line and belongs to lower income group.

So, in view of the adverse effects of the alcohol intake and their reflections upon the socio – economic status of the families, which indirectly affects the socio- economic status of the country an effort to handle the different stages of Alcoholism, along with their treatment by using small remedies as per Siddha system of medicine are mentioned in detail in the above review.

As “**Prevention is better than cure**” a complete stoppage and withdrawing one from this dreadful habit is always wise and appreciable. A humble request from the author side is to get rid of this habit to prevent one from so many dreadful conditions, which will improve the socio- economic status of the individual as well as the society and also country.

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