



Vidarigandhadi Gana of Sushruta Samhita: A Review of its Clinical Indications

Dipti^{1*}, Kumar S² and Rath SK¹

¹PG Department of Dravyaguna Vigyana, NIA, India

²Department of Kayachiktisa, Ayurvedic and Unani Tibbia College, India

*Corresponding author: Dipti, PhD Scholar (Ayu), PG Department of Dravyaguna Vigyana, NIA, Jaipur, India; Email: dipti9235@gmail.com

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Abstract

Medicinal substances are classified in Ayurveda in many ways for convenient learning, understanding and applications. *Acharya Sushrut* has classified medicinal substances under *gana sutra* and these are to be used in later sthana of the text (*chikitsa sthan, uttar tantra* etc.) as per *ayurveda* principle. The first *gana* i.e. *vidarigandhadi gana* is taken for analysis for its clinical indication from *sushrut samhita* and its commentaries. Review showed that the indication of this *gana* vis-a-vis *shosha, gulma, shwasa, kasa* have clinical applicability in other Sthana of *Sushrut samhita*. Study reveals it can be given in various other clinical conditions like *udaroga, apasmara, vidradhi, abhishyanda, atisaar, raktapitta, pratishyaya, trishna, mutrakriccha* etc. after analysing the dosha. This *vidargandhadhi gana* follows the principle of *sutra* being used in later part of text and it is not only having *vata pitta* vitiating property but also *balya* by its nature.

Keywords: *Gana; Vidarigandhadi; Ayurveda; Clinical applications; Sutra; Sushrut samhita*

Abbreviations

Su: *Sushrut samhita*; T: Tika (Commentary); u: *uttar tantra*; chi: *chikitsa sthana*; sh: *sharira sthana*; su: *sutra sthana*; Ch.chi: *Charak samhita chikitsa sthana*.

Introduction

Dravya is the most important tool in therapeutics. It is also one of the four foundational factors of therapeutics; physician, patient and attendant being the other three [1]. Here *Charaka* explains that success of therapeutics is not ensured only by mere presence of these four but by their qualitative excellence. *Ayurveda* states that any substance of this world can be used as medicine when applied with proper rationale and in correct indication [2]. *Charaka* states that a single medicinal substance can be used in various clinical conditions depending upon dose, dosage, condition of the patient, etc [3]. Therefore there are practically countless medicinal substances which are used in therapeutics.

As there are countless medicinal substances, though not impossible but it is very difficult to learn, understand and apply each medicinal substance individually. Therefore medicinal substances are classified on basis of certain common parameters like morphology, pharmacological action, therapeutic uses, etc [4]. *Charaka* has classified the medicinal substances into groups such as *mahakashaya, moolini, phalini*, etc. *Sushruta* has classified medicinal substances into different *Gana*. *Gana* means group of drugs having similar and special characteristics either in *swaroop* (morphology), *rasa* (taste), *guna* (properties), *karma* (pharmacological actions). *Vagbhatta* has used both *mahakashaya* and *gana* at separate places for classifying medicinal substances.

Acharya Sushruta has explained 37 *gana* and each *gana* has multiple indications. The components in these *gana* are included in such a way that they have similar action and properties. The nomenclature of *Gana* is given by the first drug in that particular *Gana* e.g. in *Vidarigandhadi Gana*-

Vidarigandha is the first drug mentioned in this *gana*. Each *gana* is followed by its potential action on *dosha*, *dhatu*, *mala* and clinical indication.

The *Ayurvedi samhita* texts follow a method wherein *sutra* (principles) are described in the beginning of *samhitas* in the *sutrasthana* with a tenet of using them in subsequent chapters like *nidan* (diagnosis) and *chikitsa* (therapeutics) [5]. *Gana* is one such *sutra* (principle), which logically would be used in the later part of *samhita*. Also *Sushrut* has opined that these groups of drugs (*gana*) are mentioned in brief in *sutrasthana*, their detail uses would be described in section of treatment [6]. Against this background, present study was taken to review the clinical implication of *Vidarigandhadi gana* in other *sthana* of *sushrut samhita*.

Materials and Methods

All references regarding *Vidarigandhadi gana*

was collected from *Sushrut Samhita* and its available commentaries. These references were thoroughly analysed to establish linkages between the indications and uses mentioned in *Sutra Sthana* and actual uses in other *sthana* of *sushrut samhita* (*Chikitsa Sthana*, *uttar tantra* etc). The indications and uses of *Vidarigandhadi gana* was then categorized on basis of its use in diseases mentioned in *Sutra Sthana*, as per *Dosha prabhava* of the *Gana* and also in conditions where in linkages could be logically established based on the *doshic* involvement of the disease.

Observation & Results

Vidarigandhadi gana comprises of 20 *dravyas* all of plant origin. This *gana* is said to be useful in *Shosha*, *Gulma*, *Angamarda*, *Kasa*, *Shwasa* and having *Vata-Pittanashak* property (Tables 1 & 2).

Sno	Sanskrit name	Botanical name	Family	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	doshashaman
1	<i>Vidaarigandha</i>	<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i> DC.	Fabaceae	<i>Madhur, tikta</i>	<i>Guru, snigdha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Tridoshar</i>
2	<i>Vidaari</i>	<i>Vidarikanda(alpakshira)-Pueraria tuberosa</i> DC.	Fabaceae	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Guru, snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Vatapittahar</i>
		<i>Kshirvidari(bahu kshira)-Ipomeadigitata</i> Linn.	Passifloraceae					
3	<i>Vishwadeva</i>	<i>Grewia populifolia</i> Vahl. [= <i>Grewia tenex</i> (Forssk.) Fiori]	Tiliaceae	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>laghu, snigdha, picchilla</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Vatapittahar</i>
4	<i>Sahadeva/balabheda</i> (PV sharma)			<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Laghu, snigdha, picchilla</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Vatapittahar</i>
5	<i>Swadamshtra</i>	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i> Linn.	Zygophyllaceae	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Guru, snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Vatapittahar</i>
6	<i>Prithakparni</i>	<i>Uraria Picta</i> Desv.	Fabaceae	<i>Madhur, tikta</i>	<i>laghu, snigdha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Tridoshar</i>
7	<i>Shatavari</i>	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i> Willd.	Liliaceae (asparagaceae)	<i>Madhur, tikta</i>	<i>Guru, snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Vatapittahar</i>
8	<i>Saariva</i>	<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i> R.Br.	Periplocaceae	<i>Madhur, tikta</i>	<i>Guru, snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Tridoshar</i>
9	<i>Krushnasaariva</i> (API Vol-4)	<i>Cryptolepis buchanani</i> Roem and Schult.	Periplocaceae	<i>Madhur, tikta</i>	<i>Guru, snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Tridoshar</i>
10	<i>Jivaka</i> (API volume 5)	<i>Microstylis wallichii</i> Lindll.	Orchidaceae	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Snigdha, picchilla</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Vatapittahara</i>
11	<i>Rishbhaka</i>	<i>Microstylis mucifera</i> Ridley.	Orchidaceae	<i>Madhur, kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu, snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Vatapittahara</i>

12	Mahasaha	<i>Teramnus labialis</i> Spreng.	Fabaceae	Madhur, tikta	Laghu, snigdha	Sheeta	Madhur	Vatapitthara, kaphavardhak
13	Kshudrasaha	<i>Phaseolus trilobus</i> Ait.	Fabaceae	Madhur, tikta	Laghu, snigdha	Sheeta	Madhur	Vatapitthara, kaphavardhak
14	Bruhati (Big)	<i>Solanum indicum</i> Linn.	Solanaceae	Katu, tikta	Laghu, ruksha, tikshna	Ushna	Katu	Kaphavatashamak
15	Bruhati (Small)	<i>Solanum xanthocarpum</i> Schrad. And Wendle	Solanaceae	Katu, tikta	Laghu, ruksha, tikshna	Ushna	Katu	Kaphavatashamak
16	Punarnava	<i>Boerhaavia diffusa</i> Linn.	Nyctaginaceae	Madhura, tikta, kashaya	Laghu, ruksha	Ushna	Madhur	Tridoshar
17	Eranda	<i>Ricinius communis</i> Linn.	Euphorbiaceae	Madhura, anurasa-katu, kashaya	Snigdha, tikshna, sukshma	Ushna	Madhur	kaphavatahar
18	Hamsapadi	<i>Adiantum lunulatum</i> Burn.	Adiantaceae	Kashaya	Guru	Sheeta	Madhur	Kaphapittashamak
19	Vrishchikali (API Volume 6)	<i>Pergularia extensa</i> N.E. Br.	Asclepiadaceae	Katu, kashaya	Laghu, ruksha, vishad	Anushna	Katu	kapha nisaraka
20	Rishabhi	<i>Mucuna pruriens</i> DC.	Fabaceae	Madhura, tikta	Guru, snigdha,	Ushna	Madhura	Vatahar, kapha pitta vardhak

Table 1: Botanical identity and *rasapanchaka* of *Dravya* of *vidarigandhadi gana* [7-10].

Gana Indication	Reference	Indication in text	Description
Shosha	Su.u.T. 41/32,33	Shoshapratishedha adhyaya	The patient of <i>shosha</i> have been uncted(<i>snehana</i> done) with <i>ghrit</i> of goat and sheep processed with <i>sthiradi varga</i> (<i>vidarigandhadi</i> group) before emesis and purgation.
Gulmaangamarda	Su.u.T. 42/60-61	Gulmapratishedha adhyaya	All <i>Arishta</i> should be prepared with roots of <i>danti</i> and <i>chitraka</i> and also the rugs of <i>vata</i> alleviating groups(<i>Vidarigandhadi</i>)
Urdhwa Shwas	Su.u.T. 51/17	Shwasha	<i>Ghee</i> processed with paste of <i>pippalayadi</i> drugs along with decoction of <i>pratham gana</i> (<i>vidarigandhadi</i> drugs) added with five salts alleviates <i>shwasa</i> (dyspnea) and cough
Kasa	Su.u.T. 51/17	kasa	<i>Ghee</i> processed with paste of <i>pippalayadi</i> drugs along with decoction of <i>pratham gana</i> (<i>vidarigandhadi</i> drugs) added with five salts alleviates dyspnea and <i>kasa</i> (cough)
	Su.u. 52/26	vatika kasa chikitsa	<i>Ghrit</i> cooked with <i>vidarigandhadhi</i> drugs
	Su.u. 52/32,33	Kasa caused by pitta, kshata and excessive sex	<i>Ghrit</i> cooked with decoction of <i>vidarigandhadi</i> , <i>utpaladi</i> , <i>sarivadi</i> , and <i>madhura</i> (<i>kakolyadi</i>) drugs, sugarcane juice, water, milk along with paste of <i>kakolyadi</i> drugs should be taken with sugar in morning

Table 2: Indication of *Vidarigandhadi gana* related to diseases.

Reference	Indication in text	Description
Pittanashana		
Su.chi.14/6	<i>Pittodar chikitsa</i>	Milk processed with <i>vidarigandhadi</i> gana is given for feeding
Su.u.T. 61/29	<i>Paittika apasmaar</i>	Ghee cooked with decoction of <i>pratham gana (vidarigandhadi gana)</i> and paste of <i>kakolyadi gana</i> added with mik, honey and sugar
Vatanashan		
Su.chi.T. 4/14-15	<i>Vataroga</i>	<i>Salvana</i> is prepared with <i>kakolyadi</i> , and <i>vataghna (bhadradarvadi, vidarigandhadi gana)</i>
Su.chi. 4/29	<i>Vatavyadhi chikitsa</i>	<i>Sahsra paka taila</i> ingredient
Su.chi.14/5	<i>Vata udar chikitsa</i>	<i>Snehan</i> done with ghee cooked with <i>vidarigandhadi</i> drugs. non-unctuous and unctuous enema with <i>vidarigandhadi</i> decoction added with oil of <i>danti</i> seeds. Patient should be fed with milk processed with <i>vidarigandhadi</i> gana
Su.chi.T. 16/4-5	<i>Vataj vidradhi</i>	<i>Kakolyadi gana</i> and <i>tarpana (vidarigandhadi gana)</i> mixed with marshy and aquatic meat cooked with fat, sours and salts used as poultice
Su.u.T. 9/10	<i>Vataabhishyandapratisheha</i>	Milk processed with <i>vidarigandhadi gana</i> is useful in <i>vata</i> associated with <i>pitta</i>
Su.u.T. 24/25	<i>Vatik pratishyaya</i>	Ghee cooked with five salts and <i>vidarigandhadi gana</i> is given for drinking
Su.u. 59/18	<i>Vataja mutakricha chikitsa</i>	Oil or ghee mixed with other three fats should be cooked with <i>gokshura, pashanabheda</i> etc., <i>vidarigandhadi gana</i> . Given as internal administration or unctuous enema or urethral douching.
Su.u.T. 17/33	<i>Vataraktaj timira</i>	Oil cooked with <i>sthiradi gana (vidarigandhadi gana)</i> and sweet (<i>kakolyadi gana</i>) group

Table 3: Indication of *Vidarigandhadi Gana* Related to *Doshik* Predominance.

Reference	Indication in text	Description
<i>Sutika paricharya</i>	Su.sh.10/16	Fatty gruel or Milk gruel processed with <i>vidarigandhadi gana</i> after purification
<i>Makkala shula</i>	Su.sh.10/22	Decoction of <i>viadarigandhi</i> drugs mixed with <i>devadaru</i> and <i>maricha</i>
<i>Hanuasthi bhagna</i>	Su.chi.T. 3/39/40	Ghee cooked with <i>vataghna dravya</i> i.e. <i>vidarigandhadi gana</i> is used as snuff
<i>Virechan dravyavikalp vigyaniya adhyaya</i>	Su.su.T.44/35-36	<i>Sauviraka nirmana</i>
<i>Virechan dravyavikalp vigyaniya adhyaya</i>	Su.su.T.44/40-44	<i>Tushodaka</i> ingredient
<i>Garbha appyayan</i>	Su.sh.10/57	If there is pain without bleeding, milk processed with <i>vidarigandhadi</i> plants is given
<i>Garbha apyayan</i>	Su.sh.T.10/4	Ghee processed with <i>prithakparnyadi (vidarigandhadi drugs)</i>
<i>Visarpanadistanarogachikitsa</i>	Su.chi.T.17/ 12	<i>Gauryadi ghrta</i> ingredient
<i>Aptanak chikitsa</i>	Su.chi. 5/18	Ghee cooked with decoction of <i>vidarigandhadi</i> drugs, meat juice, milk and curd is given after <i>shira shudhi</i>
<i>Ardit chikitsa</i>	Su.chi. 5/22	<i>kshira taila</i> ingredient
<i>Raktapitta (basti)</i>	Su.u. 45/38	Non-unctuous enema with milk boiled with <i>vidarigandhadi gana</i>

<i>Brihmana basti</i>	Su.chi.T. 38/83	Decoction of <i>brihman dravya</i> (<i>vidarigandhadi</i> drugs) mixed with the paste of <i>kakolyadi gana</i> with <i>ghee</i> and meat juice makes weight promoting enema
<i>Karnashula</i>	Su.u.T. 21/28	Four types of <i>sneha</i> cooked with urine, sour and decoction of <i>vataghna gana</i> (<i>vidarigandhadi gana</i>)
<i>Pratishyaya</i>	Su.u.T. 24/38	<i>Ghee</i> or oil preparation from <i>vataghna dravya</i> (<i>vidarigandhadi</i> drugs)-(ingredient)
<i>Shirorogpratisheda adhyaya</i> (<i>Shankhaka chikitsa</i>)	Su.u.T. 26/41	Irrigation and paste of <i>sheeta virya</i> drugs (<i>vidarigandhadi gana</i>) is used
<i>Pravahika</i>	Su.u.T 40/ 144	Oil cooked with <i>vata</i> alleviating drugs(<i>vidarigandhad gana</i>) and salt is beneficial for processing food and intake
<i>Shulayukta pravika chikitsa(bhojan)</i>	Su.u. 40/146	In case of pain, patient should take food with milk processed with <i>trikatu</i> and <i>vidarigandhadi gana</i>
<i>Vataja trishna</i>	Su.u.T. 48/19	Warm water processed with with <i>pratham gana</i> (<i>vidarigandhadi gana</i>)
<i>Kshataj trishna</i>	Su.u.T, 48/25	Decoction prepared with <i>sarivadi</i> , <i>trinapanchamula</i> , <i>utpaladi</i> and <i>prataham gana</i> (<i>vidarigandhadhi gana</i>) is given for drinking
<i>Mutraghata</i> (Retention of urine caused by <i>vata</i> and <i>kapha</i>)	Su.u.T. 58/33	Roots of <i>Prithakparnyadi varga</i> (<i>vidarigandhadi gana</i>) and <i>gokshura</i> should be cooked in water and milk. It should be taken with sugar and honey

Table 4: *Vidarigandhadi Gana* in other Clinical Conditions.

Discussion

Vidarigandhadi gana from *sushruta samhita* is reviewed and analysed from the text and commentaries as per their given indication and to find out possibility of any new indication. It is indicated in *Shosha*, *Gulma*, *Angamarda*, *Kasa*, *Shwasa* and having *Vata-Pittanashak* property [11]. On preliminary review, it has been found that its indication in other section of text is given in various clinical conditions like *Vatavyadhi*, *Udararoga*, *Atisaar*, *Raktapitta*, *Mutrakricha* etc (Table 3). For instance, Milk processed with *vidarigandhadi gana* is given as food in *pittaj udara roga* (Table 3) in *uttartantra* which could be the implication of principle of *sutrasthana* as per their indication given. On analysing, it has been found that *vidarigandhadi gana* has 8 direct indication related to *vata dosha* and 2 indication related to *pitta dosha* in different clinical conditions like *udaroga*, *apasmara*, *vidradhi*, *abhishyanda*, *atisara*, *pratishyaya*, etc. (Table 3) and one for each *shosha*, *gulma* and *shwasa*. It is given 3 times for *kasa* while no reference is found for *angamarda* (Table 2).

Gana give direct indication for *shosha*, *gulma*, *shwas*, and *kasa* but their dosage form, adjuvant etc. are being explained by *sushruta* in its descriptive chapter. For instance, *ghee* processed with *Vidarigandhadi gana* is directly indicated for *Vatika kasa* [12]. *Vidarigandhadi gana* processed with milk and *ghrit* are commonly used dosage forms used in various clinical conditions by *acharya sushruta*. *Vidarigandhadi gana*

processed formulations are advised in new indications like *sutika paricharya*, *makkala shula*, *hanuasthi bhagna*, *garbha appyan*, *aptanak*, *ardita*, *shankhaka*, *pratishyaya*, *pravahika*, *trishna* and *mutraghata* (Table 4). It seems that this *gana* has been used in situations where *vata dosha* is aggravated along with loss of *bala*. In *sutika paricharya*, after *shodhan* (3 days after delivery), *acharya* has advised *vidarigandhadi gana* processed milk gruel. It would have been given to alleviate *vata dosha* and enhance the body strength. *Makkal shula* is the pain found at *nabhi*, *basti* and *udar*; in *sutika* (female for 45 days after delivery) along with *bloated stomach due to aggravated vata*, here *Sushrut* indicated decoction of *vidarigandhadi gana* sprinkled with *devdaru* and *maricha* powder. If there is pain without bleeding during pregnancy, *Sushrut* indicated *vidarigandhadi gana* processed milk to alleviate *vata* which is the obvious cause of pain. In *aptanak* which comes under *vata vyadhis*, *sushrut* indicated the use of *Ghee* cooked with decoction of *vidarigandhadi* drugs, meat juice, milk and curd is given after *shira shudhi* to control the spreadability of *vata*. In *karnashula*, *shushrut* mentioned that the ear should be filled with four types of *sneha* cooked with urine, sour and decoction of *vidarigandhadi gana*. In *raktapitta*, *rakta* and *pitta* both are in its aggravated form therefore *sushrut* give *vidarigandhadi* processed milk *basti* in such situation (Su.u. 45/4-5). In *shankhaka*, irrigation and paste of *sheeta virya* drugs i.e. *vidarigandhadi gana* etc. is used to reduce the intensity of aggravated *vata*, *pitta*, *kapha*, *rakta* to get the relief from pain. In *trishna* main aggravated *doshas*

are *vata* and *pitta*, *sushrut* have mentioned Warm water processed with *vidarigandhadi gana* in *vataj trishna* and decoction prepared with *sarivadi*, *trinapanchamula*, *utpaladi* and *vidarigandhadhi gana* in *kshataj trishna* to maintain the mentioned *doshas*. In *Vata-Pittaj Mutraghata*, *sushruta* has given that the roots of *vidarigandhadi gana* and *gokshura* should be cooked in water and milk and taken with sugar and honey to compensate the intensity of *doshas* and get the homeostasis. In *pravahika* frequent watery bowel movements leads to loss of water and electrolyte along with alleviation of *vata* and *agninasha* (Ch.chi.19/30). For the management of such situation *Sushrut* indicated food processed with *trikatu* and *vidarigandhadhi gana*, *trikatu* is to maintain the *agni* and *vidarigandhadhi gana* drugs with milk to compensate the loss of fluid and to hold the *vata dosha* to maintain the haemostasis. After analysing the clinical condition, dose, dosage forms mentioned by *acharya*, it is found that the *vidargandhadhi gana* is not only having *vata pitta* vitiating property but also *balya* by its nature. It also follows the principle of *sutra* being used in later part of text.

Conclusion

Acharya sushrut have aggregated some ingredients into one *gana* based upon their commonality in morphology, properties, actions, etc. The first *gana*, *Vidarigandhadhi gana* is analysed and it showed that it follows the principle in which *sutra* is described briefly in *sutra sthana* which is to be used in later part of *samhita* i.e. the indication of this *gana* vis-a-vis *shosha*, *gulma*, *shwasa*, *kasa* have clinical applicability in other *Sthana* of *Sushrut samhita*. Study showed that it can be given in various other clinical conditions like *udaroga*, *apasmara*, *vidradhi*, *abhishyanda*, *Atisaar*, *raktapitta*, *pratishyaya*, *trishna*, *mutrakriccha* etc. after analysing the separate *dosha* or mixed *dosha*.

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