



RUDRAKSHA- THE DIVINE BEAD

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ABSTRACT

Rudraksha, a sanctified seed, is famous for its innate electromagnetic properties. According to Hindu mythology this seed stimulates our body energy wheel, giving better harmonization to body-mind and better capability to our mental and physical power thereby providing spiritual enlightenment. Due to its positive electromagnetic assets it controls body's bioelectrical energy and therefore is employed in folk medicine as a counter agent of stress, anxiety, depression, palpitation, nerve pain, epilepsy, lack of concentration, asthma, hypertension, arthritis and liver diseases, in addition to spiritual gain. Yogis have comprehensively explained about valuable healing powers of Rudraksha. Over the years people attained familiarity about its role in spirituality, therapeutics and use as fashion accessory. This present review is an attempt to bring to light its spiritual, botanical, ethno medicinal, pharmacological property of Rudraksha to the contemporary world.

KEYWORDS: Rudraksha, spiritual, electromagnetic property, Hypertension.

INTRODUCTION

Rudraksha is a valuable and magical bead of Hindu tradition & meditation. Rudraksha word is related to Hindu religion and its tree and seeds both are called Rudraksha. In Sanskrit Rudraksham means Rudraksha fruit as well as Rudraksha tree.^[1] Vedic scriptures affirm that the yogis, saints, sages of the ancient, medieval and modern India have had Rudraksha on their bodies. Rudraksha beads are regarded as the timeless jewels of the Gods and find their mention in ancient Puranas and Upanishads as being the most powerful aid in the path of self realisation. Since ages Rudraksha have been tested and worn by Yogis and Saints and they found these beads to be very useful for exceptional health and spiritual attainments. The power of Rudraksha is felt quickly and effectively by the persons who are devoted to religion, have strong belief in God and capitulate themselves to complete Vedic life style. Others who are Gurumukhi (blessed by Spiritual master) feel that the Rudraksha affects very quickly and effectively.^[2] Rudraksha means "the eye of Rudra (Shiva)" and is considered to be the most potent manifestation of the Cosmic Force.^[3] Hence Rudraksha is the object of admiration and also the source to accomplish the higher self.^[4]

Rudraksha and Hindu mythology

The word Rudraksha has its etymological beginnings in the two Sanskrit words "**Rudra**" and "**Aksha**" meaning

Lord Shiva and tear drops respectively. According to "Shiva Purana", Lord Shiva once went into deep meditation for the well being of all living creatures. When he woke up, he opened his eyes and tear drops fell on the Earth. These tear drops took the form of seeds that later on became the Rudraksha tree. **Rudraksha** therefore means **The tear of Lord Shiva**.^[5] The name also means "Under the protection of Lord Rudra". The dry seed-capsules from the Rudraksha tree form the Rudraksha beads, which are being used as a rosary and are also adorned individually.

The Rigveda mentions "Rukh draavayathi iti rudraha". Rukha means grief, distress or anguish. Draavayathi means 'eradicate', iti means 'that' or 'who', and Rudra means another name of Shiva. It means Shiva who eradicates miseries or grief.^[6]

Lord Shiva is always depicted wearing rosaries of Rudraksha beads on his head, arms and hands. With this came the religious and divine connotation of Rudraksha. It is believed that the seed of Rudraksha contains the secrets of the whole progression of the cosmos within it. The sages and yogis of the Himalayas, who live according to the eternal natural law of Sanatana Dharma, have always been wearing Rudraksha for centuries for a fearless life on their path to spiritual enlightenment and deliverance.

Devotees of Lord Shiva always wear Rudraksha as rosaries which are used in meditation; it helps to safeguard good health, to expand self-empowerment and a courageous life. Rudraksha are noted for their divine shield and are worn on the body singly or as chains (Mala). Wearing Rudraksha beads help us activating our energy wheels so that one can figure out things that are happening beyond human sensory channel like paranormal activity which is beyond current scientific understanding but sometimes actually occur.^[7,8,9]

According to Devi Bhagawada Skandha; there lived an Asura demon chief, Tripura, who was mighty and valiant. He defeated Devas and deva chiefs and became emperor of the Asura because of whom Devas were distressed and went to Lord Shiva to represent their grievances. Shiva thought for a while about how to kill Tripura, and sat with open eyes. After prolonged time Shiva winked his eyes and tears fell down from them which later originated as Rudraksha tree. From the Sun-eye (the right eye) of Shiva twelve types of Rudraksha came into being, from the moon-eye (left eye) sixteen kinds and from the fire-eye (in his forehead) ten kinds of Rudraksha originated. Those which originated from the Sun-eye are blood coloured, those from the moon-eye are white Rudraksha and from the fire-eye are black Rudraksha.^[10] It is said that boiled Rudraksha beads are considered for the Brahmins, red for Kshatriyas, white for Vaishyas and the black Rudraksha are for the Shudra varnas.^[11] Padma Purana expresses that 'A person who wears all Rudraksha becomes Me'. So, one should attempt from all levels to wear the divine Rudraksha. It also opines that even Rudra attained Rudrahood, Yogis achieve the ultimate truth and Brahma attains Brahamatav/ Moksha only after adorning Rudraksha. Thus there is nothing higher than wearing Rudraksha beads in this world.^[12]

The unique properties and divine powers of Rudraksha have been described in the authentic Shastras like the Rudraksha Jabala Upanishad, Padma Purana, Shiva Purana, Devi Purana and Bhagavat Purana. According to holy religious manuscript it helps human achieve all they want like a healthy mind, body and soul, a affluent life that many dream of and only some achieve and a blissful soul.^[13,14,15]

Description

Botanically, the holy Rudraksha tree is known as 'Elaeocarpus ganitrus Roxb' and belongs to the family Tiliaceae, a large evergreen broad-leaved tree with a wide crown. Altitude-wise, its habitat starts from sea-coast and goes up to 2,000 meters. Geographically it is found growing naturally and abundantly in tropical and subtropical areas. The trees are perennial in habitat with almost 15 to 60 meter height and carry seeds/fruits within seven years. These trees are mostly found in abundance in Nepal, in the Himalayan slopes and also in parts of India, Indonesia and Malaysia. Its English name

is Utrasum Bead Tree. In Indonesia the Rudraksha tree is known as Ganitri Tree or Jenitri Tree. Around 70% of the Rudraksha trees are found in Indonesia, 25% in Nepal and 5% in India.^[16]

Rudraksha beads are the seeds of the Rudraksha fruit obtained from Rudraksha trees which are covered by an outer shell of blue colour on fully ripening, so they are also called blueberry beads and the sweet tasting fruit flesh can be used for treatment of various diseases. It is kept in water for a number of days and then Rudraksha is taken out after peeling off the pulp. Rudraksha beads contain gaseous elements with 50.031 % carbon, 0.95% nitrogen, 17.897% hydrogen and 30.53% oxygen.

Ayurvedic properties of Rudraksha.^[17]

Rasa	Amla
Guna	Laghu Ruksha
Veerya	Ushna
Vipaka	Ushna
Karma	Ruchya
Dosha Prabhava	Vata-Kapha Shamaka
Vyadhi Prabhava	Bhutagrahanashana, Shirortishamana
Raj Nighantu	

People of all castes creed and religions can wear Rudraksha.^[18] which is a rare gift of nature to man in the sense that most beads come with a hole drilled in the centre, as if nature intended man to use the Rudraksha bead to form a chain. Only such Rudraksha beads are considered auspicious.^[19] In ancient times these naturally forming beads would have been appreciated by the forest dwelling sages for the ease with which meditation beads could be made from them. They only need to be picked from the ground and cleaned before being strung. The holes by which they are strung are natural in all beads with four faces or more.

The Rudraksha possesses magnetic power and hence when placed between two copper coins, it spins. This magnetic power inherent in the beads is immensely effective to our body and mind and hence wearing a Rudraksha mala brings good health and mental peace. It reduces heat in the body, brings down blood pressure and also relieves mental pressure and tension. It has been said, that if you drink water in which a Rudraksha bead is soaked for 5 minutes, it helps greatly in reducing blood pressure.^[20] Rudraksha is often believed to symbolize the link between earth and heaven, between man and god. Hence Rudraksha is the object of veneration and also a source to reach the higher self. As per the Vedic scriptures, Rudraksha beads possess mystical and divine properties and can nullify the effects of malefic planets to a great extent. No other bead is considered to be as auspicious and powerful as a Rudraksha. Each seed also possesses from 1 to 38 vertical lines running down its surface, like the longitude lines on a globe which are known as mukhi, or faces, and are natural formations of the seed. Seeds with one vertical line are known as Eka-

mukhi (one facet), which are very rare; those with two lines are Dvi-mukhi (two facets) and so on. Each bead has different effects on the wearer, depending on the number of mukhi or faces it has. Each type of Rudraksha bead has a governing deity and specific powers and properties. This bead can help you achieve all you want - a healthy mind, body and soul, a wealthy life that many dream of and only some achieve, and a happy soul.

According to Shastra (scripture) there are up to 38 mukhi or faces found on Rudraksha, but Rudraksha of 1 to 14 mukhi are the most commonly available ones and amongst them also 5 or 6 mukhi are the vast majority. 95% of the Rudraksha found are with 5 mukhi. It is very rough, hard and tough and can be boiled in hot water for hours without problem. This procedure is sometimes used for testing rare and expensive Rudraksha from the market for its genuineness.

Rudraksha are thought to possess many healing properties as well as magical powers. Their use as medicine, whether ground up and combined with other medicines or worn, has been documented since ancient times. Today most people choose to avail themselves of those medicinal effects by wearing Rudraksha garlands or malas.^[21] A Rudraksha mala is said to lower blood pressure.^[22] calm the nerves, cool fevers, quiet the

disturbed minds of those affected with insanity and other mental disorders. Rudraksha malas are worn by pregnant mothers to protect their unborn children and cool the body.

In Ayurvedic terminology Rudraksha lowers Pitta, reduces Kapha and calms Vata. Drinking water in which a single bead has soaked overnight is thought to introduce these medicinal effects as well. It is most likely that in India you will see many Yogis, Munis, Swamis and saints wearing strings of Rudraksha beads. The brown red bead has become quite popular. Today you will also see Rudraksha shaped into jewellery in the form of earrings, bracelets, necklaces, pendants and even buttons. It is also quite popular with Indian students as it is said to please the goddess Saraswati, the goddess of intellect and learning, thus increasing the intellectual skills and communicative powers. It is also said to have anti-ageing properties and revitalizes the body, soul and mind. Each Rudraksha has particular mantras and certain days of the week for its use. Rudraksha can be worn or kept in a place of worship and should be honoured as a manifestation of the divine. One should not wear Rudraksha to the toilet or during copulation and ideally they should be bathed in scented oil and worshiped daily.^[23]

The special traits of the different Rudraksha beads are described as follows.^[24]

Mukhi	Devta/ Lord	Ruling Planet	Mantra	Indications
Single faced	Lord Shiva	Sun	Om Namah Shivaya, Om Hrim Namah	Headache, Heart Diseases, Blood Pressure, Right eye defect.
Two faced	Devi	Moon	Om Shiva Shakti Namaha	Left eye defect, Diseases of Heart, Lung, Brain, Kidney and Intestines.
Three faced	Agni	Mars	Om Klim Namah, Om Namah Shivaya	Blood defect, plague, small pox, Digestive problems, Blood Pressure, Weakness, Disturbed menstrual cycle, Spontaneous abortion and ulcers.
Four faced	Brahma	Mercury	Om Hrim Namah	Mental diseases, Paralysis, Arthritis, yellow fever and Nasal diseases.
Five faced	Kalakni Rudra	Jupiter	Om Hrim namah	Bone marrow, Liver, Kidney, feet, Thigh, ear, diseases of fat and diabetes.
Six faced	Subramanyam	Venus	Om Hrim Hum Namaha	Eyes, Reproductive organs, Urinary tract, Prostrate, Mouth and Throat.
Seven faced	Mahaluxmi	Saturn	Om Mahaluxmi Namah, Om Hum Namah	Weakness, Colic pain, Pain in bones and muscles, Paralysis, Chronic diseases, Impotency, Worries and hopelessness.
Eight faced	Vinayaga	Rahu	Om Ganeshaya Namah	Lung, Feet, Skin and eye discharge, Hydrocele, Urticaria
Nine faced	Bhairava	Ketu	Om Hrim Hum Namaha	Lung diseases, Fever, eye pain, Bowel pain, Skin diseases, Body Pain
Ten faced	Vishnu	-	Om Hrim Namah	Pacifying all bad planets
Eleven faced	Ekadasa Rudra	-	Om Hrim Hum Namah	Maintenance of entire neurophysiology
Twelve faced	Dvada Sadhithas	Sun	Shree Suryay Namah	Heart-Lung and skin diseases, hiatus of stomach, oesophagus and bowel problems.
Thirteen faced	Shanmuga	Venus	Om Hrim Namah	Meditation and spiritual attainments
Fourteen faced	An aspect of Lord Shiva	Saturn	Om Shivay Namah	Safety and riches, provides miraculous cures to several ailments

Properties of different faced/ Mukhi

- **Single Faced Rudraksha**

Such Rudraksha is quite rare and is considered to be a manifestation of Lord Shiva, hence should be worn on the neck or kept in a place of worship and should undoubtedly be rubbed with pure scented oil daily. Worshipping every morning of the single faced Rudraksha is said to bring about all auspiciousness. Person who keep one faced Rudraksha never run short of money, suffer from catastrophic diseases or sorrows. They turn out to be famous, wealthy and powerful. These Rudraksha bring respect and honour to their wearers and create a general aura of favourable circumstances in all walks of life. The one faced Rudraksha should be worn on a red thread or string enclosed in a gold or silver cap.

- **Two Faced Rudraksha**

The two faced Rudraksha is said to represent Shiva-Shakti, the cosmic creative principle and his companion, the evolving potency. Shiva and Parvati are the two greatest practitioners of the Yoga of devotion and this Rudraksha is said to be of use to those who wish to advance on this path. The two faced Rudraksha should be worn on a red thread or a gold or silver chain.

- **Three Faced Rudraksha**

The three faced Rudraksha is said to represent the manifest trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, the presiding deities of Creation, Maintenance and Destruction respectively. Those who wear the three faced Rudraksha are said to please all of the gods, and nullify all inauspicious planetary influences.

- **Four Faced Rudraksha**

Four faced Rudraksha is considered to be a representation of four headed Brahma, the Creator of the material universe. Students, poets, scientists and those seeking academic posts are advised to wear this Rudraksha. Those who wear it will become esteemed in social circles, learned, respected and honoured, people will seek them out for advice and they will be given great responsibility.

- **Five Faced Rudraksha**

The five faced Rudraksha is a manifestation of the five-headed Lord Shiva. It is the most common form of Rudraksha beads. Wearing it is said to satisfy all of one's desires. Japa (recitation of mantras) performed on a rosary of five faced Rudraksha is always fruitful. The wearing of such a garland is also considered to be of great benefit.

- **Six Faced Rudraksha**

The six faced Rudraksha is said to represent Lord Shiva's powerful and benevolent son, Kartikeya, who has six heads, is the Commander-General of the celestial armies. He is known to protect children from childhood diseases caused by witches, ghosts and other delicate causes; he is quite stern in the protection of those who take shelter of him.

- **Seven Faced Rudraksha**

The seven faced Rudraksha represents the seven forms of the Supreme goddess of Fortune, the Mother of the Universe, Sri Maha Lakshmi. This Rudraksha is said to bring money, luck and power to those who wear it. Those who are interested in success in business are recommended to wear this Rudraksha.

- **Eight Faced Rudraksha**

The eight faced Rudraksha represents the popular elephant-headed son of Lord Shiva, Ganesha. Lord Ganesha, who possesses eight forms, is the god of talents, opportunity, marriage and good luck. He is said to remove obstacles from our life's path as well as make smooth and strong our determination to succeed.

- **Nine Faced Rudraksha**

The nine faced Rudraksha represents the Goddess Durga, whose name means a "fortress" or "citadel". Mother Durga, the companion of Lord Shiva and who appears in nine forms, is the Great Goddess of the world and serves as the superintendent over those who are incarcerated here in this world.

- **Ten Faced Rudraksha**

The ten faced Rudraksha is sacred to Lord Vishnu, the worshipful deity of Shiva and Parvati. This Rudraksha is of greatest benefit to the worshipers of Lord Vishnu. Each face represents one of the ten principal incarnations of the Supreme Lord Krishna, which include the Tortoise, the Fish, the Boar, the half-lion and half-man, the Dwarf, Sita-Rama, Parashurama, Krishna, Buddha and Kalki.

- **Eleven Faced Rudraksha**

Eleven faced Rudraksha represent the eleven Rudras, or the personification of universal anger that manifests at the end of the universe to destroy the cosmic manifestation. This Rudraksha is considered an acceptable substitute for the rare one faced Rudraksha.

- **Twelve Faced Rudraksha**

The twelve faced Rudraksha represents Surya, the Sun god who lives in twelve houses (the zodiac). Those who wear this Rudraksha are blessed with progeny, health, radiance, good fortune, beauty and eloquence.

- **Thirteen Faced Rudraksha**

The thirteen faced Rudraksha is a representation of Rajendradeva or Indra, the king of the gods. This Rudraksha affords the wearer all regard. It is believed to advance a person into positions of leadership and is very important for those in administrative positions.

- **Fourteen Faced Rudraksha**

The fourteen faced Rudraksha is an extremely rare manifestation of Lord Shiva, Mahadeva. Second only in potency to the one faced Rudraksha they often are more complex to stumble on.

- **Gauri-Shankara Beads**

Gauri-Shankara seeds are rare; they are two beads that have grown together in a pair. It is said to bring wealth, health and marital happiness into the home where it is worshiped. It is considered, by authorities, to be more effective than the one faced Rudraksha.

- **Thirteen Bead Mala**

This is a special Rudraksha collector's talisman of great rarity, power and beauty. A mysterious and fascinating gift; it consists of one of each of the 13 different Rudraksha beads strung on a thread, spaced with smaller beads. It can be worn around the neck.

Traditional uses of Rudraksha^[25]

Different parts (beads, bark and leaves) of Rudraksha are used for the treatment of diverse ailments as well as may be worn either on arm, wrist or other parts of the body.

- **As blood purifier and general tonic:** Rudraksha can be taken as a medicament for blood purification and powers the body substance. Regular consumption as a decoction in conjunction with honey purifies blood and works as general tonic.
- **Curing breathing problems:** A decoction made by mixing beads of Rudraksha, bark of Vasa and Haritaki, in equal amount can be consumed with honey. The concoction of ten faced Rudraksha with milk mitigates recurrent cough.
- **For getting good sleep:** Rudraksha shall be kept under pillow and preparation of its bead in the milk shall be applied on the eye lid for getting better sleep.
- **Rectifier of chicken pox or small pox:** Equal proportion of black pepper and Rudraksha should be crushed together and taken with stale water alleviate the problem of small pox.
- **Burn Pox or Marks alleviator:** The five-faced Rudraksha is the foremost remedy for burn or pox marks on face. It can be used as a panacea for skin diseases, ringworms, sores, pimples and boil also.
- **Epilepsy management:** Pulverized bark of Rudraksha tree and pulp of fruit or the bead can be used.
- **For curing Piles:** Rudraksha bead in combination with Triphala Churna and Guggul or with root of Kaneer is beneficial for treating piles.
- **Counter measure for jaundice, liver related problems or stomach ache**
Rudraksha, Chitraka, Harataki, Devdaru, Giloy, Daruhaldi, Dharangi and Punarnava shall be taken in equal proportion and regular consumption of it as a decoction.
- **Nullifying poisonous effects caused by bites of insects:** Panchamukhi Rudraksha can be grinded with lemon juice on a stone and the application of this paste on the affected spot will subside pain.
- **For improving memory power:** Milk boiled with four or six faced Rudraksha seed is excellent remedy for mental disorders. This also assists in enhancing memory.
- **Sexual power improvement:** A recipe of Rudraksha applied over the forehead improves sexual power.
- **For Blood Pressure:** Five mukhi Rudraksha keeps blood pressure normal.
- **For High Blood Pressure:** Rudraksha is a best medication for curing hypertension.
- **Sure shot remedy for conceiving baby:** One Rudraksha and one karsa (10 gm) of Sarpakshi (Ophiorrhiza mungos) can be cooked together and pestled in the milk of one colored cow. Consumption of it during the menstrual period will bestow even a sterile woman conceive- Damara Tantra.
- **Alleviator of heaviness, tongue cracks and tastelessness:** Gargling with Rudraksha decoction is beneficial in heaviness, tongue cracks and tastelessness.
- **Curing all brain disease:** All brain disorders can be recovered with four faced Rudraksha remedy.
- **Neutralizer of brain fever:** Consumption of overnight kept water of Rudraksha in earthen pot on an empty stomach can get rid of brain fever.
- **For Hysteria and Coma:** Elaeocarpus ganitrus is also a good assistance for panic conditions of hysteria and coma in woman.
- **For Frequent fever:** Rudraksha is also good for children's who suffers from frequent fever.
- **Imparts calmness to mind:** It cools down the body temperature and brings calm to mind.
- **Controlling anxiety:** A person grieves from anxiety should keep big size Panchamukhi Rudraksha with themselves and during nervousness; they should hold them tightly in their right palm for ten minutes. It will assist them to get back their confidence.
- **To ward off evil spirits and omens:** The Rudraksha fruits were employed to defend from evil spirits in traditional Indian medicinal system.

Medicinal and scientific value of Rudraksha

Rudraksha beads have been used for thousands of years as an amazing aid to gain power and for healthy life. It has been observed that Rudraksha beads possess electromagnetic properties and by virtue of these properties they empower and control proper functioning of all body parts. Inductance, resistance, dielectrical as well as permanent magnetic properties and dynamic polarity are extensively catalogued in to electrical properties of Rudraksha. Due to electromagnetic and inductive properties of Rudraksha beads, they send out equivalent signals, differing for different mukhis to brain, activates certain brain chemicals and neuro-transmitters thereby imposes positive impact on blood circulation, nervous system and various other organ systems. Scientifically the Rudraksha beads are di-electrical as they store electrical energy and owing to this property they play an important role in regulating palpitations of heart, hyperactivity, streamlining heart beat, lack of concentration etc. Rudraksha seeds are dynamically polar and also possess both paramagnetic and diamagnetic properties which facilitate beneficial healing capacity to them. Rudraksha beads confer anti ageing properties depend on their electromagnetism.^[26] Rudraksha pulp is used in managing head related diseases, epilepsy, and mental sickness, hypoglycemic.^[27] Furthermore it is noted to have myriad pharmacological activities that involve anti-inflammatory.^[28], analgesic.^[29], antidepressant.^[30], antiasthmatic.^[31] sedative.^[32] antihypertensive.^[33,34,35,36] smooth muscle relaxant and hydrocholeretic.^[37], antiulcerogenic³⁸ and anticonvulsant.^[39] Besides, Rudraksha extracts possess potential antimicrobial activity.^[40,41] and can be used even for the alleviation of chronic diseases like cancer.

CONCLUSION

The widespread investigation of literature exposed that Rudraksha is an imperative basis of various pharmacologically and medicinally significant components. Rudraksha has been widely used for its various pharmacological activities like anti-asthmatic, anti-depressant, anti-anxiety, anti-diabetic, anti-oxidative, anti-viral, anti-tumor and anti-hypertensive activities. Rudraksha although appreciated from ancient time for medicinal property but very little scientific experiment has done so far to reveal the accurate prospective of Rudraksha. The widespread investigation of literature uncovered that Rudraksha were used like ornament or jewellery touching the skin of our body in turn controlling the bio electrical energy due to its electromagnetic property. Its medicinal property can be compared to the effect of acupressure and magnetic therapy and require further scientific investigation to reveal true potential of this amazing electromagnetic bead. Eventually, it is also important to distinguish that Rudraksha may be effective not only in isolation, but may in fact have a potentiating effect when given in combination with other herbs or drugs. Rudraksha has been used lucratively in Ayurvedic medicine for

centuries; investigations are essential to further advocate its role in therapeutics.

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