

## REVIEW ON DRUG COLLECTION W.R.T SUSHRUTA SAMHITA

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## ABSTRACT

The world is now turning to Ayurveda and herbal medicine to seek answers to the health issues and building integrated perspective. Success of treatment depends on the four main factors i.e. *Bhishak*, *Dravya*, *Upasthana* and *Rogi*. The health is restored with these four factors functioning into their full potential. The present paper explores *Dravya*, one among these four factors with special emphasis on the method of collection. A drug would be potent if it is collected in right season from a right place and in a right way. It would remain potent if stored properly. These specific aspects of drug collection are discussed by Acharya Sushruta in *Bhumi Pravibhaagiya Adhyaya* of *Sutra Sthana*. The present paper elaborates Acharya Sushruta's insights on the drug collection and its significance.

**KEYWORDS:** Dravya Sangrahana, Drug Collection, Bhumi Pravibhaaga.

## INTRODUCTION

Acharyas gave importance to the land where the drug grows. Details of the land and quality of soil, landscape etc are very clearly explained in *Bhumi pravibhagiya adhyaya* of Sushruta samhita *sutra sthana*. Here he also explains about the preservation and storage techniques of drugs.

Acharya Sushruta advised certain guidelines regarding *dravya sangrahana*, which are necessary to procure best qualities in medicine. Drugs should be collected early in the morning on an auspicious day with auspicious constellation after performing religious rites and offering prayers to the plant/tree to be cut. While collecting the plants physician has to face towards either northern or eastern direction and collect the branches spreading towards east or north. Not only the time and direction even the place where the plant grows is important as a potent land yields potent qualities in the drug.

**Ideal Land for the Drug Collection:** For the purpose of collecting herbs and drugs, the land should be examined first generally; the land which is not afflicted by the presence of burrows, potsherd, uneven, stones, anthills, places of cremation and slaughtering, temples and sand dunes; which is not alkaline, not fragile, has continuous flowing water nearby, with unctuous sprouts of plants; soil being soft, stable, even in colour and texture, black white or red in colour should be searched.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Five Types of Land

Land/*bhumi desha* is classified into five types based on the dominance of *mahabhuta*.

**Parthiva bhumi:** The land which is rocky, stable, heavy, *shyama* or Krishna in colour with more of big trees and plants is *parthiva bhumi*.

**Apya bhumi:** The land which is *shukla*, unctuous, cold, with water all around, with more unctuous plants, grass, tender trees.

**Agneya bhumi:** The land which has more of small rocks of different colours, scanty pale small trees and creepers.

**Vayaviya bhumi:** The land which is dry with soil of ash or donkey colour, predominant in slender trees with less sap and more hollow pockets.

**Nabhasa bhumi:** The land which is *shyama* in colour with soft soil, many burrows in ground, water from this land has *avyakta* rasa, sapless trees growing all around, with more huge mountains and trees.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Characteristics of Collected Material

Though grown in such a land region the herb which is not infested by insects, damaged by poison, sharp weapons, sunlight, breeze, fire, rain and should not be grown on road side; should be well developed and deeply rooted in the soil must have a single predominant taste in it with its natural odour, colour and taste. Well grown its roots being thick, deep and spreading northward should be collected. It should be new and must be used within one year of its collection from field and must be collected from eastern and northern side for therapeutic utility.<sup>[3]</sup>

### Method of Collection of Raw Drugs

The person who is going to collect raw material for manufacture of medicine for well-being of human kind should follow certain rituals. He must be neat and clean both physically and mentally, should wear white outfit, should perform prayer prior to collection, must be fasting overnight, the useful parts shall be collected either from the east or north direction.<sup>[4]</sup>

### Season of Drug Collection

According to Acharya Caraka the raw material to be used shall be collected depending on the season and the part-used. Some *acharyas* opine that roots should be collected between summer & rainy season, leaves in Rainy – season, barks late- autumn, latex in early winter, heart-wood in spring and fruits in summer. But this is not correct, since the whole world is predominantly *saumya* and *agneya* the drugs of *saumya* quality should be collected in cold season and drugs of *agneya* quality should be collected in hot season, only then their qualities will be unaltered. *Varsha sishira* and *hemantha* are cold seasons, *sharat*, *vasanta* and *greeshma* are hot seasons.<sup>[5]</sup>

Herbs and drugs possessing cold properties, collected during cold seasons, in lands which are dominant with *saumya guna* will be sweeter in taste, unctuous, and cold, same way the *agneya* drugs from *agneya bhumi* collected in hot season will be more potent.

If the whole plant is used for treatment like *palasha*, or drugs like *lavana* etc season for collection is not significant, all seasons are suitable for collection.

### Collection of Drugs as Per Desha (AREA)

Sharangdhara advocates collection of *agnayadravas* (*Ushnaveeryadravya*) from *vindhya* region and *Soumya oushadha* (*Seetaveeryadravya*) from Himalayan region.<sup>[6]</sup>

### Collection of Drugs According to Therapeutic Use

Acharya Sushruta described the significance of *bhumi*/soil, while collecting the drugs for different therapeutic purposes as-

1. *Veerachandrava*/ purgatives should be collected from soil rich in *prithvi and jalmahabhuta*.
2. *Vamandrava*/ emetics should be collected from soil rich in *agni, vayu & akashmahabhuta*.
3. *Ubhayabhag-haradravya/ dravya* having both purgative & emetics property must be collected from soil rich in all the five *mahabhuta*.
4. *Shamanadravya*/palliative drugs should be collected from soil rich in *akashmahabhuta*.<sup>[7]</sup>

### DISCUSSION

Based on *panchamahabhuta siddhanta* everything existing on earth is made of the five elements. Same theory can be explained here to understand the quality of land based on the dominance of one *mahabhuta* and its role in producing a herb with the same quality. So it can

be understood that if a guru *madhura dravya* is needed for treatment it should be collected in *saumya rutu* from a land dominant with *prithvi* to be more potent.

Collection of different parts of plants in based on seasons is not explained by Sushruta, it is wrongly interpreted by many people. Sushruta clearly mentions it as third persons view on this topic and explains in his next lines that, it is not correct as the whole world is predominantly *soumya* and *agneya*. It is not sushruta who said roots to be collected in *varsha*, leaves in *sharat* etc.

### CONCLUSION

Drugs being one of the four components of treatment plays an important role in success or failure of treatment. In fact the drug of inferior quality leads to failure of the treatment even if other three *padas* of *cikitsa* are excellent.

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