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A BRIEF REVIEW OF MEDICINAL PROPERTIES OF KUMARI (Aloe vera Tourn.) FROM KOSHA AND NIGHANTUS

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Abstract: The aim of present study was to investigate the therapeutic uses 'Kumari'. Kumari is member of lily plant, it is full of juice and closes similar to a cactus. Aloe vera is perennial, drought resisting succulent plant belonging to Liliaceae family most commonly used for its medicinal properties. The herb has been mentioned in several ayurvedic treatises like Kosha and Nighantu, it is firstly described in 'Astang Nighantu'. Its efficacy and safety is supported by research and knowledge based on experience, its new benefits are constantly being studied. 'Kumari' is one of the most efficacious herb known in ayurvedic pharmacopeia. Here is an attempt to compile all the classical reference of Kumari.

Keywords: Kumari, Nighantu, Kosha.

Introduction: Ayurveda is said to be Anadi (having unknown origin) and Shashvata (one which has no end or it is eternal). Historians opine that 'Vedic Nighantu' was the basis of 'Nirukta'. The Nighantu contained only the synonyms words. The Ayurvedic Nighantu written during the initial phase of medieval period followed the same pattern. In due course of time, the properties and actions of drugs were added to the description of synonyms. The synonyms were coined basing on the similarity property therapeutic uses, time, place of origin and historical importance. The term Nighantu is based on the term 'Nigama.' 'Yaska' wrote the 'Nirukti' to point out the concealed or secret meaning of the Vedas. The etymological meaning of the term 'Nirukta' is that which brings out the 'secret meaning'. In Sabdkalpadurama the etymology of word Nighantu is given as that which looks beautiful or shines. Kieth differentiates the term Kosa and Nighantu. He says that kosa was written to facilitate interpretation of vedic texts, while the Nighantu was a lexicon based on other topics^[1].

The Nighantuliterature is one of the important aspects in the study of Ayurveda and specially in the subject of Dravyaguna Vijnana. The Nighantuliterature is also as ancient as Ayurveda. Much importance has not been given

to the study of Nighantu. The ancient Nighantus were actually like Kosha, containing the synonyms of Dravya. Later on, the drugs were given the description of properties, actions and their uses. In true sense the Nighantumeans collection of words, synonyms and the names of the medicinal substances. Ramavatar Sharma in his introduction to 'Kalpadru Kosha' of 'Kesava' uses the term Nighantu for the glossaries connected with Ayurveda. To understand precisely what is aimed at these glossaries are called as 'Ayurveda Nighantu'. The Nighantu may be defined as a glossary containing synonymous groups, the names of the drugs, plants, animals, minerals or anything that is administered either as food or medicine to the human body.

Aloe vera Tourn ex linn belong to family *Liliaceae*. Commonly known as 'Gheekuvar' or Gwarpatha Aloe vera is indigenous to eastern and southern Africa and grown in cape colony Europe and many parts of India including north west Himalayan region. These plants have rosettes of subulate succulent large leaves. These leaves are sessile and have a strong spine at apex and also no. of spine along the margins, the lower portion is rounded and upper portions is slightly concave. Kumari is explained almost in all Nighantus.

Ashtanga Nighantu (8th Cent. A.D.): In this Nighantu, Acharya Vahata has described maximum group of drugs on the basis of classification of Ashtanga- Sangraha and Ashtanga-Hridaya. Kumari described under 'Viprakirna varga'. synonyms mentioned in it are Kumari, Vyaghracharna, Kanya, Sthooldala^[2].

Sodhala Nighantu (12th Cent. A.D.): This Nighantu was composed by Sodhalain two parts named as 'Namasangraha' dealing with synonyms and 'Gunasangraha' dealing with properties and actions. In 'Lakshmanadi Varga' of Sodhala Nighantuproperties of 'kumari' is pichchil ,tikta,sita and saraare mentione. In karma it is 'vatahar' . It is indicated in Kustha, Udavart and helpful in other diseases^[3].

Abhidhana Ratnamala (Shadrassa Nighantu) (13th Cent. A.D.): In 'Abhidhanratnamala'synonyms of Kumariare described in 'Tikta dravya - skandha'. Following synonyms are mentionedhere Kumari, Vyaghracarana, Kanya , Karkotaki^[4].

Madhava-dravyaguna (13th Cent. A.D.): In Madhava-dravyaguna Kumariis described in 'Vividh-aushadi Varga'. Here properties of Kumari is 'Sita' and its action is 'Bhedniya' it is used in the treatment of Yakritroga, Pliharoga, Kaphaj-jvara, Raktaj vyadi, Tvak vikara. Kumarihas been mentioned in "Abhayadi varga". Madanapala has included following synonyms of Kumari Mandala, Mata, Grihakanya, Atipichila, Rasayni, Katikini, Savara and Vanodbhava. Properties like sheetal and action like bhedan are mentioned here, Kumari is describe to be useful in diseases like Ykrita Pliha roga, Kaphaj - jvar, Granthi, Visphota Raktipitta and Tvakvikara^[5].

Madanpala Nighantu (14th Cent. A.D.): In this Nighantu 'Kumari' is described in ' Abhyadi Varga' with following synonyms i.e. Kumari ,Mandala,Mata ,Grihkanya, Atipichchila ,Rasayni ,Katikini, Savra ,Vanodbhav. Properties of kumari is bhedni ,sita it is useful in yakritroga pliharoga kaphaj jvara ,granthi,visphota, rakta-pitta and skin disease^[6].

Kaiyadev Nighantu (Pathyapathya Vibodhaka) (15th Cent. A.D.): In this Nighantu 'Kumari' is described in "Aushadhi Varga" with following synonyms i.e. Mandala, Mata, Phalamatsya, Akshikirasa, Grihakanya, Kanya, Ghritkumarika. Properties of Kumari is sheetal, tikta, madhur and action is 'bhedaniya', netrya, balakarak, vrisyasukravardhaka andrasayan. It is indicated in Gulm, Ykritvridhi, kaphaj-jvar,

Granthi, Agnidagdh,Visphota, Pittaja-vikara and Raktj-vikara, Tvak-vikara^[7].

Bhavaprakasa Nighantu (16th Cent. A.D.): This book is written by 'Bhava Mishra'who is an important landmark in the history of Indian Medicine. He stands at the junction of the medvial and modern periods which is the turning point for its future course and also because of the fact that he revived, the style of Samhitas and contributed a good deal to various aspects of Ayurveda by adding new ideas and drugs. Kumarihas been mentioned in 'Guduchyadi Varga' and following synonyms are found in this Nighantu- Kumari, Grihakanya, Kanya, Ghritkumarika. Its properties are madhur and tikta rasa, sita-virya and its actions netrya, brihgana, rasayan, balakarak, vrisya, shonitasthapan. Useful in Vataroga Vish, Gulm, Pliharoga, Yakritvridhi, Kaphaj Jvar, Grinthe, Agnidagdh, Vishphotak, Pittaj vyadhi ,Rakt vikar and Tvak vicar^[8].

Gunaratnamala (16th Cent. A.D.): In this Nighantu 'Kumari' is described in "Guduchyadi Varga" and its Gunakarma along with characteristic features of Kumariare described as madhur and tikt rasa, sitavirya. Its actions like netrya, balya, vrisya, vata and vish-vikarnasaka has been mentioned here. Kumari has been described useful in diseases like Gulma, Plihavridhi, Ykritvridhi, Kapha- vikara and Jvara Agnidagdha ,Raktipitta and Tvak- vikara^[9].

Raj-Nighantu (Nighantu Raj, Abhidhana Chudamani) (17th Cent. A.D.): This book is written by NarhariPandit, who has given first place to Dravyaguna in Ashtanga Ayurveda. This book is particularly based on the 'Dhanwantari Nighantu'. The subject matter has been divided into 23 chapters. Kumari has been mentioned in the ' Parpatadi Varga'. Following 21 synonyms of kumari are mentioned here i.e. Grihkanya, Kumari, Kanyaka, Dirghapatrika, Veera, Bhrangesta, Sthaleruha, Mridukanya, Bahupatra, Ajara, Amara, Katakpravrata Vipulsrava, Vranaghi, Taruni, Rama, Sukantaka, Kapila, Ambudhisrava, Sthooldala. The properties of Kumari has been mentioned i.e. Sheetal,Tiktarasa, Madasadrisingandha and by actions Kumari is Kaphanasak,Rasayan. Kumari is indicated in Pittajanya-vikara, Kasa, Vishvikara, Svasaroga^[10].

Adhunika Kala: Kumariis explained in text books of modern periods such as Dravyaguna Vigyan by Dr P.V Sharma, Priya Nighantu, Shaligrama Nighantu, Ayurvedic materia

medica, Wealth of India and other books written by recent Acharyas, which provide information about its habit, habitat, morphology, chemical composition etc.

Shaligram Nighantu Bhushana (19th Cent A.D.): Lala Shaligram Vaisya has mentioned Ghritkumari in 'Guduchyadi Varga' with its synonyms as Kumari, Dirghapatrika, Aphala, Sursa, Kanya, Mrdughritkumari^[11].

Siddhabhesjanimala (1905 -1954 A.D.): Krishna Ram Bhatta has been mentioned using 'Kumari swarasa' in epilepsy and palpitation of heart along with madhuka kwath in 'Apasmar chikitsa adhayaya'^[12].

Nighantu Adarsha (20th Cent. A.D.): This book was published in Gujrat its author is Vaidya Bapalal G. who is the authoritative person of 20th century for identification of Ayurvedic plants. He has mentioned all the relevant materials from different Ayurvedic texts as well as modern medical and botanical works. Kumari is placed in 'Lashunadi Varga' and its properties like tikta, madhura rasa, sitavirya, madhura and katu-vipak were mentioned. Kumari is 'tridoshaghna' by action^[13]

Priya Nighantu (20th Cent. A.D.): Acharya Priyavrat Sharma in his book Priya Nighantu has described Kumari under 'Satpuspadi Varga' Synonyms of Kumari is Kumari, Grihakanya, Ghritkumari. Properties madhur, tikta rasa, sita virya. Its action like sarak, rasayan were mentioned. It is indicated in diseases like Gulma, Plihavridhi, Ykritvridhi, Rajo-rodha^[14].

Shankar Nighantu (20th Cent. A.D.): In Shankar Nighantu properties of Kumari like madhur in rasa, seeta-virya has been described. By action kumari is netrya, virya-vardhaka, brihagana, balakaraka and indicated in Gulma, Pliharoga, Ykritavikar, Vaman, Kaphaj-jvar, Agnidaghdh, Vishphota, Raktpitta and Tvakvikara^[15].

Puspayurveda (20th Cent. A.D.): In Puspayurveda properties of Kumari puspa has been mentioned that flowers of Kumari emerge at the end of winter. They pacify vata and pitta dosha and eliminate all type of worms^[16].

Shodshang Hridyam (20th Cent. A.D.): Acharya Priyavrit Sharma mentioned properties of kumari in his book i.e. tikta in rasa and Malasarka and raja-pravartaka in karma. It is indicated in Rajo-rodh, Pliha and Ykritroga^[17].

Saraswati Nighantu: Kumari has been mentioned in 'Ulpadi Varga' in this Nighantu. Following synonymous of kumari is mentioned here i.e. Kumarika, Dandapuspi, Kumari,

Patramajjaka, Chakshusya, Kanyka, Sita and Mahapicchilapatrika^[18].

Discussion: Medicinal plants are rich and widely accepted source for traditional and modern medicines, phytopharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, cosmetics, etc. In India particularly, medicinal plants form the backbone of all indigenous systems of medicine. History of drug can be studied under Vaidic kala, Upanishad kala, Purana kala, Samhita kala, Nighantu kala and Adhunikala. Kumari is a popular herb, which is used by traditional practitioner to cure various ailments. Present study revealed that by the help of literature i.e. Kosha and Nighantus we will reach to medicine very easily and take the benefit by the traditional medicines. The Nighantus generally were coined using a therapeutic text. Authors used the prevailing and popular texts of their time and region as basis to write Nighantus. This explains the emergence of more than one Nighantu during one period. Further, two different Nighantus are seen having groups with same name but have kept different substances under them. This has happened due to the different rationale used in grouping of the substances. This offers a tremendous scope for research in order to explore the therapeutic application of a substance in different regions and era, in the same manner Kumari was also a popular drug at that time. Properties of Kumari are Tikta, madhur rasa, Guru, Snigdha, Picchilaguna, Sita Virya and Madhur-vipak, Kaphapittahara. It has tremendous effect on different diseases viz. Jvara (Fever), Agnimandha (Indigestion) Udararoga (Abdominal-disease) Ykrit-pliha-vridhi (Hepatosplenomegaly) vibandh (Constipation) Krimiroga (Worm infestation), Granthi (Tumour), Raktvikara (Blood born disease), Rajorodha (Amenorrhoea) Tvakvikara (Skin disease). At therapeutic dosage it is Deepan, Pachan, Bhedan, Ykrit-uttejak^[19].

Conclusion: The present review on Kumari of different Nighantus can be useful to know about the different formulations of Kumari in which different parts (Leaves and pulp) of this herb is used. By this way we can use Kumari in the treatment of different diseases. Most of the Nighantus have mentioned Kumari has good therapeutic uses in Ykrit-Pliha-vridhi (Hepatosplenomegaly), Raktaj-vikar (Blood born disease), Tvak-vikar (skin disease), Udararoga (Abdominal disease), Kaphaj-vikar, Granthi (Tumour) Apasmar (Epilepsy), Rajo-rodh (Amenorrhoea), Krimi-roga (worm infestation), Agnimanda (Indigestion).

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