



Review Article

INTEGRATIVE INSIGHTS INTO CARDIAC HEALTH FROM AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Cardiovascular diseases are increasingly prevalent in the era of globalization, and following the COVID-19 pandemic, sudden fatal cardiac events are being reported more frequently. Ayurveda is not merely a system for the treatment of diseases; it also provides comprehensive guidelines for leading a healthy life, both physically and mentally. Ayurvedic texts describe *Dincharya* (daily regimen), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), and *Ahara* (dietary regimen) that nourishes the body as essential measures for maintaining health and preventing disease. Ayurveda also offers a wide range of therapeutic interventions for *Hrdroga* (cardiac disorders), which play a crucial role in promoting longevity and exert cardioprotective effects. Among these, *Arjuna* (*Terminalia arjuna*) is well recognized for its cardioprotective properties and is widely used across the world for the management of various cardiac conditions. The Ayurvedic approach to the treatment of *Hrdroga* includes *Nidana Parivarjana* (avoidance of known causative factors), administration of herbal and Herbo-mineral formulations, and *Panchakarma* therapies, which contribute significantly to disease management. Importantly, Ayurveda emphasizes addressing the root cause of disease, thereby offering not only curative but also preventive strategies, which are crucial in the context of cardiovascular health. In recent years, cardiovascular disorders have been increasingly observed among the younger population, who represent the future of the nation. Therefore, emphasis must be placed on an integrated approach to the prevention and management of cardiac diseases. There is an urgent need to adopt integrative strategies that combine Ayurvedic principles with modern medical approaches, particularly for individuals at high risk. The use of Ayurvedic cardioprotective agents as a first-line defence may play a pivotal role in safeguarding the vital organ the heart.

INTRODUCTION

Cardiovascular disease is the most frequent cause of death. Strategies should be made to mitigate the death due cardiological problems and prevention should be encouraged among youth and co-morbid people. Ayurveda can become a boon to *Hridaroga* in prevention and curative aspect. Common risk factors for CVDs include smoking, unhealthy diet, diabetes mellitus, hyperlipidaemia, elevated levels of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL), suppressed levels of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL), and hypertension (world health organisation).

Modern medications show side-effects and complication which are difficult to cure. Some disease in cardiovascular disorder that is ischemic heart disease, valvular heart disease, coronary artery disease, congenital heart disease etc., which need early detection and early management. So, integrated approach should be preferred in cardiovascular disorders.

The Ayurvedic approach integrates preventive measures (*Nidan parivarjan*), daily and seasonal regimens (*Dinchara* and *Ritucharya*), dietary regimens (*Ahara Vidhi*) and therapeutic interventions herbal and Herbo-mineral formulations along with *Panchakarma* to maintain cardiovascular health.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim is to study the prevention and curative measures mentioned in our classics for *Hridaroga* along with patent formulation whose research studies are published in renown journals. Ayurvedic

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modalities in *Hrida roga* which are boon in prevention and management.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Various Ayurvedic classical books, research papers and journals were referred while writing the research paper.

Hridroga (cardiovascular disease) chikitsa-treatment modalities in various texts

Hridaya is the seat of *Rasavah* and *Pranvah* *srotas* where *Sadhak piita*, *Avlambak kapha*, *Vyan vayu* and *Oja* are seated. *Vega dharan* (suppression of urges) produces heart diseases by affecting autonomic nervous system. Sedentary lifestyle, tobacco, smoking, alcohol, level of stress are the root cause in cardiac diseases. Metabolic disorders like-Hypertension, diabetes, dyslipidemia, are risk factor for cardiovascular disease. So first aim of treatment is prevention of *Hridroga* by *Nidan parivarjan* by following *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Ahara* regimen, *Ratricharya* along with *Rasayan* drugs for rejuvenation and immunomodulatory effect.

Hrdya Mahakashaya, as described in classical Ayurvedic texts, comprises fruits traditionally regarded as beneficial for cardiovascular health. These include *Amra* (*Mangifera indica* Linn.), *Amrataka* (*Spondias pinnata* Linn. f.), *Lakucha* (*Artocarpus lakoocha* Roxb.), *Karmarda* (*Carissa carandas* Linn.), *Vrkshamla* (*Garcinia indica* Choisy), *Amlavetas* (*Garcinia pedunculata* Roxb.), *Badara* (*Ziziphus jujuba* Mill.), *Dadima* (*Punica granatum* Linn.), and *Matulunga* (*Citrus medica* Linn.). These botanicals are rich natural sources of vitamin C, possess potent antioxidant activity, and demonstrate significant cardiogenic properties, thereby underscoring their relevance in both preventive and therapeutic cardiology.

Lekhaniya Drugs are beneficial in hyperlipidemia, obesity and Atherosclerosis e.g., *Vacha* (*Acorus calamus*), *Haridra* (*Curcuma longa*), *Daruharidra* (*Barberis aristata*), *Mustaka* (*Cyprus rotundus*), cow urine & *Gugglu* (*Commiphora wightii*).

Effect of *Takradhara* in essential hypertension^[1] *Takradhara* can be used in 1st stage

hypertension. The appropriate duration of action is 12 hours. *Takradhara* establishes normal functions of *Manas* and *Prana Vayu* and also stimulates hypothalamus by its penetrating effect, which in turn reduces the impulses of sympathetic division. Hypertension constitutes a major predisposing factor for the development of cardiac disorders.

Shodhana Karma

Vamana Karma: *Vamana Karma* is described particularly in *Kaphaja Hridroga*.

Virechana Karma: In *Pittaja* and *Kaphaja Hridroga* related with *Pitta Dosha*, *Krimija Hridroga*, *Virechana Karma* is useful. ^[2]

Basti Karma: It is the best *Upkaram* for vitiated *Vata Dosha*, which is always, affected in diseases of vital organs (*Marmas* like heart) hence different types of *Basti* has indicated in all types of *Hridroga* and particularly in *Vataja Hridrog* ^[3] e.g. *Taila basti*

Achara Rasayana (Lifestyle modification) - We cannot eliminate stress in our lives, but we can change our attitude towards it.

S – Stop anger, egoism, over thinking and have a self-control.

T – Trust yourself

R – Remember the preventions

E – Exercise regularly

S – Spirituality

S – State of calm mind ^[4]

Five types of Hridroga- *Vataj*, *Pittaj*, *Kaphaj*, *Tridoshaj*, and *Krimij* are described in *Samhitas*. *Sauveer*, *Takra*, *Til taila* mix with *Saidhav lavan* taken in *Vataj hridroga*. *Punarnavadi taila*, *Pushkarmool churna*, *Pushkarmuladi kwath* are beneficial in *Vataj hridroga*. *Mulethi* and *Katuki churna* with *Mishri* in *pittaj hridroga*. *Panchakarma* modalities *Swedan*, *Vaman*, in *Kaphaj hridroga*. *Sheelajeet*, *Chywanprash avleha*, *Agastyaharitaki avleha*, *Bhrama rasayan* and *Amalki rasayan* are beneficial in *Hridrogas*. For removing obstruction of *Vayu* in *Hridroga virechan* can be given along with *Pachan dravyas*.^[5]

Classical Formulations ^[6]	Proprietary Formulations ^[7]
<i>Prabhakar vati</i>	<i>Syrup. Hrudyam (Aun)</i>
<i>Arjuna ghrita</i>	<i>Syrup. Hridayashanti (Santhigiri)</i>
<i>Jaharmohra vati</i>	<i>Tab. Abana (Himalaya)</i>
<i>Arjunarishta</i>	<i>Tab. Cardostab (Nagarjuna)</i>
<i>Hridayarnav ras</i>	<i>Cardicalm (Vaidyaratnam)</i>
<i>Pooskarmoolasav</i>	<i>Hridayachintamani Rasa</i>
<i>Nagbala sarpi</i>	<i>Cap. Hartone</i>
<i>Medohar guggulu</i>	<i>Tab. Cardimap (Maharishi ayurveda)</i>
<i>Nagarjunabhra ras</i>	<i>Tab. Cardiogrit (Patanjali)</i>

<i>Makaradwaja</i>	<i>Tab. Arjuna (Himalaya)</i>
<i>Shatputi Abhrak Bhasma</i>	
<i>Jaharmohra pishti</i>	
<i>Dashmool haritaki leha</i>	
<i>Ashwgandharishta</i>	
<i>Arjuna-gokshura ksheerpaka</i>	

Hingudwiruttaradi churna, Hinguwadi vati, Haritakyadi churna, Amalaki Rasayana, Shilajitwadi vati, Pathyadi Kwatha, Dashmula Kwatha, Arjunatwak Kwatha, Pippalyadi Ghrita, Shunthi Ghrita, Arjuna Ghrita, Trayamana Ghrita, Shwadamshtadi Ghrita, Chandraprabhavati, Arjunarisht, Mrigshring Bhasma, Akika Pishti, Hridyarnawa Rasa, Nagarjunabhra Rasa, Krishna Chaturmukha Rasa and Prabhakara Vati^[8] are some pivotal formulations (Yoga) that are used in *Hrida roga*.

Asian ginseng (*Panax ginseng*), astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*), flaxseed oil (*Linum usitatissimum*), garlic (*Allium sativum*), ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*), grape (*Vitis vinifera*) seeds, green tea (*Camellia sinensis*), hawthorn (*Crataegus*), milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*), and soy (*Glycine max*) can be used in the treatment of cardio vascular disorders.^[9] Asian ginseng has been reported to support cardiovascular health by improving blood pressure regulation, glucose metabolism, and lipid profile. Its active constituents, ginsenosides, act as partial agonists on steroidal receptors and exert multiple cardioprotective effects, including stimulation of endothelial nitric oxide (NO) release, modulation of myocardial calcium channels, inhibition of reactive oxygen species, reduction of platelet adhesion, regulation of autonomic neurotransmission, and stabilization of glucose homeostasis.^[10]

Acharya Kashyapa states that *Ahara* (diet) is the supreme medicine (*Mahabhaiṣajya*), emphasizing its preventive and therapeutic value. Several substances as especially beneficial for *Hridaya* (the heart) due to their nutritional and pharmacological properties that are –

Godhuma (Wheat): Strength-giving cereal, supports cardiovascular health.

Piyusha (Milk): Wholesome, calcium-rich, cardioprotective proteins.

Rasala (Curd with sugar/spices): Probiotic, aids digestion, heart-friendly.

Navanita (Fresh butter/ghee): Provides energy and strength (moderate use advised).

Vilapika (Sweet gruel): Light, nourishing, useful in weakness.

Sauvarcala Lavaṇa (Rock salt): Digestive, milder than common salt, supports heart.

Anūpajala (Marshy water): Cooling, maintains hydration and balance.^[11]

Amla rasatmak dravyas are mainly used which also have *Hridya* properties in *Hrida roga* like – *Vrikshamla* (*Garcinia indica*), *Maatulunga* (*Citrus medica*), *Amlavetas* (*Rheum emodi*), *Pushkarmool* (*Inula racemose*) supposed be anti-inflammatory, hypolipidemic action can be used in to reverse the atherosclerosis. *Garlic* (*Allium sativum*), *Guggul* (*Commiphora wightii*), *Hawthorn* (*Crataegus oxyacantha*), and *Arjuna* (*Terminalia arjuna*) are classical medicinal plants traditionally recognized for their cardioprotective potential. Garlic is well known for its lipid-lowering, antihypertensive, and antiplatelet properties, contributing to the prevention of atherosclerosis. *Guggul* has demonstrated hypolipidemic and anti-inflammatory effects, making it valuable in managing dyslipidaemia and metabolic disorders. Hawthorn, widely used in Western herbal medicine, exhibits antioxidant, vasodilatory, and positive inotropic actions, supporting cardiac contractility and coronary circulation. *Arjuna*, a cornerstone of Ayurvedic cardiology, possesses antioxidant, anti-ischemic, and cardiotonic activities, offering significant benefits in ischemic heart disease and heart failure. Collectively, these botanicals bridge traditional wisdom and modern pharmacology, highlighting their relevance in integrative approaches to cardiovascular health.

Sampurna hridaya shudhikaran an interventional health model to improve quality of life in chronic heart failure.^[12] It improves ejection fraction along with exercise tolerance capacity (6min walk test-350 metre in normal patient) of chronic heart failure patients.

Effect of heart failure reversal treatment as add-on therapy in patients with chronic heart failure: A randomized, open-label study^[13]

Heart failure reversal therapy	Type of technique	Duration	Herbs used	Additional information
Snehana ^[14]	External oleation or massage	30-35 minutes	100ml extract (processed in sesame oil): 10gm <i>V. negundo</i> and 10gm <i>Dashmoola</i>	It uses centripetal or upward strokes directed towards the heart
Swedan ^[11]	Passive heat therapy	10-15 minutes + 3-4 minutes of relaxation after procedure	<i>Dashmoola</i> (group of ten herbal roots) steam (temperature >40°C)	During the procedure, patients were asked to lie down inside a sudation box in supine position with head positioned outside
Hrudaydhara	Decoction dripping treatment (constant speed, from 7-8cm height over the medial mediastinum region)	15 minutes	Lukewarm <i>Dashmoola</i> decoction	Variation of <i>Shirodhara</i> ^[15] technique
Basti ^[11]	Modified enema	10 minutes	10ml aqueous extract of: 1880mg <i>Tarjuna</i> , 420mg <i>B. diffusa</i> , and 180mg <i>A. calamus</i>	Administered per rectal solution had to remain inside the body for ≥15 minutes for maximum absorption

Yoga like *Bhastrika*, *Bhramri*, *Udgeet*, *Sheetli*, *Sheetkari* helps in reducing stress and maintain equilibrium of mind and body. *Sheetali pranayama* significantly reduces blood pressure in patients with HTN and improved heart rate variability.^[16] Vigorous exercises and excessive exertional yogic exercises should not be by cardiac patient. *Madhuyashti* being a *Medhya Rasayana* calms down the anxiety and stress, thus results in lowering of BP.^[17] *Naimittika Rasayana* (therapeutic modification)- drugs like *Arjuna*, *Amlavetas*, *Hritpatri*, etc., are also described in our classical textbooks which helps in preventing and curing cardiovascular disorders. Along with integrative approach and awareness among people for proper lifestyle, food and sleep regimen we can mitigate the fatal rate of heart diseases and lead a good quality of life with heart disease. *Talahridaya marma* are four in number, located symmetrically in the body- two in the upper limbs and two in the lower limbs.

- **Upper limb:** Situated at the center of the palm, along the line of the middle finger. It corresponds to the point where the middle finger touches the palm when the fist is clenched.
- **Lower limb:** Located at the center of the sole, along a straight line extending from the root of the middle toe.^[18]

Talahridaya marma was found to have mild immediate effect and good long-term effect in normalizing the

blood pressure of the patient. The *Marma* of the left hand was stimulated by pressing with the thumb in coherence to the breath for 12 to 15 times per minute for 3 minutes. Thus, reducing BP it lessens the chances of developing heart disease as HTN is the major risk factor.

DISCUSSION

Modern cardiology focuses on pharmacological and interventional management of CVDs, while ayurveda emphasizes root cause correction through holistic approaches. Integrating both systems may help in prevention, long term management, and improvement of quality of life. Clinical research has already demonstrated the cardioprotective role of *Arjuna*, the lipid-lowering effects of *Guggulu*, and stress-reducing benefits of yoga and medication. *Garlic* (*A. sativum*), *Guggul* (*C. wightii*), *Hawthorn* (*C. oxyacantha*) and *Arjuna* (*T. arjuna*) are traditional herbs which are being using for its cardioprotective effect. Adherence to *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Ahara* and *Yoga*, in conjunction with herbal and herbo-mineral formulations as well as *Panchakarma* therapy, offers an effective strategy for the prevention and management of cardiovascular diseases. Ayurveda demonstrates significant potential as both a preventive and therapeutic approach in cardiovascular health.

CONCLUSION

Cardiovascular disorders, though increasing globally, especially after the breakdown of COVID-19, can be effectively managed through an integrative approach. Preventive lifestyle measures, dietary regulation, herbal therapy, and stress management form the cornerstone of Ayurvedic management. Future research should focus on evidence-based clinical trials to validate ayurvedic formulations and therapies for cardiovascular health.

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