



# Herbal Management of Pain According to Charaka

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## Abstract

Pain is an entity that can accompany with a number of underlying conditions. All individuals have the experience of pain. It is not a disease itself but represents many diseases. In Modern Medicine discussion on the aetio-pathogenesis and management procedure are discussed in detail from different angles. Ayurveda, the ancient system of medical science, also discuss all the aspects of pain by giving the nomenclature to the condition as Pida, Vedana, Shoola, Vyatha, Toda etc. Accordingly, some single herbs, minerals, combined herbal and herbo – mineral drugs are also discussed. Primarily a discussion on the herbs can be considered with top priority as they are comparatively easily available and also needs low cost. A number of herbs are mentioned in the classics to be useful in management of pain due to different aetiology.

**Keywords:** Pain; Management Procedures; Herbal and Herbo-mineral drugs; Pain due to different aetiology

## Introduction

As per Modern concept pain represents a number of underlying diseases. Simply to say any pathology in the human body may cause pain in the part /organ concern [1-2]. Most of the conditions that is unexpected and not homologous to the body causes inflammation which is reflected as an agonizing feeling known as "PAIN". Pain may be a symptom of trauma, infection, production and accumulation of substances that are non-homologous to the normal physiology of the human body.

The ancient Indian medical science "Ayurveda", of which Charaka and Susruta Samhita can be considered as the constitutions, in different references, discuss a number of conditions as Pida, Vedana, Shoola, Toda etc. which indicate different types of pain [3]. Ayurveda consider two causes of these different types of pain – (1) Avarodha (obstruction at any part of the body that causes difficulty in movement of the functioning of the internal working forces – VATA) and (2) Kshaya (loss /reduction of the body constituents). A number of herbs are mentioned in the Ayurvedic classics for use in management / control of different types of pains. Charaka Samhita discusses a number of herbs for management of different types of pain. A discussion on the herbs as mentioned by Charaka are briefly discussed below –

- (1) For shoola (pain in the hollow organs, like abdomen) –
  - Pippali
  - Chavya
  - Chitrak moola
  - Sunthi
- (2) For Vedana in Vatarakta (pain due to inflammatory pathology) (for lepana – external use) –
  - Rashna
  - Giloya
  - Mulethi
  - Bola
  - Atibola
- (3) For Sirashshoola (headache) (For lepana -external use) –
  - Tagara
  - Utpala

Chandana

Kustha

(4) Shoolaprasamana Mahakashaya (for pain of sharp nature)  
(For internal use) -

Pippali

Chavya

Chitraka

Sunthi

Maricha

Ajamoda

Ajagandha

Ajaji

The search and observation of the present study clearly reflects that, Charaka has mentioned a number of common herbs with their use for pains of different aetiology. These preparations relieve pain by working on the underlying cause of the pain. A study on the herbs mentioned can be considered for scientific study and research which may be proved to be beneficial for the people suffering from the agonizing condition [4] (Figures 1-16) (Table 1).



Figure 1: *Piper longum* (Fruit & Root).



Figure 2: *Piper retrofractum* (Fruit & Root).



Figure 3: *Plumbago zeylanica* (Root Bark).



Figure 4: *Zingiber officinale* (Rhizome).



Figure 5: *Pluchea lanceolata* (Leaf).



Figure 6: *Tinospora cordifolia* (Stem).



Figure 7: *Glycyrrhiza glabra* (Root).



Figure 8: *Sida cordifolia* (Root & Seed).



Figure 9: *Abutilon indicum* (Root & Seed).



Figure 10: *Valeriana wallichii* (Root).



Figure 11: *Nymphaea stellata* (Flower, Root, Seed).



Figure 12: *Santalum album* (Central portion of the stem).



Figure 13: *Saussurea lappa* (Root).



Figure 14: *Piper nigrum* (Fruit).



Figure 15: *Carum roxburghianum* (Fruit).



Figure 16: *Cuminum cyminum* (Seed).

Table 1: Scientific name, used part, form of the drug and mode of application are mentioned.

S No	Name of the Herb as in the Classic	Scientific Name	Used Part
01	Pippali	<i>Piper longum</i>	Fruit and root
02	Chavya	<i>Piper retrofractum</i>	Root and fruit
03	Chitrak	<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i>	Root bark
04	Shunthi	<i>Zingiber officinale</i>	Rhizome
05	Rashna	<i>Pluchea lanceolata</i>	Leaf
06	Guduchi (Giloya)	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	Stem
07	Yasthimadhu (Mulethi)	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>	Root
08	Bola	<i>Sida cordifolia</i>	Root and seed
09	Atibola	<i>Abutilon indicum</i>	Root and seed
10	Tagara	<i>Valeriana wallichii</i>	Root
11	Utpala	<i>Nymphoea stellata</i>	Root, flower and seed
12	Chandana	<i>Santalum album</i>	Oil, central portion of the stem
13	Kustha	<i>Saussurea lappa</i>	Root
14	Marich	<i>Piper nigrum</i>	Fruit
15	Ajamoda	<i>Carum roxburghianum</i>	Fruit
16	Ajaji	<i>Cuminum cyminum</i>	Seed

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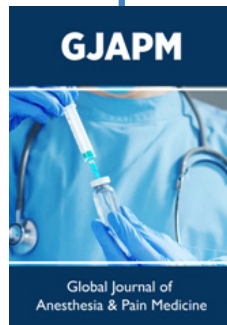
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