

HISTORY OF GUGGULU

BASED ON AYURVEDIC LITERATURE

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It is an acknowledged fact that the earliest mention of the medicinal uses of plants is noticed in the oldest repository of human knowledge, i. e. "Rig Veda". Ayurveda is developed and established as a science by ancient Hindu Sages through the works which followed Atharva Veda, the source book of the ancient Indian Medical Literature. Atharva Veda mentions about 120 herbs used either during the rituals or as medicines. Many of these medicinal plants and herbs are today considered controversial since no details have been provided for the purpose of identification. But the properties of various drugs and herbs have been given in detail in various Ayurvedic works indicating the remarkable knowledge of Materia Medica as it was known to ancient Hindus. It has been noticed that the names, descriptions and medicinal uses of plants and herbs mentioned in Atharva Veda were written by later authors with changes in names or synonyms and medicinal uses. During the Buddhist period also, considerable progress was made regarding the identification of plants in respect of the actions and other medicinal uses which were not known by the earlier physicians. There were also indications about the efforts made in the cultivation of medicinal plants by highly qualified specialists. Contacts with Greece and Rome and with Middle-East countries contributed much to the knowledge of the Indian Materia Medica and a large number of vegetable and other drugs were imported for the utilisation by the Indian physicians.

During the centuries that have gone by, the Materia Medica of the Indian System has become extensive. The vegetable Materia Medica has been built up in course of time and every region of India has contributed to its development. A close study of the books written by stalwarts of Indian Systems of Medicine of different regions of India indicate the chronological changes in respect of nomenclature, descriptions and medicinal uses of the plants and herbs due to experience and modifications introduced by these physicians.

The present article aims to present the knowledge on the drug Guggulu, Oleo-Gum-Resin of *Commiphora mukul*-Engl and the changes and modifications that have occurred in the course of centuries, on the basis of the information in available Ayurvedic works.

The oleo-Gum Resin from the plant *Commiphora mukul*, Engl. is known as Guggulu. Many of the species of *Commiphora* yield resins of commercial importance. About 5 species occur in India of which *C. Mukul* and *C. Roxburghii* yield Indian Bdellium. This plant grows mostly in the arid rocky tracts of Rajputana Khandesh, Berar, Deccan, Mysore, Kathiawar, Sind and Baluchistan. This oleo-resin is obtained by an incision on the bark of the tree. Each plant yields about 0.4 to 0.8 kg of resin which is collected in the cold season.

Details of the plant :**Nomenclature :**

Botanical name :	Commiphora mukul, Engl. Balsamodendron mukul, Hook.
Family :	Burseraceae.
English name :	Indian bdellium, Gum Guggulu.
Sanskrit names :	Usa, Ulukhala, Kalaniryasa, Kuta, Kumbha, Kausika, Guggulu, Jatayu, Divya, Durga, Devadhupa, Deveshta, Dhurta, Nisasayi, Nisacara, Palankasha, Pura, Bhava, Bhavabhishta, Bhutahara, Marudishta, Mahishaksha, Rakshohan, Rukshagandha, Vayasa, Sambhava, Siva, Sivadhupa, Sarvasaha.

Hindi : Gugal. Bengali : Guggul, Mukul. Canarese : Guggula. Tamil : Gukkulu, Gukkal, Maisatchi Kungiliyam. Telugu : Maisakshi, Guggulu. Gujarati : Gugara, Gugal. Arabic : Mogla, Moql, Mokhil, Aphalatana. Persian : Baijahundana. Sinhalese : Rata - dummula.

The above mentioned Sanskrit synonyms have been collected from the available Ayurvedic treatises and lexicons. A majority of these synonyms reveal that this drug has been used as incense. Some of the synonyms like Kalaniryasa, Mahishaksha, Rukshagandha etc., describe the physical properties of Guggulu. In addition to its utility as incense during the worship of Gods, its smoke is supposed to ward off the evil spirits. None of the synonyms except the word "Palankasha" which means that it reduces the bulk of the body indicate any particular medicinal uses. By other names, it can be inferred that this drug can protect the body from diseases and thus prolong the life. The familiar and popular name "Guggulu" also literally conveys the same meaning and idea.

The study relating to the subject may be examined in a sequential pattern stretching from Vedic period to the medieval period to appreciate the progress of knowledge on this drug.

I. Vedic Period :

Reference to this drug in Atharva Veda signifies the use of the drug has been in vogue since long time. One verse consisting of five lines has been dedicated to this drug in Atharva Veda. The following is the English translation :

"Disease (consumption) does not afflict and the curse never affects him, whom the delicious odour of the healing Guggulu penetrates (spreads).

The diseases also flee away in all directions from him like horses and deer.
O! Guggulu, either born from Sindhu or from the sea, (I) enchant your name of both types for the removal of diseases".

It is clear from the above that Guggulu is mentioned as Gulgulu in the Vedic language and worshipped as God and that it is of two varieties, one Saindhavam and the other Samudriyam. Sayana, the commentator of Vedas, explains that this drug is available from two sources, Sindhudesa and the sea coast. In vedic period, Guggulu was used as incense and therefore, the action of this drug has been explained that wherever there is smell of this drug, the people will not be afflicted with any disease. A similarity has been drawn between the disappearing diseases on account of the use of this drug and the fleeing wild animals and horses. In addition, it has also been mentioned that the fragrance of Guggulu does not even permit the curses to operate. It is to be understood that the effects of this drug are expected on both the body and mind.

II. Samhita Period :

Agnivesa Samhita which was later redacted by Charaka and Susruta Samhita of this period refer to use of this drug on various disease conditions, which is an evidence of an increase in experience of the then medical men in the use of the drug.

Bhela Samhita and Kashyapa Samhita are also considered to have been compiled during this period. Since some parts are deficient the information regarding Guggulu can not be considered to represent firm opinion of the authors.

(1) Bhela Samhita :

Palankasha has been used as a synonym to Guggulu while detailing the composition of *Mahapaisachi ghrta* in *vishama jwarachikitsa*. In addition to the fumigation purposes for all healthy persons, it is also indicated in *vishamajwara*, *unmada* and *apasmara*. Guggulu is also stated to be healing agent both as a single drug and in combination with other drugs.

(2) Kashyapa Samhita :

More information is found in this work regarding the uses of Guggulu when compared with Bhela Samhita. The fumes of burning Guggulu have been indicated in the treatment of *apasmara*, of *grahadosha* and to the neonatal women. It is also recommended that the houses are to be fumigated with the fumes of Guggulu.

A drug known as Palankasha has been mentioned as a component of some oils to be used in the treatment of *vatajwara* and for the *grahadosha*. But the identity of this Palankasha has become a difficult problem as can be noted further in this article.

(3) Charaka Samhita :

Perhaps this is the earliest medical work in which the drugs have been grouped according to their actions. Guggulu is included in the list of *sanjnasthapaniya varga* (the group of substances that are used for the restoration of the consciousness or the resuscitatives). Chakrapani, the commentator of Charaka Samhita identifies Palankasha as Guggulu whereas Gangadhara identifies as Gokshura.

In addition to the fumigation purposes, a definite utilisation of Guggulu for medicinal purposes has been described in Charaka Samhita. Guggulu has been indicated for the regular use of smoking by healthy people and also in disease of the head, *hikka roga*, irregular fevers and for the destroying the reptiles, mice, worms and insects. It is also prescribed intranasally in diseases of nose and as ointment for skin diseases. Internal administration is indicated in *urustambha*, *vatavyadhi* and *vatarakta*.

(4) Susruta Samhita :

Susruta classified the drug according to its odour and taste. It has been mentioned in Eladigana (the group of aromatic drugs commencing with Ela (cardamum) and in *katuvarga* (group of drugs having pungent taste). More information is provided in this as compared to Charaka.

The therapeutic properties of Guggulu as described by Susruta are as hereunder.

“Guggulu is aromatic, light, penetrating into the minutest parts of the body, sharp, heat making in potency, pungent in taste and digestive, laxative, emulsive, slimy and beneficent to the heart. New Guggulu is an aphrodisiac and constructive tonic. Old Guggulu is anti-fat and hence reduces corpulency. It is owing to its sharpness and heat making potency it tends to reduce the *vayu* and the *kapha*; it is its laxativeness that destroys the *malas* (refuge deposits in the *srotas*) and the deranged *pitta*; its aroma removes the bad odours of the *koshtha*; and it is its subtle essence that improves the appetizing faculty. Guggulu should be taken every morning with a decoction of Triphala, Darvi and Patala or with that of Kusa roots; it may also be taken with an adequate quantity of cow's urine, or with alkaline or tepid water. The patient should take boiled rice with soup, milk or extract of meat after Guggulu has been digested. Diseases such as internal tumour (*gulma*), urinary complaints (*meha*), *udavarta*, ascites, fistula - in - ano, worms in the intestines, itches, an aversion to food, leucoderma (*svitra*), tumour and glands (*arbuda*), sinus, *adhyavata*., swelling (oedema), cutaneous affections (*kushtha*) and malignant sores and ulcers readily yield to it, if used for a month (with the observance of the regimen of diet and conduct laid down previously). It also destroys the deranged *vayu* incarcerated in the *koshtha*, bones and joints, just as a thunderbolt destroys trees”.

The fumes of (burnt) Guggulu are considered to destroy the “fedor” in the ear due to local parasites and also for the relief of ear-ache. The fumes are also indicated to be inhaled in *swasaroga*, *mukharoga* and along with other drugs as *snehadhuma* for a healthy person.

From the above descriptions of Guggulu as detailed by Susruta, it is understood that there is a difference between the actions of the fresh and old Guggulu being diametrically opposite in nature. Susruta also described the dietetic control during the use of Guggulu.

Another important contribution of Susruta is the indication of its use in *sthaulya* (obesity) to facilitate the reduction of the bulk of the body. Guggulu is also one of

components of the medicines prescribed in the treatment of poisons, *apasmara*, *udavartha*, *kushtha*, *antarvidradhi* and *sopha*. Guggulu is also considered to be one of the drugs effective in exorcising evil spirits.

III. Early Christian Era :

(a) *Ashtanga Sangraha*: After Susruta, Vagbhata was the next to provide further information regarding the physical characters and therapeutic uses of Guggulu. Vagbhata also included Guggulu as a *Rasayana Dravya* and described separate Guggulukalpa in the *Rasayana* chapter, indicating its importance in rejuvenatory therapy (*Rasayana Chikitsa*). The drug Pura mentioned as a *dhupadravya* in the treatment of chronic fever has been translated as Guggulu by some commentators. But the word Pura has not been mentioned as a synonym of Guggulu by the authors of the medical lexicons (*Nighantus*). This word Pura is in feminine gender, but the word Purah of the masculine gender is accepted as a synonym of Guggulu by later authors.

In Guggulukalpa of the *Rasayana* Chapter of Uttarasthana, Guggulu has been mentioned as Rajanichara, which may be considered as a synonym. There seems to be a difference of opinion regarding the synonym Palankasha. This word Palankasha is in masculine gender and represents Guggulu. But the word Palankashaa which is in feminine gender and a synonym of Laksha, has been mentioned by Vagbhata in three places, which was explained by Indu as Laksha only. Chakrapani explained Palankasha as Guggulu in the similar situation in Charakasamhita and Hemadri also followed suit. Arunadatta considered Palankashaa as Laksha.

Guggulu is a resin secreted from the tree and therefore usually considered as a pure drug except for some dust or pieces of wood which accidentally get mixed up with it. Even though a definite method of purification of Guggulu was not mentioned both by the earlier authors and Vagbhata, except removal of extraneous matter (*Vigatasalya*), Vagbhata mentions the use of purified Guggulu in the diseases of *vata*.

Vagbhata was the first author to mention the varieties and dose of Guggulu. Guggulu is stated to be of three varieties according to the colour. (1) Mahishaksha with the colour of dark clouds. (2) Padmaraga with red colour. (3) Neela with *loha* colour. These three varieties are stated to be good for medicinal uses. The single dose of Guggulu is one pala i.e. about 45 to 50 grams. But the total consumption should not exceed one tula i.e. 100 tolas or about 1250 grams.

Guggulu has been included in *Eladigana* by Vagbhata and described to be the best remedy for the disorders of lipid metabolism, disorders of *vata* and for treating *vrana* (ulcers). The twig of Guggulu tree has been prohibited to be used for *dantadhavana* (brushing the teeth). The fumigation with the burning Guggulu was prescribed in the disorders due to *rakshas*, *graha* and *bhuta* (which may generally represent different infective agents like bacteria or *savishakrimi*), in *alaska* and locally after surgical operation. It is clear that the fumes are considered antiseptic

since the bed clothes, chairs etc., of a patient are required to be fumigated by burning Guggulu twice daily. The fumes are also considered to stimulate the expulsion of the placenta and also in the treatment of leucorrhoea. They are also indicated to be inhaled as *snigdha dhuma* by healthy persons, in chronic fevers and daily to the infants and in diseases of the ear.

The application of Guggulu is indicated for making an opening in the ripe swelling and also as component in a decoction used for washing the ulcers. Guggulu is also a component of ointments prescribed for *kushtha* and *vrana* and mad dog bite and in oils used for external applications for *kushtha*, *naigameshagraha* and diseases of lips. Guggulu is stated to be a *yogavahi* i.e. a drug while retaining its own properties, imbibes the qualities and properties of the drugs with which it is combined in the preparation of compounds. Therefore this drug is prescribed in the following diseases with different adjuvants (*anupana*).

(1) Diseases of teeth, ear, head and throat; (2) Hoarseness of voice (*swarabheda*); (3) Ascites (*udara*). (4) Dyspnoea (*swasa*); (5) Hernia (*antravridhi*); (6) Internal Suppurating boils (*antarvidradhi*); (7) Internal tumour (*gulma*); (8) Diseases of lipid metabolism (*medoroga*); (9) Swelling (*oedema-sopha*); (10) *Visarpa* (Erysipelas); (11) Leucoderma (*switra*); (12) Anemia (*pandu*); (13) Urinary complaints (*prameha*); (14) Malignant sores and ulcers; (15) Fistula-in-ano; (16) *Apaci*; (17) *Vyanga*; (18) *Granthi*; (19) Obesity; (20) Worms in the intestines; (21) Rheumatoid arthritis (*vatarakta*); (22) Diseases of *sukra* (semen), *artava* (menstrual discharge) and *manas* (mind); (23) Premature old age; (24) Fever caused by *kapha*; (25) Piles; (26) Urinary calculus; (27) Cutaneous affections (*kushtha*); (28) Poisons including of snake, spider and mad dog and poisoning by *Haritala* (Arsenic).

The following compound preparations contain Guggulu as a component :

(1) *Guggulvasava*; (2) *Yavanyadi churna*; (3) *Guggulu Panchatiktaghrita*; (4) *Mahavajraka taila*; (5) *Maha paisachika ghrita*; (6) *Amritaguggulu*; (7) *Mahe-swarayoga*; (8) *Tarkshyagada*.

Vagbhata also mentioned the side effects of the excessive use of Guggulu. They are *timira*, *vadanadosha*, *kleebata*, *karsya*, *moha*, *atisara* and *deharookshata*.

(b) Ashtanga Hridaya :

There are many similarities with the information given in Ashtanga Sangraha. The method of purification of Guggulu is not mentioned. Two words *Palankasha* and *Pura* are mentioned in the treatment of *vishmajwara*. The word *Palankasha* has already been discussed. The word *Purah* is explained as Guggulu by Hemadri, the commentator of Ashtangahridaya.

Here too, Guggulu is included in *Eladigana* and described as one of the best remedies for disorders of lipid metabolism including obesity and rheumatic and other diseases. It is also stated that Guggulu is the best medicine for *vrana*. The fumes of

the (burnt) Guggulu are indicated to be inhaled as *snigdhadhuma* by healthy persons, in *vishamajwara* along with other drugs and in *swasaroga*. These fumes are also indicated locally, after a surgical operation. The application of Guggulu is indicated for making an opening in the ripe swelling. As a single drug, it is prescribed in *gulma*, *swayathu*, *urustambha*, *vataroga*, *obesity*, in boils and wounds. It is also prescribed along with *snehapana* in *kushtha* and as part of other oleaginous preparations either as *ghrita* or *taila* in *asmari*, *kushtha*, *vataroga*, and *unmada*. Guggulu has also been prescribed as part of compound preparations in the treatment of *kushtha*, *vataroga* and *bhagandara*. An interesting observation contributed by Vagbhata is that Guggulu is a good remedy for the disorders caused by excessive and improper use of the fats leading to alimentary hyperlipemia. Guggulu has been mentioned as a *Balidravya* in exorcising.

The following medicinal compounds contain Guggulu as a component :

- (1) *Varunadighrita*; (2) *Kushtadi churna*; (3) *Guggulvadi churna*; (4) *Mahavajraka taila*; (5) *Nimbadi taila*; (6) *Mahapaisachika ghrita*; (7) *Amritadiguggulu*;
- (8) *Swayambhuva guggulu*.

IV. Medieval Period :

During this period, some books on materia medica and therapeutics and also a few important medical lexicons containing various synonyms, characteristics to identify the drugs, their actions and indications were written. The authors were the famous physicians namely Chakrapani, Sarngadhara, Madanapala, Bhavamisra and others. Chakrapani, commentator of Charakasamhita compiled, Chakradatta, a book on treatment. Palankasha and Pura and Kausika have been given as synonyms of Guggulu by Chakrapani. Chakrapani mentioned many compound preparations with Guggulu as a major component. The fumes of burning Guggulu are indicated either to be inhaled or applied locally in the treatment of fevers and diseases of ear. Guggulu has also been indicated for internal administration in anemia *unmada*, *apasmara*, *gridhrasi*, *krosh-tukasirsha*, *asmari*, obesity general oedema, *sotha*, *vidradhi*, *vrana*, *upadamsa*, *visarpa*, *visphota*, and diseases of eye. Sivadas Sen, the commentator of Chakradatta explained Palankasha as Guggulu. Eventhough Chakrapani has not given any method of purification of Guggulu, Sivadas Sen states that Guggulu has to be boiled either with *Erandakwatha* or *Triphalakwatha* for purification.

Guggulu has been prescribed after the application of *ksharasutra* in *arsas* and along with other drugs in *vatarokta*, *urustambha*, *prameha*, *udara* and *masurika*.

Guggulu has been prescribed as a component of some oleaginous preparations either as *ghrita* or as *taila*. The following is the list of such preparations :

- (1) *Mahapatsachi Ghrita* in *unmada*; (2) *Palankashadya Taila* in *apasmara*; (3) *Varunadya ghrita* in *asmari*; (4) *Satapushpadya ghrita* in *vridhhi*; (5) *Soureswara ghrita* in *sleepada*; (6) *Mahatrinuka taila* in *kushtha*.

The compound preparations containing Guggulu as a major component together with indications according to Chakrapani are given below :

Preparations	Disease
1. Adityapaka guggulu	<i>Vatavyadhi</i>
2. Trayodasanga guggulu	
3. Kaisora guggulu	} <i>Vatarakta</i>
4. Amrita guggulu	
5. Punarnava guggulu	
6. Yogaraja guggulu	
7. Simhanada guggulu	<i>Amavata</i>
8. Brihat Simhanada guggulu	
9. Navaka guggulu	<i>Sthaulya</i> <i>Udara and vrana</i>
10. Triphala guggulu	
11. Vatika guggulu	} <i>Vrana</i>
12. Vidangadivatika guggulu	
13. Amritadi vatika guggulu	
14. Saptanga guggulu	} <i>Nadivrana</i>
15. Navakarshika guggulu	
16. Saptavimsati guggulu	} <i>Bhagandara</i>
17. Laksha guggulu	
18. Abhaya guggulu	} <i>Bhagna</i>
19. Ekavimsatika guggulu	
20. Panchatikta Ghrita guggulu	} <i>Kushtha</i>
21. Vasa guggulu	
22. Nava Kashaya guggulu	} <i>Amlapitta</i> <i>Visarpa and visphota</i>
23. Shadanga guggulu	

The *Loharasayana* prescribed in *medoroga* contains Guggulu. Guggulu has been mixed in some prescriptions which are used as purgatives in the treatment of *udara* and *udarda*.

Chronologically next is Sarngadhara, author of Sarngadhara Samhita who considers Guggulu as *rasayana* drug. He has also given the amount of Guggulu to be added to a *Kashaya* (infusion) when Guggulu is prescribed along with it. This particular information has not been given by any of his predecessors even though they have been prescribing Guggulu along with some decoctions. It should be noted that Guggulu does not dissolve in water if it is a component in decoctions. Therefore, Guggulu should be made into a powder and added separately after decoction has been prepared. Guggulu preparations together with indications as mentioned by Sarngadhara are as hereunder :

(1) *Yogaraja guggulu* in *vataroga*; (2) *Kaisora guggulu* in *vatarakta*; (3) *Triphala guggulu* in *bhagandara*; (4) *Gokshuradi guggulu* in *Prameha*; (5) *Triphalam daka guggulu* in *kushtha*; (6) *Kanchanara guggulu* in *Gandamala* etc.

Guggulu is a component of *patoladi Kashaya* mentioned by Sarngadhara for the treatment of *upadamsa*. Two more preparations have been mentioned containing Guggulu, one *kasisadya Ghrita* and the other *Kushtakuthara*.

Of the separate books dealing with the subject of materia medica, Pharmacy etc., during this period, mention has to be made about Rajanighantu, Dhavanti Nighantu, Madanapala Nighantu, Kayyadeva Nighantu and Bhavaprakasa Nighantu. Further more information on the drug is available. A number of synonyms based on qualities, the place of origin of the drug and uses were enumerated in the works. While Atharvaveda mentioned two varieties of Guggulu according to the place of origin, Astanga Sangraha mentioned three kinds based on the colour of the drug. The authors of the Nighantus enumerated more varieties based on factors like the place of origin, colour and other characters.

Of the ancient medical scholars, Susruta and Vagbhata (in Astanga Sangraha) only provided a detailed description of the physical qualities, actions and indications of Guggulu. The elaborate information covering details like classification, physical characteristics, actions and indications provided by the authors of Nighantus is more worthy. Narahari Pandita, the author of Raja Nighantu, mentions three varieties of Guggulu (1) Guggulu, (2) Kana Guggulu and (3) Bhumija Guggulu. Kayyadeva and Bhavamisra mentioned five varieties based on the colour (1) Hiranya, (2) Kumuda, (3) Padma, (4) Mahaneela and (5) Mahishaksha. Barring a few variations, these authors almost agreed in general upon the physical characteristics like taste, actions, indications etc. These books on Materia Medica have divided the drugs into different groups (*varga*). The details of the information regarding Guggulu as mentioned in these Nighantus is given below:-

1. *Raja Nighantu* : Guggulu is mentioned in *Chandanadi Varga*.

- a. Synonyms :- Yavanadvishita, Bhavabhishta, Nisataka, Jatala, Kala Niriyasa, Pura, Bhutahara, Siva, Kausika, Sambhava, Durga, Yatughna, Mahishaksha, Devesta, Marudesa, Rakshohan, Rukshangandhaka, Divya, Mahishaksha.

It is inferred from some of the synonyms that this Guggulu is a black (dark) gum produced in the arid regions of the Yavana kingdom (probably indicating *Sindhu Desha*), of strong smell and is capable of warding off *bhuta* and *jantu* (which may represent different infective agents like bacteria) and other evil spirits.

- b. Varieties :- The Guggulu is stated to be of three varieties. 1. Guggulu
2. Kanaguggulu 3. Bhumija Guggulu.

The prefix "Kana" is an adjective indicating the physical character of the drug as being stalactitic. Separate synonyms have been mentioned for this variety:-

Gandharaja, Swarnakana, Swarna, Kanaka, Vamsapita, Suresha, Palankasha.

These synonyms indicate the colour of the Guggulu as golden yellow and the smell is pleasant.

The prefix "Bhumija" indicates of its terrestrial origin from the earth. The synonyms of this variety are the following :-

Bhumija, Daityamedaja, Durgahlada, Idajata, Asadiripusambhava, Majjaja, Medaja, Mahishasurasambhava, Umapriya, Bhutaghna.

The synonyms indicate that this drug is a favourite of the Goddess Durga and it is produced from the heart wood of the tree.

c. Properties and actions. (i) Guggulu:-

Rasa:- *katu* and *tikta*; *Virya*:- *ushna* action:- Reduces *kapha* and *vata*; useful as *rasayana* indicated in *kaṣa*, *krimi*, *vatodara*, enlargement of spleen, oedema, piles.

(ii) Kanaguggulu is pungent in taste and hot in potency; reduces *kapha* and *vata*; tonic (*rasayana*), useful in the diseases like colic (*sula*), internal tumour (*gulma*), ascites (*udara*), and flatulence (*adhmana*).

(iii) Bhumijaguggulu is pungent and bitter in taste, hot in potency, reduces *kapha* and *vata*, destroys *bhutas*, increases the power of brain and bestows flavour to the body.

2. *Dhanvantari Nighantu* - Guggulu is mentioned in *Chandanadi Varga*. Its synonyms are (a) *Kalaniryasa*, *Jatayu*, *Kausika*, *Pura*, *Naktamchara*, *Siva Durga*, *Mahishaksha* and *Palamkasha*. (b) No mention is made of different kinds of Guggulu.

(c) Properties and actions:-

Rasa:- *kaṣu*, *tikta* and *kashaya*; *virya*:- *ushna*; *vipaka*:- *katu*.

Other properties:- *picchila* (slimy), *laghu* (light), *sukshma* (penetrative), *snigdha* (viscous), *sara* (spreading), *visada* (clearing) *tikshna* (energetic).

Action:- Reduces *vata* and *kapha*, good for the voice, laxative, improves the complexion, useful in the disease of *vasti*, *medas*, *vraṇa*, *sopha* and infections. The new Guggulu is roborant and the old Guggulu reduces corpulency.

3. *Madanapala Nighantu*:- Guggulu is included in *Karpuradi varga*.

a. Synonyms:- *Kalaniryasa*, *Mahishaksha*, *Palamkasha*, *Jatayu*, *Kausika*, *Durga*, *Devadhupa*, *Siva*, *Pura*.

b. No classification is found about its varieties.

c. Properties and actions:-

Rasa:- *tikta* and *katu*, *virya*:- *ushna*, *vipaka*:- *katu*.

Other properties:- Reduces *kapha* and *vata*, *pichila* (slimy), *balya* (tonic), *sukshma* (penetrative), *visada* (clearing), *sara* (spreading), *dipana* (increases digestive capacity), *swarya* (improves voice), *vrishya* (aphrodisiac), *rasayana* (constructive tonic), capable of joining broken bones. The freshly obtained Guggulu is roborant and the old one reduces corpulency.

The diseases like ulcers, *apaci*, disorders of medas, urinary disorders including stones in the bladder, rheumatoid conditions, skin diseases including leprosy, malignant sores and ulcers, *granthi*, oedema, piles, *galaganda* and *krimi* yield to the use of this drug.

4. Kayyadeva Nighantu :-

Guggulu is mentioned in Oshadhivarga as an aromatic drug (*Surabhi drvaya*).

(a). Synonyms :- Mahishaksha, Nishasayee, Kausika, Pura, Jatayu, Kalaniryasa, Siva, Durga, Nisachara, Ulukhala, Sarvasaha, Sivadhupa, Palankasha.

The mythological story says that Lord Vishnu created this drug capable of imparting strength and therefore victory in war for the benefit of the Gods who were defeated by the king of Demons (*danavas*).

(b) Place of Occurrence :-

These trees are commonly found in arid zones. The oleo-resin oozes out of the trees which are heated during summer and collected during winter.

(c) Varieties :- 5 varieties have been mentioned :-

1. Hiranya of golden yellow
2. Kumuda with the colour of white lily.
3. Padma of the colour of ruby.
4. Mahanila which is blue.
5. Mahishaksha which has the color of a honey-bee or black *anjan*.

(d) Properties and actions:-

Rasa:- *madhura*, *tikta*, *katu*, and *kashaya*,

All varieties have the same *rasa*, *viryā* and *vipaka*. Guggulu when heated, melts and when lighted, burns emitting fumes.

Other Properties:- Reduces *kapha* and *vata* mainly but it can be used as *tridoshaghna*, Guggulu is *laghu* (light), *mridu* (soft), *sukshma* (penetrative), *visada* (clearing), *snigdha* (unctuous), *sara* (spreading), *dipana* (increases digestive capacity), *brimhana* (roborant), *vrishya* (aphrodisiac), *rasayana* (constructive tonic), *swaryam* (good for the voice), and capable of joining the broken bones.

Hiranya variety is stated to be useful for men, *Kumuda* and *Padma* for horses and *Mahishaksha* and *Mahanila* varieties for elephants. The dark

Guggulu should be in treatment of *raktapitta* and the white variety in *vatapitta*. New Guggulu is roborant and old Guggulu reduces corpulency.

Disorders of urinary system, lipid metabolism, skin, including leprosy, *apaci*, malignant sores, oedema, indigestion, itching, vomiting and intestinal infestation respond to the use of Guggulu.

According to Kayyadeva, the leaves are also medicinal. The tender leaves are sweet and pungent in taste, *ruksha* (rough), *seeta* (cold), *guru* (heavy) and constipative and therefore increase the *kapha* and *vata* and also increase the amount of urine and faeces.

5: Bhavaprakasa :-

The first part of the *Poorva Khanda* of the Bhavaprakasa consists of the physiology in Ayurveda and the Materia Medica. The information regarding the qualities, varieties and actions of Guggulu are almost similar to that given in Kayyadeva Nighantu.

(a) Synonyms :- Devadhupa, Jatayu, Kausika, Pura, Kumba, Ulukhalaka, Mahishaksha, Palankasha.

(b) Varieties :- 5 varieties based on the colour of the drug.

(1) Mahishaksha, (2) Mahanila (3) Kumuda (4) Padma (5) Hiranya.

The Hiranya variety is stated to be useful for humans, Kumuda and Padma varieties for horses and Mahishaksha and Mahanila varieties for elephants.

(c) Properties and actions :-

Rasa :- *tikta, kashaya, katu* and *madhura*.

Virya :- *ushna*.

vipaka :- *katu*.

Other Properties :- Guggulu is *visada* (clearing), *sara* (spreading), *ruksha* (rough), *laghu* (light), *sukshma* (penetrative), *picchila* (slimy), *dipana* (increases the digestive capacity), *vrishya* (aphrodisiac), *rasayana* (constructive tonic) *balya* (roborant), *svarya* (good for the voice), capable of joining the broken bones. The Guggulu is stated to reduce all the three *doshas*, but may at time increase *pitta*.

The diseases like obesity, urinary disorders including stones in the system, *vatarogas*, skin disorders including leprosy, rheumatic conditions, malignant ulcers, *granthi*, oedema, piles, *gandamala*, and intestinal infestation yield to the use of this drug, New Guggulu is roborant and the old one reduces corpulency. The new Guggulu may be either golden yellow colored or dark blue-black, unctuous, slimy and fragrant. The variety which is very old, dry, with bad smell and abnormal colours is stated to be useless.

The dietetic and behavioural restrictions are also indicated. A person who is using Guggulu should avoid articles which are sour, energetic and indigestible, sexual indulgence, physical exercise and exposure to sun, alcohol and anger.

The second and third parts of Bhavaprakasa contain the sections on treatment. It is clear from the study of Bhavaprakasa, the author Bhavamisra used the word Palankashaa as a synonym for Guggulu, which he did not mention in the *Poorvakhanda*. He has given only Palankasha, word in masculine gender as a synonym of Guggulu. Even though there are so many synonyms only three are found to be most commonly used : Pura, Palankasha or Palankashaa and Kausika.

A close study of the second and third sections of Bhavaprakasa reveals that Bhavamisra prescribed the use of Guggulu in more diseases than indicated in the Materia Medica section of the book.

The fumes of the burning Guggulu remove the "feter" in the ear (probably due to infection) and are also indicated in the diseases of the nose. An ointment prepared with Guggulu as component is prescribed in *padadari* (a condition with cracking of the soles of the feet). Guggulu is also prescribed as a single drug in *vatarogas* like *apabahuka*, *khanja*, *pangu* and *kroshtukasirsha*, *urustambha*, *vatarakta*, *vridhhi*, *vra*, *upadamsa* and *sukadosa*. This drug is indicated along with other drugs in *sannipata jwara*, *mutrakricchra*, *asmari*, *prameha*, obesity, *udara*, *sotha*, *gandamala*, *bhagna*, *nadivra*, *bhagandara* and *kushtha*.

Thirty three compound preparations containing Guggulu as a component are mentioned.

V. Modern Period :

During this period, many drugs have been imported from neighbouring countries particularly for the treatment of some important conditions like *phirangaroga*. The description of the new drugs and their uses in newly identified diseases has been mentioned by Bhavamisra. Since Bhavaprakasa has been discussed along with other *Nighantus* as a class, information in the later works in respect of Guggulu has been considered during the period.

During XVII century two original works were written by two physicians of Andhra region. 1. Basavarajeeya by Basavaraju 2. Vaidya Chintamani by Indrakanthi Vallabhacharyulu. These two authors had deviated from the beaten path of the ancient Ayurvedic scholars in describing some of the diseases and also in the prescriptions.

1. Basavarajiya :-

Probably Basvaraju was the first author to have given the method of purification of Guggulu. Guggulu is purified by boiling either with the juices of Nidigdika, Amrita, Musta, Vasa and Arishtaka or with the decoction of Triphala. Guggulu is stated to be one of the *Mitrapanchakam* a group of five drugs to which if a metallic ash (*Bhasma*) is added and burnt, the original metal is recovered.

The fumes of burning Guggulu are indicated in *hikka* and Guggulu along with other drugs is recommended for smelling as a treatment for *pratisyaya*. *Madanadilepa* containing Guggulu is prescribed for *padadari*- Guggulu is indicated in the treatment

of *vridhi*, *Chayaroga* (a *kshudra roga*). Guggulu can be prescribed intelligently combining with different drugs in almost all diseases. Twenty compound preparations containing Guggulu as a component are recorded.

2. Vaidya Chintamani :

Guggulu is stated as a drug belonging to a group called *Niryasa saras*. If Guggulu is not available, Nimba Niryasa or the gum of Neem tree can be used in its place. The fumes of the burning Guggulu are indicated in fevers, *kasa* and sneezing. The drug along with other drugs is recommended for smelling by a *pratisyaya* patient. Ointments with Guggulu as a component are indicated for *nadivrana*, *padadari* and *mangu* (discoloration of the face). An oily preparation for external use in *kushtha* and *nisadivarti* with Guggulu is recommended for *Bhagandara*.

Guggulu is indicated in *vata rogas*, *prameha*, *vridhhi*, *shtaulya*, *urustambha*, *arbuda* and *vidradhi*. Forty eight compound preparations contain Guggulu as a component.

3. Yogaratnakara :

The author of Yogaratnakara states that Guggulu is best for *vata* diseases and *Triphala guggulu* for *vrana* (ulcer). The fumes of burning Guggulu are recommended in fevers including for the fevers of children, *kasa*, to destroy the "feter" in the ear, disease of the nose like *kshavathu* and *bhramsathu*, and *pratisyaya*. Guggulu is also prescribed with other drugs as external application in *sotha*, *kushtha*, *padadari* and affliction of children by evil spirits (*graha*). It is also prescribed as a purgative with other drugs in allergic conditions like *sitapitta*, *udara* and *kotha*.

Guggulu either as a single drug or in combination with other drugs is prescribed in the following diseases :

Pandu; *gridhrasi*; *kroshtukasirsha*; diseases due to *vata*; *vatarakta* (rheumatoid arthritis); *urustambha*; *mutraghata*; *udalaroga*; *shotka* (oedema); *vridhhi*; *sleepada* (filariasis); *vidradhi*; *vrana* (ulcers); *nadivrana*; *upadamsa*; *visarpa*; Diseases of the eyes; Poisoning.

Forty four compound preparations contain Guggulu as a component.

During the 19th and 20th centuries many books have been written by the experienced Ayurvedic physicians. Since these books are mainly based on the classical knowledge and experiences of the authors, they resemble the compilations of the information gathered from the earlier works of Ayurveda. Therefore the information regarding Guggulu from these books has not been collected for the preparation of this article. Similarly, the information, now being brought to light with the recent spurt in the research about Guggulu has also not been collected for want of authenticity. But it is clear through the various works belonging to different periods that Guggulu can be successfully utilised by an enterprising physician for the relief of many diseases for which the present knowledge of modern medicine does not give any solution.

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S U M M A R Y

The article presents a succinct picture of the history of the drug Guggulu (*Commiphora mukul*) from the remote past to modern period based on information from classical treatises, medical lexicons and other compilations related to and relevant to Ayurveda. The historical developments of thoughts, regarding identity, varieties and usage of this drug are depicted lucidly.

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सारांश

गुग्गुलु का इतिहास

अयुर्वेदिक साहित्यपर आधारित

ले० बी. बी. एस्. शास्त्री

प्रस्तुत प्रबन्ध, गुग्गुलु (कामिफोरा मुकुल) का सम्पूर्ण इतिहास चिरकाल से अद्यावधिपर्यन्त प्रस्तुत करता है जो आयुर्वेदिक प्राचीन ग्रन्थों, निघण्टुओं अथवा अन्य प्रमुख वैद्यकीय ग्रन्थोंपर आधारित है। उन सभी तथ्योंका स्पष्ट रूप से वर्णन किया गया है जो इसके इतिहास में क्रमशः इसके परिचय, प्रकार एवं उपयोगों से सम्बन्धित हैं और क्रमिक रूप से विकसित हुए हैं।