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MEDICINAL IMPORTANCE OF *SHAKAVARGA DRAVYA* (VEGETABLE DRUGS): A REVIEW

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Abstract

The food itself acts as medicines and nature presented many plants which can be used as vegetables and also possess enormous medicinal values. The vegetables available as dietary materials offer nutritional values and also imparts therapeutic role in many pathological conditions. The disease free states can be achieved with the help of appropriate dietary and daily routine, in this regards some vegetables acts as drug and considered useful for preventing and treating many diseases. Vegetable's provides vitamins, minerals and essential components requiring for health promotion and disease resistance. There are many vegetables which not only useful for their nutritional value but also used for medicinal purpose. The phyto-constituents present in vegetables such as; steroids, flavonoids and glycosides, etc. are responsible for different *Guna, Rasa, Virya* and *Vipaka* thus relieves various pathological conditions.

Key-Words: *Ayurveda, Drugs, Vegetables, Disease*

Introduction

Classical texts of Ayurveda represent vegetables as “*Shakavarga*”, these vegetables prescribed as *Pathya* for the maintenance of normal health status. The *Shakavarga* gave vegetables used for various therapeutic purposes for treating conditions like; *Daha*, *Kandu*, *Kustha*, *Vidradhi* and *Visarpa*, etc. The vegetable drugs offer anti-inflammatory activity, antibacterial activity, immunomodulatory activity, anti-allergic activity and antihistamine activities, etc [1-3].

The foods or dietary materials represents socio-cultural, spiritual and economic status of society, moreover the diets consumed by individual also play important role towards his/her health. The vegetables are consumed as part of dietary meals and these vegetables fulfill nutritional requirements of body and contributed towards the process of growth and development. Additionally vegetables consumed in meals acts as medicinal agents and help to prevent and treat diseases. Vegetables come from the various parts of plants like; fruits, leaves, tubers, flowers, roots, rhizome and tubers, etc [4-7]. These plant parts acts as chief source of vitamins, minerals and proteins thus imparts many health benefits. The vegetables exhibited biological actions by virtue of their *Tikta* or Sweet *Rasa*, *Sheeth* and *Ushan* potency [7-9]. The Ayurveda branch *Kayachikitsa* utilizes different drugs for therapeutic purposes and these drugs obtained from various sources as depicted in Figure 1.

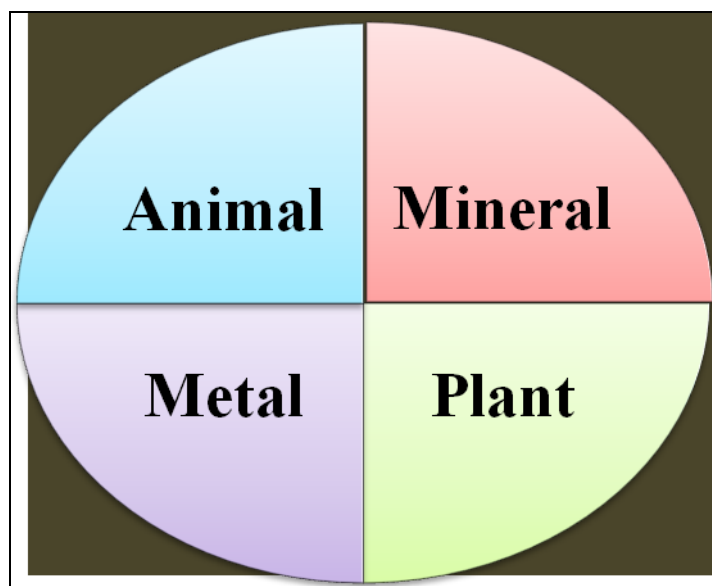


Figure 1: Various sources of natural medicines

As mentioned in above figure the drugs obtained from plant sources are major category of natural drugs, the plant used as vegetables also served as medicines.

The medicinal importance of some common vegetables is as follows: [9-11]

Ghanar:

- ✓ The leaves used as vegetable and also offers property to treat Jaundice
- ✓ The leaves also used to treat constipation
- ✓ The whole plant used to treat Ulcers

Mutter

- ✓ Seeds used as vegetable and also helps to treat toothache

Kaddu

- ✓ Fruits used as vegetables and also offers therapeutic benefits in blood pressure

Kerala

- ✓ Keralafruits used as vegetable and also provides health benefitsin Jaundice.
- ✓ It is considered beneficial for treating blood pressure
- ✓ It also improves symptoms of diabetes

Mulli

- ✓ Whole plant used as vegetable and provides relief in Jaundice
- ✓ Relieves gases and cure constipation by virtue of its carminative effects

Palak

- ✓ Palak leaves consumed as vegetable and also possess property to treat constipation & Chest pain
- ✓ Improves level of blood and helps to combat against anemia.

Methi

- ✓ Methi leaves and seeds used as vegetable also used to treat fever
- ✓ Methi leaves considered good for ulcers.

Moringaoleifera Lam:

- ✓ The pods used as vegetables and used as antibiotic.

- ✓ The pods are used as rich sources of protein.
- ✓ Plant also used in ascites, helps to cure rheumatism and can be recommended for venomous bites.
- ✓ The pods of plant used as cardiac stimulants.
- ✓ The pods are source of vitamins and improve circulatory process.
- ✓ The plant possesses anti-intestinal worm property.
- ✓ The flowers are used as tonic and diuretic.

Spinaciaoleracea Linn.

- ✓ Leaves and tender stems are edible portions, contains protein, mineral, calcium and vitamin.
- ✓ It offers cooling, anthelmintic and anti-emetic effects
- ✓ Possess laxative and alexipharmic properties.
- ✓ It is useful in the diseases of the blood, asthma, leprosy and jaundice.
- ✓ The fruits offer demulcent and diuretic properties.

Ipomoea batatas (Linn.):

- ✓ It is used as food after boiling and baking, leaves can be used as vegetable.
- ✓ It contains protein, carbohydrates, vitamin and minerals.
- ✓ The plant offers laxative and cooling properties.
- ✓ Gives aphrodisiac action and also used in scorpion bites.

Momordicacochinchinensis Spreng:

- ✓ The fruits of plant used as vegetable and used as appetizer.
- ✓ The fruit is also used as laxative and considered useful for the treatment of ulcers and sores.
- ✓ Helps to cure obstructions of liver and spleen.
- ✓ Fruits and leaves are useful in ulceration and fracture of bones.

Daucuscarota Linn:

- ✓ Carrot roots are used as a vegetable.
- ✓ It contains protein, carbohydrates, mineral, matter and vitamin A.

- ✓ Used as appetizer, anti-dysenteric and carminative.
- ✓ It also used in leprosy, burning sensation and tumours.

Conclusion

The healthy food considered as best medicines and vegetables possessing medicinal values used for both purposes; dietary as well as therapeutic purpose. The vegetables fulfil dietary requirements and also impart nutritional values for the growth and development of body. The vegetable contains vitamins, minerals, steroids, flavonoids and glycosides, etc. thus provides many health benefits. The vegetables acts like drugs by virtue of their *Guna*, *Rasa*, *Virya* and *Vipaka*. The vegetable drugs offering anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, immunomodulatory, anti-allergic and antihistamine activities used as medicines. The various parts of vegetable plants like; fruits, leaves, tubers, flowers, roots, rhizome and tubers, etc. used for dietary purposes and also recommended for therapeutic indications. The *Ghanar*, *Mutter*, *Kaddu*, *Kerala*, *Mulli*, *Palak* and *Methi*, etc. are common vegetables that can also be used as medicines for various health ailments.

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