

Chiruvilwadi Ghritham: A Classical Ashtavaidya Formulation for Gastrointestinal and Anorectal Disorders

Introduction

Chiruvilwadi Ghritham is a classical Ayurvedic formulation from the Ashtavaidya tradition of Eledath Thaikkatt Mooss¹. Unlike many conventional ghrita kalpanas (medicated ghees), it integrates six potent herbs along with dadhi (curd) as an additional drava dravya besides kwatha (decoction). This distinctive preparation makes it especially effective in a wide range of gastrointestinal and anorectal disorders. Traditionally, it is prescribed for Arśas (piles)^{2,7}, Grahani (IBS-like conditions)^{3,4,5}, Pāṇḍu (anemia), Udāvarta (reverse peristalsis), Atisāra (diarrhea), and Parikartikā (anal fissure associated with constipation).

Experiential Wisdom

Chiruvilwadi Ghritham embodies the Ashtavaidya approach of combining cleansing and nourishing effects in one formulation. Its properties - vāta-kapha hara, dīpana (digestive stimulant), and srotoshodhana (channel-cleansing) - make it versatile across different pathologies of the gut¹. The use of ghrita enhances bioavailability due to saṃskārasya anuvartanam (ability to carry and amplify the properties of herbs)⁶, enabling action even when pitta is involved. This balance of śodhana (eliminative) and bṛṃhaṇa (restorative) actions makes it beneficial in both acute and chronic digestive conditions, including those linked to śoṣa samprapti (wasting disorders).

Ingredients

- Chiruvilwa – *Holoptelea integrifolia* (Roxb.) Planch.
- Punarnava – *Boerhavia diffusa* L.
- Pippali – *Piper longum* L.
- Pippali Moola – *Piper longum* L.
- Dhanyaka – *Coriandrum sativum* L.
- Dadima – *Punica granatum* L.

Dosage

10–12 g with hot water before food, as directed by the physician¹.

Pharmacological Profile

- Rasa (Taste): Lavaṇa varjita pañcarasa (five tastes except salty)
- Guṇa (Qualities): Laghu (light), Snigdha (unctuous), Tikṣṇa (sharp)
- Vīrya (Potency): Uṣṇa (hot)
- Vipāka (Post-digestive effect): Madhura (sweet)
- Srotokarma (Action on channels): Srotoshodhana (channel-cleansing)¹

Pharmacodynamics:

- Doṣa Karma – Tridoṣahara, with a marked role in Vātānulomana (restoring downward movement of vāta)^{2,6}
- Agni Karma – Dīpana (stimulating digestion, correcting sluggish metabolism)³
- Anya Karma – Arśogna (anti-hemorrhoidal), Pāṇḍugna (anti-anemic), Grahaniroganāśana (beneficial in IBS and malabsorption)^{4,5}, Mudāvātānulomana (relieving obstructed vāta and constipation)

Probable Mode of Action

The broad therapeutic action of Chiruvilwadi Ghritham can be traced to its regulation of Apāna Vāta, the governing force

of elimination functions². Disturbances in vāta create blockages in natural pathways, leading to conditions like Arśas (piles), Parikartikā (fissures), Udāvarta (reverse peristalsis), or irregular bowel movements in Grahani and Atisāra⁷. By promoting anulomana (restoring downward flow), the formulation helps reestablish normal excretory physiology¹.

At the same time, its agni dīpana action strengthens jatharāgni (digestive fire), correcting agnimāndya (digestive impairment) and ensuring the proper formation and nourishment of rasa dhātu and subsequent dhātus³. This explains its role in conditions like Pāṇḍu (anemia), Ojokṣaya (loss of vitality), and malnutrition-related digestive disorders.

Together, these dual mechanisms-vāta anulomana and agni dīpana-offer a comprehensive therapeutic approach to gastrointestinal and anorectal disorders⁶.

Relevance of the Composition

Plant components contribute:

- Anthelmintic, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory actions
- Antimicrobial and immunostimulatory effects
- Hepatoprotective, diuretic, and renal protective benefits
- Anticoagulant and anti-fibrinolytic properties
- Hormonal and estrogenic modulation

Medium – Ghṛta Kalpana

- Extracts lipid-soluble active principles
- Improves absorption and bioavailability
- Increases palatability and shelf life
- Provides sūkṣma (subtle) penetration for deeper tissue delivery

Additive – Curd (Dadhi)

Although heating (~130°C) eliminates live probiotics, it releases bioactive postbiotic compounds - peptides, organic acids, and polysaccharides⁸. These enhance digestion, modulate gut microbiota, reduce inflammation, and support Apāna Vāta

Anulomana⁹. Thus, curd complements the formulation's digestive and metabolic effects, especially in Arśas and Grahani^{1,5}.

Broader Clinical Applications

- Gastrointestinal disorders: Atisāra, Grahani, Udāvarta, chronic constipation, and functional GI disorders^{3,4,5}.
- Anorectal disorders: Arśas, Parikartikā (fissures), hemorrhoidal bleeding, and Mudāvata (obstructed vāta)^{2,7}.
- Nutritional aspects: By correcting agnimāndya, it improves nutrient absorption, helpful in Pāṇḍu and malnutrition-related conditions⁶.
- Reproductive relevance: Since Apāna Vāta governs menstrual and reproductive physiology, the formulation may be beneficial in menstrual irregularities and fertility concerns linked to disturbed bowel health².

Conclusion

Chiruvilwadi Ghritham is a fine example of the Ashtavaidya tradition's insight into gastrointestinal and anorectal health. Its distinctive preparation with ghrita and dadhi allows it to act both as a digestive regulator and as a restorative tonic. By addressing vāta anulomana, agni dīpana, and srotoshodhana, it proves useful in a spectrum of digestive and systemic disorders, extending beyond its classical indication in Arśas^{1,6}. This breadth of application highlights its relevance not only in traditional practice but also as a candidate for future integrative research.

References:

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