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Original Article

A Critical Review of Shilajatvadi Lauha WSR To Yakshma

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ABSTRACT

Background: Rasashastra, a branch of Ayurveda, focuses on metals, minerals and herbo-mineral preparations processed through techniques like Shodhana and Marana to improve safety and therapeutic potency. Lauha Kalpas, a class of herbo-mineral compounds, use Lauha Bhasma (iron Bhasma) as the main ingredient, combined with herbs and purified mineral or metal Bhasmas to enhance efficacy. Shilajatvadi Lauha is one such formulation, categorized as Kharaliya Rasayana, is indicated in Rajayakshma, Raktashtheevi Yakshma, Raktakshaya, Pandu, and Madhumeha. Despite their potential, clinical evidence on safety and efficacy remains limited. **Objective:** To review classical references, analyse its pharmacodynamic profile and explore its probable mode of action. **Methods:** A comprehensive review of classical Ayurvedic literature was done to compile references related to the formulation. Electronic databases were searched to identify scientific studies evaluating each ingredient. **Results:** The formulation comprises Shilajatu, Loha Bhasma, Swarnamakshika, Trikatu and Madhu. The formulation predominantly exhibits Ushna Veerya with Katu Rasa dominance. Most ingredients possess Rasayana, Lekhana, and Srotoshodhana properties, supporting its specific indication in Yakshma. Studies support the immunomodulatory effect of Shilajatu, hematinic activity of Loha Bhasma and piperine-mediated enhancement of drug bioavailability. **Conclusion:** Shilajatvadi Lauha is a classical herbo-mineral formulation indicated in Yakshma. Its Rasayana, Lekhana, Yogavahi, and Srotoshodhana properties rationalize its use in Dhatukshaya and respiratory disorders.

Keywords: Shilajatvadi Lauha, Shilajathu, Yakshma, Pandu, Rasayana, Loha Bhasma, Rasa Shastra, Trikatu

INTRODUCTION

Rasa Shastra is a specialized branch of Ayurveda that deals with metals, minerals, and Herbo-mineral formulations processed through procedures such as *Shodhana* and *Marana* to enhance safety and therapeutic efficacy. These preparations are known for their rapid action, smaller dosage, and improved bioavailability[1]. Lauha Kalpa constitute a group of herbo-mineral formulations in which Lauha Bhasma serves as the principal ingredient, often combined with herbal drugs and other processed minerals to potentiate clinical effects. Shilajatvadi Lauha is one such Kharaliya Rasayana formulation indicated in Rajayakshma (tuberculosis), Rakta-shteevana Yakshma, Rakta Kshaya, Pandu (anemia), and Madhumeha (diabetes)[2]. The formulation comprises Shilajatu, Lauha Bhasma, Swarna Makshika, Trikatu, and Madhu, and is generally administered in Vati (tablet) form for precise dosing. Classical literature describes two variations of this formulation and specifically highlights its role in Yakshma management[2]. Its Rasayana, Lekhana, Yogavahi, and Srotoshodhana properties provide a rational basis for its use in Dhatukshaya and respiratory disorders. Compared to conventional iron salts that frequently cause gastrointestinal irritation, Shilajatvadi Lauha is traditionally considered better tolerated and shows potential in chronic wasting disorders.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To review classical references of Shilajatvadi Lauha.
2. To analyse its pharmacodynamic profile (Rasa, Guna, Veerya, Vipaka and Karma).
3. To explore its probable mode of action.

METHODOLOGY

Relevant conflicts of interest/financial disclosures: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

- Review of classical texts:

- Rasendra Sara Sangraha
- Bhaishajya Ratnavali
- Bharat Bhaishajya Ratnakara
- Rasarajasundara
- Ayurvedic Formulary of India Part II

- Electronic Database Search: Databases were screened for studies related to individual ingredients.

OBSERVATION AND RESULT:

Two classical texts describe slight variations in the composition, proportion, and dosage of Shilajitwadi Lauha.

Table No: 1 - Different references of Shilajatvadi Lauha.

Reference[3,4,5]	Composition	Proportion	Anupana	Dose
Rasa raja sundara/ RasendraSaraSangraha/ Bhaishajya Ratnavali/ Ayurvedic Formulary of India Part II	Shilajatu, Madhu, Shunthi, Maricha, Pippali, Swarna makshika + Loha Bhasma	1 part each of all ingredients + 6 parts Loha Bhasma	Ksheera Madhu	2 ratti (250 mg)
Bharat Bhaishajya Ratnakara	Shilajatu + Loha Bhasma	Equal parts	-	1 valla (375 mg)

METHOD OF PREPARATION[6]

The preparation of Shilajatvadi Lauha requires a rigorous multi-stage pharmaceutical process designed to transform raw minerals and metals into non-toxic, bioavailable Bhasma. This process involves Shodhana (purification), Marana (incineration), and Bhavana (trituration with herbal extracts), ensuring the final product passes both classical and modern standardization tests. According to classical references, loha bhasma (six parts) is triturated with one part each of other ingredients. Tablets of approximately 250 mg to 375 mg are prepared and dried under shade.

FORMULATION DETAILS (AFI)[6]

Table No: 2 - Ingredients of Shilajatvadi Lauha.

Sl N0:	Ingredient	Source	Ratio
1	Shilajatu	Mineral exudate	1 part
2	Loha Bhasma	Iron calx	6 parts
3	Swarnamakshika	Copper-iron pyrite	1 part
4	Shunthi	Zingiber officinale	1 part
5	Maricha	Piper nigrum	1 part
6	Pippali	Piper longum	1 part
7	Yastimadhu	Glycyrrhiza glabra	1 part

Thus, the formulation contains:

- 3 Herbal drugs
- 3 Mineral drugs
- 1 Animal origin drug (Bhaishajya Ratnavali, Rasendra Sara Sangraha, and Bharat Bhaishajya Ratnakara consider madhu as Yastimadhu)

Given its indication in Rajayakshma and the need for Rasayana and Kasa-Swasahara action, along with its preparation in Vati form, it is pharmaceutically more appropriate to interpret *Madhu* as *Yashtimadhu* rather than honey. Yashtimadhu better supports respiratory function and disease pathology while also aiding binding in Kharaliya preparations.

Drug Profile[7,8]

Table No: 3 - Rasa panchaka of Shilajitwadi Lauha.

Sl No:	Drug	Rasa	Guna	Veerya	Vipaka	Karma
1	Shilajatu	Katu, Tikta	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Katu	Rasayana, Yogavahi, Kshayaghna
2	Loha Bhasma	Kashaya	Ruksha	Ushna	Madhura	Rasayana, Balya
3	Swarna makshika	Tikta, Madhura	Laghu	Ushna	Katu	Rasayana
4	Pippali	Katu	Laghu, SnigdhaTikshna	Ushna	Madhura	Rasayana, Deepana, Pachana, Kasa Swasaghna, Srotoshodhana
5	Maricha	Katu	Laghu, Tikshna	Ushna	Katu	Deepana, Pachana
6	Shunti	Katu	Laghu, Snigdha	Ushna	Madhura	Deepana, Pachana, Kasa-Shwasaghna
7	Yashti madhu	Madhura	Guru, Snigdha	Sheeta	Madhura	Rasayana,Kasa-Swasahara, Yogavahi

The formulation predominantly exhibits Ushna Veerya with Katu Rasa dominance. Most ingredients possess Rasayana, Lekhana, and Srotoshodhana properties, supporting its specific indication in Yakshma. It is currently available in tablet form across various commercial price ranges.

DISCUSSION

Shilajatvadi Lauha is classically indicated in Yakshma, and its therapeutic basis can be understood through its multidimensional actions. The Rasayana property counters Dhatukshaya and supports tissue regeneration, while Lekhana and Srotoshodhana actions help clear Kapha-induced obstruction in the Pranavaha Srotas, thereby improving respiratory function. The Yogavahi nature of Shilajatu, Pippali, and Madhu enhances drug absorption and targeted delivery, augmenting overall efficacy. Lauha is described as *Nanamayaghna*, indicating its broad therapeutic utility. Processed Lauha Bhasma contains both Fe(II) and Fe(III) forms in nano-structured particles, which may improve absorption, iron storage, and oxygen transport—explaining its role in anaemia, weakness, and dyspnoea[9]. Tapya contributes additional Lekhana and Rasayana properties. Evidence also suggests that bhasma-based formulations can reduce airway inflammation[10]. Trikatu acts in Kasa and Swasa, promotes Lekhana and Srotoshodhana, and functions as a Yogavahi due to Pippali. Piperine enhances bioavailability by increasing intestinal blood flow and inhibiting P-glycoprotein and cytochrome P450 enzymes[11], thereby improving systemic availability of active constituents such as dibenzo-alpha-pyrones from Shilajatu and iron from Lauha Bhasma. Shilajatu has demonstrated immunomodulatory activity and enhancement of innate immune responses[12]. Loha Bhasma has shown hematinic efficacy comparable to ferrous sulphate in experimental anaemia models[13], potentially reducing anaemia-associated fatigue seen in Yakshma. Piperine's bioenhancing effect[14] further strengthens the pharmacological rationale of this formulation.

CONCLUSION

Shilajatvadi Lauha is a classical herbo-mineral formulation indicated in Yakshma, and its synergistic Rasayana, Lekhana, Yogavahi, and Srotoshodhana properties provide a rational basis for its use in conditions associated with Dhatukshaya and respiratory pathology. Compared to conventional iron salts, which frequently cause abdominal pain, nausea, and severe constipation leading to poor compliance, Shilajatvadi Lauha is generally better tolerated. Traditionally considered suitable even for children and pregnant women under supervision, it may represent a safer and more acceptable option for long-term use. Collectively, these findings provide pharmacological support for its classical indications and rationalize its use in the chronic wasting disorders (Dhatukshaya, Rajayakshma).

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