

<https://doi.org/10.33472/AFJBS.6.13.2024.4457-4467>



**African Journal of Biological Sciences**

Journal homepage: <http://www.afjbs.com>



Research Paper

Open Access

## **UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF ARKA KALPANA: A GLIMPSE INTO THE WORLD OF SHALAKYA TANTRA**

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**Article Info**

Volume 6, Issue 13, July 2024

Received: 04 June 2024

Accepted: 05 July 2024

Published: 31 July 2024

[doi: 10.33472/AFJBS.6.13.2024.4457-4467](https://doi.org/10.33472/AFJBS.6.13.2024.4457-4467)**ABSTRACT:**

The ancient book Arka Prakash, which was written by none other than the legendary King Ravana, mentions the novel technique of preparing drugs known as Arka Kalpana. Arka Kalpana is a powerful pharmaceutical formulation formed by utilizing the treasures bestowed by nature. The procedure of preparing Arka Kalpana is complex and demands close attention to detail. Arka, also known as distillate or herbal extract, is prepared by the process of distillation. It involves heating and condensing the volatile components of medicinal plants to obtain a concentrated form of medicine. Arka Kalpana is one such herbal remedy that is used by Shalakyia Tantra practitioners for treating various ailments related to the sensory organs and associated structures in the head and neck region. Arka operates on particular receptors found in these locations when applied externally or internally. It increases cellular regeneration, decreases inflammation, and improves blood circulation. Since ancient times, Arka Kalpana has always been a secure and reliable form of treatment. However, it should always be used under the supervision of a qualified Ayurvedic physician to guarantee appropriate dosage and administration based on a person's needs.

**Keywords:** Arka Prakash, Arka Kalpana, Distillation.**1. INTRODUCTION**

Within the vast field of ancient Indian literature, scholars have always been amazed and enthralled by one manuscript in particular: the Arka Prakash. This old text is said to have been written by none other than the fabled King Ravana. Admired for its esoteric meanings, this book has passed through the ages and transcended space and time to teach humanity.

Arka Prakash enlists five bhashaj-kalpa (pharmaceutical form) types. One of them is Arka Kalpana. This effective approach to medicine formation uses distillation techniques to create powerful therapeutic formulations by utilizing the gifts of nature. A number of illnesses associated with Shalakyia Tantra can be alleviated and rejuvenated by these amazing preparations.

Shalakyia Tantra is one of the eight branches of Ayurveda (the traditional Indian medical system). Shalakyia Tantra deals with a range of diagnostic techniques as well as the prevention and treatment of conditions pertaining to the mouth, throat, ears, eyes, and head through the application of herbal medicines, detoxification protocols, and surgical techniques.

Arka Kalpana has stood the test of time in Ayurvedic medicine due to its efficacy and safety profile when prepared using traditional methods outlined in texts like Arka Prakash. Arka is free from all kinds of adverse effects of doshas and exhibits amazing healing properties. The

effectiveness of Arka has been remarkably appreciated by Lord Shiva himself. Its significance lies not only in its preparation but also in understanding how different plant extracts can be utilized to address specific health concerns. Arka operates on particular receptors found in the eyes, ears, nose, throat, and head when applied externally or internally. It increases cellular regeneration, decreases inflammation, and improves blood circulation.

Incorporating Arka Kalpana into treatment protocols offers patients natural alternatives with minimal side effects compared to other contemporary medications.

### Preparation of Arka Kalpana

As per the Arka Prakash, the term "Arka" denotes medicinal extracts that are prepared via distillation. This extraction technique guarantees a concentrated and strong form of the medicinal qualities of the plants.

Different parts of medicinal plants, such as leaves, fruits, flowers, roots, or bark are gathered and cleaned thoroughly in order to produce Arka Kalpana. After that, they are pulverized into a rough powder. This powder is combined with water and put in an Alembic, a wide-mouthed jar. To allow the water to gradually evaporate, the Alembic is carefully heated on mid-flame. After rising through a condenser, the steam cools down and liquefies once more. The condensed liquid is collected separately in a sterile glass container and contains the active chemicals and essential oils of the plant material.

Until all of the desired components have been successfully removed, this process may be repeated multiple times. The end result is called Arka Kalpana, a potent elixir well-known for its healing properties in Shalaky Tantra ailments.

### Properties of Good Quality Arka:

1. When Arka is prepared, its scent outweighs the odor of the natural extracts it is prepared from.
2. Arka color should resemble the pure white color of conch shells.
3. The taste of Arka is similar to the taste of the medicinal drug from which it is processed.
4. Compared to other pharmaceutical forms of the same medicine, Arka, the most concentrated extract of the drug, has greater therapeutic potency to cure the underlying medical condition.

### The Preparation of Various Arka Kalpana Mentioned In Context with Shalaky Tantra Diseases

Various Arka Kalpana mentioned in context with Shalaky Tantra diseases are described in chapter 7 of Arka Prakāśaḥ by Prof. (Dr.) Gyanendra Pandey.

**Table 1—Arka Kalpana with the description of the preparation, mode of administration, target disease, and references.**

Sr. No.	Name of Arka Kalpana	Preparation of Arka Kalpana	Mode of Administration	Target Disease	Reference
1.	Arddhavabhedakah ara Arka	Vidanga ( <i>Embelia ribes</i> ), and Krishna tila ( <i>Sesamum indicum</i> ) are grounded together	Nasya and as a lepa (paste) over head	Ardhavabhedaka (Migraine)	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 12

		to make a paste.			
2.	Sirahsulahara Arka	Amalaki ( <i>Embilica officinalis</i> ), Haritaki ( <i>Terminalia chebula</i> ), Bibhitaka ( <i>Terminalia bellirica</i> ), Haridra ( <i>Curcuma longa</i> ), Guda ( <i>Saccharum officinarum</i> ), Kiratikta ( <i>Swertia chirayita</i> ), Nimba ( <i>Azadirachta indica</i> ), and Guduchi ( <i>Tinospora cordifolia</i> ) are processed to make Arka.	Applied externally over head	Sirahsulahara (All kinds of headache)	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 13
3.	Sankhapidahara Arka	Arka is prepared by Daruharidra ( <i>Berberis aristata</i> ), Haridra ( <i>Curcuma longa</i> ), Manjistha ( <i>Rubia cordifolia</i> ), Nimba ( <i>Azadirachta indica</i> ), Ushira ( <i>Vetiveria zizanioides</i> ), and Padmaka ( <i>Prunus cerasoides</i> ).	Massage over temporal region	Sankhaka Roga (Temporal Headache)	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 14
4.	Netrabhisyanahara Arka	Triphala [Amalaki ( <i>Embilica officinalis</i> ), Haritaki ( <i>Terminalia chebula</i> ), and Bibhitaka ( <i>Terminalia bellirica</i> )] Churana is placed in a cloth pouch and then the cloth pouch is dipped in Ahiphena ( <i>Papaver somniferum</i> ) Arka.	Cloth Pouch placed on the eyes	All kinds of Netraabhisyan da (Ocular discharge)	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 18
5.	Netrarogahara Yoga Arka	Dough of Masha ( <i>Phaseolus mungo</i> )	The Patient should lie	All kinds of eye diseases	Chapter 7/ Shlok

		is made in a circular shape and placed on the orbit of eyes and bandaged tightly.	down on his back and the dough of masha in a circular shape is placed on the eye orbit and bandaged tightly		No. 19 and 20
6.	Netrarogasamaka Arka	Punarnava ( <i>Boerhavia diffusa</i> ), Tuvani ( <i>Cajanus cajan</i> ), Kumari ( <i>Aloe vera</i> ), Amalaki ( <i>Embilica officianalis</i> ), Haritaki ( <i>Terminalia chebula</i> ), Bibhitaka ( <i>Terminalia bellirica</i> ), Haridra ( <i>Curcuma longa</i> ), Yashtimadhu ( <i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i> ), Gairik (red ochre), Daruharidra ( <i>Berberis aristata</i> ), and Saindhav lavana (Himalayan Pink Salt) are processed to form the Arka.	The Arka drops are used as eye drops	All kinds of eye diseases	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 26,27
7.	Netrarogaghna Arka	Sankhanabhi (conch-shell), seedless fruit part of Bibhitaka ( <i>Terminalia bellirica</i> ), seedless fruit part of Haritaki ( <i>Terminalia chebula</i> ), Manashila (Arsenic disulfide), Pippali ( <i>Piper longum</i> ), Maricha ( <i>Piper nigrum</i> ), and Kustha ( <i>Saussurea lappa</i> ) are crushed	The Arka drops are used as eye drops	All kinds of eye diseases	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 29,30

		in goat's milk and processed to form Arka.			
8.	Shringaver-adya Arka	Shringavera ( <i>Zingiber officinale</i> ), Kshodra (honey), Saindhava lavana (Himalayan Pink Salt) and tila taila ( <i>Sesamum indicum</i> ) are processed to form Arka.	The Arka is used in the form of ear drops	Eliminates earache, tinnitus, and deafness.	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 31
9.	Chagalamutra Arka	Goat's urine is mixed with Saindhava lavana (Himalayan Pink Salt) and processed to form Arka.	The Arka is used in the form of ear drops	Eliminates earache, tinnitus, and otorrhoea	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 32
10.	Amradyarka	Leaves of Amra ( <i>Mangifera indica</i> ), Jambu ( <i>Syzygium cumini</i> ), Madhuka ( <i>Madhuca longifolia</i> ), and Vata ( <i>Ficus benghalensis</i> ) are processed to form Arka.	The Arka is used in the form of Karnapurana (A technique of instilling lukewarm medicated oil drops in the ear canal)	Eliminates otorrhoea	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 33
11.	Babbul Arka	Babbula ( <i>Vachellia nilotica</i> ) is processed to form Arka.	The arka is mixed with honey and applied to the eyes	Cures Netrasrava (Discharge from eyes)	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 37
12.	Punarnava Arka	Punarnava ( <i>Boerhavia diffusa</i> ) is processed to form Arka.	Used as eye drops	Eases various eye ailments	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 38
13.	Katphaladya Arka	Katphala ( <i>Myrica nagi</i> ), Pushkarmula ( <i>Inula racemosa</i> ), Shringi ( <i>Pistacia integerrima</i> ), Shunthi ( <i>Zingiber officinale</i> ), Maricha ( <i>Piper nigrum</i> ), Pippali ( <i>Piper longum</i> ), Yavasa (Alhagi	The Arka is mixed with Adhraka rasa (juice of <i>Zingiber officinale</i> ) and used orally	Pinasa (allergic rhinitis), Svarabheda (hoarseness of voice), Tamak shwas (asthma), sandhivata (osteoarthritis), kasa (cough), and shwasa.	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 39,40

		camelorum), and Karavi ( <i>Carum carvi</i> ) are processed to form Arka.			
14.	Vyaghryadya Arka	Vyaghri ( <i>Solanum surattense</i> ), Danti ( <i>Baliospermum montanum</i> ), Vacha ( <i>Acorus calamus</i> ), Shigru ( <i>Moringa oleifera</i> ), Tulsi ( <i>Ocimum sanctum</i> ), Shunthi ( <i>Zingiber officinale</i> ), Maricha ( <i>Piper nigrum</i> ), Pippali ( <i>Piper longum</i> ), and Saindhava lavana (Himalayan Pink Salt) are processed together to form Arka.	The Arka is used as nasal drops	Reduces puti nasya (foul smell from the nose) and other nasal diseases.	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 41
15.	Shunthyadyarka	Shunthi ( <i>Zingiber officinale</i> ), Kustha ( <i>Saussurea lappa</i> ), Pippali ( <i>Piper longum</i> ), Bilva ( <i>Aegle marmelos</i> ) and, Draksha ( <i>Vitis vinifera</i> ) are processed to form arka.	Arka is used as nasal drops	Relieves sneezing	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 42
16.	Triphala-vajradanti Arka	Amalaki ( <i>Emblica officianalis</i> ), Haritaki ( <i>Terminalia chebula</i> ), Bibhitaka ( <i>Terminalia bellirica</i> ), swarna-makshika (Chalcopyrite), Saindhava lavana (Himalayan Pink Salt) Khadira ( <i>Acacia catechu</i> ), Dagdha puga (incinerated araca nut) and Loha churana (calcined	The combination is used as a paste on teeth for seven days	Makes teeth strong	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 49,50.

		iron) are mixed well along with juice of Vajradanti ( <i>Barleria prionitis</i> ).			
17.	Vyosadya Churana – Murva Arka yoga	Shunthi ( <i>Zingiber officinale</i> ), Maricha ( <i>Piper nigrum</i> ), Pippali ( <i>Piper longum</i> ), Haritaki ( <i>Terminalia chebula</i> ), and Chitraka ( <i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> ) are crushed and mixed with Murva ( <i>Marsdenia tenacissima</i> ) Arka.	The medicinal paste is rubbed over the tongue	Used in treating Ranula	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 51
18.	Vacadya churana – Nimba Arka	Vacha ( <i>Acorus calamus</i> ), Ativisha ( <i>Aconitum heterophyllum</i> ), Patha ( <i>Cissampelos pareira</i> ), Rasna ( <i>Pluchea lanceolata</i> ), and katukarohini ( <i>Picorrhiza kurroa</i> ) are powdered and mixed with Arka of Nimba ( <i>Azadirachta indica</i> ).	This medicinal recipe is administered as kavala (gargle)	Soothes taluroga (diseases of palate in the throat)	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 54
19.	Gomutradya Arka	Gomutra (cow urine), Ativisha ( <i>Aconitum heterophyllum</i> ), Daruharidra ( <i>Berberis aristata</i> ), Patha ( <i>Cissampelos pareira</i> ), Vatsnabha ( <i>Aconitum ferox</i> ), kalingaka ( <i>Holarrhena antidysentrica</i> ), and katuka ( <i>Picorrhiza kurroa</i> ) are processed to form Arka.	Arka is given orally	Relieves throat diseases	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 55



20.	Jatipatradya Arka	Jatipatra ( <i>Myristica fragrans</i> ), Guduchi ( <i>Tinospora cordifolia</i> ), Draksha ( <i>Vitis vinifera</i> , Daruharidra ( <i>Berberis aristata</i> ), Amalaki ( <i>Embilica officianalis</i> ), Haritaki ( <i>Terminalia chebula</i> ), and Bibhitaka ( <i>Terminalia bellirica</i> ) are processed to form Arka.	This arka in a cold state is mixed with honey and held in the mouth for appropriate duration	Relieves mukhapaka (stomatitis)	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 56
21.	Krishna-Jirakadya Arka	Krishna jiraka ( <i>Carum carvi</i> ), Kustha ( <i>Saussurea lappa</i> ), and Indrayava ( <i>Holarrhena antidysentrica</i> ) are processed to form Arka.	Arka is given orally	Reduces Vrana (ulceration) and dourgandhya (foul smell in mouth)	Chapter 7/ Shlok No. 57

These formulations not only alleviate symptoms but also address underlying causes effectively without any significant side effects. They help maintain overall health and well-being by balancing doshas - Vata, Pitta, and Kapha, within the body.

## 2. DISCUSSION

Shalaky Tantra, an ancient branch of Ayurveda, encompasses various treatments for diseases related to the eyes, ears, nose, and throat. One such treatment is Arka Kalpana, which involves the distillation process to prepare medicines. In this review article, we have explored the preparation of Arka Kalpana and its relevance in Shalaky Tantra with reference to Arka Prakash which was written by Ravana.

For instance, Arddhavabhedakahara Arka is recommended for migraine, Netrarogaghna Arka is prescribed for all kinds of eye disorders like conjunctivitis as it helps reduce inflammation and promotes healing, Chagalamutra Arka is effective against ear infections and provides relief from pain and itching, Sunthyadya Arka is beneficial in alleviating sneezing and Jatipatradya Arka is useful in curing stomatitis.

### Mode of Action of Drugs

Examining the drug's mode of action in Arka Kalpana is an intriguing topic. The ancient literature Arka Prakash states that one of the most important ways to improve the healing properties of these substances is through the distillation procedure.

The process of distillation entails heating herbal drugs and gathering the condensed vapors. With the use of this technique, powerful plant components can be extracted and their therapeutic qualities are concentrated. The resultant Arka Kalpana is very beneficial in treating a wide range of disorders pertaining to the throat, nose, ears, and eyes. Arka Kalpana operates on particular receptors found in these locations when applied externally or internally. It increases cellular regeneration, lowers inflammation, and improves blood circulation. It also demonstrates antimicrobial qualities that fight bacterial and fungal ailments.

Moreover, several herbs included in Arka products have antioxidant properties that guard against oxidative damage to sensitive tissues. These therapeutic compounds also improve general health and fortify immune function.

### **Anupana (Accompaniment) of Arka in different types of Netra Roga (Eye diseases):**

**Table 2 — Anupana for different eye diseases mentioned in Arka Prakāśaḥ<sup>5</sup>**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Eye diseases</b>	<b>Anupana (Accompaniment) of Arka</b>
<b>1.</b>	Netra Kandu (Itching in eyes)	Milk
<b>2.</b>	Netra Srava (Discharge from eyes)	Honey
<b>3.</b>	Timira (Cataract)	Oil

The mode of action of these drugs lies in their ability to penetrate deep into the affected areas through absorption or inhalation. These medicines' therapeutic qualities complement one another to relieve symptoms and enhance general health.

However, as individual situations may differ, it is imperative to speak with a licensed Ayurvedic practitioner before utilizing any of the medications recommended here. Based on the individual's unique need, the Ayurvedic practitioner will provide them guidance regarding dose specifications. It proves once again how ancient wisdom continues to hold relevance even today.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

The preparation of herbal medicinal formulation using distillation is an ancient Ayurvedic technique known as Arka Kalpana. In relation to Shalakyā Tantra illnesses, there are various varieties of Arka Kalpana described to specifically target certain ailments affecting the eyes, ears, nose, and throat. Each formulation is made with a unique combination of herbs and has been documented in ancient scriptures such as Arka Prakash.

These medications work by penetrating deeply into the affected tissues and relieving pain by lowering inflammation, encouraging healing, and re-establishing the body's equilibrium. For generations, Arka Kalpana has proved to be a secure and reliable therapeutic method. It should, however, always be used under the supervision of a qualified Ayurvedic physician to guarantee appropriate dosage and administration based on a person's needs.

Integrating this age-old method into contemporary healthcare systems can support the promotion of health and wellness by treating ailments and imbalances at the physical and energetic levels. Traditional methods like Arka Kalpana have a lot to offer in terms of

alternative healthcare treatments, as seen by the global upsurge in continuing research on Ayurvedic medicine.

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