



## MODE OF ACTION OF VIRECHANA DRAVYAS

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### ABSTRACT

Virechana, one of the principal procedures of *Panchakarma* in Ayurveda, is designed to expel vitiated *Doshas*, predominantly Pitta, through the anal route using purgative substances known as Virechana Dravyas. These drugs are characterized by unique pharmacological properties such as *Ushna* (hot), *Tikshna* (sharp), *Sukshma* (subtle), *Vyavayi* (pervading), and *Vikasi* (loosening), which enable them to penetrate even minute channels (*Srotas*), dislodge morbid *Doshas*, and bring them to the *Koshta* (alimentary tract) for elimination. The action begins with the influence of the drug's *Virya* (potency) on the *Hrudaya* (vital center), followed by systemic circulation through *Dhamanis* (channels), and subsequent mobilization of *Doshas*. The process concludes with their expulsion via the rectal pathway with the assistance of *Vayu*.

From a modern biomedical perspective, the possible mechanism of Virechana Dravyas can be explained by their irritant and stimulant actions on the intestinal mucosa, leading to enhanced secretion, altered membrane permeability, and increased peristaltic activity. This facilitates the elimination of toxins and undigested metabolites that cannot be expelled under normal conditions. Thus, Virechana Karma not only detoxifies but also improves digestion, enhances immunity, stabilizes tissues, and promotes overall health, making it a vital therapeutic tool in Ayurvedic practice.

### INTRODUCTION

Virechana is a therapeutic purgation procedure in Ayurveda, one of the five main detoxification therapies known as *Panchakarma*. It is primarily used to eliminate excess Pitta dosha and toxins (called ama) from the body, particularly from the gastrointestinal tract, liver, and gallbladder.

“प्रथमं वमनं पश्चात् विरेकश्च अनुवासनम् ।  
एतानि पञ्चकर्माणि निरुहो नावनं तथा ॥” (भा. प्र. पू. ख)

Acharya Bhavamishra explain about the five samshodhana karma like Vamana, virechana, anuvasana basti, niruha basti, and Navana karma.

पित्ते तु विरेकं श्लेष्मसंसृष्टे तत्स्थानगते वा श्लेष्मणी इतिद्य ( अ . स .  
सू. २७ / ४)

For Pitta dosha, Virechana karma is indicated where pitta dosa is aggravated in its own site or associated with kapha dosha.

दोषाः कदाचित् कुप्यन्ति जिता लङ्घनपाचनैः ।  
जिताः संशोधनैर्ये तु न तेषां पुनरुद्भवः ॥ (च. सू. १६ / २०)

Here, Charaka Acharya explains about the superiority of samshodhana karma over shamana aushadhas. After shamana chikitsa there is a chance of recurrence of disease as the dosha may aggravate further. But after doing samshodhana karma, the disease won't reoccur because by doing samshodhana karma, the aggravated dosas are eliminated completely.

तत्र दाषहरणं अधोभागं विरेचनसंज्ञकम् ।

उभयं वा शरीरमलविरेचनात् विरेचनसंज्ञा लभत ॥ (च.क. १ / ४)

### Meaning and Application:

Expulsion of *Doshas* from the Lower Part: The text states, “तत्र दोषहरणं अधोभागं विरेचनसंज्ञकम्” which means “the expulsion of doshas (pathological humors) from the lower part of the body is known as Virechana”.

Expulsion of Body Impurities: It further elaborates, “उभयं वा शरीरमलविरेचनात् विरेचनसंज्ञा लभते” meaning “or, the term Virechana is obtained from the expulsion of body impurities (malas) from both (upper and lower parts)”. This definition is cited from Charaka Samhita, Chikitsa Sthana, Chapter 1, Verse 4 (च.क. १ / ४).

Pitta-Pacifying Action: The text also highlights, “विरेचनं पित्तहरणम्” which translates to “Virechana is among those that pacify Pitta (one of the three doshas)”. This is cited from Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, Chapter 25, Verse 40 (च. सू. २५ / ४०).

### CLASSIFICATION OF VIRECHANA

Virechana, an Ayurvedic purification therapy, is classified based on several factors:

#### According to Intensity:

According to the intensity of therapeutic action in Ayurvedic

practices, treatments are categorized into three levels: **Mridu**, **Madhyama**, and **Tikshna**. **Mridu** refers to mild intensity therapies that are gentle in nature and typically use substances like *Kshira* (milk), which are soothing and suitable for individuals with sensitive constitutions or mild imbalances. **Madhyama** represents moderate intensity treatments, often involving substances like *Trivrit*, which provide a balanced cleansing effect suitable for most individuals without causing excessive strain. **Tikshna**, on the other hand, denotes strong intensity therapies that employ potent substances such as *Jayapala*, used in severe conditions or for individuals with strong digestion and high tolerance. The selection of intensity depends on the patient's strength, condition, and the nature of the disease being treated.

#### According to Indication:

According to the indications, **Sneha** therapy is recommended for conditions requiring oleation, where unctuous substances such as *Eranda Taila* (castor oil) are used to provide lubrication and nourishment to the body. In contrast, **Ruksha** therapy is applied in conditions requiring drying, where substances like *Trivrit Churna* (Trivrit powder) are utilized to reduce excess moisture, oiliness, or kapha-related imbalances.

#### According to Mode of Action:

According to the mode of action, **Anulomana** facilitates the natural downward movement of Vata using substances like *Haritaki*, thereby regulating bowel functions. **Sramsana** induces mild purgation with agents such as *Aragvadha*, helping to gently cleanse the system. **Bhedana** acts by breaking down hardened fecal matter with substances like *Katurrohini*, making elimination easier. In stronger cases, **Rechana** produces powerful purgation using agents such as *Trivrit*, effectively clearing accumulated doshas from the body.

#### According to the Origin:

According to their origin, these substances are classified into two categories: those of **animal origin**, such as *Gorochana*, and those of **plant origin**, such as *Trivrit*. This classification highlights the diverse natural sources from which therapeutic agents are obtained in Ayurveda, ensuring a wide range of applications based on their inherent properties.

#### According to Intensity:

According to intensity, these are categorized into **Mridu (mild)**, **Madhyama (moderate)**, and **Tikshna (strong)** types. Examples include *Chaturangula* representing the mild action, *Trivrit* denoting the moderate effect, and *Snuhi Ksheer* illustrating the strong intensity. This classification helps in selecting the appropriate drug based on the patient's condition and required therapeutic strength.

#### According to Parts Used:

According to the parts used, these substances are classified as **Mulini**, which are derived from roots (11 types), **Phalini**, obtained from fruits (10 types), **Kshira**, sourced from latex (2 types), and **Twak**, derived from bark (2 types). This categorization emphasizes the therapeutic importance of different plant parts in Ayurvedic practice, each contributing

specific properties and actions in treatment.

#### Teekshna Virechana:

जलाग्निकीटैरस्पृष्टं देशकालगुणान्वितम् ।

ईषन्मात्राधिकैर्युक्तं तुल्यवीर्यैः सुभावितम् ॥

स्नेहस्वेदोपपन्नस्य तीक्ष्णत्वं याति भषजम् । (च.स.क.१२/५३)

**Teekshna Virechana** refers to strong purgative therapy indicated for patients who have undergone proper *Snehana* (oleation) and *Swedana* (sudation). As mentioned in *Charaka Samhita (Kalpa Sthana 12/53)*, medicines that are free from contamination, prepared in accordance with the appropriate *Desha*, *Kala*, and *Guna* combined with slightly higher quantities, and well-processed with substances of equal potency, attain the quality of **Teekshnatva** (intensity or sharpness). Common formulations used for Teekshna Virechana include **Abhayadi Modaka**, **Narayana Churna**, and **Ichhabhedi Rasa** which act as strong purgatives to eliminate aggravated doshas effectively from the body.

#### Madhyama Virechana:

किंचिदेभिर्गुणैर्हीनं पूर्वोक्तैर्मात्रया तथा ।

स्निग्धस्विन्नस्य वा सम्यक् मध्यं भवतिभषजम् ॥ (च.स.क.१२/५६)

**Madhyama Virechana** is the moderate purgative therapy, described in *Charaka Samhita (Kalpa Sthana 12/56)*. It is stated that when the medicine is slightly deficient in some of the qualities mentioned earlier, or administered in a comparatively lesser dose, and given to a patient who has already undergone proper *Snehana* (oleation) and *Swedana* (sudation), it produces a balanced and moderate purgative action. Examples of formulations used for Madhyama Virechana include **Avipathikara Choorna**, **Trivrit Lehya**, **Manibhadra Guda**, **Danti Haritaki Lehya**, and **Dantyarishta**. These medicines help in effective elimination of doshas with a milder intensity compared to *Teekshna Virechana*.

#### Mridu Virechana:

मन्दवीर्यं विरुक्षस्य हीनमात्रं तु भेषजम् ।

अतुल्यवीर्यैः संयुक्तं मृदु स्यान्मन्दवेगवत् ॥ (च.स.क.१२/५६)

**Mridu Virechana** refers to mild purgative therapy, as explained in *Charaka Samhita (Kalpa Sthana 12/56)*. It is mentioned that when the medicine possesses **manda veerya** (low potency), is slightly *rooksha* (dry in nature), administered in a lesser dose, or combined with substances of unequal potency, it produces a gentle purgative effect characterized by **manda vega** (mild urges). Such formulations are ideal for delicate individuals, the elderly, children, or those with a weak constitution. Common examples include **Triphala Kashaya**, **Eranda Taila**, **Gandharvahastadi Eranda Taila**, **Nimbamrutadi Eranda Taila**, **Aragvadarishta**, **Abhayarishta**, and **Draksharishta** all of which help in mild cleansing without causing strain to the system.

#### MULINI VIRECHANA DRAVYA

1. Naga danti: *Baliospermum montanum*
2. Shyama trivrut: *Ipomea turpenthum*

3. Swetha trivrut: *Operculina turpenthum*
4. Vidari: *Pueraria tuberosa*
5. Saphthala: *Acacia concinna*
6. Danti: *Baliospermum montanum*
7. Indrayana: *Citrullus colocynthis*
8. Vishanika: *Gymnema sylvestre*
9. Avarthaki: *Helicterus isora*
10. Ajagandha: *Aristolochia bracteata*
11. Dravanti: *Jatropha curcas*

#### PHALINI VIRECHANA DRAVYA

1. Sankhini: *Euphorbia tirucalli*
2. Vidanga: *Embelia ribes*
3. Jalaja yashtimadhu: *Glycyrrhiza glabra*
4. Yashti madhu: *Glycyrrhiza glabra*
5. Prakirya: *Caesalpinia bonducella*
6. Udakirya: *Pongamia glabra*
7. Abhaya: *Terminalia chebula*
8. Antahkotarapushpi: *Ipomea hederacea*
9. Kampillaka: *Mallotus philippinensis*
10. Aragwadha: *Cassia fistula*

#### LAVANA VIRECHANA DRAVYA

1. Souvarchala lavana
2. Saindhava lavana

#### KSHEERA VIRECHANA DRAVYA

1. Snuhi ksheera: *Euphorbia nerifolia*
2. Arka ksheera: *Calotropis gigantea*

**Sneha Virechana:** This involves the use of oil or preparations containing 'sneha' (unctuous substances), recommended for all patients except those with 'snigdha' (unctuous) body types, as per Acharya Vagbhata (Ah. Su. 18/57).

**Ruksha Virechana:** This refers to preparations that do not contain 'sneha' and are indicated for patients with 'snigdha sarira' (unctuous body types).

#### Anulomana:

Anulomana is a therapeutic action described in Ayurveda for facilitating the natural downward movement of Vata and thereby aiding the expulsion of waste products. As mentioned in the verse — “कृत्वा पाकं मलानां यद् भीत्वा बन्धमधो नयेत् तत् च अनुलोमनं ज्ञेयं यथा प्रोक्ता हरीतकि” — it refers to the process where, after proper digestion and maturation of the malas (waste products), any obstruction is broken and the excretory material is guided downward. A classical example of a drug with this property is Haritaki, which regulates bowel movements and restores the natural flow without causing drastic purgation. Thus, Anulomana is considered a gentle yet effective cleansing method.

#### Sramsana:

Sramsana is described as the process of expelling waste materials from the intestines, whether they are pakva (digested) or apakva (undigested), and particularly when they are stuck or adhered within the koshta (alimentary canal). As stated in the

verse — “पक्तव्यं यदपक्वैः वा प्लिष्टं कोष्ठे मलादिकम्। नयत्यधः स्रंसनं तद्यथा स्यात् कृतमालकः।।” — Sramsana promotes a mild purgative action, gently clearing the bowel without intense force. A classical example is Krutamalaka (Aragvadha), which induces smooth elimination of stool and doshas, thereby helping to maintain balance in the digestive tract.

#### Bhedana:

Bhedana is the process that breaks down and expels both abaddha (unbound) and baddha/pindita (bound or solidified) waste products from the intestines. As explained in the verse — “मलादिकम् अबद्धं च बद्धं वा पिण्डितं मलैः। भित्वाऽधः पातयति यद् भेदनं कटुकी यथा।।” — the action of Bhedana involves disintegrating the compacted fecal matter and facilitating its downward elimination. A classical example is Katuki (Picrorhiza kurroa), which exhibits strong penetrating and breaking properties, making it highly effective in conditions of hard stool or obstructed bowel movements. This action is more intense than *Anulomana* or *Sramsana*, ensuring thorough cleansing of the system.

#### Rechana:

Rechana is defined as the process of expelling waste materials, whether vipakva (properly digested) or apakva (undigested), by converting them into a drava or semi-liquid form and eliminating them from the body. As described in the verse — “विपक्वं यदपक्वं वा मलादि द्रवतां नयेत्। रेचयत्यपि तज्ज्ञेयं रेचनं त्रिवृता यथा।।” — this action refers to a strong purgative effect that forcefully expels accumulated doshas and malas. A classical example is Trivrit (Operculina turpenthum), a potent purgative herb well-known for its effective cleansing capacity. Compared to *Anulomana*, *Sramsana*, and *Bhedana*, *Rechana* is the most powerful in eliminating waste materials and doshas from the gastrointestinal tract..

#### Virechana dravya according to Caraka Samhita

“त्रिवृतां त्रिफलां दन्तीं नीलिनीं सप्तलां वचाम्।

कम्पिल्लकं गवाक्षीं च क्षीरिणीमुदकीर्यकाम्।।

पीलून्यारग्वधं द्राक्षां द्रवन्तीं निचुलानि च।

पक्वषयगते दोशे विरेकार्द्धं प्रयोजयेत्।। (च. सं. सू. २/७-८)

Name of drug	B.N	Family	Parts used
Trivrut	Operculina turpenthum	Convolvulaceae	Root bark
Amalaki	Emblica officinalis	Euphorbaceae	Fruit
Haritaki	Terminalia chebula	Combretaceae	Fruit
Vibheetaki	Terminalia bellarica	Combretaceae	Fruit
Danti	Baliospermum montanum	Euphorbaceae	Root
Neelini	Indigofera tinctoria	Fabaceae	Root, Whole plant

Sapthala	Acacia concinna	Mimosaceae	Pods
Vacha	Acorus calamus	Araceae	Rhizome
Kampillaka	Mallotus philippinensis	Euphorbiaceae	Glandular hairs of fruit
Gavaakshi	Citrullus colocynthis	Cucurbitaceae	Fruit, Bark
Ksheerini	Euphorbia hirta	Euphorbiaceae	Latex
Udakeerya	Pongamia glabra	Fabaceae	Root bark, Seed
Pilu	Salvadora persica	Salvadoraceae	Fruit, Seed, Root bark
Aragvadha	Cassia fistula	Caesalpinaceae	Fruit pulp
Draksha	Vitis vinifera	Vitaceae	Fruit
Dravanti	Jatropha gossipifolia	Euphorbiaceae	Seed, Seed oil
Nichula	Barringtonia acutangula	Barringtoniaceae	Fruit, Leaf, Stem bark

#### Virechana dravya mentioned by Susruta acharya

- त्रिवृताश्यामादन्तीद्रवन्तीसप्तलाशङ्खिखनीविषाणिकागवाक्षी गलान्त्रीस्नुक्सुवर्णक्षीरीचित्रककिणिहीकुशकाशतिल्वककम्पिल्ल करम्यकपाटलापूग रीतक्यामलक बिभीतक नीलिनी चतुरङ्गुलैरण्ड पूतीक महावृक्षसप्तच्छदार्का ज्योतिष्मती चेत्यधोभागहराणि ।।
- तत्र तिल्वकपूर्वाणाम् मूलानि, तिल्वकादीनां पाटलान्तानां त्वचः, कपिल्लकफलरजः, पूगादीनामेरण्डन्तानां फलानि, पूतिकारग्वधयोः पत्राणि, शेषाणां क्षीराणीति ।। (सु.स.सू.३६/४)

Name of drug	B.N	Family	Parts used
Trivrut	Operculina turpenthum	Convolvulaceae	Root
Danti	Baliospermum montanum	Euphorbiaceae	Root
Dravanti	Jatropha gossipifolia	Euphorbiaceae	Seed, Seed oil
Sapthala	Acacia concinna	Mimosaceae	Pods
Meshasrngi	Gymnema sylvestre	Asclepiadaceae	Whole plant
Gavakshi	Citrullus colocynthis	Cucurbitaceae	Root
Vridhadaru	Argyrea speciosa	Convolvulaceae	Root
Snuhi	Euphorbia nerifolia	Euphorbiaceae	Ksheera
Swarna kshiri	Argemone mexicana	Euphorbiaceae	Ksheera
Chitraka	Plumbago zeylanica	Plumbaginaceae	Root bark
Kinihi	Albizzia procera	Mimosoideae	Seed
Kusa	Desmostachya bipinnata	Poaceae	Root

Kasa	Saccharum spontaneum	Poaceae	Root
Tilvaka	Jatropha curcas	Symplocaceae	Bark, root
Kampillaka	Mallotus philippinensis	Euphorbiaceae	Glandular hairs of fruit
Ramyaka	Melia azadirachta	Meliaceae	Root bark, Stem bark, Gum, Flower, Leaves
Patala	Stereospermum sauveolens	Bignoniaceae	Root bark, Seed, flower
Puga	Areca catechu	Araceae	Fruit
Haritaki	Terminalia chebula	Combretaceae	Fruit
Vibheetaki	Terminalia bellarica	Combretaceae	Fruit
Amalaki	Emblica officinalis	Euphorbiaceae	Fruit
Nilini	Indigofera tinctoria	Fabaceae	Whole plant
Aragvadha	Cassia fistula	Caesalpinaceae	Fruit pulp
Eranda	Ricinus communis	Euphorbiaceae	Root, Leaf, Seed, Oil
Chiruvilwa	Holoptelia integrifolia	Ulmaceae	Bark
Mahavriksha	Cassia fistula	Caesalpinaceae	Fruit pulp
Saptaparna	Alstonia scholaris	Apocyanaceae	Bark
Jyothishmati	Celastrus paniculatus	Celastraceae	Seeds

#### Nikumbhadi gana of Ashtanga hrudaya

“निकुम्भकुम्भत्रिफलागवाक्षी स्नुक्शाङ्खिखनीनीलिनितिल्वकानि । शम्याककम्पिल्लकहेमदुग्ध दुग्धं च मूत्रं च विरेचनानि ।।” (अ.ह. सू. १५/४-५)

Name of drug	B.N	Family	Parts used
Nikumbha	Baliospermum montanum	Euphorbiaceae	Root
Kumbha	Operculina turpenthum	Convolvulaceae	Root
Abhaya	Terminalia chebula	Combretaceae	Fruit
Dhatri	Emblica officinalis	Euphorbiaceae	Fruit
Vibhitaki	Terminalia bellarica	Combretaceae	Fruit
Gavakshi	Citrullus colocynthis	Cucurbitaceae	Root
Snuhi	Euphorbia nerifolia	Euphorbiaceae	Ksheera
Sankhini	Clitoria terneata	Fabaceae	Whole plant, Fruit, Seeds, Root

Nilini	Indigofera tinctoria	Fabaceae	Whole plant
Tilvaka	Jatropha curcas	Symplocaceae	Bark
Samyaka	Cassia fistula	Caesalpinaceae	Fruit pulp
Kampillaka	Mallotus philippensis	Euphorbiaceae	Glandular hairs of fruit
Hemadugdha	Argemone mexicana	Papavaraceae	Ksheera

### Virechanopaga varga

“द्राक्षाकाशमर्यपरुषकाभयामलकविभीतककुवलबदरकर्कन्धुपीलूनीति दशेमानि विरेचनोपगानि भवन्ति ।।” (च.सु.४/२४)

Name of drug	B.N	Family	Parts used
Draksha	Vitis vinifera	Vitaceae	Fruit
Kashmarya	Gmelina arborea	Verbinaceae	Fruit
Parushaka	Grewia asiatica	Tiliaceae	Fruit
Abhaya	Terminalia chebula	Combretaceae	Fruit
Amalaki	Emblica officinalis	Euphorbaceae	Fruit
Vibhitaki	Terminalia bellarica	Combretaceae	Fruit
Kuvala	Garcinia morella	Guttiferae	Gum
Badara	Zizyphus jujuba	Rhamnaceae	Seed
Karkandu	Zizyphus nummularia	Rhamnaceae	Seed
Pilu	Salvadora persica	Salvadoraceae	Fruit, Seed, Root bark

### Virechana vidhi

#### Pre-treatment:

Before administering Virechana, the patient is prepared with Snehana (oleation) and Swedana (sudation) therapies to loosen and mobilize the doshas.

#### Preparation:

The therapy is performed when the patient's mind is calm, the previous meal is digested, and after conducting auspicious rituals such as Homa, Bali, Mangala Japa, and Prayashchitta to ensure physical, mental, and spiritual readiness.

#### Timing:

The administration is scheduled on an auspicious Tithi, Nakshatra, Karana, and Muhurta, after seeking blessings from Brahmins, highlighting the importance of proper timing and sanctity in Ayurveda.

#### Administration:

A specific dose of Trivrit Kalkam (herbal paste), mixed with a suitable anupana (vehicle), is given. The dose is decided by carefully considering multiple factors such as Dosha predominance, medicine, place, time, strength, body constitution, diet, Satva (mental strength), Prakriti (individual nature), age, and existing diseases.

#### Post-treatment Care:

After Virechana, post-procedures similar to those of Vamana (emesis) therapy are followed, except for Dhuma (medicated smoking). These continue until the patient regains strength and natural complexion.

#### Recovery Phase:

When the patient attains Balavarnopapanna (restoration of strength and healthy complexion), they are bathed, anointed with oils, adorned with garlands and ornaments, and presented joyfully to friends, signifying successful completion of the therapy.

#### Guna (Qualities of Virechana Dravya):

The purgative drugs are characterized by:

- Ushna (hot in potency)
- Tikshna (sharp/penetrating)
- Sukshma (subtle, able to enter minute channels)
- Vyavayi (spreading quickly)
- Vikasi (loosening/expanding)
- Adhobhagahara Prabhava (specifically acting in the downward direction).

#### Panchabhoutika Sanghatana (Elemental Composition):

The primary elements of Virechana Dravya are Prithvi (Earth) and Jala (Water), which provide their grounding yet mobilizing properties essential for purgation.

#### Action of Virechana Dravya

##### 1. Initiation at Hrudaya (Vital Center):

The action of Virechana Dravya begins at the Hrudaya (heart/vital center), where the drug's Virya (potency) first exerts its influence.

##### 2. Circulation and Penetration:

Due to their inherent qualities of Ushna (hot), Tikshna (sharp), Sukshma (subtle), Vyavayi (spreading), and Vikasi (loosening/expanding), these drugs quickly enter the Dhamani (circulatory channels) and spread throughout the body. They are capable of penetrating both Sthula (gross) and Sukshma (minute) srotas (channels).

##### 3. Dosha Mobilization:

The drugs then act by melting and loosening the accumulated Doshas (vitiated humors) from their sites and guiding them towards the Koshta (alimentary tract) for elimination.

##### 4. Expulsion of Dosha:

Finally, aided by the force of Vayu (movement/air element), the Doshas are expelled through the Guda Marga (anal route) in the form of purgation.

## Virechana karma in different disease conditions

Disease	Virechana dravya	Reference
Raktapitta (Urdhwanga)	Trivrit, Aragwadha, Hareethaki	Ch.ch.4/54-57
Gulma	Danti-hareethaki lehya	Ch.chi.5/152-160
Svayathu	Eranda sidha ksheera Danti-trivrit sidha ksheera Kamsa hareethaki yoga	Ch.chi.12/50-52
Udara	Narayana choorna Snuhi ksheera, Snuhi ghrita Edanda taila	Ch.chi.13/133 Ch.chi.13/138-140 Ch.chi.13/172
Kushta	Trivrit, danti, triphala, aragwadha	Ch.chi.7/44-46
Vatarakta	Trivrit, Eranda taila, Draksha, Kashmarya, & Triphala kwatha	Ch.Chi.29/62-68

## Virechana guna

बुद्धैः प्रसादं बलमिन्द्रियाणां धातु स्थिरत्वं बलमग्निदीप्तिः।

चिराच्च पाक वयसः करोति विरेचनं सम्यगुपास्यमानम्।।

(सु.चि.३३/२७)

मलापहं रोगहरं बलवर्णप्रसादनम्।

पीत्वा संशोधनं सम्यगायुषा युज्यते चिरम्।।

(च.सू.१५/२२)

## 1. Clarity and Strength:

- Promotes *Prasada* (clarity) of *Buddhi* (intellect) and senses.
- Enhances physical *Bala* (strength) and stability of *Dhatus* (body tissues).

## 2. Digestive &amp; Metabolic Improvement:

- Increases *Agni Deepthi* (digestive fire and metabolism).
- Prevents untimely aging by maintaining proper tissue nutrition.

## 3. Longevity:

- When properly administered, it supports a **long and healthy life**.

## 4. Disease Elimination:

- Removes *Mala* (waste products and impurities).
- Acts as a *Rogahara* (disease-curing measure).

## 5. Restoration of Health:

- Improves *Varna* (complexion) and *Bala* (strength).
- Helps the body regain balance and vitality.

## Modern explanation on possible action of virechana karma

From a modern scientific viewpoint, the **Shodhana dravyas**

(cleansing drugs) used in *Virechana Karma* act primarily on the **intestinal mucosa**. These drugs are considered to have a locally **irritant effect** on the mucosal lining of the gastrointestinal tract, particularly the small and large intestines. This irritation leads to:

## 1. Inflammatory Response:

Mild inflammation of the mucosa alters the normal physiology of the intestine.

## 2. Increased Membrane Permeability:

Due to inflammation, the **permeability of the mucosal membrane increases, allowing substances** (including accumulated metabolic waste, toxins, or endotoxins) that are normally reabsorbed or retained in the body to pass into the lumen.

## 3. Expulsion of Waste:

These substances, which cannot be eliminated under normal conditions, are excreted via purgation along with stool.

## 4. Physiological Cleansing:

This process results in effective cleansing of the gastrointestinal tract, reducing toxic load, improving digestion and metabolism, and restoring systemic balance.

## DISCUSSION

The medicines used in Virechana (purgation therapy) predominantly possess the qualities of Ushna (hot), Tikshna (sharp), Sukshma (subtle), Vyavayi (spreading), and Vikasi (loosening/expanding). Interestingly, these qualities are also observed in *Visha dravya* (poisonous substances), which highlights the potent and penetrating nature of Virechana drugs. Hence, careful consideration of dosage (*Matra*) is essential to prevent adverse reactions or complications.

It is important to note that the action of a drug cannot be fully understood by Rasa (taste), Guna (qualities), Virya (potency), and Vipaka (post-digestive effect) alone. The Charaka Samhita emphasizes this by stating:

“न तु केवलं गुणप्रभावादेव द्रव्याणि कार्मुकाणि भवन्ति। द्रव्याणि हि द्रव्यप्रभावात्, गुणप्रभावात्, द्रव्यगुणप्रभावाच्च तस्मिन् तस्मिन्काले तत्तादधिकरणमासाद्य तां तां युक्तिमर्थं च तमभिप्रेत्य।” (च.सू.२६/१३)

This means that the pharmacological action of a substance arises not merely from its inherent qualities (*guna*), but also from its *dravya-prabhava* (specific drug effect) and their combined interactions. Moreover, the expression of these actions depends upon the context, timing, site of action, and intended therapeutic goal.

Thus, in the case of Virechana dravyas, their proper use requires a holistic understanding of their intrinsic properties, specific potency, and clinical context, ensuring both safety and effectiveness in expelling vitiated doshas.

**CONCLUSION**

The mode of action of Virechana Dravya can be understood as a sequential process beginning with the Virya (potency) of the drug acting at the Hrudaya (vital center), followed by its circulation through the channels (Dhamani) owing to its qualities like *Ushna*, *Tikshna*, *Sukshma*, *Vyavayi*, and *Vikasi*. These attributes enable the drugs to penetrate both gross and subtle srotas, mobilize the vitiated doshas from peripheral tissues, and direct them towards the Koshta (alimentary tract). Finally, with the support of Vata, the doshas are expelled through the Guda marga (anal route), resulting in systemic cleansing.

From a modern perspective, this can be correlated with the local irritant action on intestinal mucosa, increased membrane permeability, and stimulation of peristalsis, leading to effective expulsion of toxins and waste.

Thus, the action of Virechana Dravya is both systemic and local systemic in mobilizing doshas from the entire body, and local in promoting their elimination through the gastrointestinal tract achieving the dual goal of dosha nirharana (elimination of morbid doshas) and restoration of health.

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