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## Dasanga Agada in Insect Bite Poison: A Comprehensive Review on Agad Therapy

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### Abstract

*Visha* (poison) enters the body and rapidly distributes throughout after vitiating *Rakta Dhatu* (blood tissue). Internal administration of *Vishahara* (antitoxic) drugs is essential to neutralize *Visha*. *Dasanga Agada*, an Ayurvedic formulation indicated in various poisonous conditions by Ayurvedic classics is widely used in all types of *Keetadamsha* (insect bite). Materials and Methods: A comprehensive review on *Dasanga Agada Yoga* was conducted from literatures and online sources, including classical Ayurvedic texts such as *Astanga Sangraha*, *Astanga Hrdaya*, *shushrut samhita*. Observation and Results: *Dasanga Agada* comprises ten ingredients—nine herbal and one mineral in origin (*Saindhavam*-rock salt). Almost all ingredients possess *Vedanahara* (pain-relieving) and *Sophahara* (swelling-reducing) properties. Conclusion: Pain, swelling, and redness are the primary symptoms of *Keetadamsha*. These symptoms can be effectively managed by internal and external usage of *Dasanga Agada*, which demonstrates significant *Vishaghna* (antitoxic) action through *Yoga Prabhaava* (formulation synergy).

**Keywords:** *Dasanga Agada*, *Ayurveda*, *Keetavisha*, *Keraliya Visha Chikitsa*, *Agad chikitsa*.

### Introduction

*Agada Tantra* (also called *Agadatantra*) is the specialized branch of Ayurveda dealing with the management of poisonous bites, toxic combinations, and toxicological conditions. This eight-fold branch of Ayurveda encompasses the identification, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of various manifestations caused by *Sthavara Visha* (fixed poison), *Jangama Visha* (moving poison), *Krithrima Visha* (artificial poison), and *Khanija Visha* (earth-born poison).

*Keeta Visha* (insect bite poison) represents one of the most significant categories within *Jangama Visha*. According to Acharya Charaka, insects are called "*Keeta*" and originate from waste products like stool and urine of snakes. Vachaspatya defines *Keeta* as "*Krimibhyah Sthoole Kshudra Jantu Bhede*"—meaning *Keeta* is a variety of *Krimi* (animate creature) with macroscopic body. These creatures are small in size but visible, having two or more legs, with or without wings, some living in soil, some moving in air, some in crevices of buildings, walls, and roofs, some on trees, possessing different shapes and colours.

*Keeta Visha* causes severe manifestations in human beings, ranging from local symptoms to severe systemic manifestations, and can even lead to death. Acharya *Sushruta* described *Keeta Visha* under *Jangama Visha* and explained 67 varieties of *Keeta* under 4 groups: *Vayavya Keeta* (18 types),

*Agneya Keeta* (24 types), *Apya Keeta* (13 types), and *Sannipata Keeta* (12 types).

The main common symptoms of *Keetadamsha* (insect bite) include *Vedana* (pain), *Sopha* (swelling), and *Kandu* (itching). Depending on the variety of *Keeta*, diagnosis and treatment become very difficult because these varieties are not yet correctly identified, and regional variations express very differently. *Dasanga Agada*, an *Agada yoga*, is indicated especially in *Keetavisha* in classics. This formulation is mentioned in many authoritative texts and is clearly stated to have been prepared by *Acharya Kashyapa*. The preparation contains ten ingredients—hence the name "*Dasanga*" (ten parts). The importance of *Keeta Visha* management is particularly significant because although only 3% of insect species are harmful to humans, *Keeta Visha* constitutes the largest group of arthropods, which make up 80% of all living animals. Despite this, only a small percentage causes harmful effects, but the severity can be life-threatening.

*Dasanga Agada* extensively in clinical practice for treating various types of insect bites, including *Satapadi damsha* (centipede bite), *Shatapaadhi bite*, *Pipilika* (ant) bite, *Mashaka* (mosquito) bite, and *Makshika* (fly) bite.

The *Visha* (poison) that enters the body would soon be distributed throughout after vitiating.

**Rakta Dhatu**

To neutralize the *Visha*, internal administration of *Vishahara* drugs is essential, along with external applications. *Dasanga Agada* serves both purposes—can be administered internally as *Gutika* (pills), *Churna* (powder), or *Kashaya* (decoction), and externally as *Lepa* (paste application).

According to Acharya Charaka, *Keetas* are mainly divided into two categories: *Dushivisha Keeta* (causing red, black, or brownish-black coloration with pimples, itching, burning sensation, thirst, anorexia, erysipelas, suppuration, and sloughing) and *Pranahara Keeta* (producing oedema with strong smell and bleeding, causing heaviness of eyes, fainting, pain, and dyspnoea). The probable action of *Dasanga Agada* is indicated as "*Sarvakeetavisham Jayeth*"—meaning it relieves the effects of poison from all types of insect bites. This property may be due to the *Prabhava* (specific potency) of the *Yoga* (formulation) rather than the effect of its individual ingredients alone.

**Aim**

To review on the formulation *Dasanga Agada* and its therapeutic utility in *Keetavisha* management.

**Objectives**

- To study the comprehensive review of *Dasanga Agada* formulation from classical Ayurvedic texts.
- To analyse the ingredients, method of preparation, and administration of *Dasanga Agada*.
- To evaluate the probable mode of action and therapeutic efficacy of *Dasanga Agada* in *Keetavisha*.

**Materials and Methods**

**Study Design:** A comprehensive review study conducted through literature analysis and online sources.

**Data Collection:** Information was collected from different Ayurvedic medical textbooks, magazines, journals, and internet sources.

**Classical Sources Reviewed:**

- Astanga Sangraha:*** Keetavisha Prathishedham [3rd chapter, Utara tantra]
- Astanga Hridaya:*** Uttarasthana, Keetalutadivisha Prathishedham
- Prayoga Samuchayam:*** Saptama Parichedam, Vrishchika Saamana Chikitsa

**Review Approach**

The comprehensive review on *Dasanga Agada Yoga* was done by analysing:

- Ingredients and their properties

**Method of Preparation**

- Administration methods
- Dose guidelines
- Probable action mechanisms
- Therapeutic efficacy in *Keetavisha*.

**Analysis Tools**

Properties of individual ingredients were analysed based on *Rasa* (taste), *Guna* (qualities), *Virya* (energy), *Vipaka* (post-digestive effect), and *Karma* (therapeutic action).

**Review of Literature -****Definition and Nomenclature of *Dasanga Agada*:**

*Dasanga Agada* is a formulation comprising ten ingredients,

hence called "*Dasanga*" (ten parts). Among these ten ingredients, nine are of herbal origin and one is mineral in origin (*Saindhavam* - rock salt). This formulation is widely used in *Keetavisha* and is mentioned in many authoritative Ayurvedic texts.

**Ingredients of *Dasanga Agada*:**

The ingredients are as follows:

**Table 1:** Properties of *Dasanga Agada* Ingredients

Ingredient	Botanical/Latin Name	Family	Part Used
<i>Vacha</i>	<i>Acorus calamus</i> Linn.	Araceae	Rhizome
<i>Hingu</i>	<i>Ferula asafoetida</i> Linn.	Apiaceae	Resin
<i>Vidanga</i>	<i>Embelia ribes</i> Burm.	Myrsinaceae	Fruit
<i>Saindhavam</i>	Rock salt	-	-
<i>Gajapippali</i>	<i>Scindapsus officinalis</i> Schott.	Piperaceae	Fruit
<i>Patha</i>	<i>Cyclea peltata</i> Linn.	Menispermaceae	Root
<i>Prativisha</i>	<i>Aconitum heterophyllum</i> Wall.	Ranunculaceae	Root
<i>Sunthi</i>	<i>Zingiber officinale</i> Rosc.	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome
<i>Maricha</i>	<i>Piper nigrum</i> Linn.	Piperaceae	Fruit
<i>Pippali</i>	<i>Piper longum</i> Linn.	Piperaceae	Fruit

**Properties of Individual Ingredients:****1. *Vacha* (*Acorus calamus*):**

- Rasa:*** *Katu, Tikta*
- Guna:*** *Laghu, Teekshna*
- Virya:*** *Ushna*
- Vipaka:*** *Katu*
- Karma:*** *Kaphavatahara, Mootrajanana, Shothaghna*

**2. *Hingu* (*Ferula assa-foetida*):**

- Rasa:*** *Katu*
- Guna:*** *Laghu, Snigdha*
- Virya:*** *Ushna*
- Vipaka:*** *Katu*
- Karma:*** *Kaphavatahara, Vedanaasthapana, Mootrajanana, Shothahara, Krimihara.*

**3. *Vidanga* (*Embelia ribes*):**

- Rasa:*** *Katu, Kashaya*
- Guna:*** *Laghu, Ruksha*
- Virya:*** *Ushna*
- Vipaka:*** *Katu*
- Karma:*** *Vatakaphahara, Krimighna, Rakta Shodhaka, Shoolaghna, Shothahara.*

**4. *Saindhava* (Rock salt):**

- Rasa:*** *Lavana*
- Guna:*** *Sitha, Ruksha*
- Virya:*** *Sitha*
- Vipaka:*** *Madhura*
- Karma:*** *Tridosahara, Mutrala, Shoolahara*

**5. *Gajapippali* (*Scindapsus officinalis*):**

- Rasa:*** *Katu*
- Guna:*** *Laghu, Snigdha*
- Virya:*** *Anushna*
- Vipaka:*** *Katu*

- **Karma:** *Kaphavatahara, Shothahara, Vedanaa Sthapana.*
6. **Patha (*Cyclea peltata*):**
- **Rasa:** *Tikta*
  - **Guna:** *Laghu, Teekshna*
  - **Virya:** *Ushna*
  - **Vipaka:** *Katu*
  - **Karma:** *Tridosahara, Vranashodhana, Vranaropana, Daaha Prashamana, Mootrala, Vishagna, Sothahara.*
7. **Prativisha (*Aconitum heterophyllum*):**
- **Rasa:** *Tikta, Katu*
  - **Guna:** *Laghu, Ruksha*
  - **Virya:** *Ushna*
  - **Vipaka:** *Katu*
  - **Karma:** *Tridosahara, Shothahara, Vedanahara, Jwaragna.*
8. **Sunthi (*Zingiber officinale*):**
- **Rasa:** *Katu*
  - **Guna:** *Laghu, Snigdha*
  - **Virya:** *Ushna*
  - **Vipaka:** *Madhura*
  - **Karma:** *Kaphavatahara, Sothahara, Vedanaahara, Vatanulomana, Shoola Prashamana.*
9. **Maricha (*Piper nigrum*):**
- **Rasa:** *Katu*
  - **Guna:** *Laghu, Teekshna*
  - **Virya:** *Ushna*
  - **Vipaka:** *Katu*
  - **Karma:** *Kaphavatahara, Vedanahara, Sothahara.*
10. **Pippali (*Piper longum*):**
- **Rasa:** *Katu*
  - **Guna:** *Laghu, Teekshna*
  - **Virya:** *Anushna*
  - **Vipaka:** *Sitha*
  - **Karma:** *Kaphavatahara, Vedanahara, Sothahara, Krimigna.*

#### Method of Preparation and Administration

Generally, *Dasanga Agada* is made into *Gutika* (pill) form for easy administration. The preparation method involves:

- i). All ingredients are taken in equal quantity.
- ii). Made into fine powder.
- iii). As *Bhavana Dravya* (liquid for grinding) is not mentioned in classics, *Jala* (water) or *Kashaya* (decoction) of the ingredients can be used.
- iv). The mixture is ground until the drug mass attains the required consistency for rolling pills.
- v). Dried under shade.
- vi). Packed in tightly closed glass containers for further use.

#### Other Opinions on Administration

- i). **Churna form:** The drugs' powder is mixed with water and given for drinking.
- ii). **Vataka form:** Ingredients in equal quantity are ground in *Hastipadi Swarasa* (*Elephantopus scaber* Linn, Asteraceae family) for making *Vataka*, administered with *Hastapadi Swarasa*, and can also be used as *Lepa* (paste application).
- iii). **Multiple forms:** The ingredients are made into powder

and taken internally with *Jala*. It can also be used as *Kashaya*, *Gutika* form, or as *Lepana* (external paste).

#### Dose of Dasanga Agada:

Reference regarding the exact dosage of *Dasanga Agada* is not seen in Ayurvedic literature. The dosage and time of administration are fixed after assessing the patient's condition, considering the severity of poison and individual constitution.

#### Probable Action of Dasanga Agada:

The formulation has the indication "*Sarvakeetavisham Jayeth*" - meaning it relieves the effects of poison from all types of insect bites. This property may be due to the *Prabhava of the Yoga* (specific potency of the formulation) rather than the effect of its individual ingredients alone.

#### Analysis of Doshahartva -

When analyzing the Doshaghna property of the ingredients:

- 70% are *Kaphavatahara* (neutralize Kapha and Vata).
- They are *Katu, Tikta Rasa Pradhana* (predominantly pungent and bitter taste).
- *Laghu, Tikshna Guna Pradhana* (light and sharp qualities).
- *Ushna Virya Pradhana* (predominantly hot energy).
- *Katu Vipaka Pradhana* (predominantly pungent post-digestive effect).
- Almost all drugs possess *Vedanahara* (pain-relieving) and *Sophahara* (swelling-reducing) properties.

#### Specific Actions of Individual Ingredients:

- **Vacha, Hingu, and Pippali:** Have *Vedanasthapana* action (pain-stabilizing), acting on *Keetadamsha*.
- **Vidanga, Prativisha, Maricha, and Patha:** Have *Shothahara* action (swelling-reducing).
- **Prativisha and Patha:** Have *Vishaghna* action (antitoxic)
- **Hingu:** Has *Krimihara* action (anti-parasitic).
- **Vidanga:** Has *Krimighna* and *Rakta Shodhaka* actions (anti-parasitic and blood-purifying).

#### Agada Tantra Context

*Agada Tantra* is the branch of Ayurveda dealing with management of poisonous bites and toxic combinations. There are many formulations specially mentioned for *Keeta Visha* treatment. The main common symptoms of *Keetadamsa* include *Vedana* (pain), *Sopha* (swelling), and *Kandu* (itching).

#### Classification of Keeta According to Classical Texts:

##### According to Acharya Charaka:

*Keetas* are divided into 2 types:

- i). **Dushivisha Keeta:** Causes red, black, or brownish-black coloration with pimples, itching, burning sensation, thirst, anorexia, erysipelas, suppuration, and sloughing.
- ii). **Pranahara Keeta:** Produces oedema with strong smell and bleeding, causing heaviness of eyes, fainting, pain, and dyspnoea.

#### General Treatment for Keeta Visha According to Dosha Predominance:

- **Vata Aggravation:** Application of *Khanda* (sesame paste), massage with sesame oil, *Nadi/Pulaka* fomentation, nourishing diet.
- **Pitta Aggravation:** Very cold affusion, *Stambhana*, cold

ointments.

- **Kapha Aggravation:** *Lekhana, Chedana, Swedana, Vamana Karma.*
- **For All Three Doshas:** *Swedana, Lepana, Seka* (in warm conditions, except when consciousness is lost, ulceration exists, or putrefaction occurs).

### Specific Formulations for *Keeta Visha*:

#### According to *Acharya Charaka*:

- Paste of *Ksiri-Vrksas bark* (Nyagrodha, Udumbara, Asvatta, Vetasa, Plaksha) after Shodhana.
- Paste of *Muktha* (pearls) with water for swelling, pricking pain, burning, and fever.
- Paramo-Gada*: *Vacha*, bark of *Vamsa*, *Patha*, *Nata*, *Surasa* inflorescence, *Bala*, *Maha-bala*, *Nakuli*, *Kusta*, *Sirisa*, *Haridra*, *Daruharidra*, *Guha*, *Atiguha*, *Sweta*, *Ajagandha*, *Silajatu*, *Katrina*, *Katabhi*, *Ksara*, *Grhadhuma*, *Manashila* with *Rohita bile* (for *Nasya*, *Anjana*, *Lepa*).
- Pancha-Sirisa-Agada*: Fruits, roots, barks, flowers, and leaves of *Sirisa* with ghee (effective for all poison types).

#### According to *Acharya Sushruta*:

- Utakarika*: *Sirisa*, *Katuka*, *Kusta*, *Vaca*, *Haridra*, *Saindhava*, milk, marrow, muscle-fat, ghee, *Sunthi*, *Pippali*, *Devadaru* (for fomentation).
- Trikantaka Damsha*: *Kustha*, *Tagara*, *Vaca*, *Patha*, *Bilva* root, *Suvarchika*, *Grha-dhuma*, *Haridra*, *Daruharidra*.
- Dasanga Agada*: *Vacha*, *Hingu*, *Vidanga*, *Saindhava*, *Gajapippali*, *Patha*, *Prathivisha*, and *Vyosha* (made into paste and rolled into pills) - formulated by *Kashyapa*, cures all kinds of insect bites.

#### According to *Astanga Hridaya*:

- Equal quantities of *Tanduliyaka* and *Trivrt* mixed with ghee (prevents insect poison).
- Paste of *Ksiri-Vrksas* after purificatory therapies.
- Paste of *Muktha* (pearls) for swelling, pain, burning, and fever.
- Dasanga Agada*: As mentioned above, formulated by *Kashyapa*.

#### Use in Clinical Practice:

*Dasanga Agada* is widely used in all types of *Keetadamsa*:

- *Satapadi damsha* (centipede bite)
- *Shatapaadhi bite*
- *Pipilika* (ant) bite
- *Mashaka* (mosquito) bite
- *Makshika* (fly) bite
- *Grhagodika* (house-lizard) bite
- *Kanabha bite*

#### Antimicrobial Properties

Recent studies have shown that *Dashanga Agada* and its individual drugs demonstrated antimicrobial effects in various studies, supporting its traditional use in *Keeta Visha* conditions.

#### Discussion

The properties of ingredients of *Dasanga Agada* can be summarized through comprehensive analysis based on *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka*, and *Doshahartva*.

#### Analysis Based on *Rasa* (Taste):

According to the *Rasa* distribution:

- ***Katu* (Pungent):** 8 ingredients - predominant *Rasa*
- ***Tikta* (Bitter):** 2 ingredients
- ***Lavana* (Salty):** 1 ingredient (*Saindhava*)
- ***Kashaya* (Astringent):** 1 ingredient (*Vidanga*)

The *Katu Rasa Pradhana* nature contributes to *Kaphavatahara* action, as pungent taste is known to reduce *Kapha* and *Vata* Doshas. This explains why 70% of ingredients are *Kaphavatahara*.

#### Analysis Based on *Guna* (Qualities):

The *Guna* distribution shows:

- ***Laghu* (Light):** 9 ingredients - predominant
- ***Teekshna* (Sharp):** 3 ingredients
- ***Snigda* (Oily):** 2 ingredients
- ***Ruksha* (Dry):** 1 ingredient
- ***Sitha* (Cool):** 1 ingredient

The *Laghu* and *Tikshna Guna Pradhana* qualities contribute to the rapid action of the formulation, allowing it to penetrate tissues quickly and neutralize poison.

#### Analysis Based on *Virya*

The *Virya* distribution:

- ***Ushna*:** 7 ingredients - predominant
- ***Sitha*:** 2 ingredients
- ***Anushna*:** 1 ingredient

The *Ushna Virya Pradhana* nature explains the formulation's effectiveness in reducing *Kapha* and *Vata*, as hot energy is antagonistic to these *Doshas*.

#### Analysis Based on *Vipaka* (Post-digestive Effect):

The *Vipaka* distribution:

- ***Katu* (Pungent):** 8 ingredients - predominant
- ***Madhura* (Sweet):** 2 ingredients

The *Katu Vipaka Pradhana* supports the prolonged action of the formulation, as *Katu Vipaka* is known for its cleansing and reducing properties.

#### Analysis Based on *Doshahartva*

The *Doshahartva* distribution:

- ***Kaphavatahara*:** 7 ingredients (70%)
- ***Tridoshahara*:** 3 ingredients

This confirms that *Dasanga Agada* is particularly effective against *Kapha* and *Vata* predominant conditions, which are the main *Doshas* involved in *Keetavisha* symptoms like swelling (*Shotha*) and pain (*Vedana*).

#### Probable Mode of Action:

Based on the comprehensive analysis, the probable mode of action of *Dasanga Agada* includes:

##### 1. *Vedanahara Action* (Pain Relief):

- *Vacha*, *Hingu*, and *Pippali* have *Vedanasthapana* action.
- *Prativisha*, *Sunthi*, *Maricha* have *Vedanahara* properties.
- This combination provides effective pain relief in *Keetadamsha*.

##### 2. *Shothahara Action* (Swelling Reduction):

- *Vidanga*, *Prativisha*, *Maricha*, *Patha*, *Hingu*, *Vacha*

have Shothahara properties.

- This explains the formulation's effectiveness in reducing swelling.

### 3. Vishaghna Action (Antitoxic):

- Prativisha and Patha have specific Vishaghna action
- This neutralizes the poison (Visha) directly

### 4. Krimighna Action (Anti-parasitic):

- Hingu and Vidanga have Krimihara/Krimighna properties.
- This is important for insect bites that may introduce parasitic elements.

### 5. Rakta Shodhaka Action (Blood Purification):

- Vidanga has Rakta Shodhaka property.
- Patha is Tridosahara and Vishagna.
- This helps purify blood that has been vitiated by Visha.

### Yoga Prabhaava (Formulation Synergy):

The action of *Dasanga Agada* is primarily due to its *Yoga Prabhaava* (specific potency of the formulation) rather than just the individual effects of ingredients. This is supported by the indication "*Sarvakeetavisham Jayeth*" - meaning it cures all types of insect poison.

The synergy occurs through:

- **Samaana Karma:** Multiple ingredients with similar actions (*Vedanahara*, *Shothahara*) work together for enhanced effect.
- **Vipaka Prabhava:** Different Vipakas ensure prolonged action.
- **Virya Samwise:** Ushna Virya predominance ensures rapid penetration.
- **Rasa Pradhanya:** *Katu* and *Tikta Rasa* work synergistically for *Kaphavatahara* action..

### Symptoms of Keetadamsha:

Pain, swelling, and redness are the primary symptoms of *Keetadamsha*. These symptoms can be effectively managed by:

- Internal usage:** *Gutika*, *Churna*, or *Kashaya* of *Dasanga Agada*.
- External usage:** *Lepa* (paste application) of *Dasanga Agada*.

The dual mode of action makes *Dasanga Agada* particularly effective compared to formulations that are only for internal or external use.

### Dosha Predominance in Keeta Visha:

*Dasanga Agada's* 70% *Kaphavatahara* ingredients make it ideally suited for these conditions.

### Safety Considerations:

While *Dasanga Agada* is effective, care should be taken with:

- **Prativisha (*Aconitum heterophyllum*):** Contains toxic alkaloids, requires proper processing.
- **Dosage:** Should be fixed after assessing patient condition due to lack of standardized dose in classics.
- **Pregnancy:** *Ushna Virya* ingredients may not be suitable
- **Children:** Dose should be adjusted.
  - Individual ingredients have documented antimicrobial properties.

- The synergy may enhance overall antimicrobial effect.

### Conclusion

*Dasanga Agada* is a well-balanced, effective formulation for *Keeta Visha* management. Its composition ensures:

- Rapid pain relief (*Vedanahara*).
- Effective swelling reduction (*Shothahara*).
- Direct antitoxic action (*Vishaghna*).
- Anti-parasitic properties (*Krimighna*).
- Blood purification (*Rakta Shodhaka*).

The *Yoga Prabhaava* ensures enhanced efficacy beyond individual ingredient effects, making it suitable for all types of *Keetadamsa*.

### Summary

This review article comprehensively analyzed *Dasanga Agada*, a ten-ingredient formulation for *Keetavisha* (insect bite poison) management. The formulation comprises nine herbal and one mineral ingredient, with 70% *Kaphavatahara* properties. All ingredients possess *Vedanahara* and *Sophahara* properties, addressing primary symptoms of pain, swelling, and redness. *Dasanga Agada*, is effective in all types of *Keetadamsa* through internal and external administration. Its action is enhanced by *Yoga Prabhaava*.

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