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LOOKING FROM PAST TO PRESENT- CHAKSHUSHYA DRUGS IN BHAVAPRAKSHA NIGHANTU AND RESEARCH DONE ON THEM

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ABSTRACT: Bhavaprakasha is unique in the sense that it shows the slow amalgamation of traditional Indian materiamedica with several new additions which came to the Indian subcontinent through trade and exchanges with foreign civilizations. The Nighantu portion of Bhavaprakasha is an excellent repertoire of herbs and minerals used in Ayurveda. Several plants with properties related to augmentation of ocular function like chakshushya, and to the treatment of eye diseases are mentioned in Bhavaprakasha nighantu. Many of these drugs have been subjected to various biomedical *in-vitro* and *in-vivo* studies globally over the past decades. They hold the promise of being new therapeutic agents against various ocular diseases like cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, which have no efficient treatment options in existence at the moment. There are more drugs yet to be studied upon. This article is a review of drugs with pharmacological properties related to ocular function or management of eye diseases described in Bhavaprakasha Nighantu and the modern scientific research done on them in recent times.

INTRODUCTION: Bhavaprakasha, one of the laghuthrayi texts, is unique in the sense that it shows the slow amalgamation of traditional Indian materiamedica with several new additions which came to the Indian subcontinent through trade and exchanges with foreign civilizations. It has added several new herbs to our repertoire. Herbal drugs form the yuktivyapasraya category of treatment in Ayurveda. They are, hence an integral part of maintaining health as well as treatment of diseases. This fact holds good for the Shalakyatantra branch as well. Chakshushya drugs are used to enhance the health of the eye and to ameliorate eye diseases. In an age of advancing technology, the health of vision, as well as treatment of diseases of eye, is a challenge as new diseases continue to develop.

In this context, researching traditional medicinal plants using modern scientific methods for their scope in preventive and curative eye care is relevant. This article aims to review the drugs with properties related to eye or eye diseases described in Bhavaprakasha Nighantu and the modern research carried out on them so far.

MATERIALS AND METHODS: For the study, the Bhavaprakasha Nighantu was researched for drugs with properties related to eye or eye diseases. Then research data on the action of these drugs on the eye was obtained from searching databases like Pubmed, Google Scholar, Science direct, *etc.*

RESULTS:

Drugs with Action on Eye in Bhavaprakasha: In a comprehensive review of Bhavaprakashanighantu, the words “chakshushya, netrahita, netramayahrit, akshirogahrit, drishtiprasadanam nakthandhyanasanam” were found¹. The word chakshushya means “chakshushelochanayahitam”, that which is beneficial for the eyes. Netrahita also conveys the same meaning. “Drishtiprasada means” Drishau

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netra prasadayati". Prasadana is "nairmalyam". Thus drishtiprasada translates to that which clarifies vision. Netrarogahrit means "netrarogaan hantiiti", which alleviates diseases of eye.

Akshirgahrit is a synonym of the same. Drugs which are chakshushya and netrahit are tabulated in **Table 1** and drugs with netramayahritguna are summarised in **Table 2**.

TABLE 1: DRUGS WHICH ARE CHAKSHUSHYA AND NETRAHITA

<i>Chakshushya</i>		<i>Netrahit</i>	
Name of the drug	Scientific name	Name of the drug	Scientific name
Hareetaki	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Vibheetaki	<i>Terminalia bellerica</i>
Amalaki	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>	Lasuna	<i>Allium sativum</i>
SuklaJeerakam	<i>Cuminum cyminum</i>	Palandu	<i>Allium cepa</i>
Krishna Jeerakam	<i>Carum carvi</i>	Sinduvara	<i>Vitex negundo</i>
Kalajaji	<i>Nigella sativa</i>	Kataka	<i>Strychnos potatorum</i>
Yashti	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>	Bhutrana	<i>Cymnopogon martinii</i>
Lodhra	<i>Symplocos racemosa</i>	Satavari	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>
Karpoora	<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i>	Nimba	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>
LataKastoori	<i>Abelmoschus moschatus</i>	Rakta Chandanam	<i>Pterocarpus santalinus</i>
Prapoundarikam	-	Kumari	<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>
Jeevanthi	<i>Leptademia reticulata</i>	Kakamachi	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>
Mudgaparni	<i>Phaseolus trilobus</i>		
Sigru	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>		
Ketaki	<i>Pandanus odoratissimus</i>		
Draksha	<i>Vitis vinifera</i>		

TABLE 2: DRUGS WHICH ARE NETRAMAYAHRT

Name of the drug	Scientific name
Ajamoda	<i>Apium graveolans</i>
Thumburu	<i>Zanthoxylum alatum</i>
Manjishta	<i>Rubia cordifolia</i>
Daruharidra	<i>Coscinium fenestratum</i>
Aguru	<i>Aquilaria agallocha</i>
Sarala	<i>Pinus longifolia</i>
Tagara	<i>Valeriana wallichii</i>
Gunja	<i>Abrus precatorius</i>
Bhringaraja	<i>Eclipta alba</i>
Meshasringi	<i>Gymna sylvestre</i>
Akasavalli	<i>Cuscuta reflexa</i>
Varshiki	<i>Jasminum sambac</i>
Malathi	<i>Jasminum grandiflorum</i>
Kadali	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>
Yuthika	<i>Jasminum auriculatum</i>
Loni	<i>Portulaca quadrifida</i>

The herb Aparajitha (*Clitorea ternatea*) has the action drishtiprasadanam, and Agasthi (*Sesbania grandiflora*) has the action nakthandhyanasanam, that which cures night blindness. Thus these actions can be broadly classified into preventive and curative modalities. Chakshushya, netrahit thus could be drugs that are beneficial for the general structural and functional welfare of the eyes. Drishtiprasada may be drugs that clarify and improve visual acuity. Netrarogahrit is a drug that can be used in the treatment of various inflammatory, infectious and degenerative diseases of eyes in different dosage forms for both internal intake and external kriyakramas (procedures).

The Current Research Scenario: Plants on which research has been done is given in **Table 3**.

TABLE 3: PLANTS ON WHICH RESEARCH HAS BEEN DONE

S. no.	Drug	Scientific name
1	Amalaki	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>
2	Hareetaki	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>
3	Vibheetaki	<i>Terminalia bellerica</i>
4	Jeerakam	<i>Cuminum cyminum</i>
5	Karavi	<i>Nigella sativa</i>
6	Yashti	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>
7	Sigru	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>
8	Nirgundi	<i>Vitex negundo</i>
9	Draksha	<i>Vitis vinifera</i>
10	Lasuna	<i>Allium sativum</i>
11	Palandu	<i>Allium cepa</i>
12	Kumari	<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>
13	Agasthi	<i>Sesbania grandiflora</i>
14	Aparajitha	<i>Clitorea ternatea</i>

1. Amalaki (*Emblica officinalis*):

Recent Researches Done on Amalaki include:

- Quercetin is a natural polyphenolic flavonoid found in *Phyllanthus emblica*, significantly suppressed TGF- β 1-induced proliferation and migration that is the main pathogenesis involved in proliferative vitreoretinopathy (PVR), suggesting that quercetin has potential to be a therapeutic agent against PVR³.

- *Emblica officianalis* has a cytoprotective effect in age-related macular degeneration *in-vitro* ⁴.
- The progression of selenite-induced cataracts was delayed by an aqueous extract of *Emblica officianalis*. A combination of *Curcuma longa* and *Emblica officianalis* was useful in the prevention and treatment of cataracts in diabetic rats ⁵.

2. Hareetaki (*Terminalia chebula*):

- Chebulic acid, a chemical constituent of Hareetaki, has shown significant anti-proliferative potential on retinoblastoma cells ⁶.

3. Triphala:

- Triphala retards *in vitro* selenite-induced cataract due to antioxidant activity ⁷.
- Triphala was found to retard epithelial to mesenchymal transition of the retinal pigment epithelium in proliferative vitreoretinopathy ⁸.

4. Agasthi (*Sesbania grandiflora*):

- *Sesbania grandiflora* flower extract formulation had antifungal and antimicrobial action in the treatment of bacterial conjunctivitis ⁹.
- Aqueous leaf extract of *Sesbania grandiflora* significantly reduced IOP in alpha chymotrypsin induced experimental glaucoma in rabbits, against standard ¹⁰.

5. Jeerakam (*Cuminum cuminum*):

- Cumin has antiglycating properties that may be due to the modulation of chaperone activity of alpha-crystallin, thus delaying cataracts in diabetic rats ¹¹.

6. Karavi (*Nigella sativa*):

- Treatment of experimental models of dry eye with Thymoquinone, a major chemical constituent of *Nigella sativa*, was associated with reduced inflammation in pathological examination ¹².

- Liposome formulations containing thymoquinone were able to reduce the IOP significantly with sustained effect in the eyes of glaucomatous rabbits and also vastly improved the ocular tissue-induced histopathological lesions ¹³.

- Oil from *Nigella sativa* and thymoquinone were effective in preventing radiation cataractogenesis in the lenses of rats, wherein the oil component was found to be more effective between the two ¹⁴.

- Administration of thymoquinone reduced the ocular symptoms in ovalbumin-induced allergic conjunctivitis in mice by downgrading the recruitment of eosinophils, level of IgE, histamine, *etc.* ¹⁵.

7. Yashti (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*):

- The crude methanol extract of *Glycyrrhiza glabra* inhibited new vessel growth in the cornea following corneal burn and inflammation and hence could be a potential therapeutic agent for inflammation-associated corneal neovascularization ¹⁶.

- Glycyrrhizin 2.5% eye drops were effective in improving symptoms and ocular lesions in patients with moderate dry eye disease ¹⁷.

8. Sigru (*Moringa oleifera*):

- *Moringa oleifera* stem extract prevents oxidative stress-induced cataractogenesis in mouse lens by its improvement of the endogenous antioxidant system in the lens ¹⁸.

- *Moringa oleifera* leaf aqueous extract, when administered orally, reduced ocular hypertension ¹⁹.

- *Moringa oleifera* may be useful in preventing diabetes-induced retinal dysfunction through anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anti-angiogenic mechanisms ²⁰.

9. Draksha (*Vitis vinifera*):

- The antioxidant function of grapes for the control of the ageing process and age-related

eye disorders may provide new light on the design of anti-ageing herbal medicines²¹.

- Grape polyphenols have ocular promotive action through anti-oxidant, anti-microbial, anti-aging, anti-hypertensive, and anti-inflammatory properties²².
- Grape powder, when given orally, protected the lens from UV radiation-induced cataract development in mice in a dose-dependent manner by directly regulating endogenous Nrf2 and its downstream target detoxifying/antioxidant genes²³.

10. Aparajitha (*Clitoria ternatea*):

- The *Clitoria ternatea* flower petal extracts and eye gel have anti-oxidant properties²⁴.

11. Lashuna (*Allium sativum*):

- Methanol extracts of garlic have amoebicidal and cysticidal properties on Acanthamoeba trophozoites and cysts, which cause keratitis²⁵.
- A garlic-derived compound, S-allyl-mercaptocysteine (SAMC) lowered IOP in rabbits with the elevation of ANP levels in aqueous humor²⁶.
- Normal ARPE-19 cells that were treated with diallyltetrasulfide, a garlic compound, recovered from the decrease in thiol concentration as opposed to cancer cells, thus failing to induce stress signal pathway and apoptosis in normal cells. A sample-based on garlic extracts was proven to be a potential urethane carrier for choroidal melanoma. Thus garlic has anti-cancerous properties²⁷.
- Intraperitoneal injection of aqueous extract of garlic effectively prevented selenite-induced cataract in Wistar rats²⁸.
- S-allyl L-cysteine, an active component from aged garlic extract, could modulate hydroquinone-induced oxidative damage in human RPE cells and hence could be a protective factor against pathogenesis of AMD²⁹.

12. Palandu (*Allium cepa*):

- In diabetes experimental animal models on a diet of fenugreek seeds and onion, delayed cataract formation was observed, thus implying their effect in preventing cataractogenesis³⁰.
- Onion extract was effective in preventing corneal haze development after air-assisted lamellar keratectomy in canine eyes³¹.
- Installation of onion juice in rat eyes prevents selenite-induced cataract formation with increase in anti-oxidant levels and enzyme activities³².

13. Nirgundi (*Vitex negundo*):

- Flavonoid fraction of *Vitex negundo* prevented selenite toxicity and cataractogenesis *in-vitro* by maintaining antioxidant status, and decreasing oxidative stress in lens³³.
- Luteolin, a flavonoid, isolated and characterized from the leaves of *Vitex negundo* prevented selenite induced oxidative stress and cataractogenesis³⁴.

14. Kumari (*Aloe barbadensis*):

- *Aloe vera* eye drops were used successfully to treat ocular surface squamous neoplasia³⁵.
- *Aloe vera* enhanced corneal re-epithelialization and decreased inflammatory response after alkali burn in normal and diabetic rats³⁶.
- A novel lid wipe formulation containing *Aloe vera* and hyaluronic acid had antimicrobial activity against bacteria and yeast in blepharitis³⁷.

DISCUSSION: Based on the review of current research on these drugs, the observations are summarized in **Table 4** and **5**. Broadly there are both ushnavirya as well as sheetavirya drugs with chakshushya property. They do not appear to have a common rasa, guna, virya or vipaka. Therefore it may be concluded that the property chakshushya may be depending on the prabhava of these individual drugs.

TABLE 4: PLANTS WITH PREVENTIVE PROPERTIES

Name of herb	Scientific name	Property preventive against
<i>Amalaki</i> -	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>	Age related macular degeneration
<i>Triphala</i>	-	Cataract
<i>Jeerakam</i>	<i>Cuminum cuminum</i>	Cataract
<i>Karavi</i>	<i>Nigella sativa</i>	Cataract
<i>Sigru</i>	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>	Cataract
<i>Draksha</i>	<i>Vitis vinifera</i>	Retinal dysfunction due to DM
		Age related eye disease
		Ocular promotive
		Cataract
<i>Aparajitha</i>	<i>Clitorea ternatea</i>	Oxidation in eye
<i>Lashuna</i>	<i>Allium sativum</i>	Oxidative stress in AMD
		Cataract
<i>Palandu</i>	<i>Allium cepa</i>	Cataract
		Corneal haze post surgery
<i>Nirgundi</i>	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>	Cataract

TABLE 5: PLANTS WITH CURATIVE PROPERTIES

Name of Herb	Scientific name	Curative against
<i>Amalaki</i>	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>	Proliferative vitreoretinopathy
		Cataract
<i>Hareetaki</i>	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Retinoblastoma
<i>Sigru</i>	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>	Ocular hypertension
<i>Kumari</i>	<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	Ocular surface squamous neoplasia
		Ocular surface inflammation
		Corneal alkali burns, wounds
<i>Agasthi</i>	<i>Sesbania grandiflora</i>	Bacterial and fungal conjunctivitis
		Glaucoma
<i>Karavi</i>	<i>Nigella sativa</i>	Dry eye
		Lowers IOP
		Glaucomatous histopathological lesions
		Allergic conjunctivitis
<i>Yashtimadhu</i>	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>	Anti angiogenic in neovascularisation diseases like corneal neovascularization
		Dry eye
<i>Lashuna</i>	<i>Allium sativum</i>	Acanthamoeba keratitis
		Lowers IOP
		Anti cancerous
<i>Triphala</i>	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Proliferative vitreoretinopathy
	<i>Terminalia bellerica</i>	
	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>	

Even though they are all chakshushya, their individual pharmacological properties need to be assessed separately to pinpoint the vyadhiavastha in which they can be used. Drishti is sheetasatmya, and hence one would expect chakshushya drugs to be sheeta as well.

The long-term use of ushnaviryachakshushya drugs may need to be limited even if they have ocular promotive properties. For example, Lashunais chakshushya but can hardly be used in a rakta-pittadhika condition. But chakshu is a tejomaya indriya situated in a kaphasthana that is shiras. So even in healthy individuals chakshushya drugs should be used ideally in a combination of sheeta and ushna.

From the review of available literature, we find that there are many more medicinal plants with ocular promotive properties described in Bhavapraksha that are yet to be touched upon by modern research studies. As diseases become resistant to antibiotics and prevention of diseases is being viewed with greater importance than before, it becomes imperative that we look at the old traditional knowledge in a new light so that gems from the heaps of classical texts can be utilized for the present and future. Among the plants that have been researched, most drugs are preventive against cataract, have anti-angiogenic, anti-cancerous, anti-oxidant, and anti-inflammatory properties. These diseases like cataracts, cancer, neo-vascularising

diseases, and age-related degenerative diseases have no effective pharmacological agents at present. Hence researching these drugs may reveal alternatives that have the potential to be therapeutic agents against these diseases in both curative and preventive aspects.

CONCLUSION: The plants with ocular promotive and curative properties hold the potential to be therapeutic agents in the management of eye diseases as well as in preventive ophthalmology. So researching them with modern parameters is highly relevant.

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