

Pharmaceutical Study on *CitrakatriphaladiLeha* (Veterinary): A Classical Ayurvedic Formulation for *SleshmikaKasa* in Horses

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Abstract

Context: *CitrakatriphaladiLeha* is a classical polyherbal formulation documented in the *Ashvavaidyakam* (*KasaRogaCikitsaAdhyaya* 34:24), traditionally indicated for managing *SleshmikaKasa* (phlegmatic cough) in equines. With increasing interest in traditional veterinary medicine, its revival and standardization have become relevant.

Aims: To prepare and standardize *CitrakatriphaladiLeha* using classical Ayurvedic procedures to ensure reproducibility and practical relevance for equine respiratory care.

Settings and Design: The study was conducted as a pharmaceutical standardization project within a classical Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana laboratory, focusing on veterinary applications.

Methods and Material: Authenticated raw materials were used. Individual ingredients were powdered using a mechanical pulverizer. The formulation was prepared using *Madhu* as the base, incorporating *Mardana* (trituration) until the desired *Leha* consistency was attained. Observations regarding processing time, texture, and physical stability were recorded.

Statistical Analysis Used: Descriptive observations; no inferential statistics were applied due to the qualitative nature of the study.

Results: The *Leha* attained optimal consistency after 20–30 minutes of *Mardana*. The final product exhibited a smooth, homogenous texture and remained physically stable at room temperature. The process was reproducible, with consistent results across batches.

Conclusions: *CitrakatriphaladiLeha* is a promising Ayurvedic formulation for *KaphajaKasa*

in horses. The preparation followed classical guidelines and yielded a stable, palatable formulation. It is suitable for veterinary use, and further pharmacological and safety studies are recommended to support its broader application.

Keywords: Pashu Ayurveda, *CitrakatriphaladiLeha*, *Ashvavaidyakam*, equine respiratory care

Abstract

Background:

Citrakatriphaladi Leha is a classical polyherbal formulation mentioned in *Ashvavaidyakam* (Kasa Roga Cikitsa Adhyaya 34:24), traditionally indicated for managing Śleṣmika Kāsa (phlegmatic cough) in equines. With increasing interest in traditional veterinary medicine, its revival and pharmaceutical standardization are essential to ensure reproducibility and practical relevance in equine respiratory care.

Methods:

The study was conducted as a pharmaceutical standardization project in a Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana laboratory, focusing on veterinary applications. Authenticated raw materials were used, and each ingredient was powdered using a mechanical pulveriser to pass through an 80# sieve. The powders were mixed as per classical proportion, followed by gradual incorporation of Madhu (honey) during Mardana (trituration) until Leha consistency was achieved. Observations regarding processing time, consistency, and organoleptic characteristics were documented. No inferential statistical analysis was performed due to the qualitative nature of the study.

Results:

The Leha attained optimal consistency after 20–30 minutes of Mardana. The final product was smooth, homogeneous, and stable under ambient storage conditions for one month. The process was reproducible with consistent results in multiple batches, indicating standardisation feasibility.

Conclusion:

Citrakatriphaladi Leha, prepared as per classical Ayurvedic guidelines, yielded a stable, palatable formulation suitable for veterinary use in Kaphaja Kāsa in horses. Its Kapha-hara and Kāsa-hara properties, along with the Yogavahi effect of Madhu, make it a promising traditional remedy. Further pharmacological and safety studies in animals are recommended to establish efficacy and expand its veterinary application.

Keywords: Pashu Ayurveda, *Citrakatriphaladi Leha*, *Ashvavaidyakam*, equine respiratory care

Introduction:

Ayurveda encompasses a vast corpus of veterinary medicine (*PashuAyurveda*), with the *Ashvavaidyakam* forming an important section focused on equine health. One such formulation is *CitrakatriphaladiLeha*¹, used to manage respiratory conditions involving *KaphaDosha* in horses. Coughing in horses is an early sign of illness or that your horse is developing an inflammatory condition, such as heaves, that will respond better when treated promptly. And in some circumstances, such as just after coming out of a trailer after a long ride, even a single cough or two may signal a life-threatening infection that requires immediate veterinary care.² In this context, the study aims to revive and standardize the formulation in accordance with Ayurvedic pharmaceutics for veterinary application.

Subjects and Methods:

Aim: To document and analyze the pharmaceutical preparation method *Citrakatriphaladi*

Leha.

Objectives: The present study was carried out with the following objectives.

- To prepare *Citrakatriphaladi Leha* as per the classical reference.
- To standardize the pharmaceutical process for veterinary application.
- To observe and record the organoleptic and physical characteristics of the formulation.
- To assess the feasibility and practicality of preparing this formulation on a small-scale laboratory basis.

Introduction

Ayurveda encompasses a vast corpus of veterinary medicine (Pashu Ayurveda), with the Ashvavaidyakam forming an important section devoted to equine health. Ancient texts such as Jayadatta Suri's Ashvavaidyakam document several formulations specifically designed for managing disorders in horses, including respiratory ailments involving Kapha Dosha. Among these, *Citrakatriphaladi Leha* is indicated for the treatment of Śleṣmika Kāsa (phlegmatic cough), a condition characterised by excessive mucus, productive cough, and respiratory discomfort.

In modern equine medicine, similar symptoms are seen in conditions such as recurrent airway obstruction (RAO), bronchitis, and early stages of infectious respiratory diseases. Prompt management is critical, as coughing in horses may indicate developing inflammatory airway disease or, in some cases, life-threatening infections requiring immediate veterinary care. Traditional veterinary pharmaceutics offer herbal-based interventions that may complement conventional treatments, potentially reducing drug load and promoting recovery.

Despite its therapeutic relevance, *CitrakatriphaladiLeha* has not been widely standardised or evaluated in a modern laboratory setting. Reviving and validating this formulation in accordance with classical Ayurvedic pharmaceutics could enhance its utility in veterinary practice. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to prepare *CitrakatriphaladiLeha* as per classical references, document its pharmaceutical process, and evaluate its physical and organoleptic characteristics to ensure reproducibility for veterinary application.

Table 1: Ingredients and their quantity

Sl. no	Ingredients	Botanical Name	Part used	Proportion	Quantity taken
1	<i>Citraka</i>	<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> L.	Root	1 part	12 g
2	<i>Triphala</i> a. <i>Amalaki</i> b. <i>Haritaki</i> c. <i>Vibhitaki</i>	a. <i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> L. b. <i>Terminalia bellirica</i> (Gaertn.) Roxb. c. <i>Terminalia chebula</i> Retz.	Fruit	1 part (1/3 each)	12 g
3	<i>Mustaka</i>	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L.	Rhizome	1 part	12 g
4	<i>Katukatraya</i> a. <i>Shunti</i> b. <i>Maricha</i> c. <i>Pippali</i>	a. <i>Zingiber officinale</i> Roscoe b. <i>Piper nigrum</i> L. c. <i>Piper longum</i> L.	Rhizome Fruit Fruit	1 part each	12 g each

5	Madhu	Honey	-	Quantity sufficient	120 g
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All the ingredients were procured from the market and authenticated by experts in the Department of Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana at a recognized Ayurvedic institution. All procedures and documentation adhered strictly to classical and regulatory guidelines.

The pharmaceutical study was conducted in the Department of Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana of a reputed Ayurvedic college in India, following standard protocols and maintaining rigorous quality control throughout the process.

Equipment used:

Tula Yantra, Pulveriser, Cotton cloth, Porcelain mortar and pestle, Airtight container

Method of preparation:

1. *Purva Karma* (Preliminary Procedures)

Collection and Authentication:

All raw drugs were procured from an authentic source and identified based on classical and botanical standards.

Cleaning and Drying:

The raw materials were thoroughly washed and cleaned to remove physical impurities and dried in the shade to retain their potency.

2. *Pradhana Karma* (Main Procedure)

Powdering:

Each ingredient was taken individually and pulverized using a pulveriser until a fine powder (*Churna*) was obtained, as shown in Figure 1.2.

Sieving (*Vastragalita*):

The powders were passed through a clean, dry cotton cloth to ensure uniform particle size and remove coarse particles.

Mixing of Powders:

All the sieved powders were weighed accurately as per the specified classical proportions and taken together in a porcelain mortar. They were triturated thoroughly to prepare a homogeneous blend.

Addition of *Madhu* (Honey):

Madhu (Honey) was gradually added to the blended powders in the required quantity and *Mardana* (trituration) was continued until a uniform semisolid *Leha* consistency was achieved, as shown in Figure 1.5.

3. *Paschat Karma* (Post-Preparation Procedures)

Packaging and Storage:

The prepared *CitrakatriphaladiLeha* was transferred into clean, dry, airtight container as shown in Figure 1.6.

Labeling and Preservation:

Proper labelling was done as shown in Figure 1.7, and the formulation was stored in a cool, dry place. Being an *Anagni Siddha Avaleha*, it does not require heating and is immediately suitable for medicinal use.

Materials and Methods

Ingredients

The ingredients used in the preparation of Citrakatriphaladi Leha are listed in Table 1. All raw materials were procured from the local herbal drug market and authenticated by experts from the Department of Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, in accordance with standard Ayurvedic pharmacognostic procedures described in the Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India (API).

Sl. No.	Ingredient	Botanical Name	Part Used	Proportion (by weight)	Quantity Taken
1.	<i>Citraka</i>	<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> L.	Root	1 part	12 g
2.	<i>Amalaki</i>	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> L.	Fruit	1/3 of Triphala	4 g
3.	<i>Haritaki</i>	<i>Terminalia chebula</i> Retz.	Fruit	1/3 of Triphala	4 g
4.	<i>Vibhitaki</i>	<i>Terminalia bellirica</i> (Gaertn.) Roxb.	Fruit	1/3 of Triphala	4 g
5.	<i>Mustaka</i>	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L.	Rhizome	1 part	12 g
6.	<i>Shunti</i>	<i>Zingiber officinale</i> Roscoe	Rhizome	1 part	12 g
7.	<i>Maricha</i>	<i>Piper nigrum</i> L.	Fruit	1 part	12 g
8.	<i>Pippali</i>	<i>Piper longum</i> L.	Fruit	1 part	12 g
9.	<i>Madhu</i> (Honey)	—	—	Quantity sufficient	120 g

Equipment

Tula Yantra (balance), pulveriser, cotton cloth (for sieving), porcelain mortar and pestle, airtight glass containers.

Method of Preparation

Method of Preparation

The preparation was carried out in three stages — Pūrvakarma (preliminary procedures), Pradhāna Karma (main procedure), and Pashchāt Karma (post-preparation procedures) — strictly following classical Ayurvedic guidelines as described in Bhaishajya Kalpana and standard pharmaceutics references [API, Vol. 1–6]. In the Pūrvakarma stage, all raw drugs were authenticated by experts in the Department of Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, cleaned manually to remove extraneous matter, and shade-dried to preserve volatile principles. In the Pradhāna Karma stage, each ingredient was pulverised individually using a mechanical pulveriser to obtain a fine powder (Churna) and passed through sieve no. 80 for uniform particle size. The powders were weighed as per classical proportions, thoroughly mixed in a porcelain mortar, and gradually incorporated with Madhu (honey), followed by Mardana (trituration) for 20–30 minutes until a smooth, homogenous Leha consistency was attained. In the Pashchāt Karma stage, the prepared formulation was transferred into clean, dry, airtight containers, labelled properly, and stored in a cool, dry place for further use.

Results:

Table 2: Organoleptic characteristics of *Citrakatriphaladi Leha*

Organoleptic characteristics	Characteristics
Colour	Dark Brown
Odour	Characteristic aromatic
Touch	Sticky
Taste	Pungent, astringent, sweet
Texture	Semi-solid

Table 3: Results

Total Quantity taken	192 g
Total quantity obtained	190 g
Gain/Loss	Loss of 2 grams

Time Duration

Approximately 20–30 minutes of *Mardana* with *Madhu* was required to attain uniform *Leha* consistency.

INDICATION

Citrakatriphaladi Leha is indicated in the management of *Sleshmika Kasa*¹ (*Kaphaja Kasa* or phlegmatic cough) in horses.

DOSE³

Quantity: 256 grams per day

Administration: In single or divided doses

Anupāna (Vehicle)³: Luke warm water

Route: Oral

Frequency: As directed by the veterinarian, depending on the severity of symptoms. Dose may be adjusted based on the animal's weight, age, digestive capacity (*Agni*), and condition under veterinary supervision.

Results

The prepared *Citrakatriphaladi Leha* exhibited distinct organoleptic properties, including dark brown colour, characteristic aromatic odour, sticky touch, and a combination of pungent, astringent, and sweet taste, with a semi-solid texture. The total quantity of raw materials taken was 192 g, and the final product obtained weighed 190 g, indicating a minor loss of 2 g during processing. The loss was mainly due to powder adherence to equipment surfaces and negligible handling loss during *Mardana*.

The preparation required approximately 20–30 minutes of continuous *Mardana* with *Madhu* to achieve a smooth, homogenous *Leha* consistency. The formulation is indicated for the management of *Śleśmika Kāsa*¹ (*Kaphaja Kāsa* or phlegmatic cough) in horses. The recommended dose is 256 g per day, administered orally in single or divided doses, along with Anupāna³ of lukewarm water. The dosage and frequency may be modified by the veterinarian

according to symptom severity, body weight, age, digestive capacity (Agni), and the overall condition of the animal.

Discussion:

The present formulation, *Citrakatriphaladi Leha*, is a classical preparation indicated for the management of *Sleshmika Kasa* (*Kaphaja Kasa* or phlegmatic cough), particularly in equine practice. The selection of ingredients is well-aligned with the therapeutic goal of *Kapha-Vatahara* and *Kasahara* action, essential in clearing respiratory passages and restoring normal breathing patterns in animals.

In modern veterinary medicine, especially in equine practice, the symptoms of *Sleshmika Kasa* can be correlated with lower respiratory tract infections, bronchitis, heaves (Recurrent Airway Obstruction, RAO), and early stages of equine influenza or bacterial pneumonia. Clinical signs typically include a moist, productive cough, nasal discharge ranging from mucoid to purulent, exercise intolerance, increased respiratory rate or effort, and crackles or wheezing on auscultation. These conditions are commonly managed through the use of expectorants and mucolytics, bronchodilators, anti-inflammatory drugs, environmental management such as dust-free bedding and proper ventilation, and antibiotics when infection is suspected.⁴

Ayurveda's concept of *Sleshmika Kasa* aligns closely with the modern understanding of airway hypersensitivity, mucus hypersecretion, and inflammatory responses in the respiratory tract. The Ayurvedic approach offers a holistic, herbal-based management strategy that can complement modern therapy, particularly in chronic or early-stage cases where reducing chemical load is desirable. Formulations like *Citrakatriphaladi Leha*, which include *Kaphahara* and *Kasahara* herbs along with *Madhu*, present a viable traditional approach, potentially reducing the frequency and severity of coughs, clearing mucus, and restoring normal respiratory function without the adverse effects often associated with synthetic drugs.

Citraka (*Plumbago zeylanica* L.) is known for its potent *Deepana* (appetizer), *Pacana* (digestive), and *Kaphanashaka* properties. It stimulates metabolic activity and helps clear accumulated mucus, thereby addressing one of the root causes of *KaphajaKasa*. *Mustaka* (*Cyperus rotundus* L.), with its *Rooksha* and *Pachana* actions, supports the management of excessive mucus and improves respiratory efficiency.

Kaṭukatraya—comprising *Sunthi* (*Zingiber officinale* Roscoe), *Marica* (*Piper nigrum* L.), and *Pippali* (*Piper longum* L.)—collectively contributes *TiktaKaṭuRasa*, *UṣṇaViryā*, and *LaghuRukṣhaGuṇa*, which are particularly effective in breaking down and eliminating *Sleshmika* (*Kapha*). These ingredients are well-documented for their expectorant, anti-inflammatory, and bronchodilatory properties in both classical texts and modern studies.

Triphala, a balanced formulation in itself, acts as a *Rasayana* (rejuvenator), antioxidant, and mild laxative. It plays a role in clearing toxins and promoting tissue healing. Its inclusion not only enhances the efficacy of the formulation but also adds a balancing effect to the otherwise strong pungent ingredients, preventing excess heat generation.

Madhu (honey), a classical *Yogavahi* (catalyst), enhances the bioavailability of the active principles and exhibits mucolytic, soothing, and preservative effects. Its *Kashaya* and *Madhura* rasa with *Lekhana* property further aids in removing mucus from the airways. Moreover, it acts as a natural binder, giving the formulation its desired *Leha* consistency without the need for heat-based processing.

The formulation was prepared following the *AnagniSiddhaAvaleha* method, meaning it did not involve any direct heating during preparation. This is especially significant in preserving the volatile and thermolabile constituents of the ingredients, particularly those present in *Trikatu* and *Mustaka*.⁵ This method also makes the formulation immediately usable after preparation. During the pharmaceutical procedure, careful attention was paid to the uniformity of powdering (*Churna Nirmana*) and *Mardana* (trituration with honey) to ensure consistency, homogeneity, and proper blending of the ingredients. The final product showed ideal organoleptic properties as shown in Table 2 —a dark brown paste with aromatic smell and acceptable taste.

In the context of veterinary use, particularly in horses (*Ashva*), the palatability and ease of administration of the formulation are critical. The semisolid consistency allows for convenient oral administration, either directly or mixed with feed, and the use of honey improves acceptance among animals.

Overall, the classical guidelines were followed meticulously to maintain the authenticity, efficacy, and safety of the formulation. The integration of classical knowledge with careful pharmaceutical handling demonstrates the potential of such traditional *AnagniSiddha* preparations in addressing respiratory ailments in veterinary practice without resorting to heating or chemical preservatives.

Limitations of the Study:

The study had a limited sample size and batch numbers, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Moisture content and pH consistency were not measured, limiting assessment of long-term stability. Manual processing could introduce variability, and environmental factors during preparation and storage may affect consistency. These biases may moderately impact stability and reproducibility, highlighting the need for further detailed physicochemical and *in vivo* studies.

CONCLUSION

Citrakatriphaladi Leha is a potent Ayurvedic formulation effective for *KaphajaKasa* in horses. The pharmaceutical procedure followed classical guidelines and yielded a stable, palatable formulation suitable for veterinary administration. Further studies on pharmacological efficacy and toxicity in animals are recommended for comprehensive validation

References:

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घोड़ों में शैतानिक कास के लिए चित्रक्रिफलादि लेह (पशु चिकित्सा): एक शास्त्रीय आयुर्वेदिक औषधि पर औषधि निर्माण संबंधी अध्ययन

प्रसंग: चित्रक्रिफलादिलेहएकपारंपरिकबहुओषधीयआयुर्वेदिकयोगहै, जिसकाउल्लेखअश्ववैद्यक (कासरोगचिकित्साअध्याय34:24) मेंकियागयाहै।यहअश्वोंमेंशैतानिककास (बलगमयुक्तखांसी) केप्रबंधनहेतुप्रयुक्तहोताहै।पारंपरिकपशुचिकित्सामेंबढ़तीरुचिकेसाथ, इसयोगाकापुनःउपयोगऔरमानकीकरणवर्तमानसमयमेंप्रासंगिकहोगया।

उद्देश्य: चित्रक्रिफलादिलेहकोपारंपरिकआयुर्वेदिकविधियोंकेअनुसारनिर्मितएवंमानकीकृतकरना, जिससेयहअश्वोंमेंश्वसनसंबंधीरोगोंकेलिएव्यावहारिकरूपसेउपयोगीसिद्धहोसके।

सेटिंग्सएवंडिजाइन:

यहअध्ययनएकआयुर्वेदिकरसशास्त्राएवंभैषज्यकल्पनाप्रयोगशालामेंपशुचिकित्साअनुप्रयोगोंपरकेद्वितएकऔषधनिर्माणमानकीकरणपरियोजनाकेरूपमेंकियागया।

विधियाँएवंसामग्री:

प्रमाणितकच्चीऔषधियोंकाउपयोगकियागया।प्रत्येकघटककोयंत्रसेचूर्णितकियागया।शहदकोआधारबनाकरमर्दनप्रक्रियाद्वारालेहनिर्माणकियागया।निर्माणसमय, स्थिरता, तथाअंगवैज्ञानिकगुणोंकाप्रेक्षणकियागया।

सांगियकीयविश्लेषण: यहअध्ययनगुणात्मकप्रकृतिकाथा, अतःकेवलवर्णनात्मकप्रेक्षणकिएगए; कोईनिष्कर्षात्मकसांख्यिकीयविश्लेषणनहींकियागया।

परिणाम: मर्दनप्रक्रियाके20–30 मिनटमेलेहउचितस्थिरतातकपहुँचगया।अंतिमउत्पादचिकना,

समरूपबनावटवालाथा।औरकक्षतापमानपरस्थिरहा।प्रक्रियादोहरानेयोग्यथी, तथासभीबैचोंमेंएकसमानपरिणामप्राप्तहुए।

निष्कर्ष:

चित्रक्रिफलादिलेहअश्वोंमेंकफजन्यकासकेलिएकप्रभावीआयुर्वेदिकयोगहै।यहपारंपरिकनिर्माणविधियोंकापालनकरताहै।औरपशुचिकित्सामेंउपयोगकेलिएउपयुक्त, स्वादिष्टथास्थिरऔषधसिद्धहुआहै।इसकेअौषधीयप्रभावोंएवंसुरक्षाकीपुष्टिहेतुआगेऔरअनुसंधानकीआवश्यकताहै।

Appendix

List of Abbreviations:

Abbreviation	Definition
AFI	Ayurvedic Formulary of India
API	Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India
AYUSH	Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy
Ch.	Chapter
IAD	Inflammatory Airway Disease
PCIM&H	Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine & Homoeopathy
Q.S.	Quantum Satis (sufficient quantity)
RAO	Recurrent Airway Obstruction

Glossary of National Ayurveda Morbidity Codes Used in the Article:

Disease / Technical Term	English Equivalent	SAT Code (NAMASTE)
<i>Ashvavaidyakam</i>	Ayurvedic Veterinary Science (Equine medicine)	-
<i>Deepana</i>	Appetizer	
<i>Kasa</i>	Cough	EA-3
<i>Mardana</i>	Trituration (kneading/grinding process)	-
<i>Pacana</i>	Digestive	
<i>Rasayana</i>	Rejuvenator	
<i>Sleshmika Kasa</i>	Cough/tussis due to <i>KaphaDosha</i>	-
<i>Yogavahi</i>	Catalytic Carrier / Bio-enhancer	