

## **Ayurveda and Elephant: A Study of the Elephant from Medical Sciences**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The elephant plays a significant role in the life of human beings. Its enormity, strength and body with its tusks and even its bones are used by humans for various purposes. It is used in battles and wars for its size and strength and its body parts like tusks [ivory] and bones are used for jewelry and related cosmetics industry. Medicine is also a field in which elephant by-products are used. They have been used for a long period of time as evident from Ayurvedic literature.

This paper will try to study the elephant from ancient medical science of Ayurveda and see how the elephant and elephant products were tested and used for the benefit of the mankind. This paper will also try to study whether those remedies or medicines are applicable today and if they are still used for the purpose of medicine.

References of some of the medicine related to elephants are given below;

Ayurveda mentions certain medicines with reference to elephants and they are seen in the *Sushrut samhita cikitsa stana, Carak cikitsa Arsha*.

*Carakacharya* has explained eight types of urine; urine of sheep, goat, cow, buffalo, elephant, camel, horse and ass. In general urine is sharp, slightly non unctuous, pungent saline, and useful in anointing, pasting, non-unctuous enema, purgatives and abdominal disorders.

Elephant urine is salty and beneficial for patients with worms (*Krimi*) and *Kushta* (Skin Disorders) and recommended for retention of urine and feces, poison, disorders of *Kapha* and piles. (*Carak Sootrasthan*1/102).

The milk of elephants promotes strength and is heavy and a good stabilizer. (*Carak Sootrasthan*27/223).

*Hasti danta masi* and *rasanjana* mixed with cow's urine (*Gomutra*) is a local application that is good for indralupta (Alopecia) (*Sushrut samhita cikitsa stana*1/101),

*Hasti danta masi* and *rasanjana* mixed with goat's urine is a local application is good for *Indralupta* (Alopecia) (*Bhavprakash Madhyam khanda* 61/10),

Fumigation is efficacious with excreta of elephant, *sarja rasa* and ghee (*Carak cikitsa Arsha14/51*) and is good for piles.

There are references about the use of these medicines in Ayurveda. The detailed study of this area forms the basis for this research.

*Keywords: Ayurveda, medical sciences, by – products*

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