

Concepts of *Putā* and its usage

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Abstract

Rasashastra is a branch of Ayurveda pharmaceuticals specially dealing with the minerals, metals, precious stones and certain poisonous herbs. These substances are subjected to different procedures like *shodana*, *jarana*, *marana* and *amritikarana* to remove the impurities in these materials and also make them suitable for internal administration. Most of the mineral origin materials are finally converted into an irreversible special form called as *bhasma*. Preparation of *bhasma* should follow different steps i.e pulverization, mixing of liquid substance, controlled heating and *amritikarana*. Among these steps the most important step is “controlled heating”. According to *Rasashastra* classical texts, the stage of obtaining the end product of *rasa*, *maha rasa* and *upa rasa* heating is known as *Pāka*, and this is the optimum stage of this procedure. Thus the unit of heat required to obtain the optimum *pāka* (also known as *supāka*) is called as *puta*. Therefore, *puta* can be described as a unit of heat. According to the nature of the substance different *puta* should be applied and the *puta* classified in different ways. *Putā* can be classified according to the heating source, amount of the fuel materials, type of the fuel materials and the dimension of the fire place. *Mahaputa*, *gajaputa*, *varahaputa*, *sooryaputa*, *chandraputa*, *gobhara puta* and *bhanda puta* are some common *puta* types which are used practically. After application of required *puta*, especially mineral materials form *bhasma*. These *bhasmas* have special features like *varitaratva* (floating on the surface of water), *rekapurnatwa* (shows the pattern of ridges on fingers), *Apunarbhava* (convert a non reproductive form) and very light form. Due to these features *bhasma* containing drugs can give quick action, and also have enhanced properties than *parada* (mercury) containing drugs which is the most potent material in *Rasa shastra*.

Keywords: *Putā*, *Bhasma*, *Shodana*, *Marana*, *Amritikarana*