

Therapeutic significance of *saptamrita lauha* in ayurvedic ophthalmology: a review

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Abstract

Saptamrita Lauha is a classical herbo-mineral formulation widely described in Ayurvedic literature and traditionally indicated in the management of *Netraroga* along with various systemic disorders such as *Pandu*, *Shula*, and *Amlapitta*. The formulation consists of *Yashtimadhu*, *Triphala* (*Amalaki*, *Haritaki*, *Vibhitaki*), and *Lauha Bhasma*, administered with *Madhu* and *Ghrita* as adjuvants. These ingredients collectively exhibit *Tridoshahara*, *Rasayana*, and *Chakshushya* properties, contributing to ocular nourishment, enhancement of visual function, and correction of underlying *Dosha* and *Dhatu* imbalance. A comprehensive review of classical texts and standard Ayurvedic references reveals that the synergistic pharmacodynamic actions of the formulation support its effectiveness in ocular disorders and associated systemic

conditions. The fine processing of *Lauha Bhasma* enhances bioavailability, while *Madhu* and *Ghrita* act as *Yogavahi*, facilitating deeper tissue penetration and improved therapeutic efficacy. Although *Saptamrita Lauha* has been extensively used in clinical practice since ancient times, scientific validation through standardization, pharmacological evaluation, and well-designed clinical studies is necessary to establish its safety and efficacy in contemporary Ayurvedic and integrative ophthalmic care.

Keywords: *Ayurveda*; *Rasa Shastra*; *Saptamrita Lauha*; *Lauha Kalpana*; *Netraroga*; *Chakshushya*; *Rasayana*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, is founded on the intrinsic relationship between human health and nature. One of its most specialized

branches, *Rasa Shastra*, evolved from the principles of Indian alchemy, which initially focused on the transformation of metals and later extended into their therapeutic applications¹. Within *Rasa Shastra*, herbo-mineral formulations play a pivotal role, particularly *Lauha Kalpana*, where iron (Lauha) is employed as the principal ingredient due to its wide availability, affordability, and therapeutic versatility².

Among various Lauha-based formulations, *Saptamrita Lauha* holds a distinctive position because of its extensive classical references and broad therapeutic utility. Despite its long-standing clinical use in multiple disorders, including ocular diseases, scientific validation in terms of pharmacological efficacy, standardization, and safety remains limited³. The formulation consists of *Yashtimadhu*, *Haritaki*, *Vibhitaki*, *Amalaki*, and *Lauha Bhasma*, administered along with *Madhu* and *Ghrita* as *Sahapana*². The term *Sapta* denotes seven ingredients, while *Amrita* signifies nectar, indicating its rejuvenative and life-promoting nature³.

Classical Ayurvedic texts such as **Charaka Samhita**⁴ and **Sushruta Samhita**⁵ describe the internal use of iron preparations after proper processing to enhance bioavailability. *Saptamrita Lauha* is frequently mentioned in authoritative *Rasa* and *Chikitsa* texts including *Rasa Chandranshu*⁶, *Rasendra Sara Sangraha*⁷, *Chakradatta*⁸, *Bhaishajya Ratnavali*⁹, and *Yogaratanakara*¹⁰, particularly for *Netra Roga* and *Shula Roga*. This review aims to systematically analyze the classical attributes, formulation process, indications, and therapeutic relevance of *Saptamrita*

Lauha with special reference to ocular disorders.

METHODS

A comprehensive **literature review** was conducted using classical Ayurvedic texts, *Rasa Shastra* compendia, and standard reference works. Primary sources included *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and major *Rasa granthas* describing *Lauha Kalpana* and *Saptamrita Lauha*^{4–10}. Secondary sources comprised Ayurvedic pharmacopeial standards, *Dravyaguna* texts, and published review articles related to herbo-mineral formulations^{11–17}.

The formulation components were analyzed based on **Rasa, Guna, Virya, Vipaka, Dosha karma, and therapeutic indications**. Information regarding method of preparation, dosage, indications, contraindications, and quality control parameters was systematically compiled and critically evaluated according to classical references.

RESULTS

Composition and Properties

Saptamrita Lauha consists of equal proportions of *Yashtimadhu*, *Triphala* (*Amalaki*, *Haritaki*, *Vibhitaki*), and *Lauha Bhasma*, administered with *Madhu* and *Ghrita*².

- **Yashtimadhu** exhibits *Madhura* and *Tikta Rasa*, *Snigdha Guna*, *Sheeta Virya*, and *Madhura Vipaka*. It acts as *Rasayana*, *Balya*, *Pittaghna*, and *Vatashamaka*, with beneficial effects in inflammatory and ocular conditions¹¹.

- **Triphala**, predominantly Kashaya in Rasa with Laghu and Ruksha Guna, Ushna Virya, and Madhura Vipaka, effectively pacifies Kapha and balances Vata Dosha¹².
- **Lauha Bhasma** possesses Tikta, Kashaya, and Madhura Rasa, with Rasayana, Chakshushya, and Tridosahara actions, making it useful in Pandu, Kamala, and *Netraroga*¹³.
- **Madhu** acts as Yogavahi and Lekhana, enhancing drug bioavailability and balancing Tridosha¹⁴.
- **Ghrita** improves Agni, Medha, and Ojas while pacifying Vata and Pitta Dosha¹⁵.

Preparation and Dosage

The ingredients are finely powdered and triturated in a *Khalva Yantra* to obtain a homogeneous mixture, which is stored in airtight containers. The formulation appears reddish-black with *Madhura Rasa* and characteristic odor⁹. The recommended dose is **2–3 Ratti** as per *Rasa Chandranshu*⁶ and **1–2 g** according to *Bhaishajya Ratnavali*⁹, administered with Madhu and Ghrita.

Therapeutic Indications

Saptamrita Lauha is indicated in *Pandu*, *Chhardi*, *Amlapitta*, *Klama*, *Anaha*, *Jwara*, *Shula*, *Shopha*, and especially *Netra Roga*^{6–10}.

DISCUSSION

The therapeutic efficacy of *Saptamrita Lauha* can be attributed to its *Tridosahara*, *Rasayana*, and

Chakshushya properties. The synergistic action of *Triphala* and *Yashtimadhu* provides antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and rejuvenative effects, while *Lauha Bhasma* supports hematinic and tissue-nourishing functions^{11–13}. *Madhu* and *Ghrita* act as bioenhancers, facilitating deeper tissue penetration and improved drug assimilation^{14,15}.

Pharmacopeial standards emphasize the importance of quality control through organoleptic evaluation, physicochemical analysis, elemental assay, and microbial safety testing¹⁶. Although classical literature describes two *Pathabhedas* of *Saptamrita Lauha*, there is a need for **standardized preparation protocols, analytical validation, and controlled clinical trials** to establish safety and efficacy in contemporary practice¹⁷.

CONCLUSION

Saptamrita Lauha is a classical herbo-mineral formulation with significant therapeutic potential in *Netraroga* and *Shula Roga*. Classical references provide strong conceptual support for its Chakshushya and Rasayana actions. However, systematic scientific research focusing on standardization, pharmacological evaluation, and clinical validation is essential to strengthen its acceptance in evidence-based Ayurvedic practice¹⁷.

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