

THAALI – A TRADITIONAL AYURVEDIC MEDICINE OF KERALA FOR THE NOURISHMENT AND ENHANCEMENT OF BEAUTY OF HAIR

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INTRODUCTION

Hair also known as “crowning glory”, is considered as a symbol of youthfulness and beauty of women. Hair care remains as a multimillion-dollar industry consisting of variety of hair products such as shampoos, conditioners, creams, dyes etc. Besides the boom of industry, there are lots of problems affecting the hair such as hair fall, dandruff, graying, dryness, splitting of hair etc.

Kerala also known as the Ayurveda hub, has some traditional Ayurveda practices used for the enhancement of beauty and nourishment of hair. One of such practices includes the herbal preparation used for hair care well-known as *Thaali*. *Thaalis* are herbal preparations that are applied over the scalp for improving the health of the hair.

These herbal preparations are generally used to remove the Dandruff, adds natural colour of the hair, removes the extra oil content of the hair, removes the dust, dirt and scales of the scalp, prevents hair fall, removes the lice, imparts softness and smoothness to the hair shaft and ultimately helps in the healthy growth of the hair. Almost all these products are formulated by trial and error methods and are thought to be capable of countering the ill effects of environmental pollution and hard water usage⁽¹⁾.

It is assumed that these herbal shampoos can penetrate into the root shafts, stimulates the sebaceous glands, enhances the blood circulation, and imparts greater strength to the hair root and the

shaft. Most of them contain secondary metabolic compounds of plant origin with different chemical configurations. A wide range of active principles of various plants including vitamins, phytohormones, bioflavonoids, enzymes, tannic acid, fruit acids, amino acids, sugars, glycosides and essential oils are being considered useful in cosmetic formulations⁽²⁾.

Chemical shampoos available in markets generally contain a surfactant, most often Sodium lauryl sulphate and sodium laureth sulphate with a co surfactant, Cocamidopropyl betaine in water to form a thick viscous liquid to which salt (NaCl) is added to adjust the viscosity⁽³⁾.

Chemicals concerned with preservation and fragrance are also added prior to bottling. Other features of chemical shampoos are smooth rinsing power, medium toxicity, moderate to poor biodegradability, soft texture etc. The pH of the shampoos is kept slightly below 7 (acidic) to prevent the breaking of the disulphide bonds in hair keratin. Vitamin-E, Pantothenic acid etc are added to supplement the cosmetic effect of the shampoos on hair shaft⁽⁴⁾.

The problems arising due to chemical shampoos are their high synthetic chemical nature, poor degradability, non-versatility for daily usage and of course the soaring price⁽⁴⁾. Most of the commercially available shampoos are loaded with chemicals that are hazardous to skin and health⁽²⁾.

Women are using these modern-day shampoos and hair products to tackle these problems

which contain chemicals, thus ruining the actual texture and colour of hair. Thus, the usage of traditional Ayurveda knowledge such as *Thaali* which is healthy indeed, should be popularized.

It is a well-known fact that the traditional knowledge is vanishing day by day due to the lack of dissemination of the same to the emerging generation⁽⁵⁾. So, it is the need of the hour to disseminate these traditional knowledge and practices to the future generation as a part of Hair care and this article is focusing on the exploration of traditional knowledge and practices of *Thaali* prevalent in Kerala for hair care.

Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to explore the different formulations, preparatory methods and uses of *Thaali*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data on different formulations, preparatory methods and uses of *Thaali* were collected on the basis of literature review, Questionnaire based Survey study and Telephonic discussion with eminent Ayurveda experts

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study reveals that *Thaali* can be prepared from *Chemparathi* (*Hibiscus rosasinensis* L.), *Vellila* (*Mussaenda bellila* Buch-Ham), *Pada* (*Cyclea Peltata* (Lam.) Hook.f. & Thom.), *Cherupayar* (*Phaseolus aureus* Roxb.) and *Uluva* (*Trigonella foenum-graecum* L.).

The details of different drugs used in the preparation of *Thaali* with their Malayalam name, Botanical name with family is elaborated in Table no. 1.

Table no. 1. Details of drugs used in the preparation of Thaali

Sl. No	Name of Drug in Sanskrit	Malayalam name	Botanical Name	Family
1	<i>Japapushpa</i>	<i>Chemparathi</i>	<i>Hibiscus rosasinensis</i> L.	Malvaceae
2	<i>Shrivati</i>	<i>Vellila</i>	<i>Mussaenda bellila</i> Buch-Ham	Rubiaceae
3	<i>Pata</i>	<i>Paadathaali</i>	<i>Cyclea Peltata</i> (Lam.) Hook.f. & Thom.	Menispermaceae
4	<i>Mudga</i>	<i>Cherupayar</i>	<i>Phaseolus aureus</i> Roxb.	Fabaceae
5	<i>Methika</i>	<i>Uluva</i>	<i>Trigonella foenum-graecum</i> L.	Fabaceae
6	<i>Madayanthi</i>	<i>Mylanchi</i>	<i>Lawsonia alba</i> Lam.	Lythraceae

Fig. no. 1. Photograph of Drugs used in the preparation of Thaali



Hibiscus rosasinensis L.



Mussaenda bellila Buch-Ham

**Cyclea Peltata (Lam.) Hook.f. & Thom.****Lawsonia alba Lam.****Phaseolus aureus Roxb.****Trigonella foenum-graecum L.**

The details of parts used in different Thali Preparations were detailed in Table no. 2

Table no. 2. Parts used in the preparation of Thali

Sl. No.	Name of Drug in Sanskrit	Name of <i>Thali</i>	Parts used
1	<i>Japapushpa</i>	<i>Chemparathi Thali</i>	Leaves and Flowers
2	<i>Shrivati</i>	<i>Vellila Thali</i>	Leaves
3	<i>Pata</i>	<i>Paada Thali</i>	Leaves
4	<i>Mudga</i>	<i>Cherupayar Thali</i>	Seeds
5	<i>Methika</i>	<i>Uluva Thali</i>	Seeds
6	<i>Madayanthi</i>	<i>Mylanchi Thali</i>	Leaves

Method of preparation of different Thali

The method of preparation of Different *Thali* formulations were detailed below.

1. *Chembarathi Thali* (*Thali* prepared from *Hibiscus rosasinensis L.*)

Fresh leaves and flowers of *Hibiscus rosasinensis L.* were washed in water. It was then squeezed in water kept in a bowl. These leaves and flowers were grinded on a mortar with the help of a pestle. The grounded form was then mixed with the water in the bowl until it was changed into a thick suspension. The suspension was drained through a piece of cloth and a green coloured semi-viscous liquid was obtained which is used as *Thali*.

2. *Vellila Thali* (*Thali* prepared from *Mussaenda bellila Buch-Ham*)

Fresh green and white leaves of *Mussaenda bellila Buch-Ham* were immersed in boiled water for 12 hours duration. The mixture was then smashed thoroughly and drained through a piece of cloth. A green coloured semi-viscous liquid was obtained which is applied over the scalp as *Thali*.

3. *Paada Thali* (*Thali* prepared from *Cyclea Peltata (Lam.) Hook.f. & Thom.*)

Fresh leaves of *Cyclea Peltata (Lam.) Hook.f. & Thom.* were washed in water. It was then squeezed in water kept in a bowl. These leaves were then grinded on a mortar with the help of a pestle. The grounded paste

was mixed with the water in the bowl until it was changed into a thick suspension. The suspension was drained through a piece of cloth and a green coloured semi-viscous liquid was obtained which is used as *Thaali*.

4. *Cherupayar Thaali* (*Thaali* prepared from *Phaseolus aureus Roxb.*)

Seeds of *Phaseolus aureus Roxb.* were washed and dried in sunlight. It was powdered well. This powder was mixed with sufficient quantity of water and applied as *Thaali* over the scalp.

5. *Uluva Thaali* (*Thaali* prepared from *Trigonella foenum-graecum L.*)

Seeds of *Trigonella foenum-graecum L.* were immersed in water for 12 hours. After that, it was smashed thoroughly and the mixture obtained was applied over the scalp as *Thaali*.

6. *Mylanchi Thaali* (*Thaali* prepared from *Lawsonia alba*)

Fresh leaves of *Lawsonia alba Lam.* were washed in water and were grinded into a paste on a mortar with the help of a pestle. The paste is applied over the scalp as *Thaali*.

Uses of Different Thaali preparations

The uses of *Thaali* preparations includes enhancement of colour of the hair, increased hair growth, provides cooling sensation to the scalp, cleanses the hair, removes the dust particles, prevents hair fall, removes lice etc. The details of action of different *Thaali* preparations were enlisted below in Table no. 3

Table no. 3. Uses of different types of Thaali

Sl. No.	Name of Drug in Sanskrit	Name of <i>Thaali</i>	Uses
1	<i>Japapushpa</i>	<i>Chemparathi Thaali</i>	Helps in reducing dandruff, enhances colour of the hair, improves hair growth, provides cooling sensation, cleanses the hair
2	<i>Shrivati</i>	<i>Vellila Thaali</i>	improves hair growth, provides cooling sensation, cleanses the hair
3	<i>Pata</i>	<i>Paada Thaali</i>	prevents hair fall, kills lice, cleanses the hair
4	<i>Mudga</i>	<i>Cherupayar Thaali</i>	enhances colour of hair, provides cooling sensation, cleanses the hair
5	<i>Methika</i>	<i>Uluva Thaali</i>	enhances colour of hair, cleanses the hair
6	<i>Madayanthi</i>	<i>Mylanchi Thaali</i>	enhances colour of hair, improves hair growth, cleanses the hair

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