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Efficacy and Mechanisms of Karanja Ghrita in Wound Healing: An Ayurvedic Perspective Dr.Shweta Chandra* Dr. Pushpalatha B.** Dr. Bharathi K.***

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Abstract

Introduction:

Wound healing is a critical process in clinical care, where traditional therapies, such as those derived from Ayurveda, offer significant benefits. Karanja Ghrita, a formulation combining Karanja (Pongamia pinnata) oil and ghee, is traditionally used in Ayurvedic practices for its wound healing properties. This review explores its efficacy and underlying mechanisms in wound management.

Methods:

The paper examines the Avurvedic principles of wound healing, which include the stages of dushta vrana (septic wound), shudh vrana (clean wound), roohyamana vrana (healing wound), and roodha vrana (healed wound). Emphasis is placed on the role of Karanja Ghrita in each phase of healing and its application in clinical settings.

Results:

Karanja Ghrita demonstrates significant therapeutic potential in wound healing. It acts through its antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and analgesic properties, promoting both wound purification (*vrana shodhana*) and healing (*vrana roopana*). The formulation enhances tissue regeneration, prevents infection, and accelerates wound closure, particularly in chronic and septic wounds.

Discussion and Conclusion:

The clinical benefits of *Karanja Ghrita* in wound healing extend beyond its traditional use, supported by its bioactive compounds. Its ability to support tissue regeneration, reduce inflammation, and prevent infections makes it a valuable adjunct in both acute and chronic wound care. By integrating *Ayurvedic* formulations like *Karanja Ghrita* with modern wound management, healthcare practitioners can offer holistic, effective treatments for various wound types.

Keywords: Karanja Ghrita, Wound Healing, Ayurvedic Formulations, Vrana Shodhana, Chronic Wounds

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Introduction

Wound healing is a dynamic and intricate process that involves the replacement of damaged tissue with functional, living tissue.^[1] This process, aimed at restoring the anatomical and functional integrity of the affected area, engages various cellular components such as neutrophils, macrophages, lymphocytes, fibroblasts, and collagen.^[2,3] The healing mechanism unfolds in a series of wellcoordinated stages: hemostasis, inflammation. proliferation, matrix maturation, remodeling, synthesis, epithelialization, and wound contraction.^[3] In Ayurvedic medicine, the term dushta vrana refers to wounds that fail to heal naturally, often becoming chronic or septic.^[4,5] The revered sage Acharya Sushruta, considered the father of Indian surgery, described the Shashthi upakrama as a set of therapeutic procedures for managing dushta vrana. Among the primary Ayurvedic treatments for such wounds are medicinal formulations involving Ghrita (clarified butter) and *taila* (oil).^[6.7]

Karanja *Ghrita*, a potent Ayurvedic formulation made from the seeds of the Karanja tree (*Pongamia pinnata*) and *Ghrita*, plays a critical role in wound healing. Karanja possesses notable *krimighna* (anti-parasitic) and *vishaghna* (toxic-neutralizing) properties, making it highly effective in managing *dushta vrana*. Furthermore, Karanja taila has inherent shodhana (purifying) and *ropana* (healing) qualities that promote tissue regeneration.^[8] In Ayurveda, there are four primary types of *sneha* (fats or oils): Ghrita, taila, vasa (fat), and mamsa (meat). Among these, Ghrita is regarded as the most therapeutically potent. A key characteristic of Ghrita, termed sanskaranuvartana, allows it to absorb and enhance the medicinal qualities of the herbs and ingredients it carries. This property significantly improves the bioavailability and therapeutic efficacy of compounds.^[9,10] active Additionally, Ghrita is known for its nourishing, rejuvenating, and healing effects, making it indispensable in various Ayurvedic formulations, particularly those aimed at wound healing. Its ability to support digestion, metabolism, and provide a calming effect further supports holistic healing practices.^[11]

In the Ayurvedic system, *vranaropaka* (wound management) has always held significant importance, being essential for survival and recovery.^[12] The use of *Ghrita* as a base in medicinal formulations is highly valued for its ability to concentrate and retain the active compounds of its ingredients, thereby enhancing their therapeutic potency and

ensuring effective wound care.^[13,14]

A. Karanja-

Table 1 Showing Vernacular names of Karanja^[15]

S.NO.	Language	Name
1.	English	Indian Beech
2.	Hindi	Karanj, Kanja, Karanja, Karuaini, Dithouri
3.	Sanskrit	Ghrtakarauja, Karanjaka, Naktahva, Naktamala
4.	Bengali	Dahara karanja, Karanja, Natakaranja
5.	Assamese	Korach
6.	Kannada	Honge, Hulagilu
7.	Marathi	Karanja
8.	Gujrati	Kanaji, Kanajo
9.	Punjabi :	Karanj
10.	Telugu	Ganuga, Kanugu
11.	Malayalam	Pungu, Ungu, Unu, Avittal
12	Tamil	Pungai, Pongana

Table 2 Showing Botanical Aspects of Karanja^[15]

Taxonomical rank	Taxon
Kingdom	Plantae
Division	Magnoliophyta
Class	Magnoliopsida
Order	Fabales
Family	Leguminosae
Genus	Pongamia
Species	Pinnata
Common Name	Karanja, Indian beech

Table 3 Showing Properties of Karanja^[15]

Rasa	Katu, Tikta, Kasaya
Guna	Tiksna
Virya	Usna
Vipaka	Katu
Karma	Kaphahara, Pittahara, Vatahara

Table 4 Showing Utility of Karanja^[15]

Yonidoshahrut	Detoxifies vaginal diseases, useful in uterine disorders
Kushtaghna	Useful in skin diseases
Udavartahara	relieves bloating
Gulmahara	abdominal tumor, bloating
Arshahara	useful in piles/hemorrhoids
Krumihara	relieves worm infestation

Geographical Distribution

Pongamia pinnata (Karanja) is widely distributed across various regions of Asia and has been introduced in several other parts of the world, including Australia, Florida, Hawaii, India, Malaysia, Oceania, the Philippines, and Seychelles.^[16] In South India, it flourishes at elevations of up to 1200 meters, primarily in areas near streams and rivers, where it thrives in well-drained sandy loam soils with consistent moisture availability.^[17] Its adaptability to a range of climatic conditions has facilitated its spread across diverse geographic locations.

Phytochemical Constituents

The seeds of Pongamia pinnata (Karanja) contain a variety of bioactive compounds, including two sterols, three sterol derivatives, and one disaccharide, as well as eight fatty acids-three of which saturated and five unsaturated. are Noteworthy compounds identified include β-sitosteryl acetate, stigma sterol, galactoside, sucrose, and with the structures of these compounds elucidated through spectroscopic techniques and comparisons to literature data. Additionally, the compounds Pongamones A-E have been tested in vitro against DHBV RCs DNAP and HIV-1 RT, showing significant activity.^[18]

A study on Japanese Pongamia 18 *pinnata* has revealed flavonoid compounds, nine of which are novel, isolated from the root bark. Among these, notable flavonoids include Pongone, Galbone, and Pongagallone, while a immature seeds contain flavone derivative known as 'pongol'. The stems of the plant have also been found to yield five unusual flavonoid metabolites.^[19]

The fatty acid composition of Karanja oil is dominated by oleic acid (42.44%), followed by stearic acid (29.64%) and palmitic acid (18.58%). Further, the fruits of the plant have been shown to yield three new furanoflavonoid glucosides, namely pongamosides A-C, and а new flavonol glucoside, pongamoside D. These compounds were identified through advanced spectroscopic studies, marking the first discovery of naturally occurring furanoflavonoid glucosides. Additionally, pinnatin, а furanoflavone isolated from Derris indica, was found to have a nearly planar structure with a phenyl ring axially attached to the furanoflavone nucleus. The molecular structure forms molecular ribbons along the b-axis through C-HO interactions.^[20] Ghrita

Ghrita is a viscous liquid or semisolid substance at room temperature, characterized by its granular texture and a color that ranges from white to light yellow. It exudes a rich aroma and offers a pleasant taste. The preparation must be free from any animal fats, waxes, mineral oils, or vegetable oils. According to *Acharya Charaka, Ghrita* is recognized for its unctuous (oily) properties, enhancing its therapeutic and nutritive value.^[21]

Properties of Ghrita

General Properties

Ghrita is widely praised for its vast array of health benefits. It enhances cognitive functions such as memory and intellect, while also supporting the digestive system (*agni*). It aids in the production of vital bodily fluids like semen and *ojas*, which are linked to vitality and immunity. Furthermore, *Ghrita* helps balance *kapha* and *medas* (body fats), contributing to overall health.

Therapeutic Properties

On a therapeutic level, Ghrita has proven effective in alleviating conditions related to the vata and pitta doshas, making it an excellent remedy for numerous ailments. These include poisoning, mental disturbances (such as insanity), tuberculosis (phthisis), inauspiciousness, and fever. Regarded as one of the finest fats, Ghrita possesses a cooling effect and a sweet taste (madhura *rasa*). It undergoes a sweet transformation during digestion (madhura vipaka), enhancing its therapeutic properties.

Health Benefits

When utilized correctly in accordance with Ayurvedic principles, *Ghrita* offers a broad range of benefits, including its role in balancing the body's doshas and improving physical and mental health. It is particularly valuable in restoring strength and promoting longevity.

Hindi	Gaya ghee
Gujarati	Ghee
English	Clarified butter
Bengali	Gava ghee
Telagu	Neyyi, nei
Punjabi	Ghee
Marathi	Marathi
Malayalama	Pasu nei
Kannada	Тирра

Table 5 Showing Vernacular names of Ghrita^[15]

Table 6 Showing Properties of Ghee^[15]

Category	Description	
Rasa (Taste)	Madhura (Sweet)	
	Snigdha (Unctuous), Mridu (Soft), Shalakshana (Smooth),	
Guna (Qualities)	Guru (Heavy), Yogavahi (Facilitates the effects of other	
	substances), Alpabhishyandi (Low spreading tendency),	
	Soumyama (Mild)	
Virya (Potency)	Sheeta (Cooling)	
Vipaka (Post-digestive Effect)	t) Madhura (Sweet)	
Dosha Shamakata (Effect on	Tridosha shamaka (Balances all three doshas: Vata, Pitta, and	
Dosha)	Kapha)	

Table 6 Showing Therapeutic Effects of *Ghee*^[23]

Action/Therapeutic Effect	Description
Agnidipana	Enhances digestive fire
Anabhishayandi	Improves absorption and assimilation
Ayushya	Promotes longevity
Balya	Strengthening
Cakshushya	Beneficial for eyesight
Dipana	Stimulates digestion
Hrudya	Heart-promoting
Kāntipradā	Enhances complexion
Medhya	Improves intellect
Ojovardhaka	Increases vitality and immunity
Rasāyana	Rejuvenating
Rucya	Improves taste and appetite
Slesmavardhana	Increases Kapha and lubrication
Snehana	Lubricating and nourishing
Śukravardhaka	Enhances fertility
Tejobalakara	Enhances vigor and strength
Tvacya	Beneficial for skin
Vātapittapraśamana	Pacifies Vata and Pitta
Vayaasthpaāna	Anti-aging
Vishahara	Neutralizes toxins

Properties of Old Ghrita

Old *Ghrita*, also known as aged clarified butter, holds a revered place in traditional medicine due to its enhanced therapeutic properties, which develop with time. It is particularly valued for its capacity to address a wide array of health conditions. The therapeutic benefits of old *Ghrita* include:

 Intoxication: Old *Ghrita* is used to detoxify the body and alleviate symptoms of poisoning, making it a key remedy in cases of acute intoxication.

- 2. **Epilepsy**: Its neuroprotective properties are believed to stabilize neurological function, aiding in the management of epilepsy and reducing the frequency of seizures.
- 3. **Fainting**: The calming effects of old *Ghrita* may help prevent fainting episodes by stabilizing the nervous system and improving overall vitality.
- 4. **Phthisis** (**Tuberculosis**): It supports lung health and aids in the recovery from phthisis by nourishing the body and enhancing immune function.
- 5. **Insanity**: The soothing nature of old *Ghrita* makes it useful in alleviating mental disturbances, stabilizing mood, and reducing anxiety or agitation.
- 6. **Poison**: In addition to its general detoxifying action, old *Ghrita* is specifically effective against certain types of poisons, promoting healing and recovery.
- 7. **Fever**: The cooling properties of old *Ghrita* help reduce body temperature, providing relief in cases of fever.
- 8. **Pain Relief**: Old *Ghrita* has analgesic effects and is effective in alleviating pain, including in the

female genital tract, ear, and head.^[16,17,18]

The traditional uses of old *Ghrita* underscore its versatility and potency, particularly in addressing neurological, respiratory, and reproductive health issues.

Importance of Go Ghrita

Go Ghrita (cow-derived clarified butter) is a prized ingredient in Ayurveda, celebrated for its therapeutic benefits, especially in enhancing overall health and well-being. Its key benefits include:

- Eye Health: Go Ghrita is particularly beneficial for enhancing vision, improving eye health, and potentially slowing the progression of age-related eye conditions.
- Semen Production: It is believed to stimulate semen production, which is integral to reproductive health.
- **Digestive Health**: *Go Ghrita* improves digestive fire (*Agni*), aids in the absorption of nutrients, and enhances digestive processes.
- **Retention Power**: It promotes retention power, which is essential for preserving mental and physical strength.
- **Beauty Enhancement**: Regular use of *Go Ghrita* is associated with

enhanced skin tone, vitality, and overall beauty.^[19,20]

- Antioxidant Properties: Go Ghrita possesses significant antioxidant properties, facilitating the absorption of vitamins and minerals and supporting cellular health.
- **Cancer Prevention**: Some studies suggest that *Go Ghrita* may help combat cancer by increasing the availability of detoxifying enzymes that neutralize carcinogenic substances.^[21,22]

Go Ghrita stands out as a healthier and safer option due to its composition of saturated fats, offering a natural, nutrientrich alternative for enhancing overall health.

Discussion

The traditional use of *Karanja Ghrita* in wound healing has been welldocumented within Ayurvedic practices, where it is considered a powerful remedy for various types of wounds, including *Dushta Vrana* (chronic or non-healing wounds). As a formulation combining *Karanja* (Pongamia pinnata) and *Ghrita* (clarified butter), it leverages both the pharmacological properties of the plant and the therapeutic benefits of *Ghrita*. Modern research supports the traditional claims of *Karanja Ghrita* being effective in wound care, primarily due to its antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and tissue-regenerative properties.

Antimicrobial and Anti-inflammatory Properties

One of the key features that make Karanja Ghrita an effective treatment for wounds is its antimicrobial action. Karanja oil contains a range of bioactive compounds, including flavonoids, furanoflavonoids, and triterpenoids, which have demonstrated strong antimicrobial effects. These compounds work synergistically to inhibit the growth of bacteria, fungi, and viruses, which are often present in chronic wounds. Karanja is traditionally known for its krimighna (anti-parasitic) and vishaghna (toxicneutralizing) properties, making it highly effective in treating wounds that become infected or festering. This antimicrobial action is essential in preventing wound infection, a common complication in wound healing.

Moreover, *Karanja Ghrita* has significant anti-inflammatory properties. In Ayurveda, inflammation is considered a key aspect of the healing process, but when prolonged or excessive, it can hinder wound healing. The *Karanja Ghrita* formulation helps regulate the inflammatory response through the action of flavonoids and other active compounds. These compounds inhibit the pro-inflammatory cytokines and enzymes responsible for chronic inflammation, thus promoting faster recovery and reducing pain at the site of the wound.

Tissue Regeneration and Healing

Beyond its antimicrobial and antiinflammatory properties, Karanja Ghrita also promotes tissue regeneration, which is crucial for effective wound healing. The Ghrita component in Karanja Ghrita enhances the bioavailability of the active compounds from Karanja, facilitating deeper penetration into the skin and tissues. Ghrita itself has long been considered a powerful healer due to its unctuous and nourishing qualities (snigdha), which support the regeneration of tissues. It works as a base for the active compounds, ensuring that the herbal extracts are absorbed more efficiently into the tissues.

In Ayurveda, the use of *Ghrita* is believed to balance all three doshas— *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—and specifically targets the *Vata* dosha, which governs movement and healing. By balancing *Vata*, *Karanja Ghrita* supports the natural processes of tissue repair and regeneration. *Ghrita* also has a stabilizing effect on cell membranes, which is essential for the repair of damaged tissues, promoting faster epithelialization, the process through which new skin cells are formed.

Holistic Healing Approach

One of the unique aspects of Karanja Ghrita in wound healing is its holistic approach. In addition to its direct medicinal properties, Ayurveda emphasizes the balance of physical, mental, and spiritual health in the healing process. Wound healing is seen not only as a physical recovery but also as a process that involves restoring the balance of the body's energies. By incorporating Karanja Ghrita into wound care, Ayurveda offers a more integrated and holistic healing process that not only accelerates physical recovery but also contributes to emotional and mental well-being.

The rejuvenating effects of Ghrita, as highlighted in Ayurvedic texts, support (*Ojovardhaka*) overall vitality and immunity, which are essential in preventing future infections and promoting resilient healing environment. a Furthermore, the calming effect of Ghrita on the nervous system is believed to help manage stress, which is known to negatively impact wound healing. This holistic perspective makes Karanja Ghrita an excellent complement to modern wound care, particularly in cases where chronic wounds or recurring infections are prevalent.

Integration with Modern Medical Practices

While Ayurveda offers valuable insights and treatments, its integration into modern healthcare is often met with skepticism due to a lack of empirical data and clinical trials. However, contemporary scientific studies have begun to validate the claims made by Ayurvedic practitioners regarding the effectiveness of Karanja Ghrita in wound healing. The antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties of Karanja are welldocumented in modern research, and studies are increasingly investigating the synergistic effects of Ghrita and herbal formulations in tissue regeneration.

Integrating *Karanja Ghrita* into modern wound care can offer significant advantages. Its natural composition, availability, and low cost make it an attractive option, especially for treating chronic wounds that do not respond well to conventional treatments. Additionally, its minimal side effects and holistic approach to health can provide a complementary alternative to chemical-based ointments, which may have long-term adverse effects. **Conclusion**

Wound healing, or *vranaropaka*, remains a crucial aspect of human health. The historical significance of wound

management in Ayurveda is as pertinent today as it was in ancient times. In the context of modern medicine, particularly with our increased focus on hygiene and synthetic pharmaceuticals, there is growing interest in how traditional healing practices, like those found in Ayurveda, can complement and enhance contemporary healthcare methods.

This review highlights the use of polyherbal Ghritas and ghee-based formulations, which have long been utilized in Ayurvedic practices for wound healing. These formulations exhibit substantial pharmacological and therapeutic potential, promoting efficient healing wound and aligning with Ayurvedic principles of holistic health.

The extensive use of cow-derived products, particularly *Ghrita*, in Indian civilization is supported by numerous experimental studies, both on humans and animals. Research indicates that *Ghrita* formulations significantly aid in wound management, further establishing their effectiveness and relevance in modern therapeutic practices. This study reinforces the value of integrating Ayurveda into contemporary medical care, advocating for natural and time-tested approaches in treating wounds and promoting overall health.

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