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## Role of Dashmool and Masha Kwath in the Management of Avabahuka (Frozen Shoulder)

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### Abstract

**Background:** *Avabahuka* (Frozen Shoulder) is a *Vata-dominant* musculoskeletal disorder characterized by pain, stiffness, and restricted movement of the shoulder joint. Classical Ayurvedic texts describe its pathology as *Vata* vitiation leading to *Shoshana* (drying) of *Amsa Sandhi* (shoulder joint) and *Akunchana* (contraction) of *Sira* (ligaments and blood vessels). Traditional Ayurvedic therapies, particularly *Dashmool* and *Masha Kwath*, have been widely used for its management.

**Objective:** This review aims to explore the role of *Dashmool* and *Masha Kwath* in the treatment of *Avabahuka*, analyzing their pharmacological actions, Ayurvedic principles, and potential therapeutic efficacy in comparison to modern management strategies.

**Methods:** A comprehensive review of classical Ayurvedic literature, contemporary research studies, and clinical trials was conducted to understand the therapeutic significance of *Dashmool* and *Masha Kwath* in *Avabahuka* management. Their properties, mechanisms of action, and effectiveness in alleviating symptoms of *Vata* disorders were analyzed.

**Results:** *Dashmool* (a formulation of ten roots) possesses potent *Vatahara* (Vata-pacifying), anti-inflammatory, and analgesic properties, which help in reducing pain and stiffness. *Masha Kwath* (Decoction of *Masha* or black gram) is known for its *Brimhana* (nourishing) and *Snigdha* (unctuous) qualities, which counteract *Vata*-induced dryness and improve joint mobility. Studies suggest that these formulations enhance synovial fluid production, relieve stiffness, and support musculoskeletal health.

**Conclusion:** The synergistic action of *Dashmool* and *Masha Kwath* provides a holistic approach to managing *Avabahuka*, addressing both symptomatic relief and underlying pathology. Further clinical research is recommended to validate their efficacy and establish standardized treatment protocols.

**Keywords:** *Avabahuka*, *Dashmool*, *Masha Kwath*, *Frozen Shoulder*, *Vata Vyadhi*, Ayurveda

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## Introduction:

*Avabahuka*, a condition described in classical Ayurvedic texts, is a *Vata*-dominant disorder affecting the shoulder joint. The term "*Avabahuka*" is derived from two Sanskrit words: *Ava* and *Bahuka*.<sup>1</sup> The prefix *Ava* signifies dysfunction, separation, or deterioration, while *Bahuka* refers to the upper limb or shoulder, one of the *Shadangas* (six major body parts). In some texts, such as *Astanga Sangraha*<sup>2</sup> and *Sharangdhar Samhita*<sup>3</sup>, the prefix *Apa* is used interchangeably with *Ava*, both conveying the same meaning of dysfunction or deterioration.

The term *Avabahuka* thus implies dysfunction or stiffness in the shoulder joint. According to Ayurvedic literature, it is characterized by *Viyoga* (dysfunction) and *Vikratu* (deformity or stiffness), leading to restricted movement and pain in the shoulder.<sup>4</sup>

*Avabahuka* is caused by the vitiation of *Vata Dosha* (*Kupita Vata*), which localizes in the *Amsa Pradesa* (shoulder region). The aggravated *Vata* leads to the *Shoshana* (drying up) of the *Amsa Sandhi* (shoulder joint) and causes *Akunchana* (contraction) of the *Sira* (blood vessels and ligaments) in the affected area. This results in *Bahupraspanda Haratwam* (loss of movement in the upper limb), manifesting as pain, stiffness, and restricted mobility of the shoulder joint.<sup>5,6</sup>

In modern medicine, *Avabahuka* closely correlates with frozen shoulder or adhesive capsulitis, a condition characterized by inflammation and fibrosis of the shoulder

capsule, leading to pain and loss of range of motion. The pathophysiology of frozen shoulder aligns with the Ayurvedic concept of *Vata* vitiation, where *Vata* imbalance causes dryness, stiffness, and impaired function of the joint.<sup>7,8</sup>

Dalhana opines that the *Amsa* means *Bahu Shira*, *Amsa Pradesha* means around the *Bahu Shira*, and *Amsa Bandanam* means the *Shleshaka Kapha* which resides in the joints. *Nyaya Chandrika* quotes that the *Vata Kopa* due to *Dhatukshaya Nimitta* further causes the *Amsa Bandhana Shoshana* and exhibits the *Avabahuka*. *Madhukosha Vyaakhya* classifies *Avabahuka* as of two types: *Vatajanya* and *Kaphajanya*. Considering all the above *Lakshanas*, *Avabahuka* can be categorized as a *Sthanika Vikara* rather than *Sarvadaihika Vikara* and its cardinal features are as below:<sup>9</sup>

1. *Bahupraspandihara*
2. *Amsabandhana Shosha*
3. *Sira Akunchana / Stambha*
4. *Shoola*

The word *Bahupraspandahara* has three terms: *Bahu*, *Praspandana* & *Hara* where the word *Bahu* has different meanings like *Urdhva Shaka* (whole upper limb, shoulder). Dalhana's commentary suggests that the word *Praspandana* means *Chalana* or movement which is considered as *Samanya Karma* of *Vyana Vata*.<sup>10</sup> It also conveys that the word *Praspandana* means *Chesta* meaning *Akunchana*, *Prasaranadi Karma*. This *Karma* is maintained by *Vyana Vata* in the



limbs. The word *Hara* means impaired/loss/difficulty. Thus, in the present context, *Bahupraspandahara* may be taken up as difficulty in the movement or impaired or loss of movement of the upper limb and the function of the *Sandhi* like *Utkshepana*, *Prasarana*, and *Akunchana* will be affected in *Avabahuka*. The word *Amsa* has different meanings like *Skanda*, *Marma*, *Bahushira*. The word *Amsabandhana* is considered as *Amsagata Shleshma* or *Sira* present around the *Amsa Pradesha*. The *Shoshana* of these is termed as *Amsabandhana Shosha*, which is a major *Lakshana* of *Avabahuka*. *Siras* are the *Upadhatu* of *Rakta Dhatu* and form *Snayu* by combining with *Snehamsa* of *Medas*. They are responsible for the *Akunchana* and *Prasarana* of the *Sandhi*. The word *Akunchana* means *Sankocha*. So, *Sankochana* of the *Siras* around the *Amsa Sandhi* leads to *Avabahuka*. The word *Sthamba* means *Nishkriya* or *Nischala*, *Sankocha*, which is the main feature of *Avabahuka*.

### Samprapti

The way in which the *Dosha* gets vitiated and the course it follows for the manifestation of disease is called *Samprapti*. A proper understanding of *Samprapti* is vital for the treatment since *Chikitsa* is illustrated in the Ayurvedic text as nothing but 'Samprapti Vighatana'. No specific *Samprapti* has been explained for *Avabahuka*. So, it can be said that *Samprapti* of *Avabahuka* is the same as that of general *Samprapti* of *Vatavyadhi*.<sup>11</sup>

Etiological factors lead to the vitiation of *Vata Dosha*. This morbid *Vata Dosha* in turn fills

the *Riktata* of the *Srotas* (fills up the empty channels). This unique pathology may involve the whole body or a part of it, thus establishing *Vata Vyadhi*. This is the *Samanya Samprapti* of *Vatavyadhi* and holds good even for *Avabahuka*. Indulgence in various etiological factors leads to the accumulation of the *Vata Dosha* in the *Amsa Pradesha* and causes the *Shoshana* of the *Amsa Bandhan* or *Sira Akunchana*, later leading to the manifestation of *Kevala Vatajanya Avabahuka*. Furthermore, the *Dhatu Kshaya* causes the *Vata Prakopa* and then leads to the *Amsa Shosha*. This unique pathology is described as *Dhatukshayajanya Avabahuka*. Sometimes due to *Kaphakara Nidana*, the *Kapha* gets aggravated in the *Sandhi*, which impedes the *Chala Guna* of the *Vata* leading to the occurrence of *Avabahuka*. This distinct pathology is referred to as *Kaphavruta Vatajanya Avabahuka*.

**Table no. 1 Samprapti ghataka:**

<b>Doshas</b>	<i>Vata &amp; kapha</i>
<b>Dushyas</b>	<i>Sira, Snayu, Khandaras, Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Asthi</i>
<b>Srotasas</b>	<i>Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda &amp; Asthi</i>
<b>Srotodusti</b>	<i>Sanga</i>
<b>Udhbhavasthana</b>	<i>Amashaya &amp; Pakwashaya</i>
<b>Sancharasthana</b>	<i>Sira, snayu, khandaras</i>
<b>Adhisthana</b>	<i>Amsapradesha</i>
<b>Vyakta</b>	<i>Baahu praspandana hara</i>
<b>Rogamarga</b>	<i>Bahya &amp; madhyama.</i>

## Dashmool and Masha Kwath: An Ayurvedic Perspective<sup>12,13,14</sup>

Dashmool and Masha Kwath are well-known formulations used in Ayurveda for their Vata-balancing properties.

### 1. Dashmool

Dashmool is a combination of ten medicinal roots, divided into Brihat Panchamoola (large tree roots) and Laghu Panchamoola (small shrub roots). These include:

- **Brihat Panchamoola:** Bilva (*Aegle marmelos*), Agnimantha (*Premna mucronata*), Shyonaka (*Oroxylum indicum*), Patala (*Stereospermum suaveolens*), and Gambhari (*Gmelina arborea*).
- **Laghu Panchamoola:** Shalaparni (*Desmodium gangeticum*), Prishnaparni

(*Uraria picta*), Brihati (*Solanum indicum*), Kantakari (*Solanum surattense*), and Gokshura (*Tribulus terrestris*).

Dashmool acts as an anti-inflammatory, analgesic, and neuroprotective agent. It alleviates Vata disorders by restoring normal functioning of joints and nerves.

### 2. Masha Kwath

Masha (*Phaseolus mungo*), or black gram, is a highly nourishing and strengthening legume mentioned in Ayurveda for treating Vata disorders. It is *Guru* (heavy), *Snigdha* (unctuous), and *Madhura* (sweet), which counteracts the dryness and degeneration caused by aggravated Vata in Avabahuka.

**Table No. 2 – Properties of Dashmool and Masha Kwath Ingredients<sup>15</sup>**

S.No	Ingredient	Latin Name	Taste (Rasa)	Potency (Veerya)	Post-Digestive Effect (Vipaka)	Therapeutic Action (Karma)
1.	Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Astringent (Kashaya), Bitter (Tikta)	Hot (Ushna)	Pungent (Katu)	Pacifies Vata
2.	Agnimantha	<i>Premna mucronata</i>	Bitter (Tikta), Sweet (Madhura), Pungent (Katu), Astringent (Kashaya)	Hot (Ushna)	Pungent (Katu)	Pacifies Kapha-Vata
3.	Shyonaka	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i>	Sweet (Madhura), Bitter (Tikta)	Hot (Ushna)	Pungent (Katu)	Pacifies Kapha-Vata
4.	Patala	<i>Stereospermum suaveolens</i>	Astringent (Kashaya), Bitter (Tikta)	Hot (Ushna)	Pungent (Katu)	Alleviates Fever (Jwara Shamana)

5.	<i>Gambhari</i>	<i>Gmelina arborea</i>	Sweet (Madhura), Bitter (Tikta), Astringent (Kashaya)	Hot (Ushna)	Sweet (Madhura)	Alleviates Fever (Jwara Shamana)
6.	<i>Shalaparni</i>	<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	Sweet (Madhura), Bitter (Tikta)	Sweet (Madhura)	Sweet (Madhura)	Alleviates Fever (Jwara Shamana)
7.	<i>Prishnaparni</i>	<i>Uraria picta</i>	Sweet (Madhura), Bitter (Tikta)	Sweet (Madhura)	Sweet (Madhura)	Alleviates Fever (Jwara Shamana)
8.	<i>Brihati</i>	<i>Solanum indicum</i>	Pungent (Katu), Bitter (Tikta)	Hot (Ushna)	Pungent (Katu)	Pacifies Kapha-Vata
9.	<i>Kantakari</i>	<i>Solanum surattense</i>	Bitter (Tikta), Pungent (Katu)	Hot (Ushna)	Pungent (Katu)	Pacifies Kapha-Vata
10.	<i>Gokshura</i>	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>	Sweet (Madhura)	Sweet (Madhura)	Sweet (Madhura)	Pacifies Vata-Pitta
11.	<i>Masha</i>	<i>Phaseolus mungo</i>	Sweet (Madhura)	Sweet (Madhura)	Sweet (Madhura)	Pacifies Vata and increases Pitta-Kapha

## Discussion

In Ayurveda, *Avabahuka* is classified as a *Vata Vyadhi* (disorder caused by aggravated *Vata Dosha*), leading to *Amsa Sandhi Shosha* (degeneration of the shoulder joint) and *Sira Akunchana* (contraction of ligaments and blood vessels). The treatment approach emphasizes *Vata Shamana* (pacification of *Vata Dosha*) and *Sandhi Balya* (joint strengthening).

### Dashmool Kwath – Ayurvedic Mode of Action<sup>16</sup>

*Dashmool* is a combination of ten potent roots, divided into *Brihat Panchamool* (large tree roots) and *Laghu Panchamool* (small shrub roots). It has the following therapeutic actions in *Avabahuka*:

1. **Vata-Kapha Shamana** – The herbs in *Dashmool* possess *Vata-Kapha Hara* properties, which help in reducing pain, stiffness, and inflammation in the shoulder joint.

### 2. Shothahara (Anti-inflammatory Action)

– Herbs like *Bilva* (*Aegle marmelos*) and *Agnimantha* (*Premna mucronata*) help in reducing inflammation in the affected area.

### 3. Vedanasthapana (Analgesic Effect) –

*Patala* (*Stereospermum suaveolens*) and *Gambhari* (*Gmelina arborea*) act as natural pain relievers, helping to alleviate the chronic pain associated with frozen shoulder.

### 4. Balya and Rasayana (Tissue Rejuvenation) –

*Shalaparni* (*Desmodium gangeticum*) and *Prishnaparni* (*Uraria picta*) aid in strengthening the joint, promoting tissue repair, and preventing degeneration.

### 5. Deepana-Pachana (Digestive and Metabolic Actions) –

Proper digestion

and metabolism improve the absorption of nutrients required for joint health.

By acting at both systemic and local levels, *Dashmool Kwath* supports musculoskeletal health and alleviates *Vata Vyadhi* symptoms.

#### **Masha Kwath – Ayurvedic Mode of Action**

*Masha* (*Phaseolus mungo*), commonly known as black gram, is highly revered in Ayurveda for its *Vata-Hara* and *Brimhana* (nourishing) properties.

1. **Vata Shamana and Balya** – *Masha* pacifies *Vata Dosha*, providing strength and lubrication to the joints.
2. **Snigdha Guna (Unctuous Property)** – This quality counteracts the *Ruksha Guna* (dryness) of *Vata*, preventing joint stiffness.
3. **Shula Prashamana (Pain Relief)** – *Masha Kwath* acts as a natural analgesic, relieving pain and discomfort.
4. **Sandhigata Ojasvardhaka (Joint Rejuvenation)** – It promotes synovial fluid production, enhancing joint mobility and flexibility.
5. **Mamsa Dhatu Poshan (Muscle Nourishment)** – *Masha* is *Brimhana* and strengthens the muscles surrounding the shoulder joint.

#### **Modern Mode of Action of Dashmool and Masha Kwath**

From a modern medical perspective, *Dashmool* and *Masha Kwath* exhibit pharmacological actions that align with the treatment of *Frozen Shoulder*:

1. **Anti-inflammatory Action** – Studies indicate that *Dashmool* contains bioactive compounds like flavonoids and alkaloids, which inhibit inflammatory mediators like prostaglandins and cytokines, thereby reducing pain and swelling.
2. **Analgesic Effects** – The presence of phytochemicals such as tannins and terpenoids in *Dashmool* helps in modulating pain perception.
3. **Muscle Relaxant Properties** – *Masha Kwath* contains proteins, amino acids, and essential fatty acids that aid in muscle relaxation and prevent fibrosis in the shoulder capsule.
4. **Antioxidant and Tissue Regeneration** – The polyphenols in *Dashmool* and *Masha* combat oxidative stress, reducing free radical damage to joint tissues and promoting healing.
5. **Neuroprotective Effect** – Since *Vata* disorders have a neurological component, *Dashmool* and *Masha* support neuromuscular coordination, reducing nerve compression and improving movement.

#### **Conclusion**

Both *Dashmool Kwath* and *Masha Kwath* play a crucial role in the Ayurvedic management of *Avabahuka* (*Frozen Shoulder*) by addressing *Vata-Kapha* imbalances, reducing inflammation, and promoting joint health. Their modern

pharmacological effects further support their efficacy as anti-inflammatory, analgesic, and muscle-relaxant agents. Integrating these Ayurvedic formulations with physical therapy can enhance recovery outcomes for *Avabahuka*, making them a valuable alternative or complementary approach in musculoskeletal disorders.

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