

REVIEW OF BALAGRAHA AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN CHIKITSA**Vd. Sumit D. Pawar*¹, Vd. Sandip D. Sontakke²**

¹Associate Professor, Balrog Department Sanjivani College of Ayurveda and Research Center, Kopargaon.

²Assistant Professor, Balrog Department SSVP Ayurveda College and Research Center, Hatta.

Article Received: 25 March 2026, Article Revised: 15 April 2026, Published on: 05 May 2026

*Corresponding Author: Vd. Sumit D. Pawar

Associate Professor, Balrog Department Sanjivani College of Ayurveda and Research Center, Kopargaon.

DOI: <https://doi-doi.org/101555/ijarp.7822>

ABSTRACT

Bālagraha is a distinctive concept described in Ayurvedic pediatrics (Kaumarbhritya), referring to a group of disorders affecting children that are traditionally attributed to subtle or supernatural influences. Classical Ayurvedic texts such as Kashyapa Samhita, Charaka Samhita, and Sushruta Samhita provide detailed descriptions of their etiology, classification, symptomatology, and management. Due to the physiological immaturity of children—characterized by *Aparipakva Dhatus*, *Manda Agni*, and *Alpa Bala*—they are considered highly susceptible to such afflictions. This review critically analyzes the concept of Bālagraha, its diagnostic framework, and therapeutic approaches including *Daivavyapashraya*, *Yuktivyapashraya*, and *Satvavajaya Chikitsa*. It also explores possible correlations with modern pediatric conditions such as infections, neurological disorders, and psychosomatic illnesses. The study highlights the clinical relevance and integrative potential of Bālagraha in contemporary pediatric healthcare.

KEYWORDS: Bālagraha, Kaumarbhritya, Ayurvedic pediatrics, Graha roga, Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa, Pediatric disorders, Traditional medicine, Holistic child care.

INTRODUCTION

Kaumarbhritya is one of the eight classical branches of Ayurveda, focusing on neonatal and pediatric health. Among its unique contributions is the concept of Bālagraha, which describes diseases in children caused by *grahas*—entities that metaphorically or symbolically represent disease-causing factors.

Children are particularly vulnerable due to:

1. Immature immune system
2. Incomplete tissue development (*Aparipakva Dhatu*)
3. Reduced physiological strength (*Alpa Bala*)
4. Weak digestive capacity (*Manda Agni*)

बालानां धातवो ह्यल्पा बलं चापि अल्पमेव च।
मन्दाग्नित्वात् सदा ते हि रोगेभ्यः सुलभाः स्मृताः॥

Due to underdeveloped tissues, low strength, and weak digestion, children are highly prone to diseases. The concept of Bālagraha may be interpreted as an early attempt to explain infectious diseases, neuropsychiatric disorders, and unexplained pediatric illnesses.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design

This is a descriptive and analytical narrative review.

Data Sources

Classical Ayurvedic texts:

Kashyapa Samhita

Charaka Samhita

Sushruta Samhita

Ashtanga Hridaya

Modern pediatric and Ayurvedic literature

Methodology

Compilation of references related to Bālagraha

Critical textual analysis

Symptom comparison with modern diseases

Evaluation of therapeutic approaches

RESULTS

1. Concept of Bālagraha

The term *Graha* literally means “to seize or afflict.” In pediatric context, it denotes factors that suddenly afflict children and produce acute symptoms.

ग्रहाः बालं गृह्णन्ति दुर्बलं अल्पचेतसम्।
तस्मात् तेषां विशेषेण रक्षणं कार्यमिष्यते॥

2. Classification of Bālagraha

Different Acharyas have described various grahas. Kashyapa gives a detailed classification:

स्कन्दो विशाखो मेषश्च श्वग्रहः पितृग्रहः।
शाकुनी पूतना चैव तथा अन्धपुतना स्मृता॥
रेवती च ग्रहाणां तु बालानां परिकीर्तिता॥

Commonly described Grahas:

1. Skanda
2. Vishakha
3. Putana
4. Andhaputana
5. Shakuni
6. Revati
7. Pitrigraha
8. Shvagraha

3. Etiopathogenesis (Nidana and Samprapti) Nidana (Causative Factors):

1. Poor hygiene and sanitation
2. Improper breastfeeding practices
3. Exposure to infectious agents
4. Psychological disturbances in caregivers
5. Environmental contamination
6. Neglect of preventive rituals (symbolizing lack of care)

Samprapti (Pathogenesis):

1. Entry of pathogenic factors due to low immunity
2. Vitiation of Doshas (Vata, Pitta, Kapha)
3. Affecting Manas (mind) and Sharira (body)
4. Rapid manifestation due to weak resistance

4. Clinical Features (Lakshana)

रोदनं स्तनद्वेषं च ज्वरं मूर्च्छां तथैव चा

विक्षेपो नेत्रविकृतिः बालग्रहसमुद्भवाः॥

General Symptoms:

1. Persistent crying
2. Refusal to breastfeed
3. Fever
4. Convulsions
5. Altered consciousness
6. Abnormal eye movements
7. Behavioral disturbances

Each graha presents with specific symptom complexes resembling distinct disease entities.

5. Correlation with Modern Pediatric Disorders

Ayurvedic Concept	Possible Modern Correlation
Skandagraha -	Seizure disorders / epilepsy
Putana-	Gastrointestinal infections
Shakuni-	Psychiatric/behavioral disorders
Andhaputana-	Visual or neurological disorders
Revati-	Chronic infections or malnutrition

DISCUSSION

1. Clinical Importance of Bālagraha

A. Preventive Pediatrics

Bālagraha emphasizes early preventive care:

Hygiene maintenance

Proper nutrition

Breastfeeding

Environmental sanitation

B. Holistic Disease Understanding

It integrates:

Physical health

Mental health

Environmental influences

Spiritual well-being

2. Diagnostic Relevance

The symptom-based classification helps in:

Early detection

Identification of severity

Differentiation of disease patterns

3. Chikitsa (Treatment Principles)

Ayurveda advocates a threefold treatment approach:

दैवव्यपाश्रयं युक्तिं सत्त्वावजयमेव च।

त्रिविधं चिकित्सितं प्रोक्तं सर्वरोगेषु देहिनाम्॥

A. Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa (Spiritual Therapy)

Mantra chanting

Homa (fire rituals)

Raksha karma (protective measures)

Use of amulets

Significance: Psychological reassurance and caregiver confidence

B. Yuktivyapashraya Chikitsa (Rational Therapy)

Herbal medicines

Ghrita preparations (medicated ghee)

Decoctions (Kwatha)

Anti-infective and immunomodulatory drugs

C. Satvavajaya Chikitsa (Psychotherapy)

Emotional support

Behavioral correction

Creating a nurturing environment

4. External Therapies

Abhyanga (oil massage)

Dhupana (medicated fumigation)

Snana (therapeutic bathing)

5. Relevance in Modern Era

Bālagraha can be reinterpreted as:

Infectious diseases

Neurodevelopmental disorders

Psychosomatic illnesses

Environmental and social determinants of health

It aligns with:

Preventive pediatrics

Holistic medicine

Integrative healthcare systems

6. Critical Appraisal

While the supernatural explanation may not align with modern science, the clinical observations are highly relevant. The framework provides:

Early recognition of pediatric illnesses

Holistic management strategies

Emphasis on caregiver-child interaction

CONCLUSION

Bālagraha represents a comprehensive pediatric concept integrating preventive, diagnostic, and therapeutic aspects of child healthcare in Ayurveda. Though described in mythological terms, its clinical relevance remains significant when interpreted through a modern lens. The emphasis on holistic care, early diagnosis, and multi-dimensional treatment makes it a valuable framework in contemporary pediatric practice. Further interdisciplinary research is needed to validate and integrate these principles into modern healthcare systems.

REFERENCES

1. Sharma PV. *Kashyapa Samhita*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series; 2013.
2. Sharma RK, Dash B. *Charaka Samhita*. Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series; 2014.
3. Murthy KRS. *Sushruta Samhita*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2012.
4. Murthy KRS. *Ashtanga Hridaya*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Krishnadas Academy; 2010.
5. Tripathi B. *Ashtanga Sangraha*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series; 2011.

6. Parthasarathy A. *IAP Textbook of Pediatrics*. New Delhi: Jaypee; 2019.
7. Ghai OP. *Ghai Essential Pediatrics*. New Delhi: CBS Publishers; 2020.
8. Tiwari PV. *Ayurvediya Prasuti Tantra evam Stri Roga*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha; 2009.
9. Singh RH. *Exploring Ayurveda*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha; 2010.
10. Dash B. *Fundamentals of Ayurveda*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing; 2005.
11. Lad V. *Textbook of Ayurveda*. Albuquerque: Ayurvedic Press; 2002.
12. Sharma H. *Ayurveda: Science of Life*. New York: Columbia University Press; 1998.
13. Bhishagratna KK. *Sushruta Samhita Translation*. Varanasi: Chowkhamba; 2006.
14. Joshi YG. *Kayachikitsa*. Pune: Vaidyamitra Prakashan; 2012.
15. Shastri AD. *Kashyapa Samhita Vidyotini Commentary*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha; 2015.