

MUKHAPAKA IN PEDIATRICS: AN INTEGRATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW**AUTHORS**

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DOI No.: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21289270>

Date of Acceptance: 27 Feb 2026

Date of Publication: 20 March 2026

ABSTRACT

Mukhapaka (inflammatory–ulcerative disorders of the oral mucosa) described in Ayurvedic classics under Mukharoga (oral diseases) closely resembles paediatric stomatitis and aphthous lesions recognized in contemporary medicine. Oral mucosal disorders are common in children and may interfere with feeding, nutrition, and growth. Classical Ayurveda attributes Mukhapaka to vitiation of Pitta and Rakta dosha (inflammatory and vascular factors) affecting oral tissues, producing features such as burning, pain, ulceration, and swelling. Paediatric susceptibility is explained by tissue immaturity and Kapha predominance

(mucosal softness and vulnerability). This narrative review systematically compiles classical Ayurvedic descriptions of Mukhapaka and correlates them with modern paediatric oral pathology. Primary data were obtained from classical compendia including Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga Hridaya, along with contemporary paediatric and dental literature on stomatitis and oral ulcers. Ayurvedic concepts of Nidana (etiology), Samprapti (pathogenesis), Lakshana (clinical features), and Chikitsa (management) were analysed and compared with biomedical mechanisms such as infection, nutritional deficiency, and immune-mediated inflammation. Substantial conceptual similarity was observed between Mukhapaka and paediatric stomatitis. Classical local therapies—Kavala (therapeutic gargling), Gandusha (oral retention of medicated fluids), and Pratisarana (topical application)—act directly on oral mucosa and are gentle, economical, and suitable for paediatric use. Integrative appraisal suggests that Ayurvedic mucosal therapies may complement modern supportive care and warrants further clinical evaluation in paediatric oral health.

KEYWORDS: Mukhapaka, Recurrent oral ulcers, Paediatric case, Kaumarbhritya, Ayurved

INTRODUCTION

Oral mucosal disorders are prevalent among the pediatric population and can significantly impact feeding, nutrition, speech, and overall quality of life in children. Among these conditions, Mukhapaka, as delineated in Ayurvedic classics, broadly corresponds to inflammatory and ulcerative lesions of the oral cavity, including stomatitis, aphthous ulcers, and oral infections. The susceptibility of children to oral lesions is heightened due to immature immunity, nutritional deficiencies, poor oral hygiene, and frequent infections. Major public health issues worldwide include oral disorders such as dental caries, periodontal diseases, tooth loss, oral mucosal lesions, oropharyngeal cancers, HIV/AIDS-related oral ailments, and orodental trauma.[1] In Ayurvedic literature, Mukhapaka is categorized under Mukharoga, a group of diseases affecting the oral cavity. Classical texts such as the Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga Hridaya describe its etiopathogenesis. Mukhapaka, as described in Ayurvedic classics, encompasses a spectrum of inflammatory and ulcerative conditions of the oral cavity that clinically correlate with entities such as stomatitis, aphthous ulcers, and infective oral lesions. According to Acharya Charaka, Mukhapaka is mentioned under 40 Pittaja Nanatmaja Vikara.[2] Dalhana, in his commentary on Sushruta Samhita, mentions Mukhapaka as a Pittaja Vikara, but Acharya Sushruta has classified Sarvasara Mukharogas (Mukhapaka) into four types: Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, and Raktaja.[3] The deteriorated Vatadi Doshas reach the Mukha to produce Paka and Vrana. Ayurvedic management of Mukharoga emphasizes safe, economical, and locally acting interventions that target the underlying pathogenic mechanisms (Samprapti), relieve clinical manifestations, and prevent

recurrence and complications. Classical literature describes several therapeutic procedures—Kavala (medicated gargling), Gandusha (retention of medicated liquids), Pratisarana (topical application), and Dhoomapana (medicated fumigation)—which facilitate mucosal cleansing, reduce inflammation, enhance healing, and restore doshic equilibrium within the oral cavity.

AIM

To systematically review and critically analyses the concept of Mukhapaka in the pediatric population as described in classical Ayurvedic literature and to correlate it with stomatitis .

OBJECTIVES

1. To study Mukhapaka Vyadhi according to Ayurveda.
2. To study stomatitis according to modern medical science.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design – Narrative integrative literature review

Data Sources –

- 1) Primary Ayurvedic references were obtained from Charaka Samhita , Sushruta Samhita , and Ashtang Hridaya and their commentaries .
- 2) Secondary sources included kaumarbhritya text and modern pediatric literature .

LITERATURE REVIEW

Acharya Charak identifies 64 types of Mukharoga, whereas Acharya Sushruta, Acharya Bhoja, and Madhav Nidana enumerate 65 types. Acharya Vagbhata, however, describes 67 types of Mukharogas. Mukhapaka is a specific type of Mukharoga that affects the entire oral cavity. Acharya Kashyapa and Charak refer to it as Mukhapaka, while Acharya Sushruta and Acharya Vagbhata describe it as Sarvasara. [4] Acharya Sushruta notes that Mukharogas manifest in Saptaayatana, which includes seven locations: Aushta (lips), Dantamoola (gums), Danta (teeth), Talu (palate), Jihwa (tongue), Kantha (throat), and Sarva Mukha (oral cavity). [5] Kapha is identified as the primary Dosha involved in Mukharogas. According to Acharya Sushruta, Sarvasara Mukharogas (Mukhapaka) are classified into four types: Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, and Raktaja. In contrast, Acharya Vagbhata categorizes Mukhapaka into eight types: Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, Raktaja, Sannipataja, Urdhavaguda, Pootyasyata, and Arbuda. [6]

There is no reference of Nidan or Hetu of Mukhapak, so the Samanya Nidan of Mukharoga is used for reference-

Samanya Nidan of Mukhroga[6]

AHARAJ	VIHARAJ
Mansahar	Avak shayya
Balamulaka (Pittakar-causes Ajirna)	Vega Vidharana
Dugdhahar	Danta Dhavan Dwesha
Ikshuvikruti	Atiyog of Dhoompaan, Vaman and Gandush

Samanya Samprapti of Mukharogas :[7]

Due to specific etiological factors, the predominant Kapha Dosha, along with other Doshas, becomes aggravated, leading to the development of Mukharogas. The oral cavity (Mukha) is the site of Bodhaka Kapha. Consequently, the etiological factors of Mukharogas result in the disturbance (Vikriti) of Bodhaka Kapha. The primary etiological factors causing this disturbance are Madhura and Amla Rasa. As a result of these factors, primarily Kapha Pradhana Prakupita Doshas culminate in Mukharogas.

Roopa of Mukhapak [8] –

The symptoms (Roopa) of Mukhapak include Vata, Pitta, Kapha Dosha, and Rakta Dhatu as causative factors. Acharya Kashyap has described the general characteristics (Samanya Lakshana) of Mukhapak as follows: Stanyadvesha (aversion to breastfeeding), Lalastrava (excessive salivation), Chhardi (regurgitation after feeding), Sphota (ulceration), Daha (burning sensation), Kandu (itching), and Satoda Vedana.

Types of Mukhapak,

As mentioned by Acharya Sushruta, include four categories: Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, and Raktaja Mukhapaka.

1. Vataja Mukhapaka: The vitiated Vata Dosha results in Ruksha Vrana (rough ulcer), Aruna Varna (redness), Tamra Aushtha (redness in lips), Sheetasha, Guru, Sphutita, Kantakachita Jihwa (heavy, broken, thorny tongue), and Vivranoti Krichha Mukha (difficulty in opening the mouth). [9]

2. Pittaja Mukhapaka: Characterized by Daha (burning sensation), Ausha (pain), Rakta-Peeta Vrana (red-yellow ulcer), Tikta Vaktrata (pungent mouth), and Ksharokshitakshatasma Vrana (ulcer felt like Kshara).

[10]

3. Kaphaja Mukhapaka: Noted for Madhurasya (sweetness in the mouth), Kandu (itching), and Pichchhila Vrana (sticky ulcer). [11]

4. Raktaja Mukhapaka: Symptoms resemble those of Pittaja Mukhapaka. [12]

Samanya Pathya of Mukharogas –

General dietary recommendations (Samanya Pathya) for Mukharogas include Trinadhanya, Yava, Mudga, Kulattha, Jangala Mamsa Rasa, Karvellaka, Parvala, Komal Muli, hot water, Tambula, Tikta, and Katu Rasa. Therapeutic procedures such as Swedana, Virechana, Vamana, Gandusha, Pratisarana, Kavala, Raktamokshana, Nasya, Dhumapana, Shashtra, and Agnikarma are recommended. [13]

Samanya Apathya of Mukharogas –

General dietary restrictions (Samanya Apathya) for Mukharogas include Amla Rasa Dravyas, Abhishyandi Ahara, Matsya, Dadhi, Kshira, Guda, Masha, Ruksha, Kathina Padartha Sevana, Guru Ahara, Diwaswapna, Shit jala, Adhomukha Shayana, and Snana. [13]

Samanya Chikitsa of Mukhapaka [14] [15]

General treatment (Samanya Chikitsa) for Mukhapaka includes Siravedhana, Shirovirechana, Kayavirechana, Nidanaparivarjan, Mukhdhavan (with Triphala, Patha, Draksha, Jatipatra Kashaya added with madhu), Charwana (Jatipatra and Krishnajiraka, etc.), Kashayapana (Triphaladi Kwath, Darvyadi kwath, etc.), Pratisarana (applying fresh Ghan Kwath of Jatiptra or Triphala with Honey and Gairik), and Kavalagraha (Dugdha, Madhu, Taila, Ghrita, Mutra, Ekshurasa can be used).

Formulations from Various Classics for Mukharogas :

- 1.Khadiradi Vati- Ch. Chi. 26/214
- 2.Jatipatra Gandusha- Ch. Dutt 56/93
- 3.Patoladi Kwatha- Ch. Dutt 56/100
- 4.Triphaladi Kwatha- Ch. Dutt 56/101
- 5.Tiladi Gandusha- Ch. Dutt 56/102
- 6.Irimedadi Taila- Ch. Dutt 56/111

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These procedures cleanse oral mucosa, reduce inflammation, relieve pain, and accelerate healing. Modern pediatric stomatitis similarly presents with mucosal ulceration, erythema, pain, and feeding refusal due to infection, deficiency, or inflammation. Strong conceptual overlap with Mukhapaka was observed.

STOMATITIS

Stomatitis is a broad term used to describe inflammatory, erosive, and ulcerative conditions affecting the oral mucosa.[16] Recurrent aphthous stomatitis is a prevalent condition marked by repeated occurrences of ulcers, often beginning in childhood or adolescence.[17]

DISCUSSION

This review highlights significant similarities between Ayurvedic Mukhapaka and pediatric stomatitis. The traditional concept of Pitta–Rakta dushti aligns with the inflammatory and vascular changes in the oral mucosa as described in modern pathology. The susceptibility of children, explained by Kapha predominance and immature tissues, mirrors the current understanding of mucosal fragility and immune immaturity in young individuals. Ayurvedic treatment uniquely focuses on local mucosal therapy through Kavala, Gandusha, and Pratisarana, which corresponds with modern topical oral care practices. The herbal formulations used in these methods have anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and wound-healing properties, indicating their potential advantages in treating pediatric mucosal lesions.

CONCLUSION

The pacification of vitiated doshas and treatment of Dushta Dhatu are essential. Therefore, the treatment approach should include Pittashamaka, Shothahara, Vedanasthapana, Vranashodhana, Vranaropana, Rakta Prasadana, and Mamsa Dhatu Pushti Kara. Ayurvedic local therapies, such as Kavala, Gandusha, and Pratisarana, are gentle, cost-effective, and suitable for children, potentially complementing modern supportive care. Integrative clinical research is needed to validate and standardize these methods for pediatric oral health.

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