

## A critical study on the pañcapadārtha of antipoisonous (*viṣaghna*) herbs used in Sri Lankan indigenous toxicology

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### Abstract

Sri Lankan Indigenous Toxicology (*viṣa cikitsā*) is an invaluable collection of knowledge which has been capable of mystifying the modern day scientists. Most of these herbal medicines are found in literature, but also can be heard in the oral traditions coming along with the family lines of traditional medicine. Therefore it is important to look into their qualities in a critical manner as the information and data gathered in this research will be useful for further research and also it is useful in replacing these generic herbs with substitutes when they are not available. A literature based critical study was carried out to identify such common antipoisonous herbs and to find out their qualities (*pañcapadārtha*). It was seen that most of these herbs are uṣṇa in vīrya, katu in vipāka, laghu and rūkṣa in guṇa and thiktha in rasa. As contradictory as it seems when compared with the qualities of *Viṣa* itself, as a possible explanation, a hypothetical correlation can be built in between the metabolism and reaction media of both the poison and the antipoisonous herb.

**Key words:** *viṣaghna dravya*, *pañcapadārtha*, indigenous toxicology

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