

## External Therapy For Kankaasam (Cataract) in Siddha Medicine

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**Abstract:** The age-old siddha medicine has a long history of existence comprising a lot of literary evidences for 32 internal and external medicines. The aim of these therapies is to maintain stability of the human beings. According to siddha medicine there are 4448 ailments which include Gynecology, pediatrics, dermatology, ophthalmology etc..The ophthalmic medicine in siddha field have negligible centre of attraction. External therapy for eye disease include Anjanaam (collyrium), Kalikkam (eye drops), Mai (eye tax) and Salagai (probe). The siddhars have clearly explained about kankaasam (cataract) in ancient days thus it is an astonishment for all people. There are eight types of kankaasam they are neelakaasam, azhalkaasam, valikaasam, valakaasam, mantharakaasam, silaethma kaasam, kumari kaasam, ranakaasam. A cataract is a cloudiness of the lens in the eye which leads to a decreased vision. More than thousands of people are affected by cataract. This article reveals the strength of salagai in curing kankaasam along with application of kalikkam an herbal juice. Its an attempt to make people realize about the works done by siddhars and clear away the threats.

**Keywords:** Kankaasam, Salagai, Kalikkam, siddha

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### I. Introduction

External therapy in siddha field have significant role in curing the diseases. All creatures in this world belong to five primordial elements. Our eye comes under thee(fire) bootham. According to Nagamuni siddhar eye diseases are classified into 96 types that affect retina, pupil, cornea, iris and sclera. Kankaasam(cataract) is one among them. In this lens of the eyes become compact due to clumping of protein which restrict the light to pass through it. It results in blurred vision. The contrast of three dosham vatham, pitham and kapam causes cataract. In modern medicine cataract is cured by surgery similar to our classic siddha medicine. Recent surveys says that 74% of adults have experienced cataract surgery. But it is ineffective for many peoples. Siddhars have cured cataract by salagai an instrument made up of copper metal. The outcome of this procedure was excellent thus people could relieve from the ailments much faster.

#### 1.1 Kankaasam (Cataract) In Siddha

The affected part in kankaasam is cornea. One third of the eye occupies cornea in which one seventh part consist of lens. Cornea has vatha dosham. The cataract eye is pearl in color. The sprout in the eye could be length of the finger and weight of the hay. The size of the iris would be half of the black gram. There are mainly eight types of kankaasam. The curable one are pithakaasam, mantharakaasam and neelakaasam.

**Table 1.** Types of kankaasam

SL.NO	TYPES	COLOR	INDICATION
1	Valikaasam	Color varies like beetle	Asthenopia (weak eyes) Blepharitis (swollen eyelids) Insomnia Epiphora (watering eye)
2	Pithakaasam	Green	Epiphora Redness of the eye Blurred vision
3	Silaethmakaasam	White	Amblyopia (lazy eye) Ephiphora Hurt like scorpion bite
4	Vaalakaasam	Ash	Blurred vision
5	Neelakaasam	Blue	Ophthalmalgia (pain in the eye) Blue eyes

			Blurred vision
6	Mantharakaasam	Green /blue	Blurred vision Due to sexual offence and constipation
7	Kumarikaasam	Black	Ophthalmalgia Blurred vision Blepharitis Keratoconus (degeneration of vision)
8	Ranakaasam	white	Due to eye injury that affects the three dhosam.

### 1.2 Surgical procedure for Pithakaasam

*Kuthung kaasam muthupol*

*Kudi piriung kundramal*

*Satrun kalimbhu rillamal*

*Thamira silagai mupattam*

*Potrum aaru viralneelam*

*Munum pinum viralnikki*

*Matru nillaiyai vaithanaithu*

*Vaithukatti kuraitherai*

The salagai (probe) is a delicate apparatus with three inch length. It is triangular in shape having three faces. It is made up of copper metal. Excepting the tip (grain size) remaining part of the salagai is covered with anesthetized thread. The end of the cornea is pricked with salagai and it is gently rotated three times. Pricking with needle is campaign for the release of accumulated fluid. Even after depleting the accumulated fluid from the eye, if the eye sight is not clear it should be pricked for the second time with the help of smaller needle weighing sesame seed. When the iris changes to blue color it symbolizes the person have been relieved from cataract. For sustaining the pain in the pricked eye it should be treated with herbal fumigation along with application of an eye drops. Initially turmeric powder paste is applied on the eye and banded with cotton followed by tamarind leaves for three days.

### 1.3 Kalikkam for pricked eye

*Meviya vishaneer matri vethanai miguthidamal*

*Oviya manaiyai kannil olugidu marunthu kelai*

*Avinei yethanir rutham abinsenak karamkuttik*

*Kuviyae valikkung kannil ottriyae kuzhathupusae*

### 1.4 Ingredients

- Zinc sulphate
- Opium
- Alum
- Cow ghee

The above drug should be powdered first and grinded with ghee. This should be applied drop by drop in and around the eye. Then it is banded with cotton for three days. Within one week the person would be able to relieve from the pain and have a clear vision.

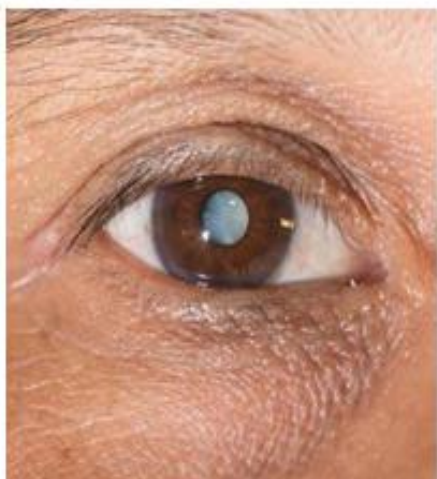


Fig.1 an eye affected by cataract



Fig.2 an surgical instrument salagai

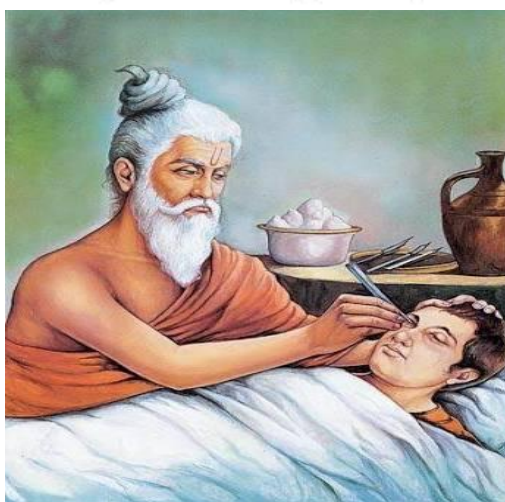


Fig.3 siddhar pricking the cataract eye with salagai

TABLE 2. Information about the elements used in the process

Common Name	Medicinal uses
Copper	It encourages the development of flexible connective tissue for proper eye structure and act as an antioxidant.
Turmeric	The <i>curcumin</i> alkaloid supports glutathione synthesis which is an important antioxidant for vision.
Tamarind leaves	It contains vitamin C that protect our eye from microbial infection and act as an antioxidant.
Zinc sulphate	It temporally relieves from redness, burning and irritation caused by dry eyes. As it is an astringent, eye decongestant and lubricant.
Alum	It is an antifungal and antibacterial agent that works for curing pink eyes.
Opium	It is used as an analgesic.
Cow Ghee	It is used for strengthening of vision.

## II. conclusion

This literature analysis on Aruvai Maruthuvam (Surgery) in Siddha reveals the ancient knowledge of Siddhars in the field of Ophthalmology and surgery. While present day modern therapeutic measures cost a huge expense for a vast majority of people, Siddha therapeutic measure may be beneficial and affordable when it is done using standard traditional procedures. Further, more preclinical and clinical research may be essential in this regard to re confirm its therapeutic efficacy.

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