

**UTILIZATION OF MERCURY IN INDIGENOUS MEDICINE IN SRI LANKA WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO *TALPATE PILIYAM*: A LITERATURE STUDY**

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The Sri Lankan indigenous medical system represents a distinct tradition, evolved over centuries through the integration of local knowledge, observation of nature and spiritual beliefs. Mercury was employed in various processed forms due to its perceived therapeutic properties historically but now it is largely avoided due to its recognized toxicity and health risks. Aim of this study was to identify the types of preparations which mercury is used and their clinical applications in indigenous medicine. *Talpate piliyam* is a series of printed books, rich in traditional medicinal knowledge, copied from ancient *Ola* manuscripts. The findings were categorized under these topics: diseases used and type of preparation. Mercury was found relevant in applications including 65 oils, 49 medicated smokes, 120 pastes, 01 *Pottani*, 04 *Patthu*, 74 *Anjana* and other 69 external formulae while 8 decoctions, 367 *Guli*, 01 *Grita*, 01 *Modaka*, 19 *Churna* and other 174 formulae mentioned as internal implementations in several disease conditions. Specially as a single medicine, it was advised to drink purified mercury in fever. In these texts, *Rahadiya*, *Rashada*, *Rasa*, *Rashadiya* and *Rasha* have been used as synonyms for Mercury. Mercury was measured in *Kalan*, *Manchadi*, *Nalu* and purified using leaf extracts of *Eclipta alba*, *Piper betel*, *Urena lobata* etc. Mercury has been used in *Nasya* and *Anjana* preparations in the treatment of *Sarpa visha* (Snake bites), as an ingredient in *Kalka* (herbal paste) for various *Taila* (oils) and flour of *Rasadiya* for ailments. It was also used in cow's disease treatments as mentioned in 07 formulations. It can be concluded that mercury was widely used in indigenous medicine and its preparations were extensive.

Keywords: Sri Lankan, Indigenous medicine, *Talpate piliyam*, Mercury