

Toxicity study of an Ayurvedic recipe Rathakalka

The use of Rathakalka at a dose of 250 mg. Twice a day orally as a preventive medicament to protect infant from certain diseases is well known and has been introduced to the society by the traditional Ayurvedic practitioners in Sri Lanka. In view of the extensive use of Rathakalka in neonates over a long period it is argued that toxicity test in animals are superfluous. On the other hand there is growing awareness among scientists and general public of the ill effects of drugs. The objective of this study was to expose the recipe Rathakalka to animal experimentation to determine the presence of toxic effects if any.

Thirty Belgium strain white rabbits (wt. 900-1000g) were randomized into three groups of ten, each group comprising an equal number of male and female rabbits. One group served as control and received 15ml/Kg body wt. distilled water and the other two groups received Rathakalka at a dose of 1 gm and 3 gm/kg body wt respectively for 60 days. The animals were observed for any signs of toxicity throughout the period of the experiment. On day 61 blood and urine samples collected and the animals were sacrificed and observed for any macroscopical changes and histo-pathological of target organs.

No mortality was observed during the course of experiment. Urinalysis and haematological parameters were within normal range. No observable gross abnormalities that could be attributed to drug toxicity were noticed in the treated group. Histo-pathological examination of the target organs revealed total normalcy.

The study concluded that the recipe Rathakalka does not show any evidence of toxicity when tested on rabbits. It is probable that the same absence of toxicity would be

observed when Rathakalka is used as a medication in infants and children by traditional Ayurvedic practitioners in Sri Lanka.