

SIDDHA PERSPECTIVE OF SEASONAL REGIMEN

(RUTHU SARIYAI) – A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Siddha Medicine is a system of traditional medicine originating in ancient Tamil Nadu in South India and Sri Lanka. Traditionally, it is taught that the *siddhars* laid the foundation for this system of medicine. Agastyar is considered the first *Siddhar*. The characteristics of people vary according to the seasonal variation (*Ruthu sariyai*) Therefore, it is imperative to know about *Ruthu sariyai*. Ancient Tamils had their own divisions of the year into different seasons (*Perumpozhuthu*) and of the day (*Sirupozhuthu*). **Aim:** The aim of the study is to study the siddha perspective of seasonal regimen (*ruthu sariyai*) in the relevant Siddha Literatures.

Methodology: It is a review of relevant literatures on siddha

perspective of seasonal regimen (*ruthu sariyai*). Data for the literature review were collected from relevant literatures. Collected data were processed and analysed. **Results and Discussion:** The winter season gives good health both for human beings and the plants. Early summer and the latter rainy season give moderate health, early rainy season and latter summer are the periods of diseases. The regular disciplines of food and action as mentioned for each season are followed as strictly as possible so that we could avoid the occurrences of the diseases due to the change of seasons. **Conclusion:** This literature review provides useful documented evidence on seasonal regimen (*ruthu sariyai*).

KEYWORDS: Siddha medicine, Seasonal regimen, Ruthu sariyai, Preventive.

1. INTRODUCTION

Siddha Medicine is a system of traditional medicine originating in ancient Tamil Nadu in South India and Sri Lanka. Traditionally, it is taught that the *siddhars* laid the foundation for this system of medicine. Agastyar is considered the first *Siddhar*. The characteristics of people vary according to the seasonal variation (*Ruthu sariyai*) Therefore, it is imperative to know about *Ruthu sariyai*. Ancient Tamils had their own divisions of the year into different seasons (*Perumpozhuthu*) and of the day (*Sirupozhuthu*).

பெரும்பொழு தென்றா சிறு பொழு தென்றா

இரண்டு கூற்ற தியம்பிய பொழுதே

The year is divided into six seasons consisting of two months each. The division of the year starts from Tamil month of December (Mid December – Mid January) (i.e.) starts in Early winter and ends with November (i.e.) latter rainy season. The different seasons are *Kaar*, *Koothir*, *Munpani*, *Pinpani*, *Ilavenil* and *Mudhuvenil Kaalam*.^[1]

சீரிள வேனில் வேனில் என்றாங்கு

இருமூன்ற திறந்தது தெரிபெரும் பொழுதே

(நம்பியகப் பொருள்)

ஈறாறு திங்களையும் இவ்விரண்டாய் வில்முதலாய்

ஓராறிருதுவாய் ஓதுவரே - சீரார்

இரும்பொழுதின் பேர்தான் இருபனி வேனில்

கருமுகில் கூதிரெனக் காண்

(மருத்துவ தனி பாடல்)

மருவிய காரேகூதிர் முன்பினிற் பனிக ளோடு

விரவிய இளைய வேனில் விரைந்திடு முதிர்ந்த வேனில்

மருவுமா வணியேயாதி மற்றிரண்டிரண்டு மாதம்

(சூடாமணி நிகண்டு)

The day is divided into six parts and there are *Maalai* (Evening), *Yamam* (Mid night), *Vaikarai* (Dawn), *Kaalai* (Morning), *Nannpakal* (Noon) and *Erpaadu* (Afternoon). The beginning of the year from the Tamil month *Thai* has two divisions so named as *Ayanam*; namely *Uttharayanam* (Northward) and *Dhakshinayanam* (Southward).^[2] The last 7 days of

the present season and the first seven days of the following season are called as the transient period. During this period, life style of the present season should be slowly changed and the life style of the following season is gradually adopted because sudden change in life style and food habits may cause disease. Therefore, it is better to slowly change the life style in order to prevent the occurrences of diseases. I am going to study the siddha perspective of seasonal regimen (*ruthu sariyai*) in the relevant Siddha Literatures.

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVE

The aim of the study is to study the siddha perspective of seasonal regimen (*ruthu sariyai*) in Siddha Literatures.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study design

It is a review of siddha perspective of seasonal regimen (*ruthu sariyai*) in relevant literatures.

3.2 Study setting

Government Siddha Medical College, Palayamkottai from December 2019 to March 2020.

3.3 Data Collection

Data for the literature review were collected from related literatures.

3.4 Data analysis

Collected data were processed and statistically analyzed by a simple statistical method using Microsoft Excel.

4. RESULTS

Table 1: Details of events occurs during the seasons.^{[1][2]}

Description	<i>Munpani</i> (Early winter season)	<i>Pinpani</i> (Latter winter season)	<i>Ilavenil</i> (Early summer season)	<i>Mudhuvenil</i> (Latter summer season)	<i>Kaar Kaalam</i> (Early rainy season)	<i>Koothir Kaalam</i> (Latter rainy season)
Events	<p>The wind flows eastwards.</p> <p>Crysanthemum, the swing bird, owl and night birds are in gaiety, Mango and <i>Sevvandhi</i> blooms, the <i>Elandhai</i> (<i>Ziziphus jujuba</i>) ripens.</p> <p>The red paddy is harvested and sugarcane is cut in the early winter.</p>	<p>The South East Monsoon sets in.</p> <p>The pigeon gladdens, the trees <i>Kongu</i> and <i>Elavu</i> bloom, the palm and date fruits ripen and the cotton plants burst.</p>	<p>The South Monsoon flows.</p> <p>The bees, parrot, <i>Mynah</i>, <i>Kraunjam</i> and <i>Quil</i> are in gay.</p> <p>The mangoes ripen.</p> <p><i>Punnai</i>, <i>Makizh</i>, <i>Thazhai</i> and <i>Shenbagam</i> blossom and the <i>Indrakopa</i> (insect) is getting weakened.</p>	<p>The west monsoon sets in, mirage appears, the partridge, goose, falcon, skylark, crow enjoy this climate.</p> <p>The Jasmine, Tamarind and <i>Pathiri</i> are bloom.</p> <p><i>Jambu</i> bears fruits.</p>	<p>Northern Monsoon sets in.</p> <p>The insect <i>Indrakopa</i>, the birds peacock and <i>Assunam</i> enjoy the season.</p> <p>The flowers like <i>Gloriosa superba</i> (White and red), <i>Konrai</i> (Cassia), <i>Kudalam</i>, <i>Vengai</i> (<i>Ptero carpus marsupium</i>), <i>Kakkanum</i> (<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>), <i>Mullai</i> (<i>Jasminum malabarica</i>) and <i>Kurunthu</i> (<i>Pavonia Zeylanica</i>) are blooms.</p> <p>The swan, the parrot and the cuckoo are saddened.</p> <p>Hydrophytes like Lotus are weary.</p>	<p>The cool wind flows, the crane, swan, heron, stroke, conch, crab and snail enjoy, the water becomes clear, reproduction of fish occurs in large quantum.</p> <p>Black clouds are seen, the flower plants like <i>Parijadam</i>, <i>Ciru shenbagam</i> (<i>Michelia champaca</i>), <i>Chemparathai</i> (<i>Hibiscus rosasinensis</i>), <i>Sanyadham</i> and reeds bloo but human beings and the fauna suffer during this season.</p>

Table 2: Description about seasonal regimen.^{[1][2]}

Description	<i>Munpani</i> (Early winter season)	<i>Pinpani</i> (Latter winter season)	<i>Ilavenil</i> (Early summer season)	<i>Mudhuvenil</i> (Latter summer season)	<i>Kaar Kaalam</i> (Early rainy season)	<i>Koothir Kaalam</i> (Latter rainy season)
Derangement of <i>Dhosa</i> and <i>Dhathukkal</i>	inner body temperature increases and appetite is more. ↓ no proper intake of food the <i>Samana vayu</i> destroys the seven physical constituents.	<i>Kapham</i> increases and dry condition prevails. As a consequence, warmth, dryness and irritation in the throat occur.	The <i>Kapham</i> that has increased in the latter winter worsens with the involvement of <i>Pitham</i> and causes <i>Kapha</i> diseases.	The climate will be hot, the water resources dry, <i>Kapham</i> , subsides and <i>Vatham</i> increases and the mankind is liable for all diseases. Diseases due to the derangement of <i>Vatham</i> occurs predominantly.	The three humors are deranged. The digestive fire is decreased. The cold wind carrying the water-drops suddenly flows as to cause shivering and aggravates the <i>Vatham</i> . The heat of Earth is flowing out so as to make the water drops evaporate thereby changing water content of the body into sour taste. This aggravate the <i>Pitham</i> humor. The rain will bring about a	<i>Pitham</i> is increased and affects the other humors also

					change in water by dissolving the waste on the ground level, disrupting the digestive fire and aggravating the <i>Kapha dosham</i> .	
Taste which neutralize the Dosha	Astringent, Sweet, sour, salt, oily and warm food	Sweet, bitter, astringent, dry and cold food	Bitter, pungent, astringent, dry and warm food	Sweet, oily cold food and	Sweet, sour, salt tastes oily and cold food	Sweet, sour, astringent oily and cold food tastes
Preventive measures	Oleation therapy	Consume sweet and oily foods	Deranged <i>Kapham</i> - <i>Nasiyam</i> – (Nasal application) and <i>Vamana</i> (emetic therapy) are advised.	Sweet, moist, oily and quickly digestible food are advised for healthy living during summer.	Purgatives Emetics Stomachic appetizers Medicine improve the digestion	Purgatives
Oleation therapy	The oil applied to the head and body should be chosen in such a way that it neutralizes <i>Vatham</i> .	-	Oleation therapy should be given with oils the neutralise the deranged <i>Kapham</i> . The oil application should be done for the head, trunk and the limbs and especially for the feet	-	-	-

Bath	bath powder – astringent use warm water for bath	-	Oleation is followed by bath with warm water and application of <i>Akil</i> and Sandal paste.	Sandal wood paste along with camphor is applied on the body for its cooling effect.	-	Distilled water of <i>Vetiveria zizanioides</i> is added to camphor and sandal (<i>Santalum album</i>) to make them into a paste and applied over the body. sandal paste on the body
Fumigation	used during this season	-	Mild fumigation	-	sandal fumes and other perfumes can be used.	-
Food	Oily food, <i>Vaat kothumai</i> , <i>Samba kothumai</i>	consume sweet and oily foods and preventive measures should be taken to control the <i>Kapham</i> .	Food made of old rice and dhal, cow's ghee, vegetables and fruits the food consisting of all six tastes should be cherished by chewing, licking and drinking.	Quickly digestible food. Sixteen varieties of <i>Samba</i> rice are mentioned for consumption for living healthy life during summer. They are <i>Mai samba</i> , <i>Kaayan samba</i> , <i>Mallikai samba</i> , <i>Kaadai samba</i> , <i>Kunrimani samba</i> , <i>Ceeraka samba</i> , <i>Milagu sambu</i> , <i>Kurum</i>	The fresh vegetables, fruits, pulses like dhal, black gram, green gram and cereals that are preserved for six months could be consumed. Old toddy could be consumed along with easily digestible food and oily substances.	Green gram, samba rice, green steamed millet, sprouted dhal, goat's milk, Indian gooseberry, snake gourd, yam, <i>Solanum torvum</i> , immatured banana and the flower, the mangosa flower, greens, honey and sugar and green leaves are good for this season.

				samba, Kaivarai samba, Kodai samba, Kallundai samba, Eerkku samba, Puzhugu samba, Korai samba, Mani samba and Annamazhaki.		The mixed food of samba rice, pulses, sugar, Indian gooseberry (Emblica officinalis) and honey is good.
Snacks	-	-	Snacks made of wheat, rice, groundnut, horse gram and ghee are advised for this season.	Paayasam is a sweet pudding prepared with milk, sugar, bamboo rice and wheat.	The various kinds of gruel are made adding spices like ginger, pepper, long pepper, Plumbago zeylanica, butter milk, warm curd, oil, honey and well water or rain water could be consumed.	-
Meat	-	-	-	Meat of goat, ram, antelope, wild pig, sparrows, skylark, grouse, local birds, chicken, partridge, hen and egg etc are preferred in summer as non-vegetarian food.	Consume only well-cooked meat.	-

Fruits	-	-	<p>Banana, mango, jack and grape fruits with or without sugar cane juice, sugar candy, honey may be taken.</p> <p>The fruit with sugar and honey could be preserved in the mud pots kept or placed in the earth-pits and consumed after a specific period of time.</p>	<p>Bananas (the larger varieties and kill bananas), the grapes, the jack fruit and pomegranate are good. Apart from this, <i>Bassia latifolia</i>, <i>Myristica</i> fragrance, sweet fragrant cardamom, palm sugar tongs, cane sugar and honey are made into a mixture in a new pot. This mixture is called as <i>panchamirta</i>, a sweetened preparation of very rich quality, ethnic to Tamil Nadu.</p>	-	-
Drinking water	-	-	<p>The boiled water is poured into a new mud pot and the powders of honey, sandal or <i>vetiver</i> are added to it, cooled and used for drinking.</p>	<p><i>Paadhiri</i> flower (Stero sperm) and camphor are added to the boiled water and consumed during summer season.</p>	-	<p>Owing to the hot sun and moonlit night, water is purified naturally and is very good for consumption. This water of this season either very cold, or hot is</p>

						comparable to elixir and it promotes digestion.
Sleep	Silk and woolen bed sheets are preferable	-	-	-	One must cover the foot with wool or leather foot wear, use blanket to cover the body	-
Morals to be done in the season	Exposing in the evening sunlight and brisk physical activity until the body sweats are advisable in the evening. One should wear a footwear for protection.	-	Physical manipulation (<i>Thokkanam</i>), marital arts (Boxing) and fighting with sticks (<i>Silambam</i>)	One should reside in farm houses with beautiful flowery plants and spend time in cultural activities and avoid alcohol, salt, sour, pungent and hot food. Easily digestible food with sweet taste and oily food are preferred.	Food materials that improve digestive fire should be consumed in this season.	-
Deeds to be avoided during the season	-	The place of residence should be free from cold wind and the food with the taste that increases <i>Vatham</i> like bitter, pungent or astringent and	Food that are sour, sweet, cold and oily are not preferable and sleep during day time is best avoided in early summer.	Sour, bitter food and alcohol are to be avoided. Too much exposure to sun and exertion also to be avoided.	Hard labour and food that are oily are to be avoided during rainy season. One should avoid walking in moisture and	One may spend time on the balcony during moon lit night for sometime, but should not stay there till midnight. Those who are prone to

		cold food should be avoided.	Food stuff with hot potency are to be avoided.		should live in a warm environment; one should avoid exposure to chillness. Butter milk with fat content, river water, day sleep and hard labour should be avoided in this season.	<i>Vatha</i> temperament should not spend the midnight in the moonlight. Vegetable oils, ghee, animal fat, liquor, toddy, over eating, day sleep are to be avoided.
The residence places	-	-	The ideal cottage for this season is in a surrounding of flowery trees with good fragrance. The ever flowing rivulet with resounding music and climbers with nice flowers should cover to the top of the cottage to provide enchantment. The sunrays hardly tires the person, who lives in this cottage; the	The shades of the tall pandanus, areca-nut, mango, <i>akil</i> , banyan, bael, <i>Shorea robusta</i> (white), <i>Saraca indica</i> , <i>Calophyllum inophyllum</i> , <i>Sandalum indicum</i> , <i>Pongamia glabra</i> and fruit bearing palm are ideal. The roof of the hut should be covered with jasmine and other flowering creepers providing	Stay in the upper floor of the house and prevent rain water entering into the house and live in the company of near and dear.	-

			<p>pastime being spent in swimming in the rivulet or tanks nearby.</p>	<p>cool shade. The cot is covered with banana bark fibre. Lotus and water lilies are also spread on it. In such comforts one should sleep during hot summer.</p> <p>The windows and doors are covered with cloth soaked in rose water. Screens made of vetiver (<i>Vetivera zizoides</i>) are also used. Water is sprinkled on them frequently using spring pots. The cools down the room temperature and helps to escape from the onslaught of the latter summer.</p>		
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Table 3: The tastes preferred for different seasons.

<i>Kaalam</i>	Season	Tastes & nature of food
<i>Kaar</i>	Early rainy season	Sweet, sour, salt, oily and warm food
<i>Koothir</i>	Latter rainy season	Sweet, bitter, astringent, dry and cold food
<i>Munpani</i>	Early winter season	Sweet, sour, salt tastes oily and cold food
<i>Pinpani</i>	Latter winter season	Sweet, sour, astringent oily and cold food tastes
<i>Ilavenil</i>	Early summer season	Bitter, pungent, astringent, dry and warm food
<i>Mudhuvenil</i>	Latter summer season	Sweet, oily and cold food

The tastes suited for all season

It is good to consume food consisting of all six tastes for all seasons. But still it is desirable to consume the specific tastes as mentioned above for each season specifically.

5. DISCUSSION***Munpani* (Early winter season)**

During this season, mankind will be healthy. The inner body temperature increases and appetite is more. If there is no proper intake of food the *Samana vayu* destroys the seven physical constituents. Food with sweet, sour and astringent taste are preferable for this period. The oil applied to the head and body should be chosen in such a way that it neutralizes *Vatham*.

***Pinpani* (Latter winter season)**

During the latter winter, *Kapham* increases and dry condition prevails. As a consequence, warmth, dryness and irritation in the throat occur. To counter these effects, one could consume sweet and oily foods and preventive measures should be taken to control the *Kapham*.

***Ilavenil* (Early summer season)**

The *Kapham* that has increased in the latter winter worsens with the involvement of *Pitham* and causes *Kapha* diseases. To overcome the ill effects of the deranged *Kapham*, *Nasiyam* – (Nasal application) and *Vamana* (emetic therapy) are advised. Physical manipulation (*Thokkanam*), marital arts (Boxing) and fighting with sticks (*Silambam*) are advised for the period of early summer.

***Mudhuvenil* (Latter summer season)**

The sun is responsible for the blooming of the lotus. The climate will be hot, the water resources dry, *Kapham*, subsides and *Vatham* increases and the mankind is liable for all

diseases. Diseases due to the derangement of *Vatham* occurs predominantly. Sweet, moist, oily and quickly digestible food are advised for healthy living during summer.

Kaar (Early rainy season)

The initial rains cool the earth and the water becomes sour. In order to withstand cold wind of the season, the surface temperature increases but the digestive fire decreases. The three humors are deranged. The *Vatham* is impaired and *Pitham* is altered; because of the contaminated water *Kapham* also gets impaired. The digestive fire is generally decreased for persons who already have a derangement of doshas. The cold wind carrying the water-drops suddenly flows as to cause shivering and aggravates the *Vatham*. The heat of Earth is flowing out so as to make the water drops evaporate thereby changing water content of the body into sour taste. This aggravate the *Pitham* humor. The rain will bring about a change in water by dissolving the waste on the ground level, disrupting the digestive fire and aggravating the *Kapha dosham*. The deranged humors are neutralized by giving purgatives and emetic appetizers and medicines that improve the digestion. The food that are not easily digestible are best avoided. During the rainy season, food of sour and salt tastes, dried and oily food stuffs are good. Easily digestible warm food and honey are advisable.

Koothir (Latter rainy season)

The day is very hot owing to the severity of the sun. The night is very cold. During this season *Pitham* is increased and affects the other humors also. To neutralise the deranged *Pitham*, purgatives that are made of bitter medicated ghee should be used and bloodletting done.

Life style to be adopted during transient period

The last 7 days of the present season and the first seven days of the following season are called as the transient period. During this period, life style of the present season should be slowly changed and the life style of the following season is gradually adopted because sudden change in life style and food habits may cause disease. Therefore, it is better to slowly change the life style in order to prevent the occurrences of diseases.^{[1][2]}

In general, Validate the data that are reported in the literatures

Description of tastes that neutralize the tri humors

வாத மேலிட்டால் மதுரம் புளியுப்பு

சேதமுறச் செய்யும் சிறையம் - ஓதக்கேள்

காரந் துவர்ப்புக் காட்டுஞ் சுவையெல்லாம்

சாரப் பரிகாரஞ் சாற்று

பித்த மதிகரிப்பின் பேசும் பரிகாரம்

சுத்தத் துவரோடு சொல்லிவிப்புச் - சத்தாகும்

கைப்புச் சுவையே கருதவதன் வீறு

எய்ப்படையு மென்றுரைத்தா ரிங்கு

(கண்ணுசாமியம்)

Tastes that are neutralize the *Vatham*: Sweet, Sour, salt

Tastes that are neutralize the *Piththam*: Sweet, bitter, astringent

Tastes that are neutralize the *Kapham*: Pungent, Astringent, bitter^[3]

<i>Guna</i>	Cognitive characters	Tastes	Effects of <i>Vatham</i>, <i>Piththam</i> and <i>Kapham</i>
Seeta	Cold	Astringent, Sweet, Bitter	Increase <i>Vatham</i> , <i>Piththam</i> and decrease <i>Kapham</i>
Ushna	Hot	Salt, Sour, Pungent	Increase <i>Kapham</i> and decrease <i>Vatham</i> , <i>Piththam</i>
Rooksha	Dry	Astringent, Pungent, Bitter	Increase <i>Vatham</i> , and decrease <i>Kapham</i>

Oleation (Oil bath)

Oil bath gives strength to the five sense organs i.e. skin, tongue, eyes, nose and ears. It also gives strength to the head and limbs. It is good to take oil bath daily. By this, the body ache is relieved; senility will be postponed. Eyes get clarity of vision. Sound sleep, body strength and longevity are ensured. Skin gets smoothened and softened. It dispels drowsiness, *Kapham*, tri-humors and altered taste.^{[1][2]}

Silk cotton bed: If one sleeps in the bed of silk cotton bed it removes the sense of heat.^{[1][2]}

Woollen bed: Sleeping in the bed made of woollen stuff is beneficial to prevent the fever with rigor. It also protects from extreme cold weather fog and menorrhagia.^{[1][2]}

The character of *Santalum album*

கோதில்சந்தனஞ் சீதோஷ்ணங் கொண்டிருக்கும் அச்சந்தம்

வாதபித்தம் ஐயம் கனப்பியமை - ஓதுசுரம்

மேகந் தனித்தாகம் வெப்பசொறி யும்போக்கும்

ஆகந் தனக்குறுதி யாம்

Sandal wood is gives relief from *Vatha pitham*, *Iyam*, fever, thirst, Body heat, Itching in the body and it is give strength to the body.^[4]

The character of Camphor

கிருமிசல தோஷங் கிளைவலிப்பு சந்தி

பொருமுமந்தம் அங்கிபட்ட புண்ணோ - டெரிசுரங்கள்

வாந்திபித்தஞ் சீதமுறு வாதஞ் செவிமுகநோய்

சாந்திகருப் பூரம்ஒன்றாற் சாற்று

Camphor is gives relief from *Kirumi*, *Sanni*, *Piththa Suram*, *Piththam*, *Seethala vatham*, respiratory diseases, vomiting, indigestion, burns, ear diseases and facial diseases.^[4]

The character of Paathiri flower (*Stereospermum chelonoides*)

பித்த சுரந்தணியும் பெண்வசியம் உண்டாகும்

முற்றியதோர் வெட்டை முடியுங்காண் - மெத்தவுமே

மாதூரியம் நீங்கா வசன மடவனமே

பாதிரியின் பூவையுண்டு கார்

It gives relief from *Iththa suram* and *veddai*.^[4]

The character of Vettiver (*Vetiveria zizanioides*)

பித்தவி தாகஞ் சசிகா மிலங்கறைப் பித்தமனற்

றத்திடு குட்டஞ் சிரநோய் களமடி - தாதுநட்ட

மத்தம னற்புண்ட னப்புண்வன் மூர்ச்சைவரிவிழிநோய்

வித்திர மேகத்தின் கட்டியும் போம்வெட்டி வேரினுக்கே

It gives relief from thirst which are produce by *Piththam*, *Somarogam*, *Kaamilam*, Jaundice, *Karaipiththm*, *raththa piththam*, *anal suram*, leprosy, head diseases, diseases in neck, *sukkila nastam*, *unmantham*, burns, diseases in eye and *meha kaddi*.^[4]

The winter season gives good health both for human beings and the plants. Early summer and the latter rainy season give moderate health, early rainy season and latter summer are the periods of diseases. The regular disciplines of food and action as mentioned for each season are followed as strictly as possible so that we could avoid the occurrences of the diseases due to the change of seasons.

6. CONCLUSION

This literature review provides useful documented evidence on seasonal regimen (*ruthu sariyai*).

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