

## REVIEW ARTICLE ON PATHYA APATHYA IN SKIN DISEASES

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Article Received on  
13 Feb. 2021,

Revised on 05 March 2021,  
Accepted on 25 March 2021

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20214-20187

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### ABSTRACT

Pathya and Apathya Ahara (dietary consideration) is an important component of every prescription in Ayurveda therapy. Sometimes, Pathya– Apathya (dietary management) is itself a complete treatment. All drugs and diet which dislodge the various Doshas but do not expel them out of the body are to be regarded as unwholesome or Apathya. The Apathya or unwholesomeness or otherwise of drugs (Dravya) depends upon various other extraneous condition like dose, quantity, time etc. Judging from the various conditioning factors, even the most tasteful object might turn out to be unwholesome or vice versa. Skin is the largest organ in the body and covers an area of approximately 1.4 to 2 M. The skin protects the body from harmful agents such as ultraviolet light, chemical and infective organisms in the atmosphere.

Skin also regulates body temperature, gathers sensory inputs from the environment, stores water, fat, and vitamin D, and plays a role in the immune system protecting from the disease.

**KEYWORDS:** Pathya, apathy, skin.

### INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the only medical science which has insisted more importance on prevention of disease and maintenance of health rather than treating any disease,<sup>[1]</sup> The precisely constituted, calculated cooked food is known as pathya. It is said to be ‘Mahabheshaja’ by Acharya Kashyapa.<sup>[2]</sup> Showing the importance of food Acharya charaka has described that

the life of all living things is food and the entire world seeks food. Complexion, clarity, good voice, long life, understanding, happiness, satisfaction, growth, strength and intelligence are all established in food.<sup>[3]</sup> So, any food which is not harmful for body channels and on the contrary which is wholesome soothing for body can be labelled as pathya<sup>[4]</sup> Pathya kalpana must be used in Dinacharya and Rutucharya<sup>[5]</sup> Acharya Sushruta described the food as the food which nourishes and gladdens the heart and directly increases the body strength. It improves memory, digestive power, energy, strengthen mind, increases 'ojas' and increases the longevity of life<sup>[6]</sup> Acharya Charaka has described the constituent of nutritious diet in chapter 5 of sutrasthana which can be taken in daily diet. Good and fine rice like 'shastika' shali, green gram, rock salt, gooseberry, rain water, milk, ghee, flesh of animals living in jangala pradesha and honey should be adopted in diet generally.<sup>[7]</sup>

### Skin disease

In ayurveda skin diseases are known by the general term Kustha. It is of two types;- Mahakustha & Ksudra kustha. According to the tridosha siddhanta of Ayurveda unhygienic conditions, irregular dieting affects vata, pitta and kapha which in turn affect the skin.

### Ayurveda has systematically described and categorised skin disorders as follows

- **Maha kusthas:** Major skin disorders, which are seven in number.
- **Kshudra kusthas:** Minor skin disorders, which are eleven in total.
- The above division is based on the pre-monitory symptoms, main symptoms and signs, appearances and progress of the skin disorder. The division is also based on various medical therapies given.

### Maha kushtha clinical features

- **Kapala kushtha:** It is reddish black in colour like reddish black earthenware, irregular and associated with dryness and pain.
- **Udumber kushtha:** It is associated with burning, itching, pain and redness. The hairs are greyish or greyish white in colour at the site. It is just like fruit of ficus in colour.
- **Mandala:** It is characterizing by stable, rounded and indurated plaques which are attached with each other. It is white or red in colour and difficult to treat
- **Rishyajivha:** Characterizes by hard skin lesions which are similar to tongue of Rishya (a special type of beer) in shape. The colour is reddish black in centre and red in periphery and associated with pain. It is also associated with Krimi (probably primary or secondary infection).

- **Pundarika:** The lesions of Pundarika are indurated and associated with burning sensation. It is similar to the colour of the red lotus. Pundarika is also associated with pustulization and Krimi
- **Sidhma:** The lesions are usually localized to chest and are similar to the flower of Alabu (gourd) in colour. The lesions release powder on rubbing and associated with mild pain and burning.
- **Kakanaka:** It is similar to the Kakanantika in colour (red and black). It is never pustulizes and associated with severe pain or discomfort

### Kshudra kushtha clinical features

- **Ek-kushtha:** Characterizes by large scaly plaques. Scales are similar to the fish scales.
- **Charma kushtha:** Its lesion covers a vast area. The skin becomes very thick like elephant skin.
- **Kitibha kushtha:** Characterizes by reddish black and rough skin lesions associated with severe itching. The lesions are round in shape and occasionally associated with secretions.
- **Vipadika:** There is cracking of palms and soles which is associated with severe pain. Acharya Sushruta described the cracking of only soles which is associated with burning, pain and itching
- **Alasaka:** The skin lesions are red in colour and associated with itching.
- **Dadrumandala:** It is characterized by nodular lesion associated with erythema and itching.
- **Charmadala:** The skin lesions of Charmadala are red in colour and blisters or skin cracked with pain and associated with itching and paraesthesia.
- **Pama:** It is characterized by nodular skin lesions which are white or reddish black in colour and associated with severe itching.
- **Visphota:** White or red colour nodular lesions with thin skin.
- **Shataru:** Characterizes by red or reddish black skin lesions and associated with burning and ulcerations (multiple ulcers).
- **Vicharchika:** Vicharchika is characterized by blackish nodular lesions associated with itching and secretions.

### Clinical features according to DOSHA

- **Vata pradhana lakshan-** Roukshyata, Parushya, Shosha, Toda, Shoola, Sankocha (tightening), Ayama, Harsha, Shyava-Arunatva

- **Pitta pradhana lakshan** - Daha, Raga, Srava, Paka, Visragandha, Kleda, Angapatana
- **Kapha pradhana lakshan** - Shvetata, Saityata, Kandu, Sthairya, Utseda, Gourava, Sneha, Kleda

### Pathya – Apathya in skin diseases<sup>[8]</sup>

The drugs and regimes which do not adversely affect the body and mind are regarded as Pathya and those, which adverse affect them, are considered as Apathya.

#### Pathya

- Light, not too oily, not too dry food
- Maintain adequate cutaneous hydration.
- Include more haridra, and pepper in the diet.
- Practice Acharya Rasyana
- Practice *Yog* mainly Pranayam, Anulom-vilom, Kapalbhaati.
- Meditation and prayer everyday

#### Apathya

- Avoid sour, salty, spicy foods, hard to digest food, milk products, fermented products, mulak, til, gud, intake of milk & fish together; cola drinks, junk foods, bakery products, fish, alcohol and smoking must be avoided.
  - Avoid excess drying or irritation of the skin.
  - Avoid over exposure to sun
  - Avoid over eating, over drinking
  - Too much or too little sleep, avoid day sleeping
  - Avoid vega dharana
  - Avoid excessive anger
1. **Atilavana-** Salt predominant foods like pickles, bhelpuri, papad, chips, namkeen used in excess quantity
  2. **Atiamla (Excessive intake of sour foods)-** Fermented products, pickles, bhelpuri, sour fruit juices, sauces like tomato sauce, excess intake of preserved foods, curd, buttermilk, lemon juice, vinegar, alcohol, sauce, squashes.
  3. **Virudhahara (Incompatible foods)-** Sprouted vegetables/grains with meat, milk with meat, honey with meat, black gram with meat, lotus stem with meat, radish with meat,

jaggery with meat, milk or honey with leafy vegetables, curd with chicken, honey heated in any form or taken with hot water, alcohol with kheer, fish with jaggery or sugar.

4. **Guru annapana (Hard to digest foods)**- Pizza, cheese mixed foods, bakery products, kidney beans, paneer etc, food items prepared mainly from black gram such as dosa, idli, vada; beef, pork; food prepared from flour. Regular intake of meat products Intake of milk shakes, kheer etc.
5. **Snigdha annapana (Oily/unctuous foods)**- Excessively oily foods such as biriyani, fried oily foods, meat soups, sweets made of excess ghee, milk etc such as kheer
6. **Asatmya ahara (Uncongenial foods)**- Foods which are not suitable to prakriti, Desha (native to the place) such as fruits of foreign origin, eating food which is not native to the area such as Chinese food, pasta or pizza, soybean etc
7. **Ajeern ahara**- Intake of food before the previous food is properly digested
8. **Chilichima cha payasa**- Intake of Chilichima (a variety of fish) in combination with milk.
9. **Dadhi**- Curd in different forms such as raita, lassi, dahivada, mixed in curry etc especially after heating and in autumn, and spring seasons
10. **Fish**- Excessive intake of fish or combination of fish with milk is said as an aetiology for skin diseases.
11. **Masha**- Use of black gram and its preparations such as vada, dosa etc in excess
12. **Mulaka**- regular usage of radish is said as a cause and precipitant of skin diseases
13. **Pishtanna**- Food prepared after pounding rice, gram etc and preparations such as Dosa, vada, dhokla, etc
14. **Tila** Regular and excessive use of substances prepared from sesame
15. **Gud**- Regular usage of jaggery and products made from jaggery
16. **kurchika, kilata**- Excessive use of dairy products in the form of paneer etc are considered cause of inflammatory skin disorders
17. **Gramya - Anupa oudaka mamsa**- Frequent eating of flesh of domesticated, marsh dwelling and aquatic animals.
18. **Vamana vega rodha**- Suppressing the urge of Vomiting
19. **Day sleep**- Habit of regularly indulging in day sleep other than greeshma ritu(summer)
20. **Papakarma**- Indulging in sinful acts

## DISCUSSION

Every living and non-living beings in this universe is composed of five basic elements, i.e; the Pancha Mahabhootas, namely Earth (Prithvi), Water (Ap), Fire (Teja), Air (Vayu) and Ether (Akasha) the panchabhuta components of ingested food nourishes their respective tissue elements in the body. Ahara is the best among all the medicines and is considered one among the three sub-pillars of Ayurveda (thrayo-upasthamba). The ahara (food) and vihara (lifestyle) which are amiable to the channels, constitution and strength of an individual is termed as pathya (wholesome) and that which is not amiable is termed as apathya (unwholesome). The preventive and curative aspects of Ayurveda revolve around the central theme of pathya ahara and vihara. Ayurveda emphasizes basic dietary guidelines in terms of appropriate food, combinations of food, methods of cooking, storage, eating atmosphere, hygiene and etiquette (ashtavidha ahara vidhi visesha ayatana).

In Ayurveda, the concept of virudhahara is very much crucial for the pathogenesis of the disease. Acharya Charaka defines virudhahara to certain diet and its combinations, which interrupts the metabolism, the process of formation of tissue and that having opposite property with that of the tissue are called as Viruddha Anna or incompatible diet. Virudha can be considered as diet which are having mutually contradictory properties, contradictory to tissues, diet capable of producing inconvenient effect on the body, when processed in a particular form or proportion or those food which may produce an unwanted effect when taken at an inappropriate time. Ayurvedic literature has compiled almost 18 types of virudha ahara and has also mentioned complications ranging from skin diseases (kushta), visarpa (erysipelas), unmada (insanity) and marana (death).

## CONCLUSION

Ahara and vihara forms the chief foundation on life of an individual. It is generally thought that diet has no direct relationship with diseases. But Ayurveda has described diet and regimen as the main causes for every disease. Contemporary medicine has less appreciated the role of dietary factors in the pathogenesis, progress and outcome of disease. Nutritional, biochemical and metabolic aspects of diet definitely play an important role in maintaining the normal integrity of skin and also promoting the immunological role of skin.

### Dietary interventions may act as

- Preventive factor by restricting the pathogenesis of many diseases

- It may interfere the course of disease, thereby resolving early.
- Dietary and lifestyle modifications may act as an adjuvant to nullify the adverse effects of common medicines and also may work synergistically with medicines to cure the disease.
- Adopting strict lifestyle and diet regimen may help in preventing not only skin diseases but also many life-styles induced serious systemic diseases.
- Observance of specific diet or activity as triggering factors to skin diseases, by avoiding such can prevent exacerbations and relapses of the disease.
- These Pathya and Apathya may help in preventing modifiable co-morbidities.

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