

ROLE OF PATHYA AND APATHYA IN PANDU ROGA: A DIETARY AND LIFESTYLE APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Pandu Roga, as described in *Ayurveda*, is primarily caused by the vitiation of *Pitta* and *Rakta Dhatu* due to improper dietary and lifestyle habits. *Charaka Chikitsa* emphasizes that *Pandu* results from the consumption of incompatible foods (*Viruddhahara*), excessive intake of sour, salty, and pungent foods, and indulgence in factors that lead to the depletion of *Rasa* and *Rakta Dhatu*. *Charaka Nidan* details its pathogenesis, including *Agnimandya* (digestive impairment), leading to poor nutritional absorption and subsequent anemia-like symptoms. The role of *Pathya* (wholesome diet and lifestyle) and *Apathya* (unwholesome factors) is crucial in its management, ensuring improved digestion, hematopoiesis, and overall health. This review highlights dietary and lifestyle recommendations in *Ayurveda* for *Pandu Roga* and their relevance in modern nutritional science.

KEYWORDS: *Pandu Roga*, *Pathya Apathya*, Anemia, Iron-deficiency anemia, *Rakta Dhatu*.

INTRODUCTION

According to *Ayurvedic* classics, particularly *Charaka Samhita*, *Pandu Roga* is a disorder primarily associated with the imbalance of *Pitta Dosha* leading to the depletion of *Rakta Dhatu*. It is described as a condition resulting from improper dietary habits, poor digestion (*Agnimandya*), and lifestyle factors that impair the production and quality of blood. The

symptoms include pallor, weakness, fatigue, breathlessness, and loss of appetite. *Sushruta Samhita* further classifies *Pandu* based on the predominant *Dosha* involvement, highlighting its multifactorial etiology.

In modern medicine, *Pandu Roga* closely correlates with anemia as described in Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine. Anemia is defined as a reduction in the number of red blood cells (RBCs) or hemoglobin concentration, leading to inadequate oxygen transport to tissues. Common causes include iron deficiency, vitamin B12 or folic acid deficiency, chronic disease, and hemolysis. Clinical manifestations such as fatigue, pallor, dyspnea, and weakness align with the *Ayurvedic* description of *Pandu Roga*.

Ayurveda emphasizes that proper dietary and lifestyle practices play a crucial role in preventing and managing *Pandu Roga*. *Pathya* (wholesome food and lifestyle) enhances digestion, improves iron absorption, and nourishes the blood, while *Apathya* (unwholesome food and habits) aggravates the *doshas* and worsens the condition. This article systematically presents the role of *Pathya* and *Apathya* in managing *Pandu Roga* effectively.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

PATHYA (WHOLESOME DIET AND LIFESTYLE IN PANDU ROGA)

Pathya includes food and lifestyle choices that support proper digestion, enhance blood formation, and pacify aggravated *Pitta Dosha*.

Pathya Ahara (Wholesome Diet)

Ayurveda emphasizes the consumption of easily digestible, iron-rich, and *Pitta*-pacifying foods, including

1. Iron-Rich Foods

Green leafy vegetables: Moringa (*Shigru*), Amaranthus (*Tanduliyaka*), Spinach (*Palak*)^[6]

Root vegetables: Beetroot, Carrots

Fruits: Pomegranate (*Dadima*), Black raisins (*Draksha*), Dates (*Kharjura*), Figs (*Anjeer*)

Sesame seeds (*Til*) and Nuts, Jaggery(*guda*)

2. Easily Digestible Foods

Old rice (*Shali*), Barley (*Yava*), Wheat (*Godhuma*)

Moong dal (*Mudga*), Buttermilk (*Takra*) with *Pippali*

3. Rakta Dhatu-Enhancing Foods

Amla^[12] (*Emblica officinalis*) – rich in Vitamin C, enhances iron absorption

Grapes (*Draksha*), Fig (*Anjeer*) – improves blood circulation

Ghee infused with *Yashtimadhu* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*)

4. Ayurvedic Herbal Support

Ayurvedic Formulations: *Punarnavadi Mandura, Lohasava, Navayas Lauha*

Herbs: *Ashwagandha, Shatavari, Guduchi*

2. Pathya Vihara (Wholesome Lifestyle)

1. Moderate Physical Activity

Light yoga and *Pranayama* (*nadi shodhan, bhastrika*) improve oxygenation

Daily morning walks enhance circulation

2. Adequate Rest and Sleep

Avoidance of excessive exertion and mental stress

Proper sleep cycle maintains *Dhatu Poshana*

3. Sunlight Exposure

Morning sunlight for Vitamin D synthesis, which aids iron absorption

4. Shodhana Therapies (Purification Procedures)

Raktamokshana (bloodletting) in severe cases to remove vitiated *Pitta*

Virechana (purgation therapy) to pacify aggravated *Pitta*.

3. APATHYA (UNWHOLESOME DIET AND LIFE STYLE IN PANDU ROGA)

Apithya includes dietary and lifestyle habits that aggravate *Pitta*, impair digestion, and hinder blood formation.

3.1 Apathya Ahara (Unwholesome Diet)

1. Pitta-Aggravating Foods

Excessive sour, spicy, and salty foods

Pickles, Vinegar, Fermented foods

2. Heavy and Indigestible Foods

Red meat, Excessive dairy consumption (curd, Cheese, milk with meals)

Fried and processed foods

3. Excessive Intake of Tea and Coffee

Inhibits iron absorption, increases acidity

3.2 Apathya Vihara (Unwholesome Lifestyle)

1. Overexertion and Stress

Heavy physical work, excessive mental stress, late-night studies

2. Irregular Sleeping Patterns

Sleeping late at night disturbs digestion and metabolism.

3. Exposure to Polluted Environments

Reduces oxygen supply, leading to poor hemoglobin synthesis

4. skipping meals or prolonged fasting causes nutritional deficiency.

4. DISCUSSION

The principles of *Ayurveda* emphasize that the treatment of *Pandu Roga*, should not be limited to medications alone but should incorporate dietary and lifestyle modifications. Consumption of iron-rich, easily digestible, and *Pitta*-pacifying foods supports blood formation. Avoidance of incompatible and heavy foods prevents further deterioration of *Rakta Dhatu*. Lifestyle habits such as moderate exercise, adequate rest, and sun exposure play a vital role in improving overall health. *Shodhana* therapies like *Raktamokshana* and *Virechana* help in severe cases.

5. CONCLUSION

Pathya (wholesome diet and lifestyle) plays a significant role in preventing and managing *Pandu Roga*. A balanced diet rich in iron, proper digestion, detoxifying therapies, and stress management significantly improve the condition. Avoiding *Apathya* factors such as excessive spicy foods, processed foods, overexertion, and stress helps in maintaining a healthy *Rakta Dhatu*. *Ayurveda*'s holistic approach to *Pandu Roga* management offers a sustainable and natural way to improve overall well-being.

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