

TIMIR: AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE ON REFRACTIVE ERRORS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MYOPIA

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Article Received on 30 Dec. 2025,
Article Revised on 19 Jan. 2026,
Article Published on 01 Feb. 2026,

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18431017>

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How to cite this Article: *Dr. Isha Jain (2026). Timir: An Ayurvedic Perspective On Refractive Errors With Special Reference To Myopia. "World Journal of Pharmaceutical Research, 15(3), 997-1001.

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ABSTRACT

Myopia is a common refractive condition in which distant objects appear unclear, and its prevalence is increasing rapidly, particularly among students and young adults. Ayurveda explains visual disorders under the broad heading of *Timir*, a disease affecting *Drishti* due to disturbance of ocular *Doshas*. The early stages of *Timir* show close similarity to Myopia in terms of symptoms, etiological factors, and disease progression. This article presents an Ayurvedic interpretation of Myopia through the concept of *Timir*, focusing on causative factors, pathogenesis, clinical features, and management principles described in classical texts, along with their correlation to modern ophthalmology.

KEYWORDS: *Timir*, Myopia, Refractive Error, *Drishti Roga*, Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

Refractive errors are among the leading causes of visual impairment worldwide, with Myopia being the most prevalent. Myopia is characterized by difficulty in seeing distant objects clearly, while near vision remains relatively unaffected. Rapid lifestyle changes such as excessive near work, prolonged digital screen exposure, reduced outdoor activity, improper posture, and psychological stress have significantly increased the incidence of myopia.

Ayurvedic literature provides an elaborate description of ocular diseases under *Netra Roga*. Among them, *Timir* is a progressive disorder involving *Drishti*. Acharya Sushruta explains

Timir as a disease caused by vitiation of *doshas* affecting the internal ocular structures, particularly the *Patalas*. The symptomatology of *Prathama* and *Dwitiya Patala Timir* closely resembles that of simple and progressive myopia, making this correlation clinically significant.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is a literary review based on classical Ayurvedic texts such as *Sushruta Samhita*, *Charaka Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, and *Ashtanga Sangraha*. Standard textbooks of modern ophthalmology and published research articles were also reviewed. Information was critically analyzed to establish a conceptual correlation between *Timir* and *Myopia*.

Ayurvedic Understanding of *Timir*

According to Ayurveda, *Timir* develops when vitiated *Vata Dosha*, along with *Kapha* or *Pitta*, enters the *Drishti Mandala* and progressively affects the *Patalas* of the eye. Acharya *Sushruta* describes the progressive involvement of four *Patalas*, resulting in gradual deterioration of vision.

Classical Description (*Shloka Pramāṇa*)

Sushruta Samhita, Uttara Tantra 7/3-4

दोषैर्वातादिभिः दृष्टिः संप्राप्तैः पटलान्विता।
क्रमात् सम्मूढतां याति तिमिरं तेन कश्यते॥

Meaning

When *Doshas*, predominantly *Vata*, enter the *Drishti* and progressively involve the *Patalas*, vision gradually becomes indistinct. This condition is termed *Timir*.

Prathama Patala Timir – Correlation with Simple Myopia

Sushruta Samhita, Uttara Tantra 7/6

दूरस्थं न पश्यति समीपस्थं तु पश्यति।
प्रथमं पटलं गत्वा तिमिरं जायते नृणाम्॥

Meaning

When *Doshas* affect the first *Patala*, the person is unable to see distant objects clearly, while near vision remains unaffected.

Clinical Correlation

This description is identical to Myopia, where distant vision is blurred but near vision is preserved.

Dwitiya Patala Timir – Progressive Visual Disturbance

Sushruta Samhita, Uttara Tantra 7/7

द्वितीयं पटलं प्राप्य रूपाणि विकृतानि च।
पश्यत्यव्यक्तरूपाणि तिमिरं वर्धते ततः॥

Meaning

With the involvement of second *Patala*, objects appear distorted and unclear, and visual impairment increases.

Clinical Correlation

This stage resembles Progressive Myopia, where blurring and distortion gradually worsen.

Pathophysiology of Timir and it's similarity to Myopia

From an Ayurvedic perspective, *Vata Dosha* plays a predominant role in *Timir* due to its *Ruksha*, *Laghu*, and *Chala* properties, leading to instability and impaired nourishment of ocular tissues. Associated *Kapha Dosha* causes heaviness and obstruction, resulting in blurred vision.

Modern ophthalmology explains Myopia as a refractive error caused by axial elongation of the eyeball or increased refractive power, causing images to focus in front of the retina. Although Ayurveda does not describe axial elongation anatomically, the concept of *Dosha*-induced functional derangement of *Drishhti* closely parallels this mechanism.

Etiological Factors (Nidana)

Ayurvedic texts emphasize *Asatmya Indriyartha Samyoga* as a major cause of *Timir*.

Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana 8/31

असात्म्येन्द्रियार्थसंयोगाद्दोषा विकृपिता नृणाम्।
नेत्ररोगान् जनयन्ति तिमिरं च विशेषतः॥

Meaning

Improper and excessive use of sense organs leads to *Dosha* vitiation, resulting in eye diseases,

particularly *Timir*.

These causes closely resemble modern risk factors for Myopia such as prolonged near work, excessive screen exposure, poor lighting, lack of outdoor activity, mental stress, and inadequate sleep.

Correlation between *Timir* and Myopia

Aspect	<i>Timir</i> (Ayurveda)	Myopia (Modern View)
Nature	Progressive <i>Drishti Roga</i>	Progressive refractive error
Early symptom	<i>Avyakta Darshana</i>	Blurred distant vision
Pathogenesis	<i>Dosha</i> vitiation affecting <i>Patalas</i>	Axial elongation / refractive imbalance
Progression	Sequential <i>Patala</i> involvement	Increasing dioptric power
Management	<i>Shodhana, Shamana, Kriyakalpa</i>	Optical correction & lifestyle measures

DISCUSSION

The conceptual similarity between *Timir* and Myopia highlights the advanced understanding of ocular physiology in Ayurveda. Acharya *Vagbhata* emphasizes early diagnosis and management of *Timir* to preserve vision.

Ashtanga Hridaya, Uttara Sthana 13/1

आदौ रोगान् जयेद् बुद्ध्या पश्चात् भेषजैः पुनः।
तिमिरे च विशेषेण दृष्टिरक्षणमिष्यते॥

Meaning

Diseases should be treated intelligently in their early stages, especially *Timir*, to protect vision. Ayurvedic management includes:

- ***Shodhana* therapies** such as *Virechana* and *Nasya*
- ***Shamana* therapy** using *Triphala*, *Amalaki*, and *Yashtimadhu*
- ***Kriyakalpa* procedures** like *Tarpana*, *Putapaka*, *Aschhyotana*, and *Anjana*
- **Preventive measures** including eye rest, accommodative eye exercises, regulated screen time, adequate sleep, and outdoor activity

These measures may help reduce eye strain and slow the progression of early Myopia.

Pathya Apathya in *Timir*

Pathya - *Mudga* (green gram), *Sita*, *Jeevanti*, *Vastuk*, *Patol*, *Karwellak*, *Kumari*, *Vihangamamsa*, *Jangal Yava*, *Lohitshali* (red rice), and *Mayuramamsa*, *Dadim*, *Draksha*,

Triphala, Ajaghrat, Peya, Vilepi, Yush etc.

Apaphya - Ushna, Vidahi, Ruksha Aahar.

CONCLUSION

Timir provides a comprehensive Ayurvedic explanation for visual disturbances closely resembling Myopia. The early stages of Myopia can be effectively correlated with *Prathama* and *Dwitiya Patala Timir*. Early Ayurvedic intervention combined with lifestyle modification may help preserve visual acuity and prevent disease progression. An integrative approach combining Ayurveda and modern ophthalmology offers promising outcomes in the management of refractive errors.

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