



A REVIEW ON ROLE OF AHAR IN PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF PRAMEHA

Sonal Gupta¹, Sudama Singh Yadav²

¹JR-3, Department of Samhita and Sanskrit, Faculty of Ayurveda, Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University

²Assistant Professor, Department of Samhita and Sanskrit, Faculty of Ayurveda, Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University

Corresponding Author: drsonalbhu@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj2011012023>

(Published Online: January 2023)

Open Access

© International Ayurvedic Medical Journal, India 2023

Article Received: 30/12/2022 - Peer Reviewed: 13/01/2023 - Accepted for Publication: 17/01/2023.



ABSTRACT

India has an estimated 77 million people (1 in 11 Indians) formally diagnosed with diabetes, which makes it the second most affected in the world, after China.^[1] Furthermore, 700,000 Indians died of diabetes, hyperglycaemia, kidney disease, or other complications of diabetes in 2020. One in six people (17%) in the world with diabetes is from India.^[2] (India's population as calculated in October 2018 was about 17.5% of the global total. ^[3]) The number is projected to grow by 2045 to become 134 million per the International Diabetes Federation.^[2] This article establishes the truthfulness of the Ayurvedic concept and the role of *Ahar dravyas* (dietics) in reference to *Prameha* (Diabetes mellitus). Yet *prameha* is multifactorial but diet and physical activity play important role in the management of prediabetic and diabetic conditions, that is the reason behind the detailed description of dietic and physical activity in the prevention and management of *prameha*. *Ahar dravyas* having excess *Madhur*, *amla*, *lavana rasa*, and *snigdha* and *guru* properties tend to incline the person towards *prameha*. Therefore, a diet having opposite properties of these attributes like *yava*, honey, old cereals, etc play a key role in the prevention and management of *prameha*.

Keywords: Ayurveda, *Prameha*, *Ahar*, Diabetes Mellitus, *Madhumeha*

INTRODUCTION

Diabetes Mellitus, a complex metabolic disorder, is associated with the diet for centuries. This disease is increasing day by day because it has a hereditary background. At the same time with the advent of automobiles and machines, physical labour is enormously reduced especially with the availability of a rich diet. So, this disease finds a volatile atmosphere to grow in society. That is why it is also known as one of the diseases of civilisation. The challenge for the medical profession has also increased because of the errors of carbohydrate metabolism, the chief derangement of this disease with the available drugs, and because of the complications that arise due to it. It is difficult to be controlled despite full control of sugar metabolism. There is not a single system that is not involved or deranged in some cases of Diabetes Mellitus. Complications of the cardiovascular system, nervous system, urinary system, and eyeball changes make the management complex, and the life of the patient becomes measurable. Modern medical sciences as well as Ayurvedic *sastras* have given more importance to *Ahar*(diet). *Maharshi Charak* described that the body is the product of food, and diseases occur as a result of faulty food. The distinction between pleasure(health) and pain(disease) arises as a result of the difference between a wholesome and unwholesome diet⁽⁴⁾. It is described in *shastras* that the intake of pure *ahar*(diet) or *hitahar* gives Arogya. The ancient Ayurvedic scholars have given much more importance to the intake of proper *ahar* and following proper *vihar* for leading a disease-free life. In appreciation of the dietic role, it is described by *Pandit Lolimbaraj Vaidhya* that if a patient follows the dietic regimen of a particular disease he does not need to take medicine, on the contrary, if he does not obey the same there is no sense of giving him treatment. In the treatment of *Prameha* *Charak* has described that excess intake of *kapha vridhdhikara aharas* i.e., *dadhi*, *navanna*, sugar-added foods, and flesh and marshy water living birds are the main cause of *Prameha*. These aetiological factors not only create *Prameha* but also cause similar disorders in the body. Similarly, multiple aetiological factors may be involved in the

causation of one disease, or one cause may lead to multiple diseases⁽⁵⁾. In *charak Samhita nidan sthana*⁽⁶⁾ *Acharya Charak* has defined therapeutics as the use of drugs, diet, and regimen which is contrary to the etiology of the disease, contrary to disease, and contrary to both aetiology and disease. The use of such drugs, diet, and regimen which is contrary to aetiology, disease, aetiology, and disease both keeps the individual healthy for a long time.

Literature review-

The history of dietic is very old, which is an essential factor for the maintenance of life as mentioned by *Acharya Sushruta* that diet is the basis of life together with strength, complexion, and *ojas* of all living being⁽⁷⁾. According to *Rigveda*'s description, *Purusha* is all that contains the events of the past, present, and future. He is also the governor of *Amruta* (nectar or immortality) and that which is manifested by *Anna*(diet)⁽⁸⁾. In *Atharvaveda*, the rice cooked with water, ghee, and mixed with the juice of *soma* is the diet of *Brahmana* (which is called the *Brahmodana*)⁽⁹⁾. In *Taiteriyopnishad*, *Anna* has been recognised as a great entity for life. *Chhandogya upanisad* lays more emphasis on the purity of food and its effect on the body and mind. *Manusmriti* also lays more importance on food and mentions certain psychic disorders due to the intake of erroneous diet⁽¹⁰⁾. It is described in *shastras* that “Arogya Bhojanadhinam” i.e., the intake of pure *Ahar*(diet) or *hitahar* gives Arogya. By taking *hita*, *ahita ahar* the *Shubha ashubha* (harmful) effects on the body and manas can be seen necessarily. That means *hita ahar* creates a *subha* (advantageous) effect and *ahit ahar* creates an *asubha* (harmful) effect⁽¹¹⁾. While describing the aetiology of *Prameha* *Acharya Charak* has mentioned that idle sitting, oversleeping, excessive use of curd, meat, soup of domestic, aquatic, and marshy animals and milk, new cereals and drinks, nutritive regimens lead to the development of *Prameha*⁽¹²⁾. *Acharya Sushruta* has described it as an anomaly of urinary secretion. They have also classified *Prameha* into 20 subdivisions. In the treatment of *Prameha*, the triple principles⁽¹³⁾ advised by *Acharya Charak* should be followed. They are-

1. *Apkarshana* (elimination of vitiated *dosha*),
2. *Prakriti vighata* (abolition of pathogenesis),
3. *Nidan parivarjan* (prohibition of aetiology). *Apkarshana* includes *Shodhana chikitsa* mainly under *Antah parimarjan and Bahih parimarjan*. *Prakriti vighata* means the destruction of bodily *doshas* obtained inside the body in 3 ways-

- a. *Pathyatmaka Ahar* (advantageous diet)
- b. *Pathyatmaka Vihar* (advantageous regimen)
- c. *Aushadha* (drugs)

Nidana parivarjan means the cause of disease should be avoided. As *Prameha* is *dravya Pradhan vyadhi* the disease is caused by *Apathya ahara*. So, the diet should be regulated.

The necessity of Pathyahara in Prameha-As *Prameha* is *dravya Pradhan vyadhi*, the importance of *Ahar* is unanimously accepted by all medical sciences. In ayurveda *shastras*, the *pathya ahar* is decided based on *dosha* and *dushya*. From the gross point of view, *Prameha dosha* is *shleshma* and *dushya* is *meda*, for which *kapha-medoghna* and *baddha mutra*-producing

substances are advocated. To follow *pathya* signifies obeying both *pratyatmika ahar and pathyatmaka vihar*.

Pathyatmaka Ahar-

To describe the *ahar dravyas* as described in Ayurveda in a simple and systematised way, the following classification of *Ahar dravya* is given.

The classification included in the *ahar vargas* as described in the *Charak, Sushruta, and Vagbhata Samhita* are-

1. *Suka dhanya*(corns with bristles)
2. *Samidhanya* (pulses)
3. *Truna dhanya*
4. *Mansa varga* (meat)
5. *Saka varga*(vegetables)
6. *Ahar yogi* (accessory food articles)
7. *Phala varga* (fruits)
8. *Sneha varga*
9. *Paniya varga*(drinks)
10. *Madhya varga* (alcoholic drinks)
11. *Mutra varga*
12. *Kritanna varga* (food preparations)

Prameha shastra sammat Ahar (diet as advised) in Ayurveda-

Sr.No.	Ahar Dravya	Charak Samhita ⁽¹⁴⁾	Sushruta Samhita ⁽¹⁵⁾	Vagbhata Samhita ⁽¹⁶⁾
	Shuka Dhanya varga			
1.	<i>Purana shali</i>	+	+	+
2.	<i>Sasthika</i>	+	+	+
3.	<i>Godhuma</i>	+	+	+
4.	<i>Yava</i>	+	+	+
5.	<i>Venuyava</i>	+	+	+
	Shami Dhanya varga			
6.	<i>Mudga</i>	+	+	+
7.	<i>Masura</i>	-	+	+
8.	<i>Chana</i>	-	+	-
9.	<i>Adhaki</i>	-	+	-
10.	<i>Kulatha</i>	-	+	-
	Kshudra Dhanya varga			
11.	<i>Kodrava</i>	+	+	+
12.	<i>Jangai kodrava</i>	+	+	-
13.	<i>Shyamaka</i>	+	+	+
14.	<i>Hasti shyamaka</i>	+	-	-
	Mansa varga			
15.	<i>Pratuda mansa</i>	+	-	-

16.	<i>Viskira mansa</i>	+	-	-
17.	<i>Jangala mansa</i>	+	+	+
18.	<i>Shulya mansa</i>	+	-	+
19.	<i>Meda shulya mansa</i>	-	+	-
	<i>Shaka varga</i>			
20.	<i>Katutikta shaka</i>	+	+	+
21.	<i>Patola</i>	-	-	-
	<i>Ahar yogi varga</i>			
22.	<i>Haridra</i>	+	+	+
23.	<i>Maricha</i>	-	+	-
24.	<i>Hingu</i>	-	+	-
25.	<i>Saindhava</i>	-	+	-
	<i>Sneha varga</i>			
26.	<i>Ausadha siddha ghrita</i>	+	+	+
27.	<i>Danti taila</i>	+	+	+
28.	<i>Engudi taila</i>	+	+	+
29.	<i>Atashi taila</i>	+	+	+
30.	<i>Sarshapa taila</i>	+	+	+
	<i>Phala varga</i>			
31.	<i>Kapitha</i>	-	+	+
32.	<i>Tinduka</i>	-	-	+
33.	<i>Jambu</i>	-	-	+
34.	<i>Amla</i>	+	+	+
35.	<i>Kharjura</i>	-	-	-
	<i>Paniya varga</i>			
36.	<i>Ksarodaka</i>	+	-	-
37.	<i>Kushodaka</i>	+	-	-
38.	<i>Triphala rasa</i>	+	-	-
39.	<i>Madhudoka</i>	+	+	-
	<i>Mutra varga</i>			
40.	<i>Gomutra along with other mutras of mutra varga</i>	-	+	-
	<i>Madya varga</i>			
41.	<i>Sidhu</i>	+	-	+
42.	<i>Arista</i>	-	-	+
43.	<i>Purana madya</i>	+	-	+
44.	<i>Asava</i>	-	-	+
	<i>Visistha yoga & anupana</i>			
45.	<i>Triphala yoga</i>	+	-	-
	<i>Anupana</i>			
46.	<i>Takra</i>	-	-	-
47.	<i>Madhu</i>	+	+	+
	<i>Ahar Kalpana</i>			
48.	<i>Yava sattu</i>	+	-	+
49.	<i>Yava apupa</i>	+	-	+

50.	<i>Yava vatya</i>	+	-	+
51.	<i>Yava odana</i>	+	-	-
52.	<i>Yava dhana</i>	+	-	+
53.	<i>Yava mantha</i>	-	-	+
54.	<i>Yava laja</i>	-	-	+
55.	<i>Godhuma sattva</i>	+	-	+
56.	<i>Godhuma apupa</i>	-	-	+
57.	<i>Godhuma vatya</i>	-	-	+
58.	<i>Godhuma dhana</i>	-	-	+
59.	<i>Mudga yusha</i>	+	+	+
60.	<i>Puranashali odana</i>	+	-	+
61.	<i>Chanakopadansa laja</i>	-	-	+
62.	<i>Trikukkuta khanda khand</i>	-	-	+
63.	<i>Shilauncchanna sattva</i>	-	+	-
64.	<i>Shilauncchanna apupa</i>	-	+	-
65.	<i>Shilauncchanna vatya</i>	-	+	-
67.	<i>Shilauncchanna dhana</i>	-	+	-
68.	<i>Shilauncchanna mantha</i>	-	+	-
69.	<i>Shilauncchanna yusha</i>	-	+	-
70.	<i>Shilauncchanna odana</i>	-	+	-

Vihar (Exercise)- As mentioned earlier lack of exercise and excessive sleep during the day and nighttime play important roles in the etiology of *Prameha*. Emphasis on this point has also been given by ancient Ayurvedic physicians. *Acharya Sushruta* has described in detail the management of *Prameha* in poor and rich patients with exercise and diet⁽¹⁷⁾. For those patients, it has been said that they should move from one to another village and earn his living by begging. By this verse, Sushruta wants to convey the role of exercise and less intake of food in the management of *Prameha*. For rich patients, he described that one who eats *shyamaka*, fruits of *amalaka*, *Tinduka*, and *ashmantaka*, and like with animal and who work by breaking stones, becomes relieved from the disease *Prameha* within one year. In *Chakradutta Prameha chikitsa adhikara* it is described, in order to overcome *Prameha* one should live as a mendicant, roam about continuously for up to a hundred *yojana* (*yojana*=8 miles) or more without shoes and umbrella and keep on almas or should move about in a forest keeping on the diet of wild rice and

amalaka⁽¹⁸⁾. So, ancient scholars have given more importance to walking exercise as it is given by modern medical science.

Aushadha- When the disease is not controlled by diet and exercise then drugs are indicated. In general, drugs having *katu*(pungent), *tikta*(bitter), and *Kashaya*(astringent) *rasa* are indicated in all types of *prameha*.

DISCUSSION

Prameha is one of the lifestyle disorders that need proper care of diet and lifestyle modification to avoid complications. Adopting a healthy diet helps a lot to manage *Prameha* through *Pathya Ahara*. To control the excess of *Kledatha* and further vitiation of *Medas* and *Mansa* there is a need for a proper diet plan. *Shyamaka* (Japanese barnyard millet) has the property of *Shoshana* and *Ruksha* which removes excess *Kledata* and pacifies *Kapha Dosha*. *Kodrava*(kodo millet) is *Grahi*(absorbent) and pacifies *Kapha*. *Uddalaka* (Sebastian) is *Madhura*, *Kashaya*, and *Tikta Rasa* controls vitiation of *Kapha Dosha* and dries up an excess of *Kledatva* in the body. *Godhuma*(wheat)

promotes instant strength in the body by nourishing the *Dhatus* without increasing *Kapha Dosh*. *Chanaka* (Bengal gram) is *Ruksha*, *Kashaya Rasa* helps to reduce *Kledata* and does not increase *Kapha Dosh*, can use *Chanaka Yusha*, *Chanaka Rotika*, etc. *Kulatta* (Horse gram) is having *Kashaya Rasa*, *Teekshna*, and *Ushna* property ceases *Kaphaja Vikaras* when used as *Kulatta Yusha* preparation. *Tikta Shakas* (bitter taste vegetables) like *Karavellaka* (bitter gourd) is bitter in taste controls *Prameha*. *Shobhanjana phala* (drumstick fruits) by its *kashaya rasa*, *kaphahara* property controls *Prameha*. *Yava* (barley) is having *Kashaya Rasa*, *Lekhana*, *Ruksha*, and *Anabhishandi* action results in maintaining the normal level of *Kledata*, and *Kapha Dosh* can be brought under control. It gives strength to the body when taken has *Yava Mantha*, *Vaatya Manda*, etc. *Acharya Charaka* has advised some of the foods like *Mantha*, *Kashaya*, *Yava Churna*, *Lehya* prepared of barley and other eatables, *Yavaudana*, *Vatya*, *Saktu*, and *Yava* along with honey to control *Prameha*. *Purana Shali* is cooked and mixed with *Mudga Yusha* and preparations of bitter vegetables. *Yava* soaked in *Triphala Kashaya* and kept overnight mixed with honey acts as a refreshing diet.

CONCLUSION

The study of historical concepts reveals that the description of *Ahar* (diet) existed since time immemorial. A wholesome diet keeps health diseases free, and the reverse is the cause of all diseases. *Ahar* comprises one-third of the total *chikitsa*. Almost all the *shastras* have given more emphasis on *Ahar* to get rid of the disease. I have given the list of various cereals and other dietic components which are described in the *Samhitas* of ayurveda. It is the responsibility of the ayurvedic physician to sort out the best among them and prescribe them accordingly to the diabetic person. All the great scholars *Charak*, *Sushruta*, and *Vagbhatta* have given more importance to 'yava' the best food for diabetes. *Prameha* is one lifestyle disorder it can be effectively managed through proper diet intake. Ayurveda an ancient medical science gives importance to *Ahara* as it considers it as three

Upastamba (sub-pillars) of life. In *Prameha* by administering *Ahara* having *Kashaya*, *Tikta Rasa*, and *Ruksha* helps to reduce the excess of *Kledata*, *Kapha Dosh*, helps to maintain *Mansa*, *Meda Dhatvagni* in *Saamyavastha* in the body. Thus, dietary management helps to prevent complications from arising it.

REFERENCES

1. Tandon, Nikhil; Anjana, Ranjit M.; Mohan, Viswanathan; Kaur, Tanvir; Afshin, Ashkan; Ong, Kanyin; Mukhopadhyay, Satinath; Thomas, Nihal; Bhatia, Eesh; Krishnan, Anand; Mathur, Prashant (2018-12-01). "The increasing burden of diabetes and variations among the states of India: The Global Burden of Disease Study 1990–2016". *The Lancet Global Health*. 6 (12): e1352–e1362. doi:10.1016/S2214-109X(18)30387-5. ISSN 2214-109X. PMC 6227383. PMID 30219315.
2. Kannan, Ramya (2019-11-14). "India is home to 77 million diabetics, second highest in the world". *The Hindu*. ISSN 0971-751X. Retrieved 2020-04-29.
3. Geoffrey Migiro (October 25, 2018). "Countries By Percentage Of World Population". *World Atlas*. Retrieved May 19, 2020.
4. Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji *Acharya*, *Charak Samhita* with Ayurveda -Dipika commentary, Edition 2021, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Sutrasthana 28/45, Page no. 181
5. Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji *Acharya*, *Charak Samhita* with Ayurveda -Dipika commentary, Edition 2021, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Nidansthana 4/24, Page no. 214
6. Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji *Acharya*, *Charak Samhita* with Ayurveda -Dipika commentary, Edition 2021, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Nidansthana 1/10, Page no. 195
7. Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji *Acharya*, *Sushruta Samhita* with *Nibandhasangraha* commentary, Edition 2021, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Sutrasthana 40/4, Page no. 175
8. F Max Muller, *Rigveda Samhita*, Edition 1983, Krishnadas Academy Varanasi, Volume 4, 10/90/2
9. Shankar Pandurang Pandit, *Atharvaveda Samhita*, Edition 1989, Krishnadas Academy Varanasi, 1/2/18, Page no. 19
10. *Manusmriti* 2/54-55
11. Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji *Acharya*, *Charak Samhita* with Ayurveda -Dipika commentary, Edition 2021, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Sutrasthana 28/45, Page no. 181

12. Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji *Acharya, Charak Samhita with Ayurveda -Dipika commentary*, Edition 2021, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Chikitsasthana 6/4, Page no. 445
13. Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji *Acharya, Charak Samhita with Ayurveda -Dipika commentary*, Edition 2021, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Vimansthana 7/14, Page no. 259
14. Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji *Acharya, Charak Samhita with Ayurveda -Dipika commentary*, Edition 2021, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Chikitsasthana 6, Page no. 446-450
15. Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji *Acharya, Sushruta Samhita with Nibandhasangraha commentary*, Edition 2021, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Chikitsasthana 11, Page no. 451-454
16. Laalchandra shastri Vaidya, *Ashtanga sangraha with Sarvanga sundari commentary*, Edition 1989, Vaidyanath ayurveda bhawan private limited, Chikitsasthana 14, Page no. 838-852
17. Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji *Acharya, Sushruta Samhita with Nibandhasangraha commentary*, Edition 2021, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Chikitsasthana 11, Page no. 453
18. Indradeva Tripathi, Chakradutta, Edition 2010, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Bhawan, *Prameha chikitsa* 35/60, Page no. 220

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Sonal Gupta & Sudama Singh Yadav: A Review on Role of Ahar in Prevention and Management of Prameha. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2023 {cited January 2023} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/135_141.pdf