



Review Article

www.ijrap.net

(ISSN Online:2229-3566, ISSN Print:2277-4343)



AYURVEDIC RECIPES AS NUTRITIOUS PATHYA FOR CHILDREN: A REVIEW

Bhagyalaxmi RM Naik ^{1*}, Prabhu C Nagalapur ², Chandrashekaraddi S Karmudi ³, Shrimant G Chavan ⁴

¹ PG Scholar, Department of Swasthavritta, SJG Ayurvedic Medical College, Koppal, Karnataka, India

² Professor and HOD of Swasthavritta, SJG Ayurvedic Medical College, Koppal, Karnataka, India

³ Associate Professor, Department of Swasthavritta, SJG Ayurvedic Medical College, Koppal, Karnataka, India

⁴ Associate Professor, Department of Panchakarma, Himalayiya Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital. Fatehpur Tanda, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India

Received on: 26/03/23 Accepted on: 29/05/23

*Corresponding author

E-mail: laxmibams.bn@gmail.com

DOI: 10.7897/2277-4343.140397

ABSTRACT

Any individual's nutrient requirements are based on age, gender, and activity. With developing age, the child shows many changes. Their association with food assumes a varied spectrum to the extent of acceptance, rejection, or selection of food. But good nutrition remains fundamental to the child's physical and mental growth and development. The media exposure to tempting eatables sold in packets like wafers, etc., is the primary factor for the wrong selection of food habits. In children, the matter of concern is the quality of food. So, it is essential for some adequate supervision for the selection of food and healthy eating for preventing and postponing nutrition-related chronic diseases. There is a vast description of healthy and nutritious food in Ayurveda, with easy methods of preparation making it more acceptable in children. Pathya and apathya are used to denote the acceptability and adaptability of a particular food. Accepting that children are picky in taking food, a slight modification can make it more acceptable. The pathya kalpana is like krushara (kichidi), misraodana (boiled rice), and krutta mudga yusha (soup prepared with pulses.) yavagu (gruel) etc., are not only nutritious but also act as agni deepaka (appetizer) ruchya, (improves taste perception) balya, (promotes strength) tarpaka, (nourishing), vatanulomaka (carminative). These ahara kalpana helps restore agni's normal functioning to digest food properly and give essential nutrition to the body. So, this is an attempt to put light on Ayurvedic recipes such as nutritious food for the growth and development of children.

Keywords: Ayurvedic Nutritious food, Pathya Kalpana, Yusha, Yavagu

INTRODUCTION

The main aim of Ayurveda is to preserve and promote the health of healthy individuals along with the prevention and cure of ailments. To attain this, one must follow the rules and regulations mentioned in classics related to food or lifestyle. In Ayurveda, the ahara is the critical component of life, and it is considered in trayo upasthamba (three pillars of life)¹. Wholesome food forms the body and happiness, whereas unwholesome food gives rise to disease and unhappiness. Food imparts the nourishment, strength, and construction of the body tissues and enhances the life span, colour complexion, memory, immunity, and digestive fire. A high number of children are suffering the consequence of poor diets and food system that is failing them, UNICEF warned in a report on children's food and nutrition. Despite all the technological, cultural, and social advances of the last few decades, we have lost sight of the most basic fact. Millions of children subsist on an unhealthy diet because they do not have a better choice. The way we understand and respond to malnutrition needs to change. It is not just about getting children enough to eat; it is, above all, getting them the right food to eat². In modern concept, the word nutrient or food factor is used for specific dietary constituents such as proteins, vitamins, minerals, and fats, but in Ayurveda, many factors are taken into consideration, like, nitya sevaniya ahara described by Charaka, krutanna kalpana (prepared foods) explained by Kaiyadeva Nighantu as pathya kalpana and siddhanna varga explained by Yogaratnakara. Here is an attempt to adopt the right

kind of food in the daily kitchen of mothers for better growth and development of the child.

A balanced diet in modern science

As per "Dietary Guidelines for Indians, 2011" by the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), a balanced diet provides all nutrients in required amounts and proper proportions. It should provide around 50-60% of total calories from carbohydrates, preferably from complex carbohydrates, about 10-15% from proteins and 20-30% from visible and invisible fat. In addition, it should provide other non-nutrients, such as dietary fibre and antioxidants, which bestow positive health benefits. The guidelines depict the importance of foods through a "Food Pyramid". A balanced diet is recommended through a blend of four primary food groups: cereals, millets, and pulses; vegetables and fruits; oils, fats, and nuts; milk and animal foods³.

A balanced diet in Ayurveda: The concept of a balanced diet was also mentioned in Charaka Samhita, under things which are always conducive to health & should be consumed regularly for health maintenance. According to Acharya Charaka, the foods to consume daily are shashtika shali (rice grown in 60 days), a good energy source, protein, minerals, and B group vitamins. It contributes 70 to 80% of total energy intake. Rice proteins are rich in lysine, an essential amino acid that other cereals protein. Godhuma (wheat) is a good source of protein and fibre, and yava (barley); is rich in carbohydrates, vitamins B1, B2, and phosphorous. The primary source of protein, mudga (green gram), contains 25% protein along with calcium, potassium, and

phosphorus. It is easy to digest. Saindhava (rock salt) enhances hunger and gives food flavour. It is claimed that potassium predominates over sodium in its composition. Amalaki (*Emblica officinalis*) is the most potent vitamin C source in the plant kingdom. It is the best antioxidant. The gastric acid is best balanced by it. Divyodaka (rainwater) or antariksha-jala is the primary source of all water, and the purest water found in nature, ghee, is easier to absorb. It can bind to lipid-soluble nutrients and herbs through the body's lipid-based cell walls. According to Charaka, cow's milk is one of the best foods for rejuvenation. It contains a perfect balance of all the nutrients. Madhu (honey) aggravates Vata, Rakta, and Pitta, including Kaphahara, ruksha, kashaya, and madhura. The best meat is identified as jangalamamsa (it comes from animals that live in dry areas), and it is ruchya. Animal flesh has 20% protein and 3-5% fat, and 100 gm of it will provide 194 calories of energy when consumed. Jangala mamsa is an abundant source of biologically valuable protein comparable to a balanced meal in the modern day. Acharya Vagbhata - godhuma (wheat), vegetables like sunishannaka, jivanthi, balamulaka, Pathya (*Terminalia chebula*), Mrudwika (*Vitis vinifera*), Patola (*Trichosanthes dioica*), sharkara (sugar), and Dadima can be regularly consumed⁵. Maintaining a nutritional status that allows us to "Maintaining a nutritional status that enables us to grow well and enjoy good health" is the definition of good nutrition. People who eat healthfully live long lives, while those who don't perish away much sooner.⁴

Importance of Pathya Kalpana

Pathya means which is suitable or fit or wholesome.

Kalpana means the process through which samskara is done.

Pathya kalpana means which is hita (good) for rogi, which increases life⁶. These are the preparation which is wholesome to the body and mind without causing any unwanted effect. They are helpful in the body healthy and diseased. All these benefits can be gained by adopting krutanna varga, siddhanna varga of various texts. Everything depends on the preparation method, even if the material used is the same. Like manda, peya, vilepi, krita yusha etc., in Bhela Samhita, pathya ahara nourishes all dhatus and srotas (channels), leading to complete nutrition to the body.

KRUTANNA VARGA AND SIDDHANNA PREPARATIONS

Misrakodana

Ingredients: Shuka dhanya: Shali (grains), Shimbi dhanya (mudga, adhaki, masura) and 10 parts water.

Method: Misra odana is prepared by mixing both shuka dhanya (cereals like shali) and shimbi dhanya (legumes and pulses like mudga (*Vigna radiate*), adhaki (*Vigna acontifolia*), masura (*Lens culinaris*) etc. Both are mixed with 10 parts of water and cooked well. The extra supernatant water is drained, and the remaining part is consumed.

Benefits: Guru, (heavy) balakaraka (strength promoting) hithakara (wholesome) to heart, tarpaka (nourishing) and agni deepaka (appetizer)⁷.

Masha tandula krsara

Ingredients: Shali, Masha (*Vigna mungo*), Hingu, (asafoetida), saindhava lavana (rock salt), Ardraka (*Zingiber officinale*) and ghrita (clarified butter).

Method: Shali particles are taken in and pounded slightly. Then 1/4 of masha is taken, and krsara is prepared with them. After that hingu, saindhava lavana, ardraka and little ghee is added to this and eaten.

Benefits: It is balya, guru, decreases Vata, increases bala and pusti (nourishing).⁸

Kruta mudga yusha

Ingredients: Mudga, Dadima (*Punica granatum*), saindhava lavana, Shunti, Dhanyaka, Pippali (*Piper longum*) and Jeeraka churna (*Cuminum cyminum*).

Method: 2 pala of mudga + ½ Adraka of water is added and cooked till 1/4th part. It is then smashed and added with Dadima 1 pala, saindhava lavana, Shunti, Dhanyaka, Pippali and Jeeraka churna 1 shana. (Chanaka, Masha, Adaki yusha also can be made).

Benefits: It is hrudya, agni deepaka, sheeta virya, and madhura in conditions like trushna (thirst), daha (burning sensation) etc. (uncooked legumes contain anti-nutritional factors that can be toxic; heating increases the protein quality by destroying anti-nutritional aspects, increasing digestibility and availability of amino acids. The prakshepakas (materials like powders) like Pippali is a digestive. It has got rasayana (rejuvenating) properties. Jeeraka is also a stimulant and carminative agent. They are used for intestinal disorders. Shunti possesses antioxidant properties. Reduces inflammation and neutralizes digestive acids. Saindhava lavana improves digestion, stabilizes blood pressure, etc.⁹

Manda as an energy drink

Ingredients: Shali and water.

Method: Shali 1 part+ 14 parts of the water is added and cooked till rice is soft, and supernatant water is collected and added with salt and given to drink.

Benefits: It is laghu, agni vardhaka, vatanulomaka (carminative), it is pachaka (digestion), grahi (absorbent), dhatu satmyaka (wholesome to dhatus), shrama hara (removes fatigue) and trushna hara. The major carbohydrate or rice is starch which is 72 to 75 percent. Rice also contains free sugars like glucose, fructose, sucrose and raffinose. Compared to wheat, rice has a higher glycaemic index; glucose is released into the blood faster.¹⁰

Kulattha pancha yusha

Ingredients: Kulatha, Masha, Mudga, Adaki, Nispava (flat beans), water, saindhava lavana, Shunti and Pippali.

Method: Kulatha, Masha, Mudga, Adaki, and Nispava are mixed and taken as 1 part and added with 18 parts of water. When the Kulattha and other pulses get cooked, they are smashed, added with saindhava lavana, Shunti, and Pippali, and served to eat.

Benefits: It is sarva jwara hara, pachaka, laghu, ruchi karaka, anga marda and kshaya nashaka. panchamrutha yusha is snehana.¹¹

Trunadhanya odana: It is ruchi karaka, laghu, agni deepaka, vranagna and Vata karaka.¹²

Mudgodana: Odana made with Mudga yusha. It is madhura, Pittanashaka, destroys aruchi (loss of taste) (It has similar varieties like Masha siddha odana, Adaki siddha odana, Kulattha siddha odana etc.)¹³

Panchakola siddha Yavagu

Ingredients: Pippali, Pippali Mula, Chavya, Chitraka, Shunti, Shali and Jala.

Method: First, medicated water (panchakola siddha) is prepared with 6 times water, and then shali is advised to cook with this medicated water. Decoctions and 1 part of rice are then boiled on mild fire until the rice is cooked, and a little water remains.

Benefits: Yavagu has properties like grahi, balya, tarpini, and Vata nashini. And it also adopts the properties of the drug decoction used.¹⁴

Panchakola has the augmenting effect of agnideepana (appetizing) according to the rasa, vipaka, and virya. The latest research also shows the action of these individual drugs as a stimulant of appetite and a carminative.

The principal constituent of rice is starch. Starch is a source of calories. When heated in a moist environment, it swells and ruptures and permits greater enzymatic digestion by activating enzymes like amylase. Rakta shali variety of rice contains more iron value than white.

Shobanjana patra Yusha

Ingredients: Mudga, Shobanjana Patra (*Moringa oleifera*) and Jala.

Methods: Shobanjana patra sadhitajala should be prepared by taking 24 gm of Shobanajanapatra and adding 1500 ml of water, boiled and reducing it to 1/2th part. Later it is filtered. Yusha will be prepared with 40 gm of Mudga and 18 parts of the above-obtained jala in an open vessel till Mudga is cooked adequately to a soft consistency. The supernatant watery portion is the resultant preparation.

Benefits: It is commonly said that Shobanjana Patra contains more vitamin A than carrots, more vitamin C than oranges, more calcium than milk, more iron than spinach, and more potassium than bananas and that the protein quality of Moringa leaves rivals that of milk and eggs. They are also rich sources of flavanols such as kaempferol and 3'o Me quercetin.¹⁵

Rasala

Ingredients: Curd, sugar, milk, Maricha, Ela (*Elettaria cardamomum*) and Karpura.

Method: Curd tied in a cloth (to strain the whey out), beaten slowly with an equal quantity of sugar and half of the milk and added with Maricha, Ela, and Karpura.

Benefits: Balya, rochana, Vata Pitta hara, snighda, guru.¹⁶

DISCUSSION

NIN (2011) guidelines recommend preferring traditional and home-made foods, avoiding replacing meals with snack foods, and limiting consumption of sugar and processed foods which provide only empty calories. So, it further states that "processed foods being rich in fats, salt, sugar and preservatives may pose a health risk if consumed regularly" The above preparations are mainly prepared with the fundamental available ingredients of the kitchen like shuka and shimbi dhanya and with the specific technique of cooking.

It is also recognized that the children's special needs of growth, fighting infections, maturation, bone development and bodybuilding can be balanced with the preparations mentioned above and considering the samskara of food is done to enhance its properties. They fulfil the nutritional requirements, and kruttanna varga does santarpana karma in swastha and atura. A nutritionally adequate and balanced diet is essential for appropriate body composition, body mass index and reduced risk of diet-related chronic diseases. These preparations are cost-effective and can be prepared with readily available drugs available in the kitchen. The following facts show it can be adapted for children: Samskara of food is done to enhance its properties. Processed food fulfils nutritional requirements. [Santarpana karmas of krittanna], kritannas of kritanna varga does santarpana in both swastha and atura as per requirement. It does kshudahara (destroys hunger) and dourbalyahara (reduces

weakness) by various peya, does tarpana (that which satiates) and hridaya karma by vilepi. Rasala has properties like brahmana (which increase body weight and strength), vrushya (aphrodisiacs), balya, ruchiprada, tarpana and hridhay. Odana prepared out of mamsa is balya and bruhmana. Panchakola yavagu is a stimulant of appetite and a carminative in nature. Shobanjana yusha is a pool of nutrients that is cheap and very rich in micronutrients.

CONCLUSION

Nutritious food is, thus, needed to sustain life and activity. Our diet must provide all essential nutrients in the required amounts. Ayurvedic dietetics does not follow the modern norms of fixing food quotas based on calories. In Ayurveda, it depends on shad rasa, thus balancing the panchabhoutikatva of the body. The Ayurvedic idea of nitya sevaniya dravyas, discussed by Acharya Charka and Vagbhata, makes it abundantly evident how vital nutrition is in modern life. The national nutritional initiatives, especially the mid-day meal schemes run by the Indian government, should try to include an Ayurvedic menu of nutritious supplements. Parents need to be educated on the significance of pathya kalpana preparations and encouraged to incorporate them into their weekly menu at least twice or thrice. It is essential to use Ayurvedic nutritional management to comprehend and analyse kuposhana janya vikaras (nutritional illnesses). Daily consumption of nitya sevaniya dravyas must be encouraged, making it a more exciting way to attract children and subsequently complete a balanced diet in a day, resulting in better growth and development of children.

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Cite this article as:

Bhagyalaxmi RM Naik, Prabhu C Nagalapur, Chandrashekaraddi S Karmudi and Shrimant G Chavan. Ayurvedic recipes as nutritious pathya for children: A Review. Int. J. Res. Ayurveda Pharm. 2023;14(3):127-130
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7897/2277-4343.140397>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

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