



Review Article

CONCEPT OF AAHAR IN KASHYAP SAMHITA

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ABSTRACT

Kashyap Samhita, provides profound insights into the concept of *Aahar* (diet) and its significance in maintaining health and preventing diseases. Diet is said to be the cause of stability for sustaining the life of all living beings. *Acharya Kashyap* in *Khila Sthana* quotes *Aahar* as *Mahabhaishajyam* i.e., no medicine will act as good as food. The person consuming *Pathya* (congenial) attains health while the one consuming *Apathya* (non-congenial) is oppressed by illness immediately. *Tushti, Pushti, Dhriti, Buddhi, Utsaah, Paurush, Bala, Sausvaryam, Ojas* and *Tejas* are the ideal nutritional markers. According to *Ayurvedic* dietary concept, different *Aahar Kalpana* is prescribed for various age groups of children. These formulations are based on factors such as taste, potency, post digestive effects, principles of food combination and timing. This review delves into the approach towards therapeutic aspects of *Aahar* in managing various ailments and promoting longevity.

INTRODUCTION

Nutrition in children is essential for growth, development and overall health. Ensuring that they receive the right balance of nutrients help support their physical and cognitive development, strengthens their immune system and lays the foundation for healthy eating habits throughout life. India, with 6.7 million 'zero-food' children, leads the count and ranks third highest globally, with 19.3% of children not receiving food. According to the National Family Health Survey 5, 35.5% of children under age five years are stunted.^[1] Promoting healthy diet is a continuous process that requires attention, education and sometimes creativity. Establishing good dietary practices as early can lead to lifelong benefits.

"Praninaam Prandharnam"^[2] (*Ka.Sa.Khi.4/4*).

Food is the essence of life for all living beings, serving as their ultimate sustenance, remains the cornerstone of existence, vital for the continuation of life itself. The foundation of good health (*Aarogya*) lies in the quality of *Aahar* consumed, that provides life (*Jeevyati*),

pleases all the senses (*Sarve Indriyani Hriladyati*), nourishes bodily tissues (*Dhatunaapyayati*), enhances memory (*Smriti*), intelligence (*Matti*), strength (*Sarva Bala Ojas*), vigor (*Urjyati*) and complexion (*Varnaprasadam*). Conversely, the opposite can lead to illness of the body.^[3]

Phalaprashan and *Annaprashan*^[4] are two important sacraments that mark significant milestones to ensure the well being and proper nutrition of the children as they transition from a liquid diet to solid foods, thereby making the gastrointestinal tract accustomed to it. The protein, fat, carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins in solid form are very important in promoting the growth and development.

Importance of Aahar

- *Aahar* is recognized as one of the *Trayopsthambha*^[5] i.e., pillars for healthy body, considered as *Mahabhaishajyam* by *Acharya Kashyap*^[6]. The child nutrition begins before birth only. During pregnancy month wise regimen is followed by mother for having normal development of fetus, following *Garbhini Paricharya*^[7]. Even after birth the child is dependent on mother's milk for its nutritional requirements. According to *Kashyap Samhita Sutra Sthana Ksheerutpatyadyaya*; pure breast milk provides unimpeded strength (*Avyahata Bala*), longevity (*Ayu*), health (*Aroga*), fortunate development (*Vardatte Sukham*) to child and does

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not cause any discomfort (*Shishodhatrya naapatti*) to child and mother.^[8]

- The children are classified into three categories on the basis of regime of food viz., *Ksheerapa* (from birth to 1 year) who usually breastfeed. *Ksheerannada* (from age 1- 2 year) who take both breast milk and food. *Annada* (above 2 years of age) who takes food.^[9]
- The markers of ideal food are *Tushti* (fulfillment), *Pushti* (nourishment), *Dhriti* (pleasure), *Buddhi* (intellect), *Utsah* (enthusiasm), *Paurush* (well built), *Balam* (good immune system), *Sausvaryam* (good voice), *Ojas* (energetic) and *Tejas* (good looking).^[10]
- *Dharam*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha* are dependent on *Aahar*. Similarly, an individual's health and

treatment are also influenced by proper nutrition.^[11]

Classification^[12]

- *Aaharyate Gladdho Niyate* (*Aahar* is of one type)
- *Veerya* (*Sheeta* and *Ushana*)
- *Dosha* (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*)
- *Bhakshya*, *Bhojya* (*Ashita*, *Khadita*, *Peeta* and *Leeda*)
- *Panchamahabhuta* (*Akasheya*, *Vayaveya*, *Agneya*, *Apya* and *Parthiva*)
- *Shadrassa* (*Madhura*, *Amla*, *Lavana*, *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya*)
- *Kaladhi Bhedha* (*Aahar* is of twenty four type)

Chaturvimshati Vikalpa Aahar^[13]

<i>Tasmaat Kaale</i> (right time)	<i>Shuchi</i> (in clean environment)	<i>Naativilambitam</i> (not extremely slowly)	<i>Naatistokam</i> (not in less quantity)
<i>Satmaye</i> (congenial)	<i>Prachya mukha</i> (facing towards east direction)	<i>Naatiushnam</i> (not extremely hot)	<i>Naatidravam</i> (neither very liquid)
<i>Matravata</i> (proper quantity)	<i>Tushni</i> (calmly)	<i>Natisheetam</i> (not extremely cold)	<i>Naatishushkam</i> (not too dry)
<i>Ushna</i> (hot)	<i>Tanmana</i> (concentrated)	<i>Naatiruksham</i> (not extremely dry)	<i>Naakankshito</i> (no reluctance over food)
<i>Snigdha</i> (unctuous)	<i>Aaswadhya</i> (tastefully)	<i>Naatisnigdham</i> (not extremely smooth)	<i>Napratanto</i> (frequent repetition)
<i>Avirodhi</i> (incompatible)	<i>Naatidrutam</i> (not too fast)	<i>Naatibahu</i> (not in large quantity)	<i>Naekrasa</i> (not accustomed to one <i>Rasa</i>)

Factors to be considered for Intake of *Hitakara* Adequate nutrition^[17]

Aahar^[14]

- *Shareer* (body constitution)
- *Desha* (habitat or place of living)
- *Prakriti* (nature of an individual)
- *Kala* (seasonal adaptations)
- *Matra* (quantity)

Proper Sequence^[15]

- First of all unctuous/oleaginous and sweet eatables.
- In middle the liquid, cold and combinations of food articles.
- At the end pungent, hot, dry and light articles.
- This diet in successive order should be taken according to congeniality.

Appropriate period for Intake of Diet^[16]

- Localisation of *Doshas* in their own place
- Clarity of *Strotsas*
- Development of desire for food

A detail description is mentioned regarding the principles of nutrition based on the time, type, quality of food and its influence on appetite and hunger of an individual in *Kalpasthanas*, *Bhojankalpadhyaya*.

- Lustre, strength, memory, intelligence and life span increases
- Happiness
- Physical and mental health
- Strong status of *Indriya*
- Longevity

Inadequate nutrition^[18]

- *Utsaah* (enthusiasm), *Varan* (complexion), *Svar* (voice) and *Drishtihani* (vision) are reduced.
- *Karshya* (emaciation)
- *Shram* (fatigue)
- *Vakavikara* (abnormalities of voice)
- *Peeda Hridayasya* (pain in cardiac region)
- *Janturgalani Mukh* (languor of face)

Depletion of fluids^[19]

- Dryness of palate (*Talva*), lips (*Oushtha*), tongue (*Jihva*), throat (*Gal*) and cheek (*Ganda*)
- Weakness of ears and eyes (*Shrotraakshidaurbalya*)
- Despondency (*Vishaad*)
- Unconsciousness (*Moha*)
- Loss of Memory (*Smritihani*), metabolic fire (*Agnihani*), intellect (*Medhahani*), pleasure

(*Sukhhani*), inability to speak (*Vakahani*) and protuberance of tongue (*Jihvaavivridhi*)

Proper digestion of food^[20]

- *Kaanksha* (desire to have food)
- *Bubhuksha* (increase in appetite)
- *Laghuta* (lightness)
- *Sthirta* (stability)
- *Sukham* (pleasure)
- *Swasthvrita Anuvriti* (Staying healthy and doing activities like a fit person)

Principles of Balanced Diet and it's benefits^[21]

- 1/3rd part of *Kukshi* should be filled with liquid
- 1/3rd part of *Kukshi* should be filled with *Ashana* (food)

- Remaining 1 part left vacant for movement of *Doshas* for proper digestion

Adhering to these dietary principles promotes health, longevity, strength, metabolism, fertility and overall wellbeing.

The *Bhojankalpa*, *Yushanirdeshya*, *Bhojyaupkramniya* Chapter of *Kashyap Samhita* provides a foundational framework for understanding and implementing ancient dietary practices. It stands out as a significant section devoted to the science of food and nutrition essential for maintaining health and preventing diseases. Various preparation of food articles and their indications are mentioned below:

Different Regimens and their Indications^[22]

S.No.	Preparation	Ingredients	Indications
1.	<i>Avkshari Bhojan</i>	<i>Takra, Shukta, Dadhimastu, Guda, Draksha, Sattu, Sheetam-hitam Dadimvari, Saindhava, Bhutrina pallava, Trivrutta, Basaka, Karvrintakadrassa, Matulunga rasa, Aadraaka swaras+ Sattu, Ghritta, Laghu Shadava, Laghu supakva bhakshya, Soopa, Raga, Panaka, Madhya</i>	<i>Balakara, Pushtikara, Ruchikara, Vatanulomana, Vidamutradehaindrayajayam</i>
2.	<i>Peya</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dadima, Takra, Chukra + Saindhava, Maricha and Aadraaka</i> • <i>Ksheer or Ghrita + Sharkara</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Trishnahara</i> • <i>Jwara, Atisara, Shrama, Moha, Kasa, Hikka, Trishna Nashaka</i>
3.	<i>Mamsrasa</i>	<i>Mamsrasa</i>	<i>Kshya, Krisha, Daurbalya, Visham jwara, Vatavikara</i>
4.	<i>Takra</i>	<i>Saindhava, Sharkara, Sauvarchal, Vida lavana + Navneeta yukta</i>	<i>Ruchikara, Balakara, Pushtikara, Amla ushna Vishdatakara, Laghukara, Suvarya, Agnideepaka</i>
5.	<i>Manda</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rakta + Gorasa</i> • <i>Deepaniya jala, Bhrishta Tandula, Mudaga, Yava, Laja</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Vilambika</i> • <i>Balya, Sarvaindryani Prakritim Bhajante</i>
6.	<i>Yavagu</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dadima</i> • <i>Sharkara</i> • <i>Jaangal Mamsrasa + Gorasa + Dadima</i> • <i>Gaveduka</i> • <i>Ghrita + Saindhava</i> • <i>Dashmoola</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Vatakapha Roga</i> • <i>Pitta kapha Roga</i> • <i>Vataroga, Gulma, Pleeharoga, Peenasa</i> • <i>Karshya</i> • <i>Balya</i> • <i>Shwasa, Kasa, Kaphaj roga</i>

Ksheer^[23]

It is considered highly beneficial for humans, acting as a *Rasayana* that promotes overall health and vitality. Aids in building a robust, well toned body, is low in fat and helps alleviate fatigue.

Indications^[24]

- After eradication of disease with *Mandagni* and *Deeptagni*
- *Karshya, Daurbalya, Ksheena indriya, Bala-varna-agnihaani, Vataridita, Pittanipidita, Jwar-atisar-udar-payuroga*
- Burning sensation in eyes, throat, mouth and nose.

- *Smritibuddhi heena* etc.

Yusha^[25]

The substance cooked with so many food articles along with liquids except for rice is called *Yusha* (soup). When combined with different medicinal drugs, it has the ability to suppress various diseases.

General Properties^[26]

- *Rochana* (stomachic)
- *Deepana* (appetizer)
- *Vrishya* (aphrodisiac)

- *Svar-varna-bala-agnikrita*
- *Praswedajananao* (diaphoretic)
- *Tushti-pushti-sukhavaha* (fulfillment , nourishment and pleasure)
- All the *Yusha* are of 2 types and liquid in nature (*Kashaya-Madhura, Kashaya-Amla*)
- Based on addition of oleaginous substance (*Krita, Akrita, Akrita- Krita*)

Effect of Yusha on balancing Tridosha^[27]

Dosha	Nature of Yusha
Vata	Unctuous and hot
Pitta	Unctuous and astringent
Kapha	Lukewarm and <i>Samskar</i> (being treated with other drugs)

- Based on the *Veerya* (*Sheeta, Ushana, Mishra*)
- As per the classification of *Doshas*, these are 75 in number. The same is based upon their action of expulsion and alleviation.
- Based on *Rasa* 50 in number
- Based on the ingredient added, 25 in number.
- *Raga, Khadav* and *Panak* based on *Agni siddhi* and *Asiddhi*

Classification^[28]**Indications of Certain Specific Yusha^[29]**

Types of Yusha	Ingredients	Indications
<i>Mudhga Yusha</i>	<i>Puraan Mudhga</i> with <i>Nistush</i> (husk) + <i>Deepana dravya</i> -liquid form	<i>Panchakarma Procedure</i>
<i>Virasika</i>	<i>Mudhga + Takramla</i>	
<i>Rochaka</i>	<i>Dadima + Takramla</i>	
<i>Dadima Yusha</i>	<i>Dadima + Mudhga</i>	
<i>Dhatri Yusha</i>	<i>Mudhga + Amalaki</i>	
<i>Chitraka Yusha</i>	<i>Mula + Skanda + Patra + Chitraka kwath</i>	<i>Grahani, Shula, Pleeha, Arsha, Gulma, Kushta, Hridraroga, Kapha</i> and <i>Vataj vikara</i>
<i>Panchkola Yusha</i>	<i>Shati, Karkatakshringi, Bilva, Ajashringi, Pushkaramula, Dhataki, Kapitha, Dadima, Changeri, Samanga</i>	<i>Sangrahi, Deepak</i>
<i>Dhanya Yusha</i>	<i>Akhandita Dhanya</i> in equal quantity + except <i>Tila, Nishpava, Sarshapa kwath + Chitraka, Dadima</i>	<i>Shira, Karna, Akshiroga, Hridaroga, Ardhava bhedaka, Aruchi, Atisara</i>
<i>Dadhimanda or Takra siddha Yusha</i>	<i>Tila + Mashak</i>	
<i>Kultha Yusha</i>	<i>Kultha Kwath</i>	<i>Sannipata, Vata</i> and <i>Kaphaj Vyadhi</i>
<i>Phala Yusha</i>	<i>Kapitha, Bilva, Badar dwaya, Dadima, Amra</i>	<i>Ama, Ajeerna, Atisar</i>
<i>Pushpa Yusha</i>	<i>Shana, Shalmali, Dhataki, Padmak, Saugandhika, Kovidar, Karburdar + Dadima siddha (Taila, Amla rahita)</i>	<i>Pradara, Raktapitta, Daha, Udar, Chakshuroga</i>
<i>Patra Yusha</i>	<i>Bilwa, Shigru, Eranda, Bala, Rasna, Amra</i>	<i>Vatanashka</i>
<i>Kalaka Yusha</i>	<i>Dadima, Amrataka, Jambu, Chirabilva, Twaka, Dadhimanda Kwath</i>	<i>Atisara</i>
<i>Pallva Yusha</i>	<i>Vata, Udumbar, Pippal, Ashvath, Plaksh, Kala, Palasha, Kamala + Ghrita, Dadima samskrita</i>	<i>Pittaja roga, Garbhapata, Daha, Katukini (Graha roga) nashaka</i>
<i>Punarnava Yusha</i>	<i>Punarnava, Rasna, Changeri, Bala + Dadhi, Sarpisha</i>	<i>Vatanashaka</i>
<i>Kambalika Yusha</i>	<i>Rohita matasya kwath + Shukta, Kanji, Mastu, Kutaj beeja, 5 Pala Guda + Katu Taila</i>	<i>Vataroga nashaka, Brihana, Balya, Nidrajanaka, Ruchikara</i>
<i>Maha Yusha</i>	<i>Deepanam Panchmula, Madhura varga phala, Sarvadhanya, Maricha, Kakoli, Ksheerkakoli, Kashmarya, Palasha, Parushaka, Badara, Kultha, Rasna, Eranda, Punarnava, 2 Pala Gokshur, Taruna Shigru, Palasha + 1 Drona jala</i> (prepare Kwath, reducing 1/4 th then add <i>Dadhi, Kanji, Shukta, Taila, Ghrita</i>) + <i>Tarun Mulaka patra 100 + Trikatu siddha</i>	<i>Sarvaroga, Atyagni, Vinidra, Stabdhangha, Chibuka, Akshiroga nashaka</i> <i>Jeerna Atisara nashaka</i>

	If mixed with equal quantity of <i>Mamsa niryuha + Tila kalka</i>	
<i>Lashuna Yusha</i>	<i>Lashuna kalka</i>	<i>Vatanashaka</i>
<i>Mulaka Yusha</i>	Boil <i>Taruna Mulaka</i> + fry with oleaginous (<i>Sneha</i>) substances + <i>Prakshepa Dravya</i>	<i>Sarvaroga nashaka</i>
<i>Mamsa Yusha</i>	<i>Amla rahita Lavaka mamsa rasa + Ghrita, Taila</i>	<i>Pitta, Vata upshamna</i>

Rice creation^[30]

Odana: It is prepared with well cleaned grains, properly cooked having drained off its water, hot and uniform in appearance. The properties are as follows:

- *Vishadha*
- *Siddha*
- *Swina*
- *Nisruta*
- *Mridu*

Peya and Yavagu^[31]

➤ *Peya*

- Cooked with twenty times of water
- Having broken pieces of rice (*Skitha*)
- Having identical thickness in lower, middle and upper portion (*Tulyadhomadhyatopari*)
- Incapable of being held in hand (*Ahastaharya*)

➤ *Yavagu*

- Capable of being held in hand

Vilepi^[32]

- The properties and abnormalities of *Vilepi* are same as indicated for *Yavagu*

For the benefit of human beings and physicians, these auspicious great sacred percepts about *Aahar* is propounded by *Acharya Kashyap* in *Kashyap Samhita*.

CONCLUSION

In today's fast - paced world, traditional norms regarding diet and regimen have often been neglected, contributing to the overall decline in societal health. This review aims to evaluate this ancient science of dietetics. The principles of food and its related dietary practices have been long forgotten. The perspective of *Aahar* in the *Kashyap Samhita* is not solely about food intake but encompasses the overall quality of life, incorporating factors previously discussed. A knowledgeable physician can easily determine what is beneficial (*Hitakara*) and harmful (*Ahitakar*) in terms of diet for an individual. The text highlights the importance of balanced nutrition and offers detailed dietary guidelines tailored to different stages of life and health conditions, reflecting a deep understanding of the interplay between diet, physiology and health. The ancient wisdom continues to offer valuable insights, inspiring modern approaches to nutrition and complete health.

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