



Review Article

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO OCULAR HEALTH: *PATHYA-APATHYA* PRINCIPLES IN *NETRA ROGA* AS DESCRIBED IN *YOGARATNAKARA*

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ABSTRACT

The most important sense organ is *Netra* as rightly said by *Acharya Sushruta*–“*Sarvendriyanam madhye nayanam pradhanam*” thus it requires appropriate *Pathya ahara* and *vihara* for the maintenance of normal functioning and also to prevent many avoidable and preventable ocular diseases. The very motto of Ayurveda is *Swasthasya swasthya rakshanam aturasya vikara prashamanam* is full filled if a person does proper analysis of *Pathya* and *Apathya* in *Swastha avastha* and *Vyadhi avastha*. In the current digital world, excessive screentime and improper lifestyle has significant impact on ocular health, with regards to this preventable ocular impact *Pathya-apathya* plays an important role. Ayurveda give more importance to *Pathya* and *Apathya* in the prevention, management and prognosis of any disease. The improper diet and lifestyle may adversely affect the normal functional integrity of *Netra* by aggravating the *Doshas* at different levels leading to many ocular diseases. An important Ayurvedic compendium *Yogaratanakara* gives a vast valuable detail in a systemic manner regarding the wholesome and unwholesome diet and regimens to be followed in relation to ocular health and disease. The present work aims to compile the complete details given by *Acharya Yogaratnakara* regarding the dietary substances, behavioural practices and lifestyle factors indicated or contraindicated in *Netra chikitsa*. Furthermore, the work highlights the relevance of *Pathya-apathya* as a prime supportive component and emphasizes the need for its appropriate incorporation in the community w.r.to preventive and therapeutic *Netra chikitsa*.

INTRODUCTION

The authorship of *Yogaratanakara* is still having a noted difference of opinion. Many *Acharyas* suggest that the text belongs to the 16th–18th century, based on linguistic style and historical references mentioned in the book. The most accepted commentary on this work is the *Vidyotini teeka* which is written by *Vaidya Lakshmipathi Shastri*, which definitely gives valuable insights into the interpretations of the original *grantha*. The text *Yogaratanakara* is divided into two major sections, *Purvardha* and *Uttarardha*.^[1]

Pathya Ahara/Vihara is such diet which has beneficial effect over the body and mind of an individual without causing any untoward effect and which is contrary to this is said to be *Apathya*.^[2]

Purvardha

The *Chakshushya/Netrya* (beneficial for the eyes and vision) *Dravyas* includes *Tamrachuda* (rooster), *Shatapushpa* (dill), *Mayura Mamsa* (peacock meat), *Kukkuta Mamsa* (chicken meat), *Ksheerottha Navaneeta* (fresh butter obtained from milk), *Ghrita* (ghee), *Mahisha Ghrita* (buffalo ghee), *Aja Ghrita* (goat ghee). *Madhu/Makshika* (honey) is described as *Netramayahara* (alleviating diseases of the eye).

While explaining *Jala*, the properties of *Sheeta* and *Ushna vaari* (cold and warm water) are described in relation to ocular disorders, with *Shruta sheeta jala* (boiled and cooled water) being indicated in *Netra Roga*.

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Dadhi and *Takra* (curd and buttermilk) are considered as *Netra Rujapaha* (alleviating ocular pain). In contrast, *Tamakhu* (tobacco) is considered to be *Drishtimandhyakara* (causing impairment of vision), *Sarshapa* (mustard) is described as *Chakshughna* (harmful to the eyes) and *Tambula* (betel quid) is contraindicated in *Netra Roga* (ocular diseases).

The classical texts also mention the use of *Suvarna* and *Raupya Patra* (gold and silver vessels) for food consumption and notably describe the practice of praying to Hanuman before meals in the context of *Drishti dosha* (disorders of vision). Under *Siddhannadipaka yogas*, *Mudga Yusha* (green gram soup) is mentioned in relation to *Urdhvajatru Roga* (diseases affecting the region above the clavicle). Specific *Netraroga-vinashana Santarpana Yoga* (nourishing formulation for alleviating ocular diseases) is prepared by adding *Draksha* (grapes), *Dadima* (pomegranate), *Kharjura* (dates), *Sharkara* (sugar) and *Laja* (popped rice).

Uttarardha

Specific preparations such as *Pugapaka* (an areca nut preparation) and *Drakshapaka* (a grape based preparation) are mentioned specifically for *Netra rogas* and *Netrarti* respectively.

In *Sama Avastha* (condition associated with *Ama*)– *Langhana* (light diet/fasting therapy) and *Swadu-Tikta Rasa Bhojana* (sweet and bitter foods) are indicated; *Sarpi-pana* (intake of ghee), *Kashaya-pana* (astringent decoction/substances) and *Guru Bhojana* (heavy food) are contraindicated.

Importance of *Langhana* (lightening therapy/fasting): it is beneficial in *Netraroga* (ocular diseases), *Udararoga* (abdominal diseases), *Pratishyaya* (rhinitis), *Vrana* (wound) and *Jvara* (fever), particularly during the first five days. Specifically, in *Kaphaja abhishyanda* (*Kapha*-dominant conjunctivitis)– *Langhana* along with *Mudga-rasaudana* (rice with green gram soup) or *Tiktadi Bhojana* (diet predominantly containing bitter and other suitable tastes) is indicated. In *Timira* (visual disturbances)– rubbing the palms after washing the hands and gently placing them over the eyes after dinner is traditionally described as beneficial.

Details of *Pathya-Apathya* explained in *Yogaratanakara*^[3]

1. *Pathya*

Pathya Ahara (Beneficial Dietary Factors)

- *Mudga* (green gram)
- *Yava* (barley)
- *Ajyapana* (consumption of ghee)
- *Lohita Shali* (red rice)
- *Koumbha Ghrita* (old ghee)

- *Vana Kulattha Yusha* (soup prepared from wild horse gram)
- *Peya* (thin rice gruel)
- *Vilepi* (thick rice gruel)
- *Surana* (elephant foot yam)
- *Patola* (pointed gourd)
- *Vartaka* (brinjal/eggplant)
- *Karkotaka* (a variety of bitter gourd)
- *Karavellaka* (bitter gourd)
- *Navina Mocha* (fresh banana flower)
- *Nava Mulaka* (fresh radish)
- *Pattura Shaka* (leafy vegetable)
- *Draksha* (grapes)
- *Kustumburu* (coriander)
- *Lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa*)
- *Triphala* (combination of *Haritaki*, *Amalaki* and *Vibhitaki*)
- *Kshaudra* (honey)
- *Shaka Panchaka* (five beneficial leafy vegetables):

- *Jivanti* (*Leptadenia reticulata*)
- *Vastuka* (*Chenopodium album*)
- *Matsyakshi* (*Alternanthera sessilis*)
- *Meghanada* (*Amaranthus spinosus*)
- *Punarnava* (*Boerhaavia diffusa*)

The leafy vegetables are generally considered as *Achakshushya* (not beneficial for the eyes), except for the above-mentioned five leafy vegetables.

- *Shali* (rice)
- *Tandula* (rice grains)
- *Godhuma* (wheat)
- *Saindhava* (rock salt)
- *Goghrita* (cow's ghee)
- *Gopaya* (cow's milk)
- *Sita* (sugar candy/crystallised sugar)
- *Nari paya* (breast milk)
- *Chandana* (*Santalum album*)
- *Karpura* (*Cinnamomum camphora*)
- *Punarnava* (*Boerhaavia diffusa*)
- *Markava* (*Eclipta alba*)
- *Kakamachi* (*Solanum nigrum*)
- *Kumari* (*Aloe vera*)
- *Sarva tikta* and *laghu dravyas* (all bitter and light food)

Pathya Vihara (Beneficial Behavioural and Lifestyle Practices)

- *Mano Nivritti* (mental calmness and avoidance of mental stress)
- *Gurujana Puja* (respect and worship of elders/teachers)

Pathya Chikitsa (Beneficial Therapeutic Measures)

- *Langhana* (light diet/therapeutic fasting)
- *Ashchyotana* (ocular instillation of medicated liquid)
- *Anjana* (application of collyrium)
- *Sweda* (sudation therapy)
- *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation)
- *Pratisarana* (local rubbing/application of medicine)
- *Purana* (*tarpana*-ocular nourishing therapy)
- *Nasya* (nasal administration of medicine)
- *Raktamokshana* (bloodletting)
- *Shastra Karma* (surgical intervention)
- *Lepana* (application of medicinal paste)
- *Seka* (pouring/irrigation with medicated liquid)
- *Upanaha* (poultice)

2. Apathya

Apathya Ahara (Harmful Dietary Factors)

- *Madhuka Pushpa* (*Madhuka*/*Mahua* flowers)
- *Dadhi* (curd)
- *Patrashaka* (leafy vegetables)
- *Kalinga* (a specific variety of gourd/melon)
- *Pinyaka* (oil-cake residue)
- *Virudhaka* (sprouted/germinated food grains)
- *Matsya* (fish)
- *Sura* (alcoholic beverage)
- *Mamsa* except *Jangala Mamsa* (meat, except meat of animals from dry/arid regions)
- *Amla–Lavana Dravya* (sour and salty substances)
- *Vidahi* (foods causing burning sensation)
- *Teekshna* (sharp/intensely acting substances)
- *Katu* (pungent substances)
- *Ushna* (hot substances)
- *Guru Annapana* (heavy foods and beverages)
- *Masha* (black gram)
- *Kanjika* (fermented sour gruel)
- *Sarshapa Taila* (mustard oil)
- *Amla Dravya* (sour substances)
- *Phanita* (jaggery syrup/molasses)
- *Veshavara* (a heavy meat preparation)

Apathya Vihara (Harmful Behavioural and Lifestyle Practices)

- *Krodha* (anger)
- *Shoka* (grief)
- *Maithuna* (sexual intercourse)
- *Ashru* (excessive crying)
- *Vayu Sevana* (excessive exposure to wind)

- *Vit Vega Dharana* (suppression of the urge to defecate)
- *Mutra Vega Dharana* (suppression of the urge to urinate)
- *Nidra Vega Dharana* (suppression of the urge to sleep)
- *Vami Vega Dharana* (suppression of the urge to vomit)
- *Sukshmekshana* (prolonged viewing of minute objects)
- *Danta Vigharshana* (vigorous rubbing/brushing of the teeth)
- *Snana* (bathing, when contraindicated)
- *Nishi Bhojana* (night-time eating)
- *Atapa* (excessive exposure to sunlight/heat)
- *Prajalpana* (excessive talking)
- *Chardana* (vomiting)
- *Ambu Pana* (excessive drinking of water)
- *Jala Avagaha* (immersion in water)
- *Nishi Jagarana* (not sleeping at the night hours)
- *Surya Vilochana* (direct gazing at the sun)

Pathya Ahara and Vihara in Netra Roga^[4]

Mamsa Varga (Meat Group)

Tamrachuda and *Kukkuta Mamsa* (rooster and chicken meat) are characterised by *Madhura–Kashaya Rasa* (sweet and astringent taste), *Sheeta Virya* (cold potency) and *Katu Vipaka* (pungent post-digestive effect). They are described as *Tridosahara* (alleviating all three *doshas*), *Laghu* (light to digest) and *Balya* (strengthening), making them beneficial for *Netra*. *Mayura Mamsa* (peacock meat) possesses *Madhura Rasa* (sweet taste) and is *Vatahara* (pacifying *Vata*) and is also regarded as *Chakshushya* (good for vision).

Shaka Varga (Vegetable and Leafy Vegetable Group)

Surana (elephant foot yam) is *Deepana* (digestive), *Laghu* (light), *Ruksha* (dry) and possesses *Kashaya–Katu Rasa* (astringent and pungent taste). *Patola* (pointed gourd) is *Pachaka* (carminative), *Laghu*, *Deepana*, *Snigdha* (unctuous), *Ushnahara* (relieves excessive heat) and *Tridosahara*. *Vartaka* (brinjal) is *Kapha–Pittahara* and *Chakshushya*. *Karkotaka* is *Katu* (pungent), *Ruchya* (improves taste) and *Deepana*, while *Karavellaka* (bitter gourd) is *Laghu*, *Hima* (cooling), *Deepana* and alleviates *Kapha*, *Pitta* and *Rakta Dosh*. *Navina Mocha* (fresh banana flower) is *Madhura*, *Sheeta*, *Guru* (heavy) and *Tarpana* (nourishing) with benefits in different *Netra rogas*. *Nava Mulaka* (fresh radish) is *Katu*, *Ushna*, *Laghu*, *Pachana* and is described as *Nayanamayanaashaka* (alleviating eye diseases). *Pattura Shaka* is *Madhura*, *Sheeta*, alleviates *Pitta* and *Kapha* and relieves burning

sensation. Although leafy vegetables are generally considered *Achakshushya* (not beneficial for the eyes), five leafy vegetables, namely *Jivanti*, *Vastuka*, *Matsyakshi*, *Meghanada* and *Punarnava*, are specifically recommended. These possess predominantly *Laghu*, *Sheeta*, *Deepana*, *Rasayana* (rejuvenative) and *Tridosahara* properties, thereby supporting *Netra swasthya*.

Aushadha Varga (Medicinal Plant Group)

Shatapushpa (dill) is *Laghu*, *Teekshna* (sharp), *Deepana*, possesses *Katu Rasa* and *Ushna Virya* and is described as *Akshirogahrit* (alleviating eye diseases). *Lodhra* is *Laghu*, *Sheeta*, *Chakshushya* and *Kapha-Pittahara*, while *Triphala* is well recognised as *Chakshushya*. *Kumari* (aloe vera) possesses *Sheeta*, *Madhura*, *Balya*, *Rasayana* and *Netrya* properties and alleviates *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Rakta Dosha*. *Kustumburu* (*Dhanyaka*/coriander) is *Kashaya*, *Snigdha*, *Laghu*, *Deepana*, *Pachana* and *Pittahara*. *Markava* possesses *Kashaya-Tikta Rasa*, *Ruksha Guna*, acts as *Rasayana*, *Balya* and *Netrarogahara*, while *Kakamachi* is *Tridosahara*, *Kashaya* and it is said to be *Netrahita* (beneficial for the eyes).

Dhanya Varga (Cereals and Pulses)

Yava (barley) possesses *Madhura-Kashaya Rasa*, *Sheeta Virya* and is *Agnivardhaka* (improves digestion). *Lohita Shali* (red rice) is *Balya*, *Chakshushya* and *Tridosahara*, whereas *Godhuma* (wheat) is *Madhura*, *Sheeta*, *Balya* and pacifies *Vata*, it is also said to be *Kapha-varadhaka*.

Kritanna Varga (Food preparations)

Mudga Yusha (green gram soup) is *Laghu*, *Ruksha*, *Netrya* and *Kapha-Pittahara*, making it particularly suitable in *Kapha pradhana netra rogas*. *Vana Kulattha Yusha* (wild horse gram soup) possesses *Katu-Kashaya Rasa*, *Katu Vipaka*, *Laghu Guna* and relieves burning sensation.

Dugdha Varga (Milk and Milk Products)

Milk products occupy prime place in ocular nourishment. *Takra* (buttermilk), owing to its *Ashtaguna*,^[5] is described as *Netra Rujapaha* (relieving ocular pain) and possesses *Kashaya*, *Amla* and *Madhura Rasa*, *Laghu Guna* and is said to be *Agnideepaka*. *Ksheerrottha Navanita* (fresh butter obtained from milk) is *Chakshushya*, *Balya*, *Raktapittahara*, *Madhura*, *Snigdha* and *Sheeta*. *Kaumbha Ghrita* is *Kapha-Vatahara*, *Balya* and is described as beneficial even in *Andhyatwa* (blindness), while *Purana Ghrita* (old ghee) is *Timirahara* (alleviating *Timira*). *Ghrita* in general is *Rasayana*, *Chakshushya*, *Deepana*, *Sheeta Virya*, *Pitta-Vatahara*, *Ayushya* (increases the life span) and *Balya*. *Mahisha Ghrita* (buffalo ghee) is *Madhura*, *Sheetala* and alleviates *Pitta*, *Rakta* and *Vata*, whereas *Aja Ghrita*

(goat ghee) is *Agnivardhaka*, *Chakshushya* and *Balya*. *Naripaya* is described as *Chakshushya* and is used as *Ashchyotana* in *Nayanabhighata* (ocular trauma).

Madhu, Jala and Lavana Varga (Honey, Water and Salt)

Madhu (honey), particularly *Makshika Madhu*, is regarded as the best variety and is described as *Laghu* and *Netramayahara* (alleviating eye diseases). *Shruta-Sheeta Jala* (boiled and cooled water) is recommended in ocular disorders, although excessive water intake is discouraged. *Saindhava Lavana* (rock salt) possesses *Madhura Vipaka*, *Anushna Guna*, *Deepana*, *Pachana* and is regarded as *Chakshushya*.

Phala Varga (Fruit Group)

Draksha (grapes) is having *Madhura-Kashaya rasa*, *Sheeta guna* and is said to be *Chakshushya*, *Brimhana* and *Guru*. *Dadima* (pomegranate) is *Madhura*, *Tridosahara*, *Tarpaka* and *Laghu*, while *Kharjura* (dates) is *Madhura*, *Sheeta*, *Snigdha*, *Balya*, *Tarpaka* and *Raktapittahara*.

Gandha, Ratna and Miscellaneous Varga

Chandana (sandalwood) is *Sheeta*, *Laghu*, *Pittahara* and *Dahahara* (relieves burning), while *Karpura* (camphor) is *Sheeta*, *Laghu*, *Vrishya* (aphrodisiac), *Chakshushya* and *Kapha-Pittahara*. *Suvarna* (gold) is *Sheeta*, *Balya*, *Rasayana*, *Netrya*, *Ayushyakara* and *Tridosahara*, whereas *Raupya* (silver) possesses *Amla*, *Kashaya* and *Madhura Rasa*, *Sheeta Virya* and *Madhura Vipaka*, acts as *Rasayana*, promotes longevity and is described as beneficial in *Urdhvajatru Roga* (diseases above the clavicle). *Puga* is *Tridosahara*, whereas *Ardra Puga* (fresh areca nut) is considered as *Drishtihara* (impairing vision) and *Abhishyandi* (causing obstruction and congestion). Finally, *Sarva Tikta* and *Laghu Dravyas* (all bitter and light substances) are recommended because they pacify *Pitta Dosha*, act as *Srotohara* (removing obstruction of channels) and *Srotovishodhaka* (cleansing the body channels), thereby supporting *Netra swasthya*. *Sharkara* (sugar) is *Madhura* in *Rasa* and *Vipaka*, *Snigdha*, *Laghu* and alleviates *Vata* and *Pitta*, whereas *Laja* (popped rice) possesses *Madhura-Kashaya Rasa*, *Sheeta Virya* and alleviates *Pitta* and *Kapha*.

Mano-nivritti (mental tranquillity) and *Gurupada Puja* (reverence towards the Guru/elders) represent the psychological and behavioural aspects of the Ayurvedic approach to maintaining ocular health. Although classical texts do not directly attribute these practices to the prevention of *Netra Roga*, they are integral components of *Sadvritta* and *Achara Rasayana*, which promote mental equilibrium, ethical conduct and emotional well-being. Since *Ayurveda* recognises the intimate relationship between the mind (*Manas*),

body and sensory organs, these practices may indirectly support ocular health by minimising stress-related *Doshic* disturbances and preserving the normal functioning of the *Indriyas*.^[6]

Langhana (fasting/light diet) is considered one of the foremost measures for eliminating *Ama*, which is regarded as the root cause of many diseases. By improving *Agni*, reducing *Kapha* and digesting *ama*, *Langhana* restores physiological balance and is especially beneficial in *Sama* and *Kapha*-dominant ocular disorders.

Ashchyotana (ocular instillation) involves the instillation of medicated eye drops from a height of approximately two *Angulas*. The medicine enters the *Srotas* (channels) of the head, nose and face, removes the accumulated *Malas* and *Doshas* localised in the *Urdhvajatru* (structures above the clavicle), thereby alleviating different *Netra rogas*. *Anjana* (application of medicated collyrium) is the procedure of applying medicinal paste or powder to the inner aspect of the lower eyelid using the fingertip or an *Anjana Shalaka*. It is primarily indicated when the vitiated *Doshas* are fully manifested and localised in the eye, facilitating their elimination while cleansing, protecting and restoring the normal physiology of eyes. *Pratisarana* (gentle rubbing the eyelids with specific medicaments) involves local rubbing margin of the eyelids/eyelashes. It results in a mild increase in tissue temperature and local blood circulation thereby facilitating the *Srotomukha Vishodhana* (cleansing of the channel openings). This enhances drug penetration and improves the therapeutic efficacy of locally applied *Aushada dravyas*. *Tarpana* (ocular nourishing therapy with medicated ghee) nourishes and rejuvenates the ocular tissues. *Ghrita*, being lipophilic, easily permeates the *Sukshma srotas* and the lipid-rich corneal epithelium, thereby enhancing tissue contact time, bioavailability and drug delivery to deeper ocular tissues. *Lepana* (application of medicated paste), particularly in the form of *Bidalaka*, involves applying a thin layer of medicated paste over the eyelids excluding the eye lashes. The active constituents penetrate the eyelid tissues, improve local blood circulation, enhance drug absorption and helps in reducing acute inflammation and associated ocular symptoms. *Seka* (irrigation with medicated liquid) is described by *Acharya Sushruta* as *Anilavrit*, *Rujapaha* and *Dhatu Vivridhikara* (promoting tissue nourishment). It is especially useful during the acute inflammatory stage of *Netra rogas*, where increased corneal and conjunctival permeability facilitates greater drug absorption and enhances therapeutic efficacy at the earliest.^[7]

Upanaha (application of medicated poultice) is a simple but effective local therapeutic measure and

acts as *Shulahara* (reduces pain), *Sthambhahara* (stiffness) and *Shothahara* (anti-inflammatory). The *Aushada dravyas* administered penetrates the body through the *Romakupas* (hair follicles) and are metabolised with the help of *Bhrajaka Pitta*, producing therapeutic effects according to the pharmacological properties of the drugs administered.^[8]

Padabhyanga (foot massage) is said to be *Chakshushya* as specific two *Nadis* situated between the great toe and the second that are functionally connected to the *Netra*. Regular *Padabhyanga* helps pacify *Vata Dosha*, thereby supporting the normal functioning of *Netra* and promoting visual health.^[9]

Swedana (sudation therapy) is the procedure that induces perspiration and alleviates *Stambha* (stiffness), *Gaurava* (heaviness) and *Sheeta* (coldness). In *Netra Roga*, *swedana* is actually contra-indicated but if it is indicated only *Mrudu sweda* has to be administered.^[10]

Virechana (therapeutic purgation) is one of the principal *Shodhana* therapies indicated in *Paittika* disorders. It eliminates vitiated *Doshas*, particularly *Pitta*, through the *Adhobhaga* (lower gastrointestinal tract), thereby reducing systemic *Doshic* burden. Classical texts also describe that properly administered *Virechana* enhances *Buddhi* (intellect), strengthens the *Indriyas* (sense organs) and it is best when performed during *Sharad rtu* (as *Rtu Shodhana*), helps prevent *Pitta*-related diseases.^[11]

Nasya (nasal administration of medicine) is based on the classical principle "*Naso hi Shiraso Dvaram*" (the nose is the gateway to the head). The administered medicine reaches the *Shringataka Marma*, from where it spreads throughout the cranial region, eliminating vitiated *Doshas* from the *Siramukhas* of the *Netra*, *Karna*, *Nasa* and *Kanta*. Classical texts compare this action to the effortless removal of *Munja* grass from its stem, illustrating the effective elimination of morbid *Doshas* from the *Urdhvajatru*.^[12]

Raktamokshana (therapeutic bloodletting) is an important parasurgical procedure indicated in disorders associated with *Dushta Rakta* and aggravated *Pitta*. By removing vitiated blood using appropriate surgical or parasurgical techniques, it reduces *Shotha* (inflammation), *Raga* (congestion) and the progression of disease, particularly in *Rakta* and *Pitta*-dominant *Netra rogas*.^[13]

Shastrakarma (surgical intervention) is indicated in diseases that are classified as *Shastra Sadhya Vyadhi*, where surgical management offers the most appropriate treatment. The procedure should always be performed after careful assessment of the

indications and contraindications to ensure safe and effective management.^[14]

Apathya Ahara and Vihara in Netra Roga

Apathya Ahara (Dietary Factors Detrimental to netra swasthya)

Mamsa Varga (Meat Group)

Matsya (fish) is considered *Vidahi* (causing burning) and aggravates *Pitta* and *Rakta Dosha*, making it unsuitable in specifically *Shothayukta netra rogas*. *Mamsa* (meat), except *Jangala Mamsa*, is described as *Guru* (heavy) and *Abhishyandi* (causing obstruction of channels), thereby promoting *Kapha vriddhi* and predisposing to *Netra ragata* (congestion). *Veshavara*, a heavy meat preparation, is *Guru*, *Ushna* and *Pittavardhaka*, further increasing the risk of *Pitta pradhana netra rogas*.

Shaka Varga (Vegetable Group)

Patra Shaka (leafy vegetables), when consumed in more quantity or without proper processing (*Samskara*), may aggravate *Vata* and *Kapha Dosha*. It is said to be *Guru* (heavy to digest), they may predispose to *Vibandha* (constipation) leading to *Dosha vaishamyas*. *Kalinga* is having *Katu Rasa*, *Sheeta Virya* and *Deepana* properties, has been specifically mentioned as *Apathya* in the context of *Netra Roga*.

Dhanya and Anna Varga (Cereals and Food Preparations)

Masha (black gram) possesses *Madhura Rasa*, *Madhura Vipaka*, *Guru* and *Snigdha Guna* and said to be *Kapha vardhaka*. *Virudhaka* (sprouted or germinated grains) is *Guru*, *Vidahi* and is described as *Drushtidushaka* (impairing vision). *Guru Annapana* (heavy food and beverages) impairs digestion (*Agnimandya*), promotes *Ama* formation and causes *Srotorodha* (obstruction of body channels), thereby contributing to disease progression.

Dugdha Varga (Milk Products)

Dadhi (curd) is classically described as *Abhishyandi* (increases secretions), *Guru* and *Vidahi*, and is a potent aggravator of *Kapha* and *Pitta Dosha*. By producing *Srotorodha*, it predisposes individuals to *Netra rogas* characterised by *Raga* (congestion), *Shotha* (inflammation) and *Srava* (excessive secretions).

Taila Varga (Oils)

Kshauma Taila (linseed/flaxseed oil) is described as *Achakshushya* (not beneficial for the eyes). It possesses *Agneya* (hot nature), *Ushna Virya*, *Guru Guna* and *Katu Vipaka*, while increasing *Kapha* and *Pitta Dosha*, making it unsuitable in *Netra Roga*.

Madya and Fermented Preparations

Sura (alcoholic beverages) and *Kanjika* (fermented sour gruel) possess *Ruksha*, *Ushna*, *Katu*

and *Teekshna guna*. These fermented preparations may also contain histamine-like substances capable of precipitating ocular allergic manifestations, ocular surface dryness and visual disturbances in susceptible individuals.

Lavana, Katu and Vidahi Dravya Varga

Amla-Lavana Dravyas (sour and salty substances), together with *Vidahi*, *Teekshna*, *Ushna* and *Katu Ahara*, aggravate *Pitta* and *Rakta Dosha*, thereby increasing the risk of inflammatory ocular disorders.

Upadravakara Dravyas (Other Harmful Substances)

Tamakhu (tobacco) is specifically described as *Drishtimandhyakara* (impairing vision) and is therefore considered detrimental to *Netra swasthya*. *Sarshapa* (mustard) possesses *Katu* and *Tikta Rasa*, *Snigdha Guna* and is *Kapha-Vatahara*, but it's *Teekshna* nature increases *Rakta*, *Pitta* and *Agni*, making it unsuitable in *Pitta pradhana netra rogas*. *Tambula* (betel) possesses *Teekshna*, *Ushna*, *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kshara* properties. *Tarbuja* (muskmelon), despite its *Madhura* and *Kashaya Rasa*, is described as *Raktapittakara*. *Pinyaka* (oil-cake residue) is *Guru* and *Ruksha*, produces *Agnimandya* and contributes to *Doshic* imbalance.

Apathya Vihara (Behavioural and Lifestyle Factors Detrimental to netra swasthya)

Manasika Varga (Psychological and Emotional Factors)

Krodha (anger) and *Shoka* (grief) are included among the *Dharaniya Manasika Vegas*, indicating that they should be controlled. Excessive emotional stress aggravates *Pitta* and *Vata Dosha*, respectively. Stress-induced adrenergic responses may also produce pupillary dilatation and transient blurring of vision. Such disturbances predispose to *Vata-Pittaja* ocular disorders.^[15]

Physical Activities and Lifestyle Practices, Vega Dharana (Suppression of Natural Urges), Ahara Kala and Nidra (Food Timing and Sleep Habits)^[16]

Maithuna (excessive sexual activity) causes *Dhatu Kshaya*, particularly depletion of *Shukra Dhatu*, thereby reducing nourishment to ocular tissues. Hormonal alterations may further contribute to meibomian gland dysfunction and tear film instability. *Vata-Atapa Nishevana* (prolonged exposure to wind and sunlight) aggravates *Vata* and *Pitta Dosha*, while ultraviolet exposure and environmental contaminants predispose to disorders such as *Pinguecula*, *Arma* (pterygium) and *Abhishyanda* (conjunctivitis). *Sukshmekshana* (prolonged visualisation of near objects) causes accommodative strain and increase in *Vata dosha*, leading to refractive changes and ocular fatigue. *Danta Vigharshana* is said to aggravate *Vata*

dosha and *Prajapana* (excessive talking) causes physical exhaustion and also said to aggravate *Vata dosha*. *Jala Avagaha* (prolonged immersion in water) may disturb delicate ocular tissues which can be considered as precursor of any *Netra rogas*. *Surya Vilochana* (direct gazing at the sun or intensely bright objects) may aggravate *Pitta Dosha* and may cause phototoxic retinal injury. Prolonged exposure is associated with conditions such as solar retinopathy and macular damage.

Suppression of *Mutra* (urination), *Vit* (defecation), *Nidra* (sleep) and *Vami* (vomiting) adversely affects *Netra*. *Mutra Vega Dharana* is associated with *Shirashula*, *Vit Vega Dharana* with *Shiroroga* and *Drishti Vikara*, while *Nidra Vega Dharana* causes *Akshi Gaurava*. Suppression of vomiting increases intra-abdominal and intracranial pressure, potentially damaging the delicate ocular vasculature.^[17]

Nishi Bhojana (late-night meals) impairs digestion, promotes the formation of *Ama* and contributes to *Doshic* imbalance. *Nishi Jagarana* (night vigil) aggravates *Vata*, producing ocular dryness, whereas *Divaswapna* (daytime sleep) aggravates *Kapha*, resulting in causation of different *Vataja* and *Kaphaja netra rogas* respectively in susceptible individuals.

Ati-Ambupana (excessive water intake) may alter systemic hydration and tear film osmolarity, contributing to *Kapha* and *Pitta dosha* vitiation and predisposing susceptible individuals to conditions such as cystoid macular oedema and central serous retinopathy. *Chardana* (excessive vomiting) aggravates *Timira*, as described by *Acharya Charaka*, while repeated episodes may also increase intra-abdominal and intracranial pressure, adversely affecting anatomical and physiological changes in the ocular structure.

DISCUSSION

The concept of *Pathya–Apathya* occupies a predominant position in Ayurvedic therapeutics, as it balances well with pharmacological and procedural interventions by addressing the root factors which are responsible for disease initiation and progression. The current work explains that the *Laghutrayee Yogaratnakara* provides a comprehensive outline for *Netra swastya* that stretches beyond *Pathya aharas* and integrates therapeutic procedures, lifestyle modifications, behavioural practices and psychological well-being. Maintenance of health and treating the disease successfully depends equally on appropriate *Ahara* (diet), *Vihara* (lifestyle), *Achara* (conduct) and *Chikitsa* (therapeutic interventions) and this holistic approach is well explained in the text by the author.

The analysis of the recommended *Pathya dravyas* reveals a predominance of substances possessing *Tikta*, *Kashaya* and *Madhura Rasa*, *Laghu Guna*, *Sheeta Virya* and *Kapha–Pitta Shamaka* properties. These attributes help maintain the clarity of the *Srotas*, improve *Agni*, digest *Ama*, reduce inflammation and provide nourishment to ocular tissues. Commonly used *Dravyas* like *Ksheera*, *Ghrita*, *Triphala*, *Lodhra*, *Kumari*, *Mudga*, *Lohita Shali*, *Matsyakshi*, *Jivanti*, *Punarnava*, *Draksha* and other *Chakshushya dravyas* are repeatedly emphasised because of their *Rasayana*, *Balya*, *Shothahara* and *Dhatu vivridhdhikara*, suggesting that preservation of *Drushti* depends not only on *Sthanika kriyas* but also on balancing *Sarvadaihika dosha* and *Dhatu poshana*.

Kriyakalpas such as *Ashchyotana*, *Anjana*, *Tarpana*, *Seka*, *Lepana* and *Pratisarana* directly address ocular pathology by improving ocular drug delivery, reducing symptoms like *Raga*, *Shotha*, *Shula*, *Srava*, enhancing *Dhatu poshana* and facilitating *Dosha nirharana*. Similarly, *Sarvadaihika kriyas* like *Langhana*, *Virechana*, *Nasya* and *Raktamokshana* aim to eliminate vitiated *Doshas* from the body, particularly those affecting the *Urdhwajatru Pradesha*, thereby restoring *Dosha-dhatu samyata*. From these observations we can understand that the classical Ayurvedic principle if advocated properly can successfully manage the different *Netra rogas* with the help of both local and systemic interventions.

Another important review is the inclusion of psychological and spiritual practices, such as *Mano-nivritti* and *Gurupada Puja*. These demonstrate Ayurveda's recognition of the relationship between *Manasika swasthya* and *Netra kriyas* (ocular function). Emotional disturbances such as anger, grief and chronic stress are identified as contributory factors in *Doshic* imbalance, whereas mental tranquillity, emotional stability and spiritual well-being are regarded as protective factors that support normal visual function.

The *Apathya* factors described in the text similarly reveal a multidimensional understanding of *Roga utpatti*. *Ahara* which are *Guru*, *Abhishyandi*, *Vidahi*, *Ushna*, *Teekshna* or *Pitta–Kapha vardhakas* are consistently contraindicated because they promote *Amotpatti*, *Srotorodha*, *Shotha* and *Dosha vaishamya*, thereby predisposing individuals to different *Netra rogas*.

Likewise, unhealthy behavioural practices such as suppression of natural urges, excessive exposure to sunlight and wind, prolonged visual strain, irregular sleeping habits, emotional stress and inappropriate dietary habits further disturb physiological balance

and contribute to the manifestation of different ocular diseases.

To concise, *Yogaratanakara* presents *Pathya-Apathya* not merely as dietary advice but as a comprehensive preventive and therapeutic strategy that integrates balanced nutrition, behaviour, lifestyle, mental health and clinical interventions. Such an approach supports the Ayurvedic objective of preserving *Drushti*, preventing disease recurrence and promoting long-term ocular health through correction of the underlying *Doshic* imbalance rather than symptomatic management alone.

CONCLUSION

Yogaratanakara presents a holistic approach to *netra swasthya* through the principles of *Pathya-Apathya*, integrating *Ahara*, *Chikitsa*, lifestyle practices and *Manasika swasthya*, prevent *Amotpatti*, prevent *Srotorodha* and *Netra dosha-dhatu-mala samyata*, whereas *Apathya* factors contribute to *Dosha vaishamyas* and the development of *Netra Rogas*. Many of these classical advocations remain relevant to modern preventive eye care, emphasizing healthy diet, adequate sleep, stress management and environmental protection. Further clinical and experimental studies are needed to validate these classical concepts and strengthen their evidence-based application in contemporary ophthalmic practice.

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