



**RESTORING RENAL HEALTH THROUGH AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF
CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE**

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ABSTRACT

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is a Progressive, Irreversible decline in Renal function that leads to Metabolic and Systemic disturbances. Despite advancements in Modern Nephrology, CKD continues to be a major Global health burden. Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, offers a holistic framework for understanding kidney pathophysiology and provides individualized approaches for management. According to Ayurvedic principles, Kidneys can be correlated with *Vrikka*, which forms the *Moolasthan* (root structure) of *Mutravaha Srotas* (urinary system). Proper function of these channels depends on the equilibrium of *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha doshas*, along with optimal *Agni* (metabolic fire). When these are deranged, renal function deteriorates, manifesting as *Mutrakrichra* (dysuria), *Mutraghata* (urinary obstruction), and chronic renal insufficiency. This article discusses Ayurvedic principles, pathogenesis, and therapeutic modalities applicable in CKD management.

KEYWORDS: Chronic Kidney Disease, *Mutravaha Srotas*, *Vrikka*, *Mutrakrichra*, *Mutraghata*.

INTRODUCTION

Chronic diseases have become a major public health problem. Morbidity & mortality of chronic diseases are more in India, other low and developing countries. The chronic diseases account for 60% of all deaths worldwide. 80% of chronic disease deaths worldwide occur in low & middle-income countries.^[1]

Chronic Kidney Disease affects approximately 10% of the global population, often progressing silently until advanced stages. It manifests through fluid imbalance, electrolyte disturbance, anemia, and systemic complications. *Ayurveda* conceptualizes renal impairment as a *Mutravaha Srotas Dushti* (vitiation of urinary channels) caused by derangement of *Tridosha* and weakening of *Dhatu*s (body tissues). The Ayurvedic approach emphasizes early detection, elimination of causative factors (*Nidana Parivarjana*), rejuvenation (*Rasayana*), and *Srotoshodhana* (cleansing of channels) to prevent progression.

According to classical Ayurvedic texts, Kidneys can be functionally correlated with the *Vrikka* – a *Moolasthan* (root structure) of *Mutravaha Srotas*. The *Vrikka* helps in the separation of urine (*Mutra Nirmana*) and maintenance of *Kleda* (body fluids). Proper functioning of *Apana Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* ensures healthy urine formation and excretion. When these doshas become imbalanced due to improper diet, lifestyle, or systemic disorders like *Prameha* (metabolic syndrome), they cause obstruction (*Avarana*) or depletion (*Kshaya*) of *Mutravaha Srotas*, resulting in renal dysfunction.

Etiology of CKD in India is Diabetic Nephropathy(31.2%), Undetermined (16.4%), Chronic Glomerulonephritis(13.8%), Hypertension(12.8%), Tubulointestinal disease(7%), Obstructive uropathy(3.4%), Autosomal Dominant Polycystic Kidney Disease(2.5%), Renovascular diseases(0.8%), Kidney Transplant Graft Loss(0.3%), others(11.7%). Mostly diabetes mellitus and hypertension together account for

most of the patients being treated for ESRD ^[2][End Stage Renal Disease].

Aim: To explore the Ayurvedic understanding and management of chronic kidney disease (CKD) through classical texts.

Objective: To evaluate the efficacy of Ayurvedic therapies, including Samshodhana procedures and nephro-protective medicinal plants, in the management of Chronic Kidney Disease.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This review utilized classical Ayurvedic and Contemporary texts to analyse kidney-related concepts and management principles.

Ayurvedic Perspective on CKD

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is not directly mentioned in Ayurveda, but Ayurvedic concepts can be applied to it through *Nidanapanchaka* (the five-fold diagnostic approach). The signs and symptoms of CKD primarily indicate an imbalance in *Vata and Kapha Doshas*, along with disturbances in multiple Doshas. Initially, there is vitiation in *Rasa* (plasma), *Rakta*(blood), *Mutra* (urine), and *Udaka* (water), followed by involvement of all Dhatus and Upadhatus (tissues and sub-tissues). The aggravated *Doshas and Dhatus* circulate through the

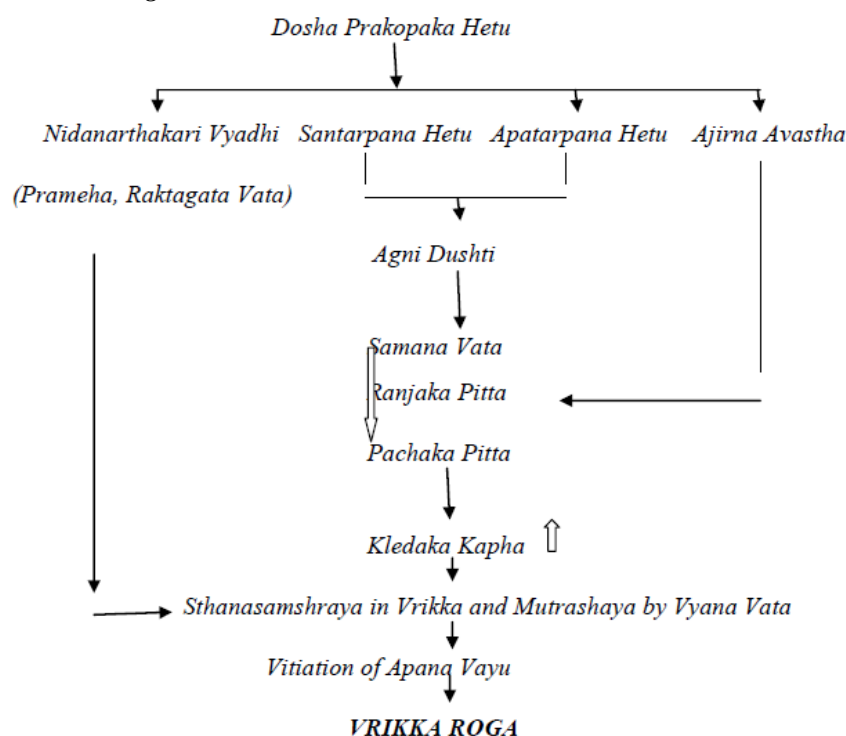
Rasa with Vyana Vayu, affecting the *Mutravahasrotasa* (urinary channels), resulting in *Khavaigunya* (dysfunction). The clinical manifestations of *Dosha* disturbance are considered the primary signs of CKD.

According to *Ashtanga Hridayakara*, there are 2 types of pathology for *MutraRogas* i.e. *Mutra Apravruttijannya* and *Mutra Atipravrutijannya Vikaras*.^[3] By seeing all the symptoms of CKD, we can incorporate it into *Mutra Apravruttijannya Vikara*. 8 types of *Mutrakrichra*, 13 types of *Mutraghata*, 4 types of *Ashmari* are also included under the same. In both *Mutrakrichra & Mutraghata*, *Krichrata & Mutra-Vibandhata* are simultaneously present. But 20 types of *Prameha* are included under *Mutra Atipravrutijannya Vikara* due to its *Prattyatma Lakshana* “*Prabhuta Avila Mutrata*”.

As Oedema is the main subjective complaint in CKD, in *Ayurveda* it can be correlated to *Shotha*, where there is vitiation of *Vata* in *BahyaSiras* leading to the vitiation of *Kapha, Rakta & Pitta* causing *shotha*.

In CKD we come across reduced formation of Urine (*Mutra*), because of which the excessive *Kleda* is not evacuated out and resides in *Basti* causing *PratilomaGati* of *Vata* and leading to the *Dushti* of *Rakta*.^[4]

Probable Samprapti in Vrikka roga



Pathogenesis of Chronic Kidney Disease

In Modern medicine, the pathogenesis of Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) involves damage to renal cells due to various underlying causes, such as immune complex deposition, inflammation from specific types of

glomerular nephritis, or toxin buildup in renal tubules and interstitium. The systemic harm is a result of the accumulation of toxins that would typically be excreted by the kidneys, as well as complications arising from the loss of other renal functions, such as maintaining fluid

and electrolyte balance, hormone regulation, and the progressive systemic inflammation that affects the vascular and nutritional systems.

Prognosis

Chronic kidney disease (CKD), being a disorder of a vital organ and in an advanced state, is classified based on its stages. In the early stages (stages 1 and 2), it is considered *Krucchrasadhya* (difficult to treat). Stages 3 and 4 are regarded as *Yapya* (manageable with palliation), as significant kidney cell damage and biochemical disturbances occur. At this point, adherence to a strict regimen is crucial to prevent progression. Stage 5, or end-stage renal disease, presents with uremic symptoms and is deemed incurable and beyond mitigation, as it affects all organ systems, leads to widespread destructive effects, and is associated with a poor prognosis and fatal outcomes.^[5]

Management

Modern treatment of CKD focuses on addressing its underlying causes, Lifestyle Modifications like Smoking cessation, Limit alcohol intake etc. Bicarbonate supplementation to manage chronic metabolic acidosis has been shown to slow CKD progression.^[6] Furthermore, in individuals with diabetes, strict glucose

control has proven effective in delaying the onset of albuminuria and preventing its progression to overt proteinuria.^[7]

Ayurvedic approach

The management of *Vrikka rogas* are mainly focuses on *Nidana parivarjana*, but also improving *Jathragni* to address *Amotpatti* and remove *Srotorodha*.

Treatment can include both *Shodhana Chikitsa* (detoxification therapies), *Shamana Chikitsa* (palliative therapy) which includes *Ekamulika dravya* prayoga also.

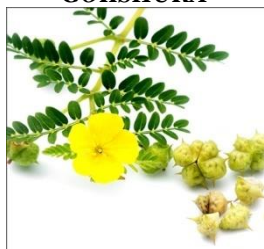
In *VrikkaRoga Prakarana of BhaishajyaRatnavali* while explaining about *Chikitsa*, patient is advised to undergo *Virechana*, *Swedana* & drugs which are having *Mutrala* properties & *Raktashodhaka properties*.^[8]

Shodhana Chikitsa

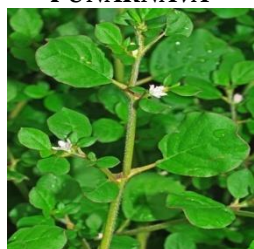
In the management of CKD, the elimination of circulating vitiated *Dosha* can be effectively achieved through *Virechana* therapy. Additionally, *Basti* therapy (*Yapana Basti*), when combined with appropriate medications is highly recommended. This therapy offers multiple benefits, including cleansing, pacifying the aggravated *Dosha*, and supporting the patient's longevity.

Shamana Chikitsa [Ekamulika Dravyas]: Which acts as *Rasayana* i.e Nephro-protective.

GOKSHURA



PUNARNAVA



KULATTHA



VARUNA



BHUMYAMALAKI



KUSHA



KASHA



IKSHU



Shamnoushadis used in Chronic Kidney Diseases – *Gokshuradi Guggulu*, *Punarnavadi kashaya*, *Brihatyadi kashaya*, *Varunadi Kashaya* etc.....which are *Kapha* – *Medohara* and *Mutrala* in nature.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda offers a holistic, individualized approach to Chronic Kidney Disease by addressing its root causes and emphasizing rejuvenation and detoxification. Principles like *Nidana Parivarjana*, *Shodhana*, *Shamana*, and *Rasayana* are central to management. The incorporation of these time-tested therapies with modern

diagnostic monitoring can significantly improve the quality of life and slow the progression of Chronic Kidney Diseases (CKD).

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