

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF PATHYA APATHYA IN NETHRA ROGA

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ABSTRACT

The main goal of *Ayurveda* is to prevent and treat diseases in patients as well as keep healthy people healthy. Both the body and disease are dependent or caused by food, wholesome and unwholesome food are responsible for happiness and misery respectively as the quote says - *Ahara Sambhavam Vastu Rogascha Ahara Sambhavam*.^[1] The key to health and disease does not lie in the application of drugs or chemicals or special therapies but in the prime factors i.e. *Aahara, Nidra, Brahmacharya* which are pillars of *Ayurveda*. *Aahara* has been termed as *Mahabhaishajya* by *Kashyapa* can be used as preventive tool in various disease. *Ayurveda* also focuses on combination and compatibility of food items, their quantities, how they are prepared and how *Apathya* affects *manas, prakruthi* and environmental factors of a person. *Pathya* is not only about food it is also about following seasonal as well as night regimen. *Pathya* is described according to *Dosha, Dushya, Deha Prakriti*, and *Vyadhi* when we choose a diet for a disease based on *pathya kalpana* it helps to improve the action of the *Aushadhi* and fights against *roga uthpatti karanas* and does *srotho shuddhi*. *Pathya* is important for *swasthya rakshana* as well as for *dehaposhana*. The word *Chakshu* means which illuminates the objects and enlightens the mind about its details which is situated in eyeballs, when we talk about *pathya apathya* importance of the word *chakshushya* can be highlighted, *pathya* for *Akshi* can be explained as *chakshushya* and *apathya* as *achakshushya* hence an attempt is made to extract the necessary information about both *pathya and apathya* in *Nethra roga*.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda, pathya, apathya, nethra, Aahara.*

INTRODUCTION

In *Ayurveda* *Netra* is considered as site of *Alochaka pitta*. *Pachaka pitta* due to its strength obliges all other types of *pittas* by nourishing them, it is must to keep the status of *pachaka pitta* in proper balance to keep *Alochaka pitta*. As per *Kashyapa*, *aahara* is also named as *mahabhaishajya*, no medicine is equivalent to food, it is possible to make a person disease free with just proper food whereas even hundreds of medicines can't cure disease by taking *apathya aahara*. *Pathya* is derived from the root word "*Patha*", which means "a way or channel" According to *Charaka Samhita*, *Pathya aahara* and *vihara* has beneficial effect over the body and mind of an individual without causing any adverse effect.

Definition of *pathya*^[2]

पथं पथोऽनपेतं यद्यच्चोक्तं मनसः प्रियम्।

यच्चाप्रियमपथं च नियतं तत्र लक्षयेत्॥ (च.सू. २५/४५)

Aahara-viharas that calms the mind, beneficial to the body, doesn't cause harm to *sharirika doshas* as well as provides nutrients to body is called *pathya*, which is the opposite to it is *apathya*.

Ahara is given the first place among three *Upastambha* which are the most essential for living. Due to modernization, urbanization and busy life style people have modified their lifestyle and food habits, which has led to impairment of proper functions and damage to all sense organs.

Acharyas have guided us with the measures to prevent *nethra roga* through *pathya apanya*, *dinacharya*, *rathricharya* as well as *kriyakalpa* procedures. Since *nethra* is the most important sense organ- *sarvendriyani nayanam pradhanam* always an extra effort has to be put to protect eye from diseases.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Classical texts of *Ayurveda* and other contemporary texts and articles are used for reference regarding *pathya* and *apathya* in *nethra roga*. these information are compiled together for an in-depth and better understanding.

PATHYA IN NETHRA^[3]

आशचोत्तनं लङ्घनमञ्जं च स्वेदो विरेकः प्रतिसारणं च।
प्रपूरणं नस्य अस्रग्विमोचः शस्रक्रिया लेपनमाज्यपानं।।
सेको मनोनिवृत्तिरङ्गपूज मुद्ग यवा लोहित शालयश्च।
कौम्भं हविस्तस्य कुलत्तयूषःपेय विलेपि सुरणं पटोलम्।
वार्ताककार्कोटककारवेल्लं नवनीतमोचं नवमूलकं च।
पुनर्नवमार्कवकाकमचिपत्तूरशाकानि कुमारिका च।।
द्राक्षा च कुस्तुम्बुरू माणिमन्थो रोध्नं वरा क्षौद्रमनुपानश्च।
नारिपयश्चन्दनमिन्दुखण्ड तिक्तानि सर्वाणि लघूनि चापि।।
विजानत पथ्यमिदं प्रयुक्तं यथामलं नेत्रगदं निहन्ति।

AAHARAJA PATHYA

Mudga, Yava, Raktha Shali, Peya Vilepi with Kaumbha Gritha Surana, Patola, Vartaka, Karkotaka, Karavellaka, Navaneetha, Kakamachi, Nava Mocha, Bala Moola, Punarnava, Markava, Kakamachi, Kumari, Draksha, Lodra, Dhanyaka, Triphala, Madhu, Sthanya, Chandana, Karpoora

Mudga

Prabhava- Drushtiprasadana

Zinc And Vitamin A are Important Nutrients in *Mudga*, essential for healthy Eyes. Zinc activates the enzymes that produce Vitamin A in the body, ideal for treating night blindness.

Yava

Prabhava- Raktavikarahara, Balya

Yava is rich in antioxidants such as Vitamins A, E, and C which are known to reduce the buildup of cancer cells. The presence of vitamin E, beta-carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin also help protect the cells and repair cell damage caused by oxidative stress.

Raktha Shali

Rakthashali is a highly nutritive grain with healthful properties to balance the three doshas. it is known for its property to improve blood count. It is also known to be good for purifying the blood and is good for the skin & eyes. It is a small slender red grain with a color closer to bright maroon/brown. It is sweet in taste, relatively easy to cook and easy to digest.

Jeerna Gritha (Peya and vilepi prepared with purana gritha).

Gritha acts as neuroprotective. Help in reducing dryness and irritation, providing relief from eye strain and fatigue, which is essential for maintaining proper eye lubrication. Properties of *peya* and *vilepi Laghu, Madhura, Dipan, Rochaka, Grahi, Vrushya*.

Surana

Prabhava- Arshogna (arshas of varthma)

It also relieves arterial blockage and vein blockage. Lowering Cholesterol, Cardiovascular Health, Anticoagulant and Anti Inflammatory, Cancer Prevention, Slow down ageing, Diabetes, Detoxification, Anti-Inflammatory, Memory and Concentration, Boost Immunity, Cures Piles, Cooling effects, Good for Digestion.

Vartaka

It has the key antioxidant that averts age-related macular degeneration, which is the primary cause of vision loss and blindness. Thus, brinjal may be beneficial in safeguarding the eyes from free radical damage and promoting good vision.

Karavellaka

Vitamin A and beta-carotene present in bitter gourd are beneficial for our eyes' health and improve vision. They are also effective for dark circles treatment. Bitter gourd reduces several blood-sugar control markers, including hemoglobin A1c and fructosamine.

Nava mocha

Bananas are also a source of vitamin A which is also crucial for eye health. Vitamin A protects the cornea, which is essential for good vision.

Bala moolaka

With their exceptional combination of antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals, radishes can help combat sight loss conditions such as retinitis pigmentosa and macular degeneration, making them an essential component of a diet aimed at preserving vision.

Amalaki

It is rich in Vitamin C; thus, helps you attain a better vision. This Vitamin rich berry also strength the eye muscles. Another major benefit of Amla is that it prevents cataract. Amla powerfully inhibits the free radicals, which are one of the sources of cataract.

Vibhitaki

Terminalia bellirica has a positive effect upon the optimal vision condition, enhances good eyesight and visual functions.

Draksha rich in antioxidants, vitamins, and flavonoids that play a crucial role in slowing the progression of sight loss conditions like macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy.

Ksheera

Not only do they contain Vitamin A but also Zinc. Therefore, incorporating food items like milk and yogurt becomes vital for maintaining good eyesight. Zinc helps Vitamin A create a pigment called melanin, which protects the cornea. It helps in bringing the Vitamin from the liver to the eye.

Sheegru

Moringa or drumstick leaves contain important antioxidants, among which beta-carotene is essential in maintaining and promoting good eye health by preventing early macular degeneration along with other eye problems.

Kshoudra

Honey's anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial properties, combined with its soothing abilities, make it a surprisingly effective treatment for several eye conditions.

Punarnava

Punarnava is good for the eyes as it helps in managing cataract. The presence of antioxidants in *Punarnava* helps prevent damage caused by free radicals to the eye lens which is responsible for cataract formation. It might also be useful for managing the symptoms of conjunctivitis, itching and eye infections due to its anti-inflammatory activity.

Patola

Prevents eye ailments. Vitamin A prevents macular degeneration, a condition that leads to blindness.

Saindhava lavana

This salt contains daily recommended amount of trace minerals. Table salt causes dehydration and it can dry out eyes which can lead to vision problems. But Saindhava would not dehydrate. It has 84 trace minerals which actually improve eye health.

VIHARAJA PATHYA

Langhana, Pooja Karma

Langhana^[4]

यत् किञ्चित् लाघवकरं देहे तल्लघनं स्मृतम्।।

Importance of *Langhana* in Eye disorders by doing *Langhana* for 5 days *Akshi rogas, Kukshibhava rogas, pratishyaya, vrana, jwara* all these diseases will be pacified.

अक्षिकुक्षिभव रोगाः प्रतिश्याय व्रणज्वराः।पञ्चैते पञ्चरात्रेण प्रशमनं यान्ति लघनात्।।^[5]

Aamaja Netranashaka Shadvidha Upaya Six therapies such as *sweda, pralepa, tikta dravya aahara, seka, langhana* for a period of 5 days are act as *ama pachana* in *akshiroga* associated with *ama*.

BHESHAJA PATHYA

Aschottana Anjana, Lepana, Nasya, Poorana, Prathisarana, Raktamokshana, Seka, Shastrakriya, Swedana, Virechana.

Aschottana

The drug mixes with tears, distributes uniformly over the eyes, giving lubrication, soothes and protects the surface of eyes.

Anjana

Its active principles penetrate to the posterior chamber of the eye according to their hydrophilicity and lipophilicity mainly through the conjunctiva and cornea by paracellular and transcellular pathways respectively. Increases the lacrimal secretions and improves the circulation.

Lepa (Lepa is similar to Bidalaka)

The skin of the lids is very thin and delicate and is joined to cover the subjacent muscles by loose areolar tissue and is free from fat. Medicine which is applied over the lid is absorbed into the palpebral conjunctiva and to bulbar conjunctiva and in turn reduces the inflammation of anterior segment of eye and due to closure of eye helps in epithelialization of cornea and conjunctiva.

Nasya

Nasa hi shiraso dwaram as quote says *nasa* is the gateway for *shiras* and any medication instilled through nose reaches *Shiras*. *Shodhana Karmas* are always very effective. One of them is *Nasya* is the best for *Urdhwajatra Vikaras*, which include *Netra Vikaras*.

Nasya can give a *Shirah Sthanika Shodhana*, because *Netra* is in *Shirah* it can function faster and be more effective. *Nasya* administration in the early stages of *Netra Rogas* can even prevent unnecessary procedures.

Tarpana

Contact time is more and more drugs are absorbed. It will cross corneal epithelium barrier easily due to its lipophilic property

Netra is the site of *alochaka pitta*. *Ghrita* having *Madhura rasa, Madhura vipaka, sheeta virya* – acts as a good medicine for mitigating *vata pitta* diseases. *Dosha* in the eye get eliminated due to *snigdha, sheeta, guru, mrudu and agnivardhaka* properties of *ghrita*.

Prathisarana

Prathisarana is explained in the treatment principles of *Mukha-Roga*. The medicine is taken with the index finger and applied on the *Nethra*. Rubbing of the eye lid and lid margin with very fine powder of the medicinal drugs *Prathisarana* is mainly carried out in *Kapha Pradana Vyadhi* with expected *Lekhana* effect.

Rakthamokshana

Rakthamokshana is one of the Para surgical procedures which is being widely practiced in *Netra roga* as in *Charaka Samhita* the *Basti Karma* is regarded as partial or even the complete treatment method similarly, in *Sushruta Samhita* the *Rakthamokshana* is compared to *Basti* said by *Acharya Charaka* as the partial or complete treatment of diseases. The expulsion of vitiated doshas accumulated in the body gives relief from pain immediately due to its vata shamana effect, its analgesic effect occurs due to reduction in intravascular volume and pressure.

Commonest *Rakthamokshana* types used in *Nethra* are *Siravyadha*, *Jalauka* and *prachhana*.

Seka

As medicine is poured over the eyelids continuously for a specific time, it helps to improve the circulation locally thereby reduces the inflammation and strengthens the muscles, nerves of eyes.

Swedana

Swedana is contraindicated in *Nethra* but *Kashyapa acharya* has indicated *Hasta sweda* to *Nethra*. In *Abhishyanda* and *Adhimantha* of *vataja* type, *snehapana* and *swedana* are indicated.

Swedana is useful in *kaphaja vartma rogas*. *Swedana* with the decoction of *kutannata*, *asphota*, *phanijjaka*, *bilwa*, *pattura*, *pilu*, *Arka* and *kapittha* in *kaphaja netra roga*.

Palming:- Enhances the efficiency of the nerves. If it is done with deep breathing it relaxes the mind and improves blood circulation.

Virechana

Virechana is a measure to impart strength to *indriyas*^[6] and the most preferred *Shodhana karma* in eye diseases. *Virechana* is indicated generally in *sira*, *Karna*, *Akshi*, *nasa rogas* and specifically in *Akshipaka*, *kacha*, *timira* and *Abhishyanda*. According to *Acharya Sushruta*, *Virechana* is indicated as initial step for treatment of following eye diseases: *Parimlayi kacha*, *Neela kacha*, *Pittaja Abhishyanda* & *Adhimantha*, *Amyadhyushitha*, *Shukthika*, *Pitta vidagdha drushti*, *Dhoomadarshi*.

APATHYA IN NETHRA^[7]

क्रोदं शुच्यं मेथनमश्रु वायुविण्मूत्रनिद्रवमिवेगरोधम् ।।
सूक्ष्मेक्षणं दन्त विघर्षणं च स्नानं निशाभोजनमातपं च ।
प्रजल्पनं छर्दनमम्बुपानं मधुकपुष्पदधिपत्रशाकं ।।
कलिङ्गपिण्याकविरूढकानि मत्स्यंसुरामांसमजाङ्गलं च ।
ताम्बूलमम्लं लवणंविदाहितीक्ष्णंकटूष्णं गुरुचात्रपानं ।।
नरो न सेवेत् दिनाभिलाषि सर्वेषुरोगेषुदृग्गाश्रवेषु ।

AHARAJA APATHYA**Excess intake of Amla**

Causes "*Akshibruva Nikochana* (constriction of eyes and eyebrows). Causes ciliary muscle strain and sudden involuntary actions of lids.

Pinyaka

It's the residue of sesamum, groundnut and other oil seeds after extracting the oil from it Produces giddiness, dryness, indigestion and vitiated vision.

Excessive intake of Madya

Madya is toxicating in nature. It increases the amounts of methyl alcohol in body. Methyl alcohol metabolizes very slowly and oxidized into formic acid and formaldehydes in tissues, causing degeneration of ganglion cells, a main factor to cause toxic Amblyopia.

Excess intake of Kshara, Tikshna, Ushna

Kshara increases the body pH there by increasing the pH of eye also. Excessive intake breaks down into hydroxyl ion and cation which saponifies the cell membrane and interacts with collagen and glycosaminoglycans producing the stromal haze.

Katu Aharas

They also cause epithelial defect and ciliary body irritation. *Katu Ahara* stimulates the pain chemicals called prostaglandins. They are powerful local acting vasodilators.

Virudaka/ Sprouts

Sprouting increases the concentration of protein, fiber and other nutrients. Regular consumption of sprouts can lead to diarrhea. Excess consumption of sprouted corns and pulses can lead to increase in *Apana vata*. Consuming raw sprouts can cause food poisoning. These conditions also favor the growth of harmful bacteria such as *E. coli*.

MANASIKA APATHYA**Shoka and klesha**

Stress leads to vitiation *Sharirika* and *Manasika Doshas* Studies have reported that frequent changes in the endocrine, immune, autonomic nervous and cardiovascular system towards the biology of grieving. All of these are fundamentally influenced by brain functions and neurotransmitters and further have impact on Eyes i.e. *Kopa*: when in anger the adrenaline shoots up and as a result the pupils will be dilated causes perception of more light. When pupils are dilated blurriness can be noticed as a reaction to the over perception of light. Profound vasodilatation also occurs due to activation of autonomous nerve system.

Prajalpana/ Athibhashya

Rajas is characterized by *bahubhashitwa* (prating/excessive talking). Due to *Ucchairbhashya/ Athibhashya* i.e. excessive speaking with loud voice can cause *Shirstapa* i.e. *daha*, pain at *shankaka*, *Trishna*,

murcha, jwara, swasa, hanugraha, manya graha and it may lead to strain of eye muscles.

VIHARAJA APATHYA

Atimathuna

Excessive indulgence in sex results in *Dhathu Kshaya*, leads to *purva dhathu kshaya*

Studies have revealed there will be drop in Estrogen and Androgen levels by indulgence. Further studies have proved the presence of receptors in epithelial cell of lacrimal gland, Meibomian gland and conjunctiva which causes Meibomian gland dysfunction, tear film instability and disturbs the regulation of immune system and alters the secretory functions of Lacrimal glands.

Vega Vinigraha

Suppression of natural urges like *Mootra, Vata, Vit, Shukra, Jrumbha, Asru, Kshavathu* causes *Vata Prakopa*. The pressure exerted by controlling these urges increases the pressure within the globe, causes pain. In advanced stages causes Vaso dilatation leading to hemorrhages in *Shukla Mandala* or *Drishti Mandala*. *Bhashpa Nigraha* also leads to *Akshi Roga*.

Swapna Viparyaya

Abnormal sleeping habits keeping awake at night (*Ratri Jaagarana*). Decreased oxygen supply to the brain causes loss of cognitive abilities and involuntary, spontaneous, localized quivering of ocular muscle occurs also leads to excessive stress to ciliary muscles cause defects in accommodation.

Sukshmanireekshanath

Watching minute objects for longer duration like in tailors, embroidery workers, computer users etc. Where there is the focusing of the eyes for prolonged periods on a fixed object which are held very close. Exertion of an abnormally excessive accommodation and causes difficult in sensory perception. On staring continuously, the blinking rate also will reduce, which make tear film to evaporate fast.

Snana

Samhitas give the caution that if at all warm water head bath is taken, it leads to: hair fall, premature greyness of hair, decreases the eye sight, reduces the body strength declines the mental ability and leads to thinning of hair.

Atapa sevana

On regular exposure to sunlight or heat causes *sthanasamshraya* of *pitta dosha* in *swasthana* which increase *Tejo Guna* in nethra and causes *akshidaha* and *pitta raktaja nethra roga*.

As the temperature rises, this can lead to eye allergies, which can range in severity from minor watering and swelling of the eyelids, sties, and bacterial and viral conjunctivitis.

Danta Vigarshana

Excessive brushing leads to injury to gingiva furthermore, research has found that the oral bacteria associated with gingivitis can play a role in the development of eye diseases. In short, taking care of your teeth won't just benefit oral health it will benefit our eyes too.

Rathri Bhojana

Eating out of sync with the natural rhythm disrupts the internal clocks by altering cellular activity patterns, which can negatively impact the brain, cellular rhythms play an important role in the mechanisms underlying learning and memory, such that disruptions to these rhythms can impair cognition as well as in sense organs, late night eating can make it more difficult to fall asleep and reduce sleep quality, which can also negatively impact brain function in turn on eyes. In *Sadvritta* it is mentioned that *Bhojana sevana* at night is inappropriate

BHESHAJA APATHYA

Vamana

Athi Vamana causes *vata prokopa*, upward pressure exerted during *vamana* causes fragile vessels of eyes to rupture and bleed i.e. subconjunctival hemorrhage and retinal hemorrhage It is indicated in *klinna varthma, kokoonaka*.

SWASTHA VRITTA

Chatra dharana - holding an umbrella during summer is beneficial to eyes as it protects from heat.

Pada-abhyanga, Pada-prakshalana, Padatra dharana

Regular *abhyanga* of feet with oil improves eye sight "*Shiro shravana padeshu tam visheshen shiliyeta*". *Vayu* is predominant in *sparshana indriya* and it can be controlled by *abhyanga*. We have to clean our *pada tala* and protect from injury because *Acharya Dalhana* has explained that there is *Nadi* that transverses from feet to the eyes hence any application to *pada tala* is directly connected with eyes.

CHAKSHUSHYA RASAYANA

Rasayana is beneficial for healthy and diseased individuals both, because of *tridosha samyakara* effect. According to *Charaka Samhita* a person who use *rasayana* gets many advantages like *longevity*, sharp memory, intellect, disease free body, youth, excellence of luster, complexion and voice, excellent potentiality of body and sense organs, *vak-sidhi, pranati*, beauty etc. *Rasayana* improves *vyadhikshamatva*. It protects eyes by free radical damage. It gives strengthening to ocular tissues. It slows down the process of ageing along with degeneration of ocular tissue.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda has a holistic approach in health management. It gives due importance to food in the management of disease both as a causative factor (*Apathya*) and as a part of therapy (*Pathya*). As per *Ayurveda*, most of the

ailments develop due to improper eating habits so, Ayurveda deals with the *Pathya Vyavastha* in a very scientific way. Day to day activities, seasonal regimes etc. also play an important role in the maintenance of health especially *nethra swasthya*. If a person is endowed with all other sensory faculties but without eye sight, he will be useless as an insect (*kudya*). We can prevent eye disorders by adopting *dinacharya*, *yoga*, *pathya*, few life style modifications, *nethra rasayana* etc. Diseases of eye affects psychological as well as developmental factors hence affecting the quality of life. Considering all these *netra swasthya* is very important, all the above measures may help considerably reducing the impact of eye disorders in general population.

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