

Role of *Patra* (Vessels) in Ancient Dietetics

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Abstract: Ayurveda is the ancient science which deals with health as well as diseased condition. For that they give concepts of *Tryopstambha*. In *Tryopstambha*, acharyas include Ahara, Nidra and Brahmacharya. Among them they give priority of Ahara. According to Acharya Charaka, if person follow the all regiment of diet then the Ahara become prana. These rules of dietetics explain under *Astaaharavishasaayatnani*. Karana is the part among them and acharya explain regarding Bhajana under the heading of Karana. Patra plays main role in Ahara Kalpana. Acharya explained various vessels regarding Storing, Preparation and serving of the food. Patra has quality to enhance the quality of food and give health benefits. On the other side Acharya also explain the contraindication of vessels in under *Viruddha* which get harmful effect of the health. Based on these aspects, it can be inferred that the characteristic of an ideal vessel varies according to need and use of the vessel. Therefore, understanding regarding vessels is essential for healthy life.

Keywords: Patra, Bhajana, Vessels, Food

1. Introduction

Ayurveda is the ancient science which deals with health as well as diseased condition. Acharyas give more importance regard healthiness. For that they give concepts of *Tryopstambha*. In *Tryopstambha*, acharyas include Ahara, Nidra and Brahmacharya. If the regimen of *Tryopstambha* follow properly, it become reason for health but if not follow properly it causes diseases. Among them they give priority of Ahara.

Ahara is the essential for the living life. So that Acharya Sushrut gave importance of food in first chapter of *Sutra Sthana* which is beginning of the shastra. Ahara is the root of the life and gives strength, complexion and increase the Ojas in the body [1]. Acharya Charak also said that Ahara is the Prana of the body but he also considered that if person follow the all regiment of diet then the Ahara become prana, give strength to the body as well as mind, give complexion, give strength to the sense organ. If person not follow the rules of dietetics, it become harmful for the body as well as mind [2]. Acharya Charak gives detail description regards importance of Ahara. Ahara is the source of the life and all activities of human beings in the world seek Ahara which give complexion, clarity, good voice, long life, happiness, satisfaction, growth, intelligence etc. [3]

Acharya Charaka explained the rules of dietetics under the *Astaaharavishasaayatnani* in the first *Adhyaya* of *Vimana Sthana*. These eight factors are *Prakruti, Karana, Samyoga, Rashi, Desha, Kala, Upyoga Samsta and Upyokata*. Bhajana is come under the in heading of *Karana*.

Aims

To evaluate the role of *Patra* in context to *Ahara Kalpana*.

2. Material and Methods

Ayurvedic classics like Sushrut Samhita, Charaka Samhita, Ashtanga Hridayam, Ashtanga Samgraha, Bhavprakasha, Sharangdhara Samhita and books regarding *Paka Shashtra* like Kshemakutuhalam, Bhojanakutuhalam, Ayurveda

Mahodadhi and material available online have been thoroughly screened, analysed and presented in a systematic manner.

3. Observation

Ayurveda science deals with *Aushadha* as well as *Ahara*. Acharya explain various *Ahara Kalpana* is *Ahara* context. *Patra* is the main parts of *Ahara Kalpana* because without it any *Ahara Kalpana* is not possible.

Patra is used for medicine as well as for food. For Any *Ahara Kalpana*, *Patra* is used from beginning up to end product of *Ahara*. *Bhajan*s are specifically used in various processes and named according to their size, capacity, material of the vessel and containing material i.e., *Bruhat Patra, Laghu Patra, Nava Kalasha, Ghrita Bhand*a, *Taila Patra, Kharparam Sikata Purnam, Venu Patra, Arka Patra* etc.

In *Charaka Samhita* acharya gave list of objectives that should be collected before the starting any procedure. In this list, Acharya mentioned different type of vessels ex. *Achamani, Manika, Ghata, Pithara, Paryoga, Kumbhi, Kumbha, Kunda, Sharava, Darvi, Kataha, Udachanam, Paripachanam, Manthan, Charma, Sutra, Karpas. Una* etc. [4] In ancient era, these vessels were made from *Mritika* (earthen vessels), *Suvarna* (gold), *Rajata* (silver), *Tamra* (copper), *Kamsya* (bronze), *Loha*(iron), *Sphatik, Vaidurya, Shail* (stone), *Katch, Patra* (leafy vessel) etc. materials. *Bhaishaja* stored in *Sapidhaana Ghata, Moosha and Phalaka*. [5]

Patra Prayojana (purpose of vessels):

Bhajana is used for *Bhaishajya Kalpana* as well as for *Ahara Kalpana*. For Any *Ahara* and *Bhaishajya Kalpana*, *Bhajana* is used from beginning up to end product like *Patra Prayojana* (purpose of vessels):

Bhajana is used for *Bhaishajya Kalpana* as well as for *Ahara Kalpana*. For Any *Ahara* and *Bhaishajya Kalpana*, *Bhajana* is used for multiple purposes like *Archadana* (Covering),

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Kwathana (Boiling), Dhalana (Molding), Tapanana (Heating), Nidhapana (ghee or oil made with the help of sunrays), Parivartana (Transformation), Pachana (Boiling), Bharjana (Roasting), Mardana (Trituration), Lepana (Coating), Sandharana (Retention), Sanchalana (Stirring), Samputana (ready the putak for fire), Samyojana (Mixing) etc.

Indication of Bhajana:

When broadly categorized indication of *Bhajana* in context to *Ahara* and *Bhaishajya Kalpana*, it can use three main purposes,

- 1) Storing purpose.
- 2) Preparation of Ahara.
- 3) Serving of the food.

Uses of *Patra* in context to *Ahara Kalpana*:

Bhajana used for Storing purpose

Storing is done for raw material as well as final product of the *Ahara Kalpana*. According to Shrangdhara, *Ghrta*, *Guda*, *Vidang*, *Pippali*, *Dhanya* and Honey should not use fresh. [6]

Ghrta should be stored in *Krishnaayas Patra* and *Mrutika Patra*. [7] Based on time period of storing *ghrita*, the properties of it change.

For *Dhanya*, Acharya also said that one-year *Puran Dhanya* is best but for *Dhanya* not any specific vessels indicated. Acharya Shrangdhara also mentioned that if any specific *Patra* is not mentioned then *Mrutika Patra* is taken [8].

Water also stored in different vessels like *Suvarna*, *Rajata*, *Tamra Patra*, *Sphatika*, *Katcha*, *Mritika Patra*. [9] According to Bhojanakutuhalam, *Tamra* (copper) *Patra* is ideal for the storing of the water. If *Tamra Patra* is not available then earthen vessels, *Sphatika*, *Katcha* (glass) or *Vaidurya Patra* can be used [10].

Bhajana used for Preparation purpose

For preparation of food, vessels should be select according to which type of *Samsakara* done on food material. But mostly *Mrutikapatra* and *Lohapatra* are used.

In Mahodadhi, explain specific vessels for boiling of water and its effect on health.

Bhajana used for Serving purpose

Serving is the art that attract the person towards the food. The vessels play important role for that. Therefore, acharya separately mentioned the vessels for serving.

Acharya Sushruta mentioned different type of vessels for serving food and beverages. *Ghrta* should be served in *Krishna Ayas Patra*. *Peya* should be served in *Rajata* (silver) *Patra*. Fruits and *Bhakshya Padatha* like *Laddu* should be served in leafy vessels. *Parisuska* and *Paridagdha Padatha* should be served in *Suvarna Patra*. Liquid items, *Mansrasa*, Fruits juices should be served in *Rajata Patra*. *Katavara* and *Khadayusha* should be serve in the stone vessels. Milk which boils and cooled, should be serve in *Tamra Patra*. *Panaka* and *Madhya* should be served in *Mrutika Patra*. *Raga* and *Shadava* should be served in glass

or *Vaidurya Patra*. [11] *Panaka* and *Panchasara* should be served in new earthen pot [12].

According to *Kshemakutuhalam*, *Ghrta* should be served in *Kastha* and *Loha Patra*, *Mamsarasa* should be served in *Rajata*, *Sisaka*, *Suvarna*, *Loha* and *Kastha Patra*. *Patrakanda* should be served in *Kastha*, *Pashana* and *Loha Patra*. *Pistaana* should be served in *Kansya Patra* and *Kastha Patra*. Milk should be served in *Mrutika* and *Kastha Patra*, Water and buttermilk should be served in *Mrutika Patra*. *Raga*, *Shadav*, *Khanda* should be served in Glass vessel, *Kansya*, *Sphatika* and *Vaidurya Patra*. [13]

In Mahodadhi, given regarding boiling of water in specific vessels and its effect on health. Water boiled in *Loha Patra*, it produces itching and *Mandagni* but it is used for remove waste product from body and Stomach Wash (*Amashaya Kshalana*). *Madhuudumbara Patra* is best for boiling of the water. It gives complexion of the body but it also causes *Mandagni*. Water boils in Earthen pots, its removes waste products from the body, creates balance states of *Dhatu*s and enhance the *Ojasa*, *virnya* and Strength. [14]

Contraindication of Patra Regarding Ahara Kalpana:

Mayuramamsa roasted or cooked in *Eranda Kastha Patra*, is the considered as *Samskara Viruddha*. [15] Meat of Pigeon is cooked in *Haridra Kastha Patra*. Fish or *Sunthi* cooked vessel is not use for cooking for *Pippali*, *Makoya* and honey. [16] Acharya Sushruta add some other meat with peacock like pigeon, *Laava*, *Titira* and *Godhafor Erand Kastha* as *Karma Viruddha*. *Bhas* bird meat is not roasted on *Loha Shulya* [17]. *Ghrta* is put in *Kamsya Patra* (bronze) for more than ten days, it become poisonous [18].

4. Discussion

Different types of vessels like *Suvarna* (gold), *Rajata* (silver), *Tamra* (copper), *Loha* (iron), *Kansta* (Bronze), *Mrutika*, Leafy, stony are used for storing, cooking and serving purpose. Acharya also explained benefits of uses these vessels.

According to Bhavaprakasha and Bhojanakutuhalam, benefits of using of *Suvarna* (gold) *Patra* is pacify all three dosha and enhance vision (*Drashtikruta*). Using of *Rajata Patra* also *Chakshushya* and pacify *Tridoshas*. Using of *Kansya* (bronze) *Patra*, it will enhance Wisdom and impart the taste of food also *Raktapitta Prasadaka*. Vessels prepared from *Pittala* (brass) aggravate vata but pacify kapha and vermicial. Vessels prepared from *Ayasa* (iron) and *Katcha* (glass) give prosperity and treats swelling, *Pandu*, *Kamla* with enhance the body strength. Using of Stony vessels and earthen vessels can cause Poverty. Using of wooden vessels can enhance the taste of food and aggravate Kapha in the body. Leafy vessels can enhance the taste, carminative, pacify poison and sins. [19] In Bhojanakutuhalam, given detail explanation regarding benefits of using some leafy vessels. Using of banana leaf vessels, it can enhance the taste of food, *Hradhya*, Aphrodisiac. It imparts strength, stimulates the digestive fire, it treats poisoning, fatigue, *Vatarogas*, and *Raktapitta* but not useful in case of jaundice. Consuming food on *Palash Patra* which pacify vata and kapha associated

diseases, *Udara Rogas, Gulma, Pinasa*. It is taste imparting and stoutening. Consuming food on *Arka* leaves causes excessive dryness, is vermifugal and aggravates pitta. It is used to treat *Gulma, Shoola*, poisoning, *Swasa, Pandu, Kushtha*, pacifies *Vata* and *Kapha Dosha*, it is *Parama Chakshushya*. Carminative and digestive. Consuming food on *Eranda* leaves pacifies *Vata*, aggravates *Pitta* and is vermifugal. Consuming food on leaves of *Ketki* which cures all type of *Granthi*, and it is pleasant, taste imparting, ophthalmic. Consuming food on *Nalini, Kumuda, Utpala* (verities of lotus) leaves is wholesome for passengers, is aphrodisiac and best fatigue alleviator [20].

In Ayurveda Mahodadhi, detail explanation given regarding effect of different vessels on storing of water. Water stored in *Suvarna Patra*, is sweet in taste cold, *Madhura Vipaki*, pacifies *Tridosha*, enhance strength and intellect. Water stored in *Tamra Patra* is *Katu Rasa* and *Ushna Virya*, aggravate *Pitta* and digestive fire and pacifies *Vata Dosha*. Water stored in *Loha Patra* is become vitiated, aggravate *Rakta* and pitta but give relief in itching. [21] Storing water in specific vessel made of gold or silver, the properties of vessel may be imparted to water. Gold and silver are having *Vishagnakarma* which may help in purifying the water. Water store in *Sphatika Patra*, it makes water holy and Cold. *Vaidurya* and *Katcha Patra* also have same effect on water. [22]

For purpose of preparation, *Mrittika* and *Loha Patra* are commonly mentioned. The food cooked in earthen pots is high in iron, calcium, magnesium and sulfur which plays an important role for the wellbeing of human body. These are also ecofriendly. Cooking in earthen pots is a slow process and involves the use of minimum amount of oil thereby helping in retaining food's natural oil and moisture. Due to slow cooking, earthen pots allow moisture and heat to circulate through the food, thus retaining the nutritional level. *Loha Patra* can sustain high temperature and heat for long duration.

The concept of *Viruddha* is also seen in certain reference where contraindication of *Patra* told ex. *Mayurmansa* roasted on *Erandkastha*, it causes immediate death [23].

5. Conclusion

Ahara is considered as roots of life. *Bhajan* plays main role in *Ahara Kalpana* which is used for Storing, preparation or serving purpose. Acharya also explain the contraindication of vessel in context to *Virudhha*. In storing purpose, Vessels may be preventing infection and play role as antimicrobial, antifungal etc. Acharyas also mentioned different vessels for preparation and serving because of vessels may enhance the Qualities of food and also give health benefits. Based on these aspects, it can be inferred that the characteristic of an ideal vessel varies according to need and use of the vessel.

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