

CONCEPT OF PATHYA AND APATHYA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CURD - A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The activities and the various food substances that are conducive to the *Srotas* (channels of the body) and mind are regarded as *Pathya* and those that are not conducive are regarded as *Apathya*. *Pathya* is also considered as synonymous to *Chikitsa* (treatment) according to *Acharya Charaka*. Other synonyms of *Pathya* are *Satmya* (habit), *Swastha hitakara* (Good for Health), *Upshaya* (palliative), *Swavastha Paripaalaka* (Maintains Health), *Hita Ahara* (Wholesome food), *Swasthaaurjaskara* (Promote health status), *Sharmakara* (establish Health), *Dhatu Avirodhi* (Not against body tissue) and *Dhatu Saamyakara* (Establish normalcy of body tissue). *Pathya* word is indicative for both food and activity.

Dadhi (Curd) is considered as both *Pathya* and *Apathya*. *Dadhi* belongs to *Amla Skanda* (group of sour drugs) and it is one among the *Vicitra Pratyarabdha Dravya* (substances which does not act as per *Rasa Panchaka*); as these *Dravyas* are having the capability of producing both positive and negative impact on health.

Dadhi is *Pathya* in conditions like anorexia, intermittent fever, diarrhea, emaciation, rhinitis, Dry cough, Irritable bowel syndrome and hemorrhoids. *Dadhi* is indicated in intermittent fever, where pathogenesis occurs due to-

Vata, Kapha as alone or *Vatakapha*. *Dadhi* is *Apathya* in *Kustha, Visarpa, Prameha* etc. In this paper an attempt is made to understand the concept of *Pathya* and *Apathya* by considering diet as curd.

Keywords: *Dadhi, Curd, Ayurveda, Pathya, Apathya.*

INTRODUCTION

Pathya is one which is not harmful to *patha* or the *srotas* or channels and which is pleasant for *Mana* (mind). As per Acharya Chakrapani *Patha* is *srotas*, according to Acharya Gangadhara channels which carries *Vata, Pitta, kapha, Dhatu*. It includes not only the entity which are carried by *Srotas*, also includes the *Dhatu* which under go transformation, there by whole body component can be included. Here the word “*Manaha priya*” i.e. pleasant for mind indicates about desire of intake of food as per Acharya Chakrapani, as per Acharya Gangadhara the food which provides *Sukha Anubhava* (comfortable feeling) to mind. For a successful treatment, *Pathya* is very much essential. Similarly, *Apathya* can acts as cause for the disease. Food can be *Pathya* or *Apathya* depends on *Matra* i.e. quantity. By the influence of *Matradi* even *Pathya* can behave into *Apathya* & vis versa.

The references about *Pathya* and *Apathya* are present in *Veda*, for instance according to the *Rigveda*, *Soma* is the functional part of wholesome food which is a powerful medicine for all diseases. Wholesome food acts as a medicine and it should be strictly followed¹. In *Yajurveda*, *Masha* (*Phaseolus moongo Linn.*), *Tila* (*Sesamum indicum Linn.*), *Mudga* (*Phaseolus radiatus Linn.*), *Priyangu* (*Setaria italic Beauv.*), *Shyamaka* (*Echino chloafrumentacea*), *Neevara* (*Hygroryza aris-tata Nees.*), *Godhuma* (*Triticum sativum Lam.*), *Masoora* (*Lens culinaris Medic.*) etc are considered as *Pathya*.

Yajurveda states that water, food, air etc when purified by *Yajna Karma* acts as medicine²

Atharveda states that a person who maintains *Agni* (fire), *Jala* (water), *Vayu*(air) and *Prithavi* (earth)by wholesome food and celibacy becomes energetic and healthy. He progresses towards the transcendent state attained as a result of being released from the cycle of rebirth^{2.1}. In *Atharveda*, some cereals like *Virih* (*Ory-*

za sativa Linn.), *Yava* (*Hordeum vulgare Linn.*), *Tila* (*Sesamum indicumLinn.*), *Masoora* (*Lens culinaris Medic.*), *Masha* (*Phaseolus moongo Linn.*) etc. have been described³.

Acharya Kashyapa explored the medicinal potential of *Aahara* (food) along with its prophylactic value of maintaining health. Kashyapa stated that modified & specific food is the best medicine. No drug can match the benefits of food in diseased state. Only wholesome food can keep a person healthy.⁴

Acharya Harita stated the importance of *Pathya* (wholesome) and *Apathya* (unwholesome)by stating that if person ignores the concept of *Pathya Apathya* (unwholesome), illness will never leave the body. Hence one should use *Pathya* (wholesome) according to his/her physical and pathological condition regularly. Even in the absence of medicine, if patient takes only *Pathya* (whole some) according to disease he will become healthy, but even if patient takes more and regular medicine and avoid *Pathya Ahara* prescribed by physician he will neverbecomehealthy.⁵

Yogaratanakara, said that for the treatment of diseases three important factors like etiology, medicine properties and *Pathya* (wholesome) should be studied thoroughly before starting the treatment. Judicious planning of treatment by proper understanding of these three factors always yields a successful eradication of disease. *Yogaratanakara* uses the metaphor of *Ankura* (seedling) for progressive form of disease. This *Ankura* (seedling) will dry and be destroyed if it is not nourished by water; similarly, disease will be destroyed if a patient does not consume *Apathya Ahara* (unwholesome food)⁶

Vaidya Lolimbajra indicated the importance of *Pathya Aahara* (wholesome food) by stating that if a patient intakes wholesome food then there is no need of medicine and if a patient continuously consumes unwhole-

some food then also there is no need of medicine. In the latter case, medicine will not be effective.

Bhela Samhita also explains about merits of *Pathya* and demerits of *Apathya* in the Sutrasthana. *Pathya Ahara* nourishes all *Dhatus* (body elements) and *Srotas* (channels of circulation) leading to complete nutrition of body. *Pathya Ahara* also helps to detoxify the body by getting rid of vitiated *Dosha*. Contrary to this, *Apathya Ahara* helps in vitiation of *Vata*, *Doshas* etc. Hence for the maintenance of health and treating diseases *Pathya Ahara* should be consumed.⁷ On reviewing the *Aharas*, acharya charaka⁸ mentions that *Shashtika*, *Shali*, *Yava*, *Mudga*, *Saindhava*, *Amalaka*, rain water, ghee, meat of animals of aired climate, honey, and he also mentions *Agrya* of each *Aharavargas* which can also be considered as *Pathya*⁹.

The reference of *Dadhi* is evident in Vedic literature as one of the ingredients in *Homa*, *Havana*, individually or as one among *Pancagavya*¹⁰. It is an adjuvant to juice of *Soma* which is offered to lord Indra, Varuna and Vayu for their drinking and sacrificing to *Yajna*. The term used in *Rigveda* for *Dadhi* is *Dadh-yashira*¹¹.

According to *Sayana Bhashya* purpose of adding curd with *Soma* is to confiscate the *Doshas Shukra and Teevra (Shuddha and Tikshna)*¹². Another opinion in this regard is that it enhances the taste of *Somarasa*¹³. Other than *Dadhi*, *Ksheera* and *Yava* (Barley) were also used as adjuvants which are called as *Ashira Dravya*¹⁴. There is reference in *Rigveda* which states that *Ksheera* and *Dadhi* should not be mixed together¹⁵.

In Mahabharata, there is a quotation which states that *Dadhi* is one among the eight exceptions during fast¹⁶.

DISCUSSION

Pathya will be decided by considering the *Matra* (Quantity), *Rutu* (Season), *Samskara* (Processing), *Desha* (Place), *Deha* (Body), *Dosha* (Body humor).

Dadhi by its nature is sweetish sour in taste, astringent preceding taste, and heavy to digest, hot in potency, sour in post digestive taste¹⁷. Here the term *Ushna* in the quotation applies to both quality and potency¹⁸. Predominant taste of *Dadhi* is *Amla Svadu* and it possesses *Grahi* and increases *Agni* and produces *Shopha* according to AcaryaHarita. The attributes of *Dadhi* varies according to inoculation time for fermentation, type and nature of milk which is used.

Matra varies based on Guru or *Laghu* property of the *Dravya*. *Dadhi* should not be consumed daily (*Nitya Asevana Dravya*)¹⁹, because it's heavy, unctuous and *Abhishyandi* (increases the secretion), alters the digestion and lead to different ailments²⁰. In Ashvini Samhita the time taken for digestion of *dadhi* is mentioned as "twenty nights", which signifies the heaviness of *Dadhi*. Hence when *Takra* (butter milk) prepared by churning *Dadhi* it will become light. Gastric half-emptying time of the liquid phase was shorter for milk [35 (SE 2) min] than for FM (60 [SE 2] min), which proves that *Dadhi* is *Abhishyandhitama and Gurutama* in comparison to milk.

The goat casein in curd which is both softer and smaller than that produced by cow milk. This makes it more easily accepted by the human digestive system which supports the *Laghu* and *Agni Deepana* properties of *Aja Dadhi*. Fermented goat milk (*Lactobacillus Rhamnosus*CRL1505) demonstrated to stimulate the mucosal immune system and improve the defense against intestinal and respiratory infections in a mouse immunosuppressant model.

These studies support the reference *Aja Dadhi* is a solution for *Svasa*, *Kasa* and *Kshaya*.

In spring and autumn seasons, *Kapha* and *Pitta* will be in aggravated state, so usage of *Dadhi* is to be restricted, whereas during summer it is restricted due to its hot potency. (Table No -1). *Bhojana Kutuhala* explains *Dadhi* as wholesome when consumed in two cold seasons - *Hemanta* and *Sisira*²¹.

Table 1: Dadhi Sevana based on Ritu

| Rutu | Hitahita | Guna | Indication | Adverse |
|-----------------|--------------|---|---|---|
| <i>Varsha</i> | <i>Hita</i> | - | <i>ShoSha, vatadi, brama, Shrama, AtiSara</i> | - |
| <i>Greesham</i> | <i>Ahita</i> | <i>Guru, Amala, Raktapittavrud-dhi</i> | - | <i>Shopah, Trushna, Jvara, Vishamajvara</i> |
| <i>Hemanta</i> | <i>Hita</i> | <i>Guru, snigdha, suMadhura, kaphakrut, balavardhana, vrushya, medhya, puShti, tushti</i> | | |
| <i>ShiShira</i> | <i>Hita</i> | <i>Vrushya, balakara, Gana, Am-laMadhura, picchila, guru, pittakaraka</i> | <i>Shramahara</i> | |
| <i>Vasanat</i> | <i>Ahita</i> | <i>Madhura kincit Amla, snigdha, vatala, kaphatmakam, ba-laveerya karaka</i> | | |
| <i>Greshma</i> | <i>Ahita</i> | <i>Amla, atiushna, raktapit-takaraka,</i> | | <i>Shosha, bhrama, pipasa</i> |

Dadhi in *Varsha Ritu* increases *Pitta, Kapha* and reduces *Vata*. It is not advisable to take in diseases like *Gulma, Arsha* and *Kustha*. In *Greeshmarutu* it produces *Raktapitta, Vidaha, Shosha, Bhrama* and *Pipaasa* and in *Hemanta* it causes *Shopah, Trishna, Jvara* and *Vishama Jvara*. Also, Acharyas specify that curds should be consumed on alternative days²¹.

In *Rutucarya* while explaining about the *Varsha RutuCharya* as it is the *Vata Prakopa Kala the Rasa* to be consumed in this season is sweet, sour and salt, hence *Dadhi* can be consumed. *VasantaRitu* being *Kapha Prakopa Kala, TiktaKatu Kashya Rasas* should be consumed and during *Sharat* being *Pitta Prakopa Kala the Rasa Svadhu Tikta Kashaya Rasas* can be taken. Also, in both the *RitusVata Pitta Prakopa* takes place. Being *Snigdha, Abhishyandi and Ushna* it is not advisable. In *Greeshma Ritu* though *Madhura Rasa* is advisable, *Dadhi* being *Ushna Veerya* cannot be advised.

Samskara is referred as “*Gunantaradhana*” – transformation of qualities of *Dravya*. Heating of *Dadhi*, is a form of *Samskara Viruddha* (process incompatibility) not advised as it may alter the attributes. Being hot in potency if mixed with hot substances it vitiates *Pitta*. *Dadhi* has become a habitual diet now a days. Hence an individual can consume *Dadhi* either with *Mudga Supa* (soup of *Phaseolus mungo*), *Madhu* (Honey),

Ghrita (Ghee), *Sitopala* (Sugar candy) or *Amalaki* (*Emblica officinalis*). These adjuvants are claimed to counteract the adverse effects of *Dadhi*.

Dadhi is *Satmya* to people who live in *Jangala Desha* and is a *Pathya Dravya*. *Satmya* refers to food should not yield accumulation of *Dosha*, in another way it should give instant strength even after excess usage.

Dravya like *Dadhi* acts as *Samataya Viruddha* individual of *Anupa Desha* people. Curd is unwholesome for the people of low altitude area, as *vipareetaguna* to place should be considered while selecting the food article. In a Survey conducted at *Anupasadharana*, which is *Kaphapradhana desha* observed with in an average 19.8% of occasional consumers and 22.34% of daily consumers were showed *Kapha Dosha* increased symptoms and 10.64% of occasional and 9.14% of daily consumers was with *Pitta Vruddhi Lakshana* respectively.²²

These adjuvants are claimed to counteract the adverse effects of curd due to vitiated *Kapha, Pitta* and *Rakta*. In survey it is evident that ghee, honey and sugar are mixed with curd, whereas *Amalaki* is used in preparation (fresh or dried *Amalaki* is grinded with coconut, pepper and *Jeeraka* then mixed with curd).²³ A study has evidence for good antioxidant activity of mixture of curd and *Amalaki*. Protein digestibility was more

when curd is mixed with *MudgaYusha* (Green Gram Soup) and Ghee.²⁴

Dadhi and by product of *Dadhi* is *Pathya* or *Apathya* in following conditions.

Table 2: Indications and Contraindications of *Dadhi*

| Sl no | Disease | Dadhi | |
|-------|--------------------|--------|---------|
| | | Pathya | Apathya |
| 1. | <i>Amavata</i> | - | + |
| 2. | <i>Amlapitta</i> | - | + |
| 3. | <i>Agnimandhya</i> | - | +2 |
| 4. | <i>Arsha</i> | - | + |
| 5. | <i>Aruci</i> | + | - |
| 6. | <i>Atisara</i> | + | - |
| 7. | <i>Bhagandara</i> | - | - |
| 8. | <i>Chardi</i> | + | - |
| 9. | <i>Daham</i> | - | - |
| 10. | <i>Garbhinicya</i> | +3 | - |
| 11. | <i>Grahani</i> | +1 | - |
| 12. | <i>Gulma</i> | - | + |
| 13. | <i>Hrudrogam</i> | + | - |
| 14. | <i>Jvara</i> | - | + |
| 15. | <i>Kasa</i> | + | +4 |
| 16. | <i>Krimi</i> | - | + |
| 17. | <i>Kustha</i> | - | + |
| 18. | <i>Medoroga</i> | - | - |
| 19. | <i>Mukharoga</i> | - | + |
| 20. | <i>Murca</i> | - | - |

| | | | |
|-----|--------------------|---|----|
| 21. | <i>Mutraghata</i> | + | - |
| 22. | <i>Mutrakrucra</i> | + | - |
| 23. | <i>Nasikaroga</i> | + | - |
| 24. | <i>Pandu</i> | - | - |
| 25. | <i>Pittaroga</i> | - | + |
| 26. | <i>Prameha</i> | - | + |
| 27. | <i>Raktapitta</i> | - | + |
| 28. | <i>Shiroroga</i> | - | + |
| 29. | <i>Shopha</i> | - | + |
| 30. | <i>Shuka</i> | - | - |
| 31. | <i>Sula</i> | + | - |
| 32. | <i>Svarabheda</i> | - | + |
| 33. | <i>Trushna</i> | + | +5 |
| 34. | <i>Udara</i> | - | + |
| 35. | <i>Upadamsha</i> | - | - |
| 36. | <i>Urusthambha</i> | - | + |
| 37. | <i>Vatarakta</i> | - | + |
| 38. | <i>Visarpa</i> | - | + |
| 39. | <i>Visha</i> | - | - |
| 40. | <i>Vruddhi</i> | - | + |
| 41. | <i>Yakshma</i> | - | - |

1+ = *RukshaDadhi*, 2+ = *Koorcika*, 3+ = *Kilata, Koorcika*, 4+ = *DadhiMastu* 5+= *DadhiManda*

Curd can be *Pathya* in above diseases sometimes as alone or sometimes mixing with adjuncts like sour pomegranate fruit, honey or sugar etc.

Taste enhancing (*Rochishnu*) and salivation promoting property is appreciated with *Dadhi*, which is due to acidic taste and sodium and calcium ions. *Dadhi* is indicated in intermittent fever, where pathogenesis occurs due to- *Vata, Kapha* or *Vatakapha*. In-vitro study some evidence claims that certain probiotic strains can inhibit the growth and adhesion of a range of entero pathogens like *Salmonella*.

In the conditions like *Peenasa* (Acute and chronic rhinitis) *Dadhi* by its hot potency does digestion of *Ama*. In gastrointestinal tract diseases like *Atisara, Grahani* and *Arshas*, *Dadhi* is useful as an adjuvant and also as one of the ingredients for preparing medicine.

Hypercholestremia due to improper functioning of *MedoDhatvagni*, *Dadhi* can be a choice as it influences on *Dhatvagni*. In preparations of *Rasayana* it is useful as an ingredient and *Anupana*. *Dadhi* also possess property of *Vrushya*, Taste promoter and flavor for food.

The pathology due to *VatadoshaDadhi* is useful as *Pathya, Anupana* and as an ingredient in formulations. Even in *AmashayaSamudbhava* diseases are also *Dadhi* is indicated in *PakwaAvasta*.

In All types of *GulmaDadhi* is used, because of its *Vatahara* and *Bhruhmana* properties. Also, it is useful in *Sneha* and *Kshaara Yoga* which are useful in *Agnimandhyaja, Annavaahasrotas* and *VataPradhanaVikara*.

While preparing certain *Pathya*, curd is useful like in *Vatajakasa Dadhimastu*, *VatajaAtisara Dadhidadi-man Sadhita Odana* is beneficial.

In diet preparation specific to disease *Dadhi* is used along with adjuvants like *Honey*, *Ghruta* and *Shakara* this establishes the concept “*AgrutaSharkaraihi Vina*”.

CONCLUSION

Historical Review on *Dadhi* reveals that from time immemorial curd is a diet. Its usage was popularized when there was need for preserving milk in different forms for obtaining certain therapeutic values which are originally absent in milk. Glimpse over *DadhiVarga* reveal *Dadhi* is a component in *KheeraVarga*. *Dadhi* can be consumed in daytime without heating by mixing with adjuvants like ghee, sugar etc. occasionally during *Varsha*, *Shishira* and *Hemanta*. *Rasa Guna Veerya Vipaka Siddhanta* reveals *Dadhi* by its nature is sweetish sour in taste, astringent preceding taste, heavy to digest, hot in potency, sour in post digestive taste. *Dadhi* is *Satmya* to people who live in *Jangala Desha* and is a *Pathya Dravya*. Concept of *Viruddha* reveals *Dravya* like *DadhiKsheera* acts as *Viruddha* even by *Samaana Guna* as in *Anupa Desha* people consuming *Dadhi*.

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