

“Dietary practices of Millets according to Ritu”

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ABSTRACT:

Objectives: Ayurveda is ancient Science of life, The basic principle followed in the Ayurvedic system of medicine is Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam which means to maintain the Health of Healthy is the first and foremost aim of the holistic science of Ayurveda instead of Aturasya Vikar Prashamanam means to cure the diseases of the Diseased. For this purpose Dincharya (Daily Regimen), Ritucharya (Seasonal Regimen) and Sadavritta (Social Code of Conducts) have been mentioned in the classics of Ayurveda. One of the regimen is Ritucharya, Ritu means Season and Charya means Regimen. Ritu has variation classification of Doshas , its has different effects on the body hence disturbed equilibrium (Prakruti-Purusha Siddhant). This disequilibrium occurs due to lack of following seasonal regimens due to lack of concentration in seasonal characteristics which causes Doshavaishmya in the body which leads to disease manifestation.

Methodology: Materials related to Millets, Ritucharya, Prakruti and other relevant topics have been collected. Samhitas and their Commentaries, various websites, scientific journals also referred

Result : In response to Ritu, Doshas show 3 types of response (Avastha) i.e., Sanchaya, Prakopa, Prasham According to this 3 Doshas avastha suitable millet which does not cause doshavaishmya and maintain Homeostasis of the body will be discussed

Conclusion : Hence there arises a need to understand and implementation of change in diet and practices in response to change in Ritu. In this paper presentation, According to Prakruti and Ritu which Millets will be suitable to keep the body Healthy and in a sound state is discussed.

KEYWORDS: Ritucharya, Millets, Prakruti, Dosha

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INTRODUCTION



Ayurveda is ancient Science of life, The basic principle followed in the Ayurvedic system of medicine is Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam which means to maintain the Health of Healthy is the first and foremost aim of the holistic science of Ayurveda instead of Aturasya Vikar Prashamanam means to cure the diseases of the Diseased. For this purpose Dincharya (Daily Regimen), Ritucharya (Seasonal Regimen) and Sadavritta (Social Code of Conducts) have been mentioned in the Classics of Ayurveda.

One of the regimen is Ritucharya, Ritu means Season and Charya means Regimen. Ritu has variation classification of Doshas, its has different effects on the body hence disturbed equilibrium (Prakruti-Purusha Siddhant). This disequilibrium occurs due to People do not know or ignore the suitable types of food stuffs, dressing, and others regimen to be followed in particular season, this leads to derangement of homeostasis and causes various diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, cancer, and so on. Lack of following seasonal regimens due to lack of concentration in seasonal characteristics which causes imbalance of Doshas in the body and they lead to disease manifestation.

Prakruti (Constitution) is a unique Psychosomatic temperament of an individual encompassing the Physical, Functional and Behavioral Characters of a person. Ayurvedic Classics described Daily regimen (Dincharya), Seasonal Regimen (Ritucharya) and Social code of conducts (Sadavritta) to keep the body in a sound state.

In **Tasyashitya**¹ chapter of Charaka Samhita, it is said _

Tasya Shitaditya

Ahaarbalam Varnascha Vardhate.

Tasyartusatmayam Vaditam Chestaharvyapasrayam,

Which means the strength and complexion of the person knowing the suitable diet and regimen for every season and practicing accordingly are enhanced. Main theme of this chapter is to make people aware concerning the methods to live in accordance with the environment.

Hence, for achieving fitness, modification in diet as well as lifestyle according to Ritu and Prakruti has to be given importance.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

Ayurveda focuses on prevention from disease to maintain Healthy body that is Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam is the first and foremost aim of the holistic science of Ayurveda . For this purpose Dincharya (Daily Regimen), Ritucharya (Seasonal Regimen) and Sadavritta (Social Code of Conducts) have been mentioned in the Classics of Ayurveda.

One of the regimen is Ritucharya. Many of the exogenous and endogenous rhythm have specific phase relation-ship with each other; which means that they interact and synchronize each other. If body is unable to adopt itself to stressors due to changes in specific traits of seasons, it may lead to Dosha Vaishmya, which in turn may render the body highly susceptible to one or other kinds of

disorders.

As adaptations according to the changes, is the key for survival, the knowledge of Ritucharya (regimen for various seasons) is thus important

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Classification of Season

In Ayurveda SAMVATSAR is referred as Year and RITU as Season. According to Ayurveda One year (Samvatsar) consists of six Seasons (Ritu) and the year is divided into two Ayana (Solstice) i.e., periods depending on the direction of movement of sun that is Uttarayana (northern solstice) and Dakshinayana (southern solstice). Each Ayana is formed of three Ritus (seasons). The word Ritu means —to go. It is the form in which the nature expresses itself in a sequence in particular and specific in present forms in short, the seasons. A year consists of six seasons, namely, Shishira (winter), Vasanta (spring), and Grishma (summer) in Uttarayan and Varsha (monsoon), Sharat (autumn), and Hemanta (late autumn) in Dakshinayana. As Ayurveda has its origin in India, the above seasonal changes are observed pre-dominantly in Indian subcontinent

Uttarayana and Its Effect

Uttarayana is also called Aadaana kaala² or the taking away period. Uttarayana indicates the ascent of the sun or northward movement of the sun. The sun and wind are powerful during this period. The sun takes away the energy of the people. Due to the heat, air becomes hot and drains the cooling effect of earth. Due to this, people get dehydrated and weakened and the atmosphere becomes hot and dry. It brings increase in the Tikta (bitter), Kashaya (astringent), and Katu (pungent) Rasa (taste), respectively, which brings about dryness in the body and reduces the Bala (strength).

During Uttarayana the seasonal changes in Indian subcontinent is from Shishira (winter) to Vasanta (spring) and to Grishma (summer). The period can be compared to mid-January to mid-July, when warmth and dryness in weather increases. It has an overall debilitating effect on environment, to which human being is also a part.

Dakshinayana and Its Effect

Dakshinayana is also called Visarga Kaala³ or the giving away period. Dakshinayana indicates the descent of the sun or movement of the sun in southern direction. The moon becomes powerful during this period. The sun releases its energy to the people; the earth cools down due to cold winds and rain. Unctuousness sets in the atmosphere and Amla (sour), Lavana (salty), and Madhura (sweet) Rasa are predominant, so the strength of person enhances during this period. People regain their strength and nourishment that was lost in the Aadaana kaala.

During Dakshinayana the seasonal changes in Indian subcontinent is from Varsha (monsoon) to Sharat (autumn) and to Hemanta (late autumn). The period can be compared to mid-July to mid-January, when cool sets, and due to which anabolic activity dominates over the catabolic activity in the environment

Types of millets⁴



Major millets

- a) Pearl millet
- b) Finger millet

Minor millets

- a) Foxtail millet
- b) Proso millet
- c) Little millet
- d) Kodo millet
- e) Barnyard millet

List of millets according to Ayurveda are:⁵



- 1) Kangu (Priyangu) - Foxtail millet
- 2) Shyamaka - Barnyard millet
- 3) Koradusha (Kodrava) - Kodo millet
- 4) Cheenaka - Proso millet
- 5) Nartaki - Finger millet
- 6) Gaveduka - Adlay millet
- 7) Yavanaala - Sorghum



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Shishira⁶ (Winter)



General condition

Mid-January to mid-March (approximately) is considered as Shishira Ritu (winter). During this season, the environment remains cold, along with cold wind. Jatharagni (digestive fire) gets ignited and appetite increases. Due to this capacity, the body easily digests Guru Aahar (heavy food). As this lies in the Dakshinayan phase, hence the body grows due to increased appetite. If heavy food is not consumed accordingly, then this increased metabolism of the body starts consuming the Dhatus, therefore leading to a weakened body. The predominant Rasa and Mahabhuta during this season are Tikta (bitter) and Akasha, respectively. The strength of the person becomes less, deposition of the Kapha Dosha occurs, and Agni (catabolism) remains in a higher state.

Diet regimen

Foods having Amla (sour) as the predominant taste are preferred. And Guru aahar are advised. Cereals and pulses, wheat/gram flour products, new rice, corn, and others, are advised. Ginger, garlic, Haritaki (fruits of Terminalia chebula), Pippali (fruits of Piper longum), sugarcane products, and milk and milk products are to be included in the diet.

Recommended Millets

1. Kangu/Priyangu⁷ (*Setaria italica* - Foxtail millet)

Guru (heavy for digestion), Sangrahi (absorbs excessive fluids and helps for normal formation of faeces and enhances digestion), Brumhana (nourishes the body tissues) and Vrishya (aphrodisiac)

2. Cheenaka⁸ (*Panicum miliaceum* - Proso millet)

Guru (heavy for digestion) and Brumhana (nourishes the body tissues)

In Shishir Ritu, Jatharagni (digestive fire) gets ignited and appetite increases. Due to this capacity, the body easily digests Guru Aahar (heavy food). As Kangu and Cheenaka, owing to Guru and Bruhanyia qualities, are suitable to consume in Shishir Ritu.

Vasanta⁹ (Spring)



General condition

The approximate time is from mid-March to mid-May. Old bark of trees gets replaced by new one. Environment is clear and non dusty. Flowers blossoms on trees and there is fragrance in environment. In this Ritu, shlesham (mucous) which had got accumulated in winter season melts off due initiation of increase in temperature. Predominant Rasa and Mahabhuta during this season are Kashaya (astringent), and Prithvi and Vayu, respectively. Strength of the person remains in medium degree, vitiation of Kapha Dosha occurs and Agni remains in Manda state.

Diet regimen

One should take easily di-gestible foods. Food items tasting Tikta (bitter), Katu (pungent), and Kashaya (astringent) are to be taken. Besides those, honey is to be included in the diet.

Recommended Millets

1.Vanshayava¹⁰

Vanshayava is Katu and Kashaya in rasa with Katu Vipaka . It pacifies Kapha Dosha , Laghu in guna and Ruksha that is dry in nature.

Controls Chronic Rheumatic pain , Ideal for Weight watchers , Balances Cholesterol levels, Improves Cognitive Health , Combats diabetes In Vasanta Ritu Food items tasting Tikta (bitter), Katu (pungent), and Kashaya (astringent) and Laghu in guna which pacifies Kapha Dosha are to be taken.

As Vanshayava owing similar qualities is suitable to consume in Vasanta Ritu

Grishma¹¹ (Summer)



General condition

Mid-May to mid-July (approximately) is considered as Grishma (summer) season. Environment is prevalent with intense heat and unhealthy wind. Sun is hot and penetrating, Air is dry, light, hot, unpleasant day. Land becomes hot and dry especially during day time. Water becomes hot and light. The river bodies dried and the plants appear lifeless. The

predominant Rasa is Katu (pungent) and Mahabhuta are Agni and Vayu. The strength of the person become less, deposition of Vata Dosha occurs, but the vitiated Kapha Dosha is pacified during this season. Agni of the person will remain in mild state .

Diet regimen

Foods which are light to digest—those having Madhura (sweet), Snigdha (unctuous), Sheeta (cold), and Drava (liquid) Guna are to be taken. Drinking plenty of water and other liquids, such as cold water, buttermilk, fruit juices, meat soups, mango juice, churned curd with pepper, is to be practiced.

Recommended Millets

1. Ragi (Finger Millet)

Rasa(Taste) Madhur , Virya (Action)Shita Cooling and Vipaka (post-digestive effect) Sweet. Dosha (Constitution) Balances kapha, pitta and vata and harmonious balance between its cooling properties and dosha-specific benefits. For individuals with a predominance of Pitta dosha, ragi's cooling nature helps mitigate excess heat and acidity, aligning perfectly with Ayurvedic principles of maintaining balance. For those with a Vata constitution, ragi's grounding and nourishing qualities provide much-needed stability and energy. Even Kapha types can benefit from ragi in moderation, as it is relatively light and can help prevent excess mucus production when incorporate thoughtfully into their diets.

2. Bajra¹² (Pearl Millet / Pennisetum glaucum)

Bajra is Madhura in Rasa, Ruksha, Ushna Virya and pacifies Vata and Kapha Dosha. It has relatively low glycemic index and has been shown to produce lower blood glucose level than wheat and rice. Bajra also contains Niacin which helps in lowering the cholesterol level. Its consumption decreases triglycerides and C- reactive protein.

In Grishma Ritu Foods which are light to digest—those having Madhura (sweet), Snigdha (unctuous), Sheeta (cold), and Drava (liquid) Guna are to be taken. As Ragi and Bajara owing similar qualities are suitable to consume in Grishma Ritu

Varsha¹³ (Monsoon)



General condition

Mid-July to mid-September (approximately) is considered as Varsha Ritu. During this season the sky is covered by clouds and In this season Varun and Vayu starts flowing, this is very essential for agriculture purpose. Rain occur without thunder storm . Air is damp and chilled.

Rivers are flooded with water. Land is muddy and wet and there is vegetation all over the earth due to enough supply of water .The predominant Rasa and Mahabhuta during this season are Amla (sour), and Prithvi and Agni, respectively. The strength of the person again becomes less, vitiation of Vata Dosha and deposition of Pitta Dosha, Agni also gets vitiated.

Diet regimen

Foods having Amla (sour) and Lavana (salty) taste and of Sneha (unctuous) qualities are to be taken. Besides meat soup, Yusha (soup), etc. are to be included in the diet. It is mentioned that one should take medicated water or boiled water.

Recommended Millets

1. Bajra¹² (Pearl Millet / Pennisetum glaucum)

Bajra is Madhura in Rasa, Ushna Virya and pacifies Vata and Kapha Dosha. It has relatively low glycemic index and has been shown to produce lower blood glucose level than wheat and rice. Bajra also contains Niacin which helps in lowering the cholesterol level. Its consumption decreases triglycerides and C- reactive protein. Hence Bajara is suitable to consume in Varsha ritu

Sharad¹⁴ (Autumn)

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General condition

The period between mid-September to mid-November is Sharat Ritu (autumn). In this season sky is filled with scanty white clouds and earth is damped with water. Though the sun is hot, the heat effect is normal. Air is damp and hot. Atmosphere is clear. Effect of moon is moderate. Land emanates water vapors remains slightly wet muddy and covered with lush green grass, water is clear and pure (Hansodaka) due to rays of rising star Agasti. The predominant Rasa is Lavana (salty) and predominant Mahabhutas are Apa and Agni. The strength of the person remains medium, pacification of vitiated Vata Dosha and vitiation of Pitta Dosha occur, and activity of Agni increases during this season.

Diet regimen

Foods are having Madhura (sweet) and Tikta (bitter) taste, and of Laghu (light to digest) and cold properties are advised. Foods having the properties to pacify vitiated Pitta are advised.

Recommended Millets

1. Jowar (Great Millet/Sorghum Vulgare)

In Ayurveda Jowar is described as Madhur -Kashay rasa (sweet in taste) with Laghu (light) Guna, having Sheeta virya (cold potency) which help to nullify the Vata and Kapha dosha. Jowar contain essential nutrients like iron, Ca, potassium and phosphorous. It contains good amount of Thiamine and Riboflavin. Phytochemicals are also present in high amount in Millet that they have shown potential usefulness in reducing the obesity. Jowar is also said to be heart healthy.

2. Koradusha/ Kodrava (*Paspalum scrobiculatum* -Kodo millet)

Madhura-Tikta rasa (sweet-bitter in taste), Param Graahi (absorbs excessive fluids and helps for normal formation of faeces and enhances digestion), Vishahara (anti-poisonous), Avrishya (Antaphrodisiac) Patya in Vrana (best diet in wounds and ulcers) Ancient Indian medicine ayurveda classifies Kodo millet as langhana, which means bringing lightness to the body

3. Shyamaka¹⁵ (*Echinochloa frumentacea* - Barnyard millet)

Its medicinal qualities showed are that it is sweet in taste, dry, and light to digest. It increases Vata and balances Pitta and Kapha, Sangrahi (absorbs excessive fluids and helps for normal formation of faeces and enhances digestion)

4. Nartaki¹⁶ (*Eleusine coracana* - Finger millet)

Tikta-Madhura -Kahaya Rasa (bitter-sweet-astringent in taste), Sheeta (cold in potency-anabolic), Snigdha (unctuousness), Balya (promotes strength) Vrishya (aphrodisiac) In Sharat Ritu Foods are having Madhura (sweet) and Tikta (bitter) taste, and of Laghu (light to digest) and cold properties are advised. Foods having the properties to pacify vitiated Pitta are advised. Hence One should advised to consume Jowar, Kodrava, Shyamaka and Nartaki owing similar qualities in Sharat Ritu

Hemant¹⁷ (Late Autumn)**General condition**

Mid-November to mid-January is considered as Hemanta (late autumn) Ritu. Blow of cold winds starts and chillness is felt. Predominant Rasa during this season is Madhura and the predominant Mahabhutas are Prithivi and Apa. The strength of a person remains on highest grade and vitiated Pitta Dosha gets pacified. Activity of Agni is increased.

Diet regimen

One should use unctuous, sweet, sour, and salty foods. Various meats, fats, milk and milk products, sugarcane products, Shidhu (fermented preparations), Tila (sesame), and so on, are also to be included in the diet.

Recommended Millets**1. Cheenaka (Panicum miliaceum - Proso millet)**

Guru (heavy for digestion), Brumhana (nourishes the body tissues)

2. Koradusha/ Kodrava¹⁸ (Paspalum scrobiculatum -Kodo millet)

Madhura-Tikta rasa (sweet-bitter in taste), Param Graahi (absorbs excessive fluids and helps for normal formation of faeces and enhances digestion), Vishahara (anti-poisonous), Avrishya (Antaphrodisiac) Patya in Vrana (best diet in wounds and ulcers) Ancient Indian medicine ayurveda classifies Kodo millet as langhana, which means bringing lightness to the body In Hemanta Ritu Jatharagni (digestive fire) get ignited and appetite increases. Due to this capacity body easily digest Guru Aahar (heavy food). As Cheenaka and Kodrava owing Guru and Bruhaniya qualities are suitable to consume in Hemanta Ritu

Therapeutic indication of Millets¹⁹

Millet	Botanical Name	Synonyms	Rasa	Guna	Therapeutic uses
Sama (Barnyard Millet)	Echinochloa frumentace Linn.	Shayamak, Shyam, Tribeej, Rajdhanya, Trinbeej, Uttam (Shastri, 2011)	M, S	Sheet, Snigdha, Laghu	Obesity, Raktapitta, Pittaj kasa, Urustambha, Sanyadosa, Jalodara
Koradusha (Kodo Millet)	Paspalum scrobiculatum Linn.	Kodrav, Kordush, Kudyal, Uddalak, Madanagraj	M, T	Guru, Ruksha	Obesity, Raktapitta, Pittaj kasa, Visha, Urustambha, Trishna, Jalodara, Kustha Sanyadosa, Jalodara
Kanguni (foxtail Millet)	Setaria italica Linn.	Kanguni, Pitatandula, Vatal, Sukumar, Priyangu	M, S	Guru, Ruksha	Kustha Vatakarak, Pitta daha nashak, Bhagna asthi Sandhan
Cheena (Common Millet)	Panicum miliaceum Linn.	Varak, Sthulkangu, Sthul priyangu, Kangubhed, Marha	M, S	Ruksha	Brihana
Jwar (Great Millet)	Sorghum vulgare pers	Jurnahwa, Yavnal, Raktika Krostupuccha, Sugandhika	M	Guru, Sheet	Brihana Malrodhak, Ruchikarak, Viryavardhak, Raktavikar

Ragi (Finger Millet)	Eleusine coracana Linn.	Madhuli, Ragika, Nartak, Madua	M, T, S	Laghu sheet	Brihana Triptikarak, Balakarak, Raktapitta shamak
Bajra (pearl Millet)	Pennisetum typhoides Burm.f.Stapf. & Hubbard	Bajranna, Sajak, Nalika, Neelkaran, Agrayadhanya	M	Ruksh, Ushna	Balya, Agnideepak, Strikamodpadaka, Punsatvahar, Durjara (nighantu ratnakar)
Vanshayava			K, K	Laghu,Ruksha	Controls Chronic Rheumatic pain , Ideal for Weight watchers , Balances Cholesterol levels, Improves Cognitive Health,CombatsDM

Nutritional Composition of Millets²⁰



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Food grains	Carbohydrate(g)	Protein (g)	Fat (g)	Energy (kcal)	Fiber (g)	Mineral (g)	Ca (mg)	P (mg)	Fe (mg)
Finger millet	72.0	7.3	1.3	328	3.6	2.7	344	283	3.9
Kodo millet	65.9	8.3	1.4	309	9.0	2.6	27	188	0.5
Proso millet	70.4	12.5	1.1	341	2.2	1.9	14	206	0.8
Foxtail millet	60.9	12.3	4.3	331	8.0	3.3	31	290	2.8
Little millet	67.0	7.7	4.7	341	7.6	1.5	17	220	9.3
Barnyard millet	65.5	6.2	2.2	307	9.8	4.4	20	280	5.0
Sorghum	72.6	10.4	1.9	349	1.6	1.6	25	222	4.1
Bajara	67.5	11.6	5.0	361	1.2	2.3	42	296	8.0
Vanshayava	30			150			45	12	8

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In response to Ritu, Vata, Pitta and Kapha Doshas show 3 types of response (Avastha) that is Sanchaya, Prakopa, Prasham

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State of Doshas²¹

Dosha	Accumulation (Chaya)	Aggravation (Prakopa)	Pacification (Prashaman)
Vata	Grishma	Varsha	Sharat
Pitta	Varsha	Sharat	Hemanta
Kapha	Shishira	Vasant	Grishma

According to Avastha of Vata, Pitta and Kapha Doshas which millet is suitable and does not cause doshavaishmya and maintain Homeostasis of the body is discussed

1. **In Shishir Ritu** - As **Kangu** and **Cheenaka** owing Guru and Bruhaniya qualities are suitable to consume in Shishir Ritu
2. **In Vasanta Ritu** - Food items tasting Tikta (bitter), Katu (pungent), and Kashaya (astringent) and Laghu in guna which pacifies Kapha Dosha are to be taken. As **Vanshayava** owing similar qualities is suitable to consume in Vasanta Ritu
3. **In Grishma Ritu** - Foods which are light to digest—those having Madhura (sweet), Snigdha (unctuous), Sheeta (cold), and Drava (liquid) Guna are to be taken. As **Ragi** and **Bajara** owing similar qualities are suitable to consume in Grishma Ritu
4. **In Varsha Ritu** – Bajra is Madhura in Rasa, Ushna Virya and pacifies Vata and Kapha Dosha. Hence Bajara is suitable to consume in Varsha ritu
5. **In Sharad Ritu** - Foods are having Madhura (sweet) and Tikta (bitter) taste, and of Laghu (light to digest) and cold properties are advised. Foods having the properties to pacify vitiated Pitta are advised. Hence One should advised to consume **Jowar**, **Kodrava**, **Shyamaka** and **Nartaki** owing similar qualities in Sharat Ritu
6. **In Hemant Ritu** - Jatharagni (digestive fire) get ignited and appetite increases. Due to this capacity body easily digest Guru Aahar (heavy food). As **Cheenaka** and **Kodrava** owing Guru and Bruhaniya qualities are suitable to consume in Hemanta Ritu

CONCLUSION

Hence there arises a need to understand and implementation of change in diet and practices in response to change in Ritu. In this paper presentation, According to Prakruti and Ritu which Shridhanyam will be suitable to keep the body Healthy and in a sound state is discussed.

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