



Review Article

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A SCIENTIFIC REVIEW OF NITYA SEVANIYA AAHARA

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ABSTRACT :

Ayurveda, the ancient science of life, places great emphasis on daily dietary practices for maintaining health and preventing diseases. The concept of *Nitya Sevaniya Aahara* (daily consumable diet) is central to this preventive approach. These food substances are recommended for regular consumption because of their *Rasayana* (rejuvenating), *Balya* (strength-promoting), *Agnideepaka* (digestive fire-enhancing), and *Dhatu Poshaka* (tissue-nourishing) properties. Food (*Aahara*) is considered one of the three fundamental pillars of life, along with *Nidra* (sleep) and *Brahmacharya* (celibacy).

आहारसंभवं वस्तु रोगाश्चाहारसंभवाः।(च.सू.28/45)

The World Health Organization (WHO) has also emphasized food safety with its 2015 slogan, "From farm to plate, make food safe," highlighting the importance of proper nutrition as a

key component of primary health care. Acharya Charaka and Acharya Vagbhata elaborated on *Nitya Sevaniya Dravya*, comparable to the modern concept of a balanced diet. Since both health and disease originate from food, the appropriate selection of daily diet is essential.

This dietary framework identifies specific food substances whose inherent qualities (*Rasa, Guna, Virya, and Vipaka*) help maintain the balance of *Doshas*, optimize *Agni*, and nourish the *Dhatus*, thereby preserving homeostasis and preventing the formation of *Ama* (toxins).

तच्च नित्यं प्रयुञ्जीत येनानुवर्तते ।

अजातानां विकाराणामनुत्पतिकरं च यत्॥(च. सू. 5/13)

Acharya Charaka and Acharya Sushruta classified foods into several categories: *Nitya Sevaniya Dravya* (to be consumed daily), *Nitya Asevaniya Dravya* (to be avoided daily), *Adhyashana*, *Vishamashana*, and *Asatmya Aahara* (irregular or incompatible foods). Both *Nitya Sevaniya* and *Nitya Asevaniya Aahara Dravya* are described in detail in classical texts. This review highlights the importance of the daily intake of *Nitya Sevaniya Aahara Dravyas* in promoting the health of healthy individuals, preventing disease onset, and maintaining overall well-being.

Keywords: Nitya Sevaniya Aahara, Dravya, Health, Adhyashana, Vishamashana.

INTRODUCTION:

Ayurveda regards *Aahara* (diet) as one of the *Trayopasthambha*—the three fundamental pillars of life—along with *Nidra* (sleep) and *Brahmacharya* (regulated lifestyle). Among the various classifications of food, *Nitya Sevaniya Aahara* holds special importance for its role in maintaining health (*Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam*) and preventing the onset of diseases. The Acharyas have identified certain food substances suitable for regular consumption because of their balanced properties and beneficial effects on overall well-being.

ऋय उपस्तम्भा इति आहारः स्वप्नो ब्रह्मचर्यमिति ॥ (च.सू.11/35)

In today's age, marked by lifestyle disorders, unhealthy dietary habits, and the growing prevalence of non-communicable diseases, there is a pressing need to revisit traditional wisdom for preventive healthcare. Ayurveda provides a well-structured, time-tested dietary framework that emphasizes not only nutrition but also holistic balance and wellness. One of its key principles, *Nitya Sevaniya Aahara*—daily consumable foods—ensures optimal digestion, strengthens immunity, and helps prevent diseases. These foods, being naturally

compatible with the human body and adaptable to seasonal variations, act as subtle yet powerful forms of daily therapy.

Modern nutrition also stresses the importance of a balanced diet rich in fibre, antioxidants, and essential fatty acids—nutrients abundantly present in *Nitya Sevaniya Aahara*. In the context of increasing lifestyle-related disorders, these foods serve as a preventive strategy, reducing oxidative stress, boosting immunity, and supporting metabolic harmony.

Nitya Sevaniya Aahara—foods recommended for daily intake—form a unique preventive approach in Ayurveda. As described by Acharyas such as Charaka and Sushruta, these food items are not only nourishing but also help maintain internal equilibrium and promote long-term health.

पथ्ये सति गदार्तस्य किं औषध निषेवणैः। पथ्येऽसति गदार्तस्य किं औषध निषेवणैः ॥ (वैधजीवन 1/10)

Ayurveda perceives food not merely as sustenance but as a form of medicine. Within this framework, *Nitya Sevaniya Aahara*—specific foods meant for regular use—serve as the cornerstone of daily preventive care.

“आरोग्य भोजनाधीने।” (का.स.खि.५/९)

Nitya Sevaniya Aahara Dravyas:

षष्टिकाञ्छालिमुद्गां सैन्धवामलके यवान्। आन्तरीक्षं पयः सर्पिर्जङ्गलं मधु चाभ्यसेत् ॥ (च.सू.5/12)

1. Shashtika Shali
2. Mudga (Green gram)
3. Saindhava Lavana (Rock salt)
4. Amalaki (Indian gooseberry)
5. Yava (Barley)
6. Varsha Jala (Rainwater)
7. Go-Dugdha (Cow's milk)
8. Madhu (Honey)
9. Go-Ghrita (Cow's ghee)
10. Jangala Mamsa (Meat of animals from arid regions)

1. **Shashtika Shali:**

The term *Shashtika* denotes “sixty,” and *Shali* refers to a superior variety of rice. *Shashtika Shali* is a special type of rice that matures within sixty days and is highly esteemed in Ayurveda for its *Poshaka* (nourishing) and *Balya* (strength-promoting) properties. It has been mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* under *Shukadhanya Varga* as one of the best grains for daily consumption. It serves as a rich source of energy, contributing about 70–80% of total caloric intake, and provides appreciable amounts of protein, minerals, and B-group vitamins like thiamine, riboflavin, and niacin. Regular use of *Shashtika Shali* promotes strength, nourishment, and overall vitality (*Ayushya*, *Brimhana*, and *Rasayana* effects). It is light and unctuous in nature and helps in pacifying all three *Doshas*.

- Latin Name: *Oryza sativa*
- English Name: Rice
- Family: Graminaeae
- Gana: Stanyajanana Shukadhanya Varga
- Guna: Laghu (Light for digestion), Snigdha (Unctuous)
- Rasa: Madhura (Sweet)
- Anurasa: Kashaya (Astringent)
- Virya: Sheeta (Cold in potency)
- Vipaka: Madhura (Sweet post-digestive effect)
- Doshaghna: Tridosahara
- Rogaghna: Useful in Amavata (rheumatoid arthritis), Arsha (haemorrhoids), Prameha (diabetes), Twak Roga (skin diseases), Kshaya (emaciation), and Raktapitta (bleeding disorders).
- Karma: Haridya, Pittahara, Vrishya (aphrodisiac), Vishaghna, Mutrala, Brimhana, Swarya, Baddhavarchaskara, Ruchikara (appetizing).

2. Mudga (Green Gram): *Mudga* is considered the best among *Shimbi Dhanya* (leguminous grains). It possesses *Kapha-Pitta Shamaka* properties, helping to balance both Kapha and Pitta doshas. Nutritionally, *Mudga* contains about 20–25% protein—twice that of wheat and three times that of rice—making it one of the richest plant-based sources of protein. Although its protein quality is somewhat inferior to that of animal sources, it remains an excellent component of a vegetarian diet. *Mudga* is most beneficial when consumed in the form of soup, as it is light, easily digestible, and highly nourishing.

- Latin name: *Phaseolus mungo*
- English name: Green Gram
- Guna (Qualities): *Laghu* (light), *Ruksha* (dry)
- Rasa (Taste): *Madhura* (sweet), *Kashaya* (astringent)
- Virya (Potency): *Sheeta* (cold)
- Vipaka (Post-digestive effect): *Katu* (pungent)
- Doshaghnta (Effect on Doshas): *Kapha-Pitta Shamaka* (pacifies Kapha and Pitta doshas)
- Rogaghnta (Therapeutic uses): Useful in *Jwara* (fever), *Medoroga* (obesity), and disorders of *Kapha*, *Pitta*, and *Rakta* (blood).
- Karma (Actions): *Grahi* (absorbent), *Chakshushya* (beneficial for eyes), and *Jvaraghna* (antipyretic).

3. Saindhava Lavana (Rock Salt): *Saindhava Lavana* is described by Acharya Charaka under *Aaharayani Varga* and regarded as the best among all salts (*Lavana Varga*). Though both rock salt and common salt share the same chemical formula (NaCl), *Saindhava Lavana* contains additional minerals like potassium, which are beneficial for health. It aids digestion, enhances appetite, adds taste to food, and helps in toxin elimination by improving blood circulation and maintaining mineral balance. Considered the best salt for internal use, it also supports immunity and acts as a *Yogavahi*, helping medicinal substances reach the microcellular level.

- Latin name: *Sodii chloridum*
- English name: Rock Salt
- Guna: *Vishada*, *Sukshma*, *Ushna*, *Vyavayi*, *Snigdha*, *Tikshna*, *Laghu*
- Rasa: *Lavana*, *Madhura*
- Virya: *Sheeta*
- Vipaka: *Madhura*
- Doshaghnta: *Tridoshaghna*
- Rogaghnta: Useful in *Adhmana*, *Shula*, *Vamana*, *Vrishya*
- Karma: *Agnideepaka*, *Pachaka*, *Ruchikarka*, *Chakshushya*, *Lekhana*, *Vibandhahara*, *Hridya*, *Shothahara*, *Vrana Shodhaka*, *Ropana*

4. Amalaki (Indian Gooseberry): Described under *Phala Varga*, *Amalaki* is praised by Charaka and Sushruta as a *Rasayana*, *Vrishya*, *Tridoshaghna*, and *Chakshushya* (good for eyes). It is the richest natural source of vitamin C and contains compounds like gallic acid,

tannins, and pectin. Recognized as a potent *Rasayana*, it delays ageing and enhances immunity. *Amalaki* balances all three doshas, especially Pitta, and is effective in managing *Prameha* (diabetes) and liver disorders.

Latin name: *Emblica officinalis*

Family: *Graminae*

Rasa: *Panchrasa (Amlapradhana)*

Guna: *Laghu, Ruksha, Sheeta, Guru*

Virya: *Sheeta*

Vipaka: *Madhura*

Doshaghnta: *Tridoshaghna, mainly Pitta Shamaka*

Rogaghnta: Useful in *Kamala, Yakritroga, Prameha, Hridroga, Raktapitta*

Karma: *Rasayana, Balya, Vayasthapana, Deepana, Medhya, Krimighna*

5. Yava (Barley): *Yava* is listed under *Shukadhanya Varga* and known for its multifaceted use as both *Pathya* (wholesome) and *Aushadha* (therapeutic). Rich in fibre, vitamins, and minerals, it supports digestive health, regulates blood sugar, and promotes metabolic balance.

- Latin name: *Hordeum vulgare*
- Family: *Graminae*
- Rasa: *Madhura, Tikta, Kashaya*
- Guna: *Laghu, Ruksha, Pichchila, Mridu, Sara*
- Virya: *Sheeta*
- Vipaka: *Katu*
- Doshaghnta: *Kapha-Pitta Shamaka, Vatakara*
- Karma: *Lekhana, Medohara, Mutrala, Agnideepana, Varnya, Balya*

6. Varsha Jala (Rainwater):

According to *Sushruta Samhita*, *Varsha Jala* or rainwater is *Divya Jala*—naturally pure, cooling, and life-sustaining. When collected properly, it is the purest form of water, balancing thirst, fatigue, and heat.

- Rasa: *Avyakta Rasa*

- Guna: *Laghu, Snigdha*
- Virya: *Sheeta*
- Vipaka: *Madhura*
- Doshaghnta: *Kapha-Pitta Shamaka, Vatakara*
- Karma: *Jeevaniya, Tarpana, Hridya, Buddhivardhaka*

7. Go-Dugdha (Cow's Milk): Cow's milk is a complete, nourishing food and is considered the best *Jeevaniya* (life-promoting) substance. It strengthens the body, enhances longevity, and acts as a *Rasayana*. Rich in calcium and essential nutrients, milk promotes vitality and balances *Vata* and *Pitta*.

- Synonyms: *Dugdha, Ksheera, Paya*
- Rasa: *Madhura*
- Guna: *Sheeta, Mridu, Snigdha, Guru, Manda*
- Virya: *Sheeta*
- Vipaka: *Madhura*
- Doshaghnta: *Kapha-Pitta Shamaka*
- Karma: *Jivaniya, Rasayana, Hridya, Tarpana, Brimhana*

8. Madhu (Honey): Honey (*Madhu*) is produced by bees and valued in Ayurveda for its therapeutic versatility. It enhances digestion, acts as a *Yogavahi* (catalyst for drug action), and purifies the body. Old honey reduces obesity, while fresh honey is nourishing.

- English name: Honey
- Rasa: *Madhura, Kashaya*
- Guna: *Laghu, Ruksha, Sukshma*
- Virya: *Sheeta*
- Vipaka: *Madhura*
- Doshaghnta: *Tridoshaghna (Sushruta), Vatavardhaka (Charaka)*
- Karma: *Lekhana, Shodhana, Deepana, Varnya, Medhya, Yogavahi, Ropana*

9. Go-Ghrita (Cow's Ghee): *Ghrita* is the best among oily substances due to its ability to adopt the qualities of other drugs (*Samskarasya Anuvartana*). It nourishes the tissues, enhances memory, and balances *Vata* and *Pitta*. Rich in vitamins A, E, and K2, it supports heart and brain health.

- Latin name: *Butyrum depuratum*

- English name: Clarified Butter
- Rasa: *Madhura*
- Guna: *Snigdha, Mridu, Guru, Sheeta, Yogavahi*
- Virya: *Sheeta*
- Vipaka: *Madhura*
- Doshaghnta: *Vata-Pitta Shamaka*
- Karma: *Rasayana, Medhya, Deepana, Balya, Smritivardhaka, Vayasthapana*

10. Jangala Mamsa (Meat of Wild Animals): *Jangala Mamsa* refers to the meat of animals from dry regions. It is light, easily digestible, and *Vata*-pacifying. Goat meat (*Aja Mamsa*) is especially recommended as it resembles human muscle tissue and promotes strength and nourishment.

- Rasa: *Madhura*
- Guna: *Guru*
- Virya: *Sheeta*
- Doshaghnta: *Pitta-Kapha Shamaka, Vatavardhaka*
- Karma: *Brimhana, Balya, Varnya, Swarya, Buddhi Vardhaka*

Discussion:

The Ayurvedic concept of *Nitya Sevaniya Aahara* focuses on preventive and promotive health, emphasizing foods that balance doshas, enhance *Agni*, and nourish *Dhatus*. Charaka lists *Shashtika Shali, Mudga, Yava, Amalaki, Saindhava Lavana, Madhu*, and *Go-Dugdha* as ideal for regular consumption. Modern nutritional science supports these recommendations—linking them to high protein, antioxidants, and essential minerals—proving the timeless relevance of Ayurvedic dietary wisdom.

Conclusion:

In the modern age of processed foods and lifestyle disorders, *Nitya Sevaniya Aahara* offers a holistic approach to health maintenance. It integrates mindful eating, seasonal adaptation, and digestive respect—nourishing the body, mind, and spirit. Regular consumption of these foods promotes *Ojas*, strengthens immunity, and prevents disease. Thus, *Nitya Sevaniya Aahara* is not merely a dietary guideline but a living philosophy of *Swasthya Rakshana*, preserving the body's natural harmony through daily nourishment.

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