

CONCEPT OF RASA (TASTE) ORDER IN USAGE AS MEDICINE AND FOOD

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ABSTRACT

Ayurvedic Drugs/food items usage is based on *samanyvishes sidhanta* so these materials possess the *rasapanchakas* (five basic elements of drugs) to destruct the pathology so their order of usage in respective condition is more important. **Aims and Objectives:** To highlight the importance of *Rasa* of drug and food materials while its use to eradicate and prevent the disease. **Manifestation of Disease:** Disease occurs due to vitiation of *tridoshas* (three basic elements of body) and *saptadhatus* (Seven basic tissues of body) by change in their qualities. **Order of Rasa as Medicine:** According to diseased condition i.e. *doshickshaya vridhi avastha* rasa order is told i.e. *Katu, Tikta* and *Kashayrasatmak* drugs should be advised in *kaphaj* disease serially. In *Pittaj* disease *Tikta, Madhur* and *kashay* rasa serially and in *vataj* disease *Lavan, Amla* and *Madhurrasa* serially. **Order of rasa as food:** While taking food we have to take food of *madhurrasatmak* at first then *Amla and Lavanrasatmak* and at last *Katu, Tikta and Kashayrasatmakahar* to prevent the diseases and to keep healthy condition of human body and also *rasa* order changes as per diseased condition that also told by *Bhavmishra*. **Discussion:** Order of usage of *rasa* as medicine and as food material is very effective in curing and preventing diseases.

Keywords: Introduction, Aims and objective, Order of *Rasa* as Medicine, Order of *Rasa* as food, Discussion.

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurved *Dravyaguna* subject is related to medicinal plants. All medicinal plants mentioned in Ayurved are described to cure the diseases. The basic concept of drug action is depended on *Rasa Panchak* i.e. *Rasa, Guna, Virya, Vipak* and *Prabhav*. With the help of this *Rasapanchak* drug/Medicinal plants/Food material destructs the complete pathology of disease. The basic cause of Disease manifestation is vitiation of *Doshas* and *Dhatus*. In Disease manifestation at first *Doshas* gets vitiates and then *Dhatus* due to following *viruddha* Ahara-vihar (etiological factors related to improper food intake and physical activities). Here vitiation of both in case of their qualities in

the respect of *Kshaya* (Decreased condition) and *Vridhi* (Increased condition). In Ayurved there are total 20 *gunas* (qualities) are mentioned which are known as *Gurvadi* as well as *Shareerikgunas* also. Destruction of pathology according to Ayurved is changes in qualities from increased or decreased condition to their normal condition by administration of drug having similar or opposite qualities of *doshas* and *dhatus*, and above mentioned *rasa panchakas* *Rasa, Virya and Vipakas* having these qualities which are utilized to normalize the qualities of vitiating *Doshas* and *Dhatus*. *Rasa* is main aspect of drug which comes in contact directly with the *doshas* situated in GI tract while

administering food substances or drug material. So in pathogenesis of disease due to improper food ingestion causes vitiation of doshas i.e. *Kaphadosha* in *Amashaya* (Stomach), *Pitta dosha* in *Pachyamanashaya* (duodenum small intestine) and *Vatadosha* in *Pakvashaya* (small intestine last part and large intestine). Vitiation of *doshas* starts from mouth to anal region after ingestion of improper food material. So the *Gun*as of *Rasa* are having more importance in the manifestation of disease as well as curing of disease. So the *Rasa* of food material as well as drug/medicinal plants are having importance in manifestation and curing the disease.

Aims and Objective:

1. To highlight the importance of *Rasa* of Drug/Medicinal Plant's Parts while its administration to cure the disease.
2. To highlight the importance of *Rasa* of Food substances while its administration to prevent disease manifestation and to cure it also.

Manifestation of Disease: In Ayurved manifestation of disease is starts from vitiation of *Dosh*as to *Dhat*us and *Mal*as (three excreted materials) by changing their qualities in the respect of *Kshaya* (Decreased condition below normal state) and *Vridhi* (Increased condition above normal state). Curing and prevention of the disease is to normalize the qualities of *Dosh*as to *Dhat*us and *Mal*as.

Importance of Order of Rasa: *Rasa* is the main factor from *Rasapanchak* of Medicinal plants and food material which comes in contact of *Dosh*as present in GI tract after its administration. So at first there will be changes occurs in quality of *Dosh*as and due to vitiation of *dosha* the *dhat*us and *mal*as gets vitiates and by change in their qualities disease can be cured. So the *Rasa* is having more importance.

Order of Rasa as Medicine¹: In Ayurved the diseases are classified according to *dosh*as i.e. *Vataj*, *Pittaj*, *Kaphaj* etc. So here order of *Rasa* is explained according to these types.

Order of Rasa in Kaphaj Vyadhi: At first *Katu rasa* (Pungent taste) then *Tikta* (Bitter taste) and lastly *Kashayrasatmak* (Astringent taste having) Drugs/Medicinal plant's part should be administered to cure *Kaphaj diseases*.

Ayurvedic pharmacological actions of these Rasas in Kaphaj disease:

1. *Katu* (Pungent taste) *rasa* reduces the increased *Pichil* (stickiness) quality and *Guru* (heaviness) of *Kaphadosha* with the help of opposite *Ruksha* (Dryness) quality and *Laghu* (lightness) quality of *Katu rasa* by the action of absorption process.
1. *Tikta rasa* (Bitter taste) decreases sweet taste from mouth and makes the mouth bitter and due *Vishad* (Clean/clear) quality it liquefy the stickiness of *Kapha* and decreases the *Pichilguna* of *Kaphadosha* by the breakdown process.
2. *Kashaya Rasa* (Astringent taste) due to its *Ruksha* (roughness) and *Sheet* (Coldness) quality it absorbs the *Snigdhanasha* (oiliness) of *Kaphadosha* and stops its secretion respectively.

Order of Rasa in Pittaj Vyadhi: At first *Tikta* (Bitter taste), then *Madhur* (Sweet) and lastly *Kashayrasatmak* (Astringent taste having) Drugs/Medicinal plant's part should be administered to cure *Pittaj diseases*.

Ayurvedic pharmacological actions of these Rasas in Pittaj disease:

1. *Tikta rasa* (Bitter taste) decreases *Saampitta* condition i.e. Undigested food along with *pitta* due to *Vishad* (Clean/clear) quality it liquefy the stickiness of *Aama* by the breakdown process.
2. *Madhur rasa* (Sweet taste) decreases hot quality of *pitta dosha* by the qualities like *Sheet* (coldness) and *Guru* (Heaviness) by the action of suppression.
3. *Kashaya Rasa* (Astringent taste) due to its *Ruksha* and *Sheet* (Coldness) quality it absorbs the *Dravata* (Liquid condition) and prevents the secretion of *Pitta dosha* respectively.

Order of Rasa in Vataj Vyadhi: At first *Lavan rasa* (Salty taste), then *Amla rasa* (Sour taste) and lastly *Madhurrasatmak* (Sweet taste having) Drugs/Medicinal plant's part should be administered to cure *Vataj* diseases.

Ayurvedic pharmacological actions of these Rasas in Vataj disease:

1. *Lavan rasa* (Salty taste) produces moistness in the path way of *Vatadosha* so *Vatadosha* easily moves and due to *Ushna* quality (Hotness) it reduces the increased coldness of *vatadosha* and due to heaviness quality (*guru guna*) reduces the lightness of *Vatadosha* by stimulating process.

Table No.1 Order of Rasa as Medicine:

Dosha	1 st Order Rasa	2 nd Order Rasa	3 rd Order Rasa
<i>Vata</i>	<i>Lavan</i>	<i>Amla</i>	<i>Madhur</i>
<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Kashay</i>
<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Kashay</i>

Order of Rasa as food at healthy condition²: If we follow the rules/order of *rasa* in food we can prevent the disease and not only the disease but also it keeps our body as well as mind in healthy condition scientifically according to Ayurveda.

While taking food we have to follow the following rules-

1. *Madhur RasatmakAhar* (Sweet food items) at starting of meal or dinner.
2. *Amla and Lavan rasatmak Ahar* (Sour and Salty food items) at the middle of meal or dinner.
3. *Katu, Tikata and Kashay rasatmak ahar* (Pungent, bitter and Astringent food items) at the end of meal or dinner. Now we will see the reason of above rules one by one –

1. At first *Madhur rasa* – Before meal or dinner our stomach remains empty (If there will not be intake of food or food items at the middle period of meal and dinner). Due to emptiness of stomach there will be aggravation of *laghu* and *ruksha* qualities of *vatadosha*. So to maintain the *Vatadosha* in normal condition or to avoid its *Vridhi avastha* (quality increased condition) we have to administrate the food items having

1. *Amla rasa* (Sour taste) stimulates the channel i.e. pathway of *Vatadosha* for its movement in its regular and normal direction by the help of qualities like *Ushna* (hot), *Tikshna* (penetrating) and *Snigdha* (oiliness).
2. *Madhur rasa* (Sweet taste) with the help of its qualities like *Guru* (heaviness), *Pichil* (stickiness), and *Snigdha* (oiliness) reduces the main increased qualities of *Vatadosha* i.e. *Laghu* (lightness), *Vishad* (cleanliness) and *Ruksha* (Dryness) by its opposite characteristics.

opposite qualities of *laghu* and *ruksha* of *vatadosha*. And *madhur rasa* possess these qualities i.e. *Guru* and *snighdha* quality. So due to *Madhur rasa* we can maintain the *vatadosha* at normal condition. Due to *Madhur rasa* we can keep the food material moist (*Kledan*) to dissolve it properly in body fluids.

2. At middle *Amla* and *Lavan rasa*- These two *rasa* possess the quality of *snighdha* and *ushna* which causes the food items moist and digestable by maintaining the acid level normal in stomach and duodenum. And also these qualities help to maintain the *Vatadosha* in normal condition by reducing its *ruksha* and *sheet* quality. Also these both *rasa* increases the taste of food.
3. At last *Katu, Tikta* and *Kashay rasa*- After intake of food there is necessity of proper digestion of it upto its absorption from gut, so the qualities of all these three *rasa* helps in doing the same process. These qualities are *ushna guna* of *Katu rasa* for digestion purpose, *vishada* and *sheet guna* of *tikta rasa* to avoid excessive *snighdha guna* at intestine level and maintains *pitta dosha* at normal condition respectively, *laghu* and *ruksha guna* of *kashay rasa* to

absorb the digested material from gut wall. Above rules are told in healthy condition to prevent the disease. Now we will see the rules of *rasa* in food for diseased condition.

Order of Rasa as Food in diseased condition³: This explanation is given by *Bhavamishra* in *Bhavprakash*. He had given an example for that but *Vaidya* should follow the rule according to the *doshik* condition involved in disease in the manner of *Vridhi* and *Kshay*. *Bhavamishra* says that in the condition of *Aruchi* (Anorexia) and *Agnimandya* (Loss of appetite) which happens due to *Kapha dosh vridhi* and in *kaphaj* diseases patient has to take food material like *Adrak* (zinger) and salt at first/before of meal or dinner or on both time. Here due to *Katu rasa* and *laghuguna* of *Adrak* and *Ushna, snighdhaguna* of *lavan rasa* minimize the *kaphadosha* and *vatadosha* respectively and destructs the pathogenesis of Anorexia and loss of appetite by digesting the food material present in GI tract. Not only these two *rasatmak* food material but also at the end of food *madhur rasa sevan*(intake) is also told to avoid adverse effect of Zinger and salt by minimizing the *pitta dosha* increased by both in GI tract.

DISCUSSION:

All above description of using *rasa* in order as medicine and food is based upon the basic concept of *samanyvishesh sidhant* of Ayurved i.e. use of similar and opposite quality of drug or food material to maintain the qualities present in the body elements (*Dosha and Dhātu*) at normal level. Due to this concept we can maintain

our body and mind at healthy condition and cures the diseases effectively.

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