

A CRITICAL REVIEW ON AHARA DRAVYA (DIETETICS SUBSTANCES) WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MAMSA, PHALA, AND SHAKA VARGA AND ITS NUTRITIONAL IMPORTANCE

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ABSTRACT

Ahara dravya Vargas has been a part of the human diet since the earliest time. *Ayurveda* describes *Ahara*(diet) as the best preventive medicine and management of many diseases. "*Mamsa varga, Phala Varga, and shaka varga*" are categorised under *Ahara varga*, listing different meats, fruits and vegetables with their properties and their indication in different medical conditions. But during the last 5000-year, vast changes have occurred in the use of meats, fruits, and vegetables. Several items have become outdated and new items are introduced. Most people are not aware of the type of food whether it is beneficial or not and they eat everything without knowing their *Agni* (digestive power) and the quality of *ahara dravya* that's why it is the major cause of lifestyle disorder. So, we are trying to collect and explore some selected *ahara dravya* mainly from *Mamsa varga, Phala varga, and Shaka varga* with their nutritional importance according to modern sciences and provide knowledge to everyone by which they consume *Ahara* properly according to their *Agni* (digestive power) and get rid of diseases and make themselves healthy forever.

Keywords: *Ahara dravya varga, mamsa varga, Phala varga, Shaka varga, Agni*, Nutritional importance.

INTRODUCTION

Diets and drinks whose colour, smell, taste, and touch are pleasing to the senses and conducive to health, if taken in accordance with the rules represent the very life of living beings. The effect of the use of such diets and drinks can be perceived directly. If consumed according to rules, they provide fuel to the fire of digestion; they promote mental as well as physical strength, the strength of tissue elements and complexion and they are pleasing to the senses. Otherwise, they are harmful^[1]. **Sushruta** said, it is conceived earlier that the main cause for the existence of the living beings is food, which is also a cause for strength, colour, and *Ojas*(immunity). It is based on six tastes and all these tastes are again based on the drugs which are responsible for the decrease, increase, and equilibrium of *Doshas*. The food in the universe is a causative factor for existence, production and destruction, growth, strength, health, colour, and clarity in the organs. And due to irregularity of food, there arises illness. Such food which is ingested by gulping, drinking, licking, and eating; prepared with the combination of different substances, prepared in different methods, has different effects. The individual substances in terms of the substances as a whole; their taste, quality, potency, *Vipaka*, and actions; because a physician who has no such knowledge will not be able to maintain the health and cure the diseases.^[2] Since all living beings depend upon the food that is why it has taken important place in human life. How much food that we will consume all depends upon *Agni* and the quality of food because this *Agni* is directly influenced by quality of food. When supplied with fuel in the form of food and drinks, this power of digestion or *Agni* is sustained; it dwindles when deprived of it^[3]. If we know the properties of *Ahara* or food substances, then we will consume it according to our *Agni* i.e the right quantity always depends upon the substance itself.

Based on the food article itself it is advised that heavy article should be taken up to one third or one half of the saturation point (of capacity of stomach); even light one should not be taken in surfeit to maintain the strength of *agni*^[4] and food itself digestion enhance *Agni*^[5].

Objective and Method:

The effect of *ahara* on the body is dependent upon its properties so here we mentioned some selected *ahara dravya* that are usually or frequently consumed by an individual or person. Considering its quintessential part in present-day food style on the basis of their qualities we are explaining some *Ahara dravya Vargas* mainly *mamsa Varga*, *Phala Varga*, and *Shaka Varga* along with their properties in the light of modern science. Properties of *Mamsa Varga*, *Phala Varga*, and *Shaka Varga* according to *Charaka (Ch)*, *Sushruta (Su)*, *Astanga Hridaya (A.H.)*, and *Astanga Sangraha(A.S.)* are described in table form along with Nutritional importance.

Review and Discussion-

A person who always intake food keeping *hita* and *Ahita* (whether it's favourable for the body or not) in mind and obey the principles of *Vihar* (daily routine work) stay healthy forever. This principle of *Ahar-vihar* is described in detail by various resource persons in *dinacharya* and *ritucharya* chapter but could not elaborate all circumstances of these. eg in spring season a person should not take *guru*(heavy), *sheeta* (cold potency), unctuous(*snigdha*), *Amla* (Sour), sweet(*madhur*) rasa substances and sleep during day time, with the help of aforesaid stated example one could not be able to differentiate between *guna* (basic properties) of *dravya*(substances) that whether its *sheeta* or *ushna*(hot potency) or whether its *guru* or *laghu* . So, to know the medicinal as well as diet qualities of each and every *Ahara dravya* (food item) in detail this study has been done.

Properties of some selected *Shaka*(vegetables), *Mamsa*(meats), *Phala* (Fruits)^[6,7,8,9] and its Nutritional Importance^[10]

S.no	Name of <i>shaka</i>	Properties	Nutritional importance
1.	<i>Tanduliyaka</i> (Amaranthus spinosus)	It is curative of intoxication and poisoning, useful for patients suffering from <i>Raktapitta</i> , sweet in taste as well as <i>Vipak</i> and cold in potency. (Ch.) A.H. - Laghu	It is used in the treatment of internal bleeding, diarrhoea, excessive menstruation, snake bite, boils, stomach disorder, mouth ulcer, vaginal discharge, nose bleeds, and wounds.
2.	<i>Patol</i> (Trichosanthes Dioica) Pointed gourd	Pacifying <i>pitta kapha</i> , Bitter in taste palatable, <i>katu Vipak, Laghu</i> (Light) <i>Agni Deepan</i> (enhance digestive power) A.H. -beneficial for heart, Kill worms	Promotes gut health, is good for diabetes, boost immune system, treat skin disorder, improves heart health, rich in antioxidants
3.	<i>Karela</i> (bitter gourd)	Pacifying <i>kapha vata, tikta</i> (bitter and pungent in taste), <i>Rochak</i> (palatable) <i>Laghu</i> (light) and <i>Agnideepan</i>	Good for diabetes, good for skin and hair, liver cleanser, good for digestion, improves cardiac health, combats cancer, weight management, heal wounds, blood purifier, energised the body
4.	<i>Vartaaka</i> (eggplant)	Pacifying <i>Vata, Agni deepan, katu tikta</i> rasa (pungent and bitter in taste) Su- Pacifying <i>Vata Kapha, Rochak, Laghu,</i> A.H. - Two type <i>katu tikta</i> and sweet(<i>madhur</i>), is slightly alkaline <i>Hridya</i> (beneficial for the heart), does not aggravate <i>pitta</i> .	It May Have Cancer-Fighting Benefits, Could Help with Weight Loss, promote blood sugar control, reduce the risk of heart disease, be high in antioxidants, rich in nutrients vitamin K and C, etc.
5.	<i>Palak</i> (spinach)	It is like <i>tandulja shaka</i> (Ch.) A.H. -Hard to digest and laxative A.S. - <i>Sheeta virya</i> (cold in potency)	Lower blood pressure, healthy eyes, improved cognition, for healthy bone, skin and blood. Spinach is full of fibre, eating too much fibre can cause gas, cramping, and abdominal pain, risk for calcium oxalate kidney stone.
6.	<i>Vastuka</i> (bathua)	Laxative (Ch.) Su- <i>Katu vipak, Kriminasak</i> (destroy worms), <i>Medha</i> (Brain) and <i>Agni Vardhak</i> Mitigates all the <i>Doshas</i> Laxative, palatable	Repairs cell, relieves constipation, may help with weight loss, purify blood Promotes healthy hair, eye health, good for dental health.
7.	<i>Grijnaka</i> (carrot)	<i>Tikshna</i> (Sharp), <i>Vata kapha, Arsha rog Hitakari,</i> Beneficial in fomenting (Ch.) A.H. - <i>Vrana</i> (Ulcer) <i>Shotha</i> (<i>Inflammation</i>) <i>Hitakari, Vistambhi</i>	Good for eyes, lower risk of cancer, improves heart health, boosts immune system, reduce constipation, Control diabetes, strengthen the bone.
8.	<i>Surana Kand</i> (Yam or elephant foot)	A.H. - <i>Agni Deepan</i> (kindle digestion), <i>Ruchikarak,</i> <i>Kapha naashak, Vishad</i> (non-unctuous), especially good for haemorrhoids.	Enhance brain function, ease symptoms of menopause, have cancer-fighting properties, reduce inflammation, improves blood sugar control level, improve digestion, weight loss, antimicrobial properties, and reduced cholesterol level.
S.No.	<i>Mamsa</i>	Properties	Nutritional importance
1.	<i>Aja</i> (Goat) (Mutton)	Ch. - <i>Naati sheeta</i> (not too cold) <i>Guru</i> (heavy), <i>Snigdha</i> (unctuous) , <i>Adoshala</i> (does not cause <i>Dosha</i> imbalance). It is homologous with the muscle of the human body. It does not obstruct/cause coating of the channels of circulation and is nourishing (<i>Brihmana</i>). Su. - <i>Pinas rog</i> (rhinitis) <i>nashak</i>	Low in fat and saturated fat High in iron, Vitamin B12 (production of energy in cells, DNA synthesis, nerve cell function red blood cell formation) Potassium is a nutrient and electrolyte that helps regulate blood pressure and maintain cell functions, particularly nerve and muscle cells.

2.	<i>Kukkut</i> (chicken)	Ch. -Unctuous, hot in potency, aphrodisiac, and nourishing. It promotes voice complexion, strength, and semen. It alleviates <i>Vata</i> .	Provides stronger bones and muscles, weight management and heart health, promotes better mood, many nutrients such as Vitamin B12, Tryptophan, Choline, Zinc, Iron and copper, etc.
3.	<i>Sookar</i> (pork)	Ch. -Unctuous, nourishing, aphrodisiac, Fatigue remover, alleviates <i>vata</i> , promoter of strength, heavy. it is palatable. it produces sweating. Su. - alleviator of <i>aam</i> and <i>vata</i>	Maintenance of muscle mass, and improved exercise performance, it's mainly made up of saturated and monounsaturated fats. Pork is an excellent source of many vitamins and minerals, including thiamine, zinc, vitamin B12, vitamin B6, niacin, phosphorus, and iron.
4.	<i>Rohit Matsya</i> (Rohu fish)	Lives on moss and grass and does not sleep. Therefore, it promotes the power of digestion. It is light for digestion, it promotes strength considerably. (Ch.) Su- <i>Anurasa kashaya</i> , A.H- Best fish,	Fish is high in omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential for brain and eye development. Improves cardiovascular health, clearing the vessel, control blood sugar level Provide strength to joints, improves vision and respiratory diseases, provide skin health, boost your brain power, treat insomnia.
S. No	Phala (fruits)	Properties	Nutritional Importance
1.	<i>Mridvika</i> (Raisins)	Provides immediate cure for thirst, burning sensation, fever, Dyspnea, Rakt-pitta consumption, wasting, vitiated <i>Vata</i> and <i>Pitta</i> , <i>Udavarta</i> , hoarseness of voice, alcoholism, bitter taste and dryness in mouth and cough. It is nourishing, aphrodisiac, sweet, unctuous, and cold in potency. (Ch) Su. - <i>Sara</i> (purgative), A.H. - beneficial for eye, delay digestion superior to all fruit,	Contains fibres which help to treat constipation, weight gain, reduced cholesterol level. Beneficial in iron deficiency anaemia. Calcium and boron help in making bone strength. Might help in prevention of cancer, keep blood pressure in control, enhance immunity, Raisins are helpful with providing pain relief caused by inflammatory problems such as arthritis and gout, improved sleep.
2.	<i>Kharjura</i> (Date)	It is sweet, nourishing, aphrodisiac, heavy, cold in potency, and beneficial in wasting injury, burning sensation, and vitiated <i>Vata</i> as well as <i>Pitta</i> . (Ch.) Su- <i>Kshata</i> (injury) <i>kshaya nashak</i> (tuberculosis), <i>Hridya</i> , <i>Tripti karak</i> (Satiating) A.H- <i>Vistambhakarak</i> (constipative), <i>Kapha Sukra dhatu vriddhi</i>	Very nutritious, high in fibre, high in disease fighting antioxidants, promotes brain health, promote natural labour, excellent natural sweetener Bone health, control blood sugar.
3.	<i>Amaratak</i> (spondias pinnata)	Ch.- It is sweet, nourishing, strength promoting, refreshing, heavy, unctuous, aggravates <i>kapha</i> , cold in potency, and aphrodisiac. During digestion it produce wind(<i>afara</i>) in abdomen.	Antimicrobial action, Hepato-protective action, hypoglycemic action, anthelmintic activity.
4.	<i>Paraavata</i> (Psidium guajava)	Fruit one is sweet in taste and cold in potency and other is sour in taste and hot in potency. Both of them are heavy to digest and curative of anorexia as well as excessive digestion and metabolism.	Lower blood sugar level, boost heart health, relieve painful symptoms in menstruation. Benefit digestive system, aid weight loss, anticancer effect boost immunity, Good for skin.
5.	<i>Sahtoot</i> (mulberry)	It is also slightly different from <i>parusaka</i> in quality	Mulberries are highly nutritious and contain a good amount of fibre, vitamin C, and iron in each serving. Slow cancer cell growth, reduces cholesterol level, improve blood sugar level

6.	<i>Bilva</i> (wood Apple)	<p>Ripe fruit-It is difficult for digestion, an aggravator of dosas, and a producer of foul-smelling flatus (Ch.) Su- <i>Vistambhi</i>, <i>Vidaha Janaka</i> (Burning sensation) A.S.- <i>Grahi</i>, <i>Guru</i> and causes <i>Agnimandya</i> Unripe Fruit- The young unripe fruit of bilva however is unctuous hot in potency sharp, promoter of digestion, and alleviator of <i>kapha</i> as well as <i>vata</i>. (Ch.)</p>	Ideal summer drink, treatment of asthma, cure of anaemia, use in fracture, healing of the wound, swollen joints, control high blood pressure, treat jaundice, diarrhoea, typhoid.
7.	<i>Amara</i> (mango)	<p>Young fruit- It cause <i>Rakta pitta</i> Mature unripe-It aggravates <i>pitta</i> Ripe fruit- alleviate <i>vata</i> and promote flesh, semen as well as strength (Ch.) Su- <i>Hridya</i>, provides a good complexion, palatable. A.H- <i>Kaphakara</i></p>	Mango is low in calories yet high in nutrients — particularly vitamin C, which aids immunity, iron absorption, and cell growth and repair, helps prevent diabetes, immune-boosting nutrients, supports heart health, improves digestive health, supports eye health, lowers the risk of certain cancers.
8.	<i>Jambu</i> (syzygium cumini)	It is the sweetish astringent, heavy, producer of wind in abdomen, cold in potency, alleviator of <i>Kapha</i> and <i>Pitta</i> , bowel binding and aggravation of <i>Vata</i> .	Improves haemoglobin compound, keeps the heart healthy, strengthens gums and teeth, prevents infection, and treats diabetes.
9.	<i>Badar</i> (jujube)	It is sweet, unctuous, laxative, and alleviator of <i>Vata</i> as well as <i>Pitta</i> . Its dried fruits alleviate <i>Vata</i> and <i>Kapha</i> but do not go against <i>pitta</i> .	Jujube fruits are low in calories and high in fibre. They also offer several vitamins and minerals, including vitamin C and potassium. Rich in antioxidants, improves sleep and brain function, boosts immunity, and fights cancer cells. Improves digestion.
10.	<i>Dadima</i> (Pomegranate)	<p>Ch.-Three type- Sour, astringent, and sweet Sour <i>Dadim</i> is the best Alleviator of <i>vata</i>, bowel binding, promoter of digestion, unctuous, hot in potency, and cardiac tonic. It does not provoke <i>kapha</i> and <i>pitta</i>. It cures hoarseness of voice and diseases due to the vitiation of <i>kapha</i> as well as <i>pitta</i>.</p>	Pomegranates in their whole fruit form are low in calories and fat and high in fibre, vitamins, and minerals. They even contain some protein. Enjoy the nutritional benefits of pomegranate by eating the seeds, or arils, inside. Pomegranates are rich in an array of antioxidant compounds that help protect your cells from free radical damage. Anticancer properties, beneficial for hearts, Support urinary health, antimicrobial properties, and good for the brain.
11.	<i>Matulunga</i> (Citrus decumana)	<p>Ch.-Filaments of matulunga are useful in colic pain, anorexia, constipation, impairment of digestion, alcoholism, hiccough, dyspnoea, Cough, vomiting, disorders relating to faeces, and such other diseases as arise from the vitiated <i>vata</i> as well as <i>kapha</i>. Filaments, unlike other parts of this plant, are light.</p>	Pomelo is particularly rich in vitamin C and potassium and contains several other vitamins and minerals, as well as protein and fibre. Full of fibre, promotes weight loss, is Rich in antioxidants, boosts heart health. Anti-aging properties, antibacterial and antifungal properties, May fight cancer cells.

CONCLUSION

Classical text of *ayurveda* has detailed different meat, fruits, and vegetables under the heading of *Mamsa varga*, *Phala varga*, and *Shaka varga*. A systematic review of classical meat, fruits, and vegetables provide a lot of information regarding their properties,

distribution, and usage. However, there is a lack of knowledge about the vegetables or meat or fruits which are frequently used by the person either in a healthy condition or diseased. So proper knowledge of some selected substance of meat, fruits, and vegetable which have taken from their varga that is *Mamsa*

varga, Phala varga, and Shaka varga of ahara varga which are mentioned in Charaka, Sushruta, and Vagbhata and also provides its nutritional importance in light of modern science. And with this knowledge of mamsa, phala, and shaka varga it will be convenient to prevent diseases by proper utilisation and will be helpful in the treatment of diseases as diet supplements as well.

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