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A critical review on *Padamshika Krama* - A transition technique

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: *Padamshika Krama* is a unique concept in *Ayurveda*, which is to be observed during the change from *Apathya* to *Pathya*. *Padamshika Krama* is a technique of gradual adopting and leaving that can be used for both *Ahara* and *Vihara*. According to various *Acharya's*, opinion on this notion varies. Sudden abandonment and transition to new things is the source of so many health conditions that are left unnoticed. Sudden withdrawal from certain diet practice will lead to the vitiation of *Dosha*.

Method: Literature review **Discussion:** The study tries to develop the concept of *Padamshika Krama* in relation to *Ahara-Vihara* as well as *Rutucharya*. Various notions regarding the method and days of transition has been discussed along with its significance. **Conclusion:** *Padamshika Krama* is a method, which helps to maintain the body equilibrium. It can be correlated to the concepts such as tapering dose and withdrawal symptoms. This method prevents the occurrence of diseases due to incompatibility.

Key words: *Padamshika Krama*, *Rutucharya*, *Ahara*, *Vihara*.

INTRODUCTION

Ahara (food) has prime importance among the *Trayopastambha* (3 pillars of health) explained in *Ayurveda*. *Ahara* is the reason for both health as well as diseases.^[1] Food is the one, which nourishes the body, increase the strength, holds the body tissues, enhances the life span, color, complexion, memory, immunity and the digestive fire.^[2] Hence, *Acharyas* have exactly pointed out the importance of *Ahara* in *Trayopastambha* and it is explained first. Concentrating on the concept of *Ahara* in the *Samhita*

there are many time-tested concepts like *Hitabhuk* (eating which is conducive), *Mitabhuk* (eating in proper quantity), *Rutubhuk* (eating according to season), *Satmya* (compatible), *Astavidha Aharavisheshayatana* (eight food factors), *Ahara Vidhi* (method of food intake) which are well known concepts and are in practice from thousands of years. *Hita-Ahita* (conductive- non conducive), *Pathya-Apathya* (wholesome-unwholesome) *Satmya-Asatmya* (compatible- incompatible) are the various terms used to define the relation between *Ahara* and the individual who consumes it and the effect of *Ahara* as well as *Vihara* (daily activity) on the individual. Person aimed at healthy life should always consume *Hita Ahara* and follow *Hita Vihara*. Transition from *Ahita* to *Hita* should be smooth and it should not affect the body equilibrium. *Padamshika Krama* is a concept, which is to be followed by each one to manage transition from *Ahita* to *Hita*, the seasonal variations and its effect on physiological activity of the body.

The concept of *Padamshika Krama* looks like a mathematical formula with which one can easily

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adopt *Hita* and leave *Ahita*. The highlight of this regimen is that, it is completed within 7, 14, 16, 46 and 63 days according to various *Acharya*.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To systematically review the concept of *Padamshika Krama* available in *Ayurveda* Literatures.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

All the reference about *Padamshika Krama* from *Bruhatrayi* has been collected and compiled.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pada is considered as one by fourth part.

Amsha is considered as division or part.^[3]

Pada is one by fourth part, similar to that is considered as *Padamsha*.

A particular practice of abandoning *Ahita* which is *Satmya* due to practice and adapting *Hita* which is not in practice is known as *Padamshika Krama*. This should be practiced with a time gap of 1, 2 and 3 days respectively.^[4] *Apathya* which is in practice should be left by *Pada* and good practice should be adapted by *Pada* in a time interval of 1, 2, and 3 days.^[5] *Apathya* is not only confined to diet it can also be other activities such as fasting, physical activities such as swimming, awakening or sleep.

Concept of *Padamshika Krama* has been mentioned in *Charaka Navegandharaneeya Adhyaya* after the concept of *Vyayama*. In *Astanga Hrudaya* this concept is found in *Annaraksha Adhyaya*, *Anagathabadha Pratishedha Adyaya* of *Sushruta Samhita* has the concept of *Padamshika Krama*.

Hitakara Ahara causes nourishment and *Ahitakara Ahara* leads to disease. Again, this *Ahita* and *Hita* food depends on quantity, processing, time, place, *Dosha* and *Avastha* (condition) of Person. *Hitahara* may turn into *Ahitha* if it is not taken by considering the above said criteria.^[6] *Hitahara* brings back the normalcy in *Dhatu* and maintain the equilibrium among the *Dhatus*. *Ahitahara* does the opposite work.^[7] Food which is good, comfortable to the body and channels of the body that which imparts the sense of

satisfaction is known as *Pathya*. Food, which are not wholesome to the body and mind is considered as *Apathya*.^[8] *Satmya* is that which is convenient to person. *Satmya* is that which nourishes the *Atma* and that to which a person is accustomed to regular intake. *Okasatmya* (daily accustomed) is the one which is attained through practice.^[9] If *Apathya* is ceased and *Pathya* is started suddenly, it leads to the diseases related to *Satmya* and *Asatmya*.^[10] When a person wants to shift from one food habit to another direct shift leads to so many difficulties. *Padamshika Krama* is the method of gradual leaving and adaptation of *Ahara* and *Vihara* without causing any harm to the body.^[11]

Technical challenges while understanding this concept

Even though this concept is simple, some of the terminologies have to be viewed from the perspective of understanding. There are two opinions regarding the understanding of the word *Padamshika Krama*. *Acharya Chakrapani* opines that *Pada* is 1/4th part similar to that is considered as *Padamsha*. Another opinion regarding this by *Acharya Chakrapani* is 1/16th part is considered as *Padamsha*. *Padamshika Krama* explained by *Acharya Charakrapani* is as shown in table no 1.

Table 1: Padamshika Krama according to Chakrapani - 7 days^[12]

Days	Composition of food	
1	¾ <i>Apathya</i>	¼ <i>Pathya</i>
2	½ <i>Apathya</i>	½ <i>Pathya</i>
3	½ <i>Apathya</i>	½ <i>Pathya</i>
4	¾ <i>Apathya</i>	¼ <i>Pathya</i>
5	¾ <i>Apathya</i>	¼ <i>Pathya</i>
6	¾ <i>Apathya</i>	¼ <i>Pathya</i>
7	Only <i>Pathya</i>	

First day one should leave 1/4th part of *Ahitakara Ahara* and should take 1/4th part of *Hitakara Ahara*.

Second and third day one should leave 1/2nd part of *Apathya* and take 1/2nd parts of *Pathya*. 4th, 5th and 6th day one should leave 3/4th part of *Ahitakara Anna* and take 3/4th part of *Hitakara Anna*. 7th day one should completely leave *Apathya* and take complete *Pathya Ahara*. *Yavakadi* (barley etc.) which are in practice are considered as *Apathya* and *Raktashalyadi* (Red rice) which are not in practice are considered as *Pathya*.^[13]

Table 2: Padamshika Krama according to Chakrapani - 15 days^[14]

Days	Constitution of food
1	¾ <i>Apathya</i> ¼ <i>Pathya</i>
2	<i>Poorna Apathya</i>
3, 4	2 parts <i>Pathya</i> 2 parts <i>Apathya</i>
5	¾ <i>Apathya</i> ¼ <i>Pathya</i>
6, 7, 8	1 part <i>Apathya</i> 3 parts <i>Pathya</i>
9	2 parts <i>Pathya</i> 2 parts <i>Apathya</i>
10, 11, 12, 13	<i>Poorna Pathya</i>
14	1 part <i>Apathya</i> 3 parts <i>Pathya</i>
15 days onwards	<i>Pathyahara</i>

First day one should take 3 parts of *Apathya* and 1 part of *Pathya*. Second day complete *Satmya Apathya* should be taken. 3rd and 4th day 2 parts of *Pathya* and 2 parts of *Apathya* should be taken. 5th day one should follow the rule of first day, i.e., 3 parts of *Apathya* and 1 part of *Pathya* should be taken. 6th 7th and 8th day 1 part of *Apathya* and 3 parts of *Pathya* should be taken. 9th day 2 parts of *Apathya* and 2 parts of *Pathya* should be taken. 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th day complete *Pathya Ahara* should be followed. 14th day 1 part of *Apathya* and 3 parts of *Pathya* should be taken. 15th day he should take complete *Pathya Ahara*.

In the context of *Rutucharya*, *Padamshika Krama* has been mentioned. *Rutusandhikala* is the very sensitive

time period and one has to take care about the food intake in this time. *Rutu sandhi* is the time period of 14 days which contain 7 days of previous season and 7 days of subsequent season. There will be a change in the climatic condition. *Ahara* and *Vihara* should be given due importance during this time since same diet cannot be followed in all season. It is said that disease manifest due to the sudden withdrawal of current practice. *Rutu sandhi* is the time where one should start parting the food of previous season and start-adopting food of next season since the sudden withdrawal will lead to health issues.^[15]

In the same way, one has to start taking the food of next season and leave food of previous month in a format explained in table no 3.

Table 3: Padamshika Krama according to Ayurveda Rasayana

<i>Annakala</i> (food interval)	Food composition
1	3 parts <i>Poorvarutu Ahara</i> 1 part of <i>Uttararutu Ahara</i>
2	<i>Poorvarutu Ahara</i>
3	3 parts <i>Poorvarutu Ahara</i> , 1 part <i>Uttararutu Ahara</i>
4	2 parts <i>Poorvarutu Ahara</i> , 2 parts <i>Uttararutu Ahara</i>
5, 6	3 parts <i>Poorvarutu Ahara</i> , 1 part <i>Uttararutu Ahara</i>
7	2 parts <i>Poorvarutu Ahara</i> , 2 parts <i>Uttararutu Ahara</i>
8	1 part <i>Poorvarutu Ahara</i> , 3 parts <i>Uttararutu Ahara</i>
9, 10, 11	2 parts <i>Poorvarutu Ahara</i> , 2 parts <i>Uttararutu Ahara</i>
12	1 part <i>Poorvarutu Ahara</i> , 3 parts <i>Uttararutu Ahara</i>
13	<i>Uttararutu Ahara</i>
14	1 part <i>Poorvarutu Ahara</i> , 3 parts <i>Uttararutu Ahara</i>
15	<i>Uttararutu Ahara</i>

In the time period of 14 days gradual shift from the food practice is explained. 1st day 3 parts of food of previous season and 1 part of subsequent season

should be taken. 2nd day food of previous season should be taken. 3rd day 3 parts of previous season food and 1 part of subsequent season food should be taken. 4th day 2 parts of food of previous season and 2 parts of subsequent season food should be taken. 5th and 6th day 3 parts of food of previous season and 1 part of subsequent season should be taken. 7th day 2 parts of food of previous season and 2 parts of subsequent season food should be taken. 8th day 1 part of food of previous season and 3 parts of subsequent season food should be taken. 9th 10th and 12th day 2 parts of food of previous season and 2 parts of subsequent season food should be taken. 12th day 2 part of food of previous season and 3 parts of subsequent season food should be taken. 13th day completely one should shift to food of subsequent season. 14th day 1 part of food of previous season and 3 parts of subsequent season food should be taken. 15th day onwards person should shift to completely to the food of present season.

This pattern of reduction by *Pada* follows one cycle of one, two and three day's interval respectively. Reduction by *Padamsha* i.e., 1/16th part will have 5 cycles of one two and three days interval which will take 63 days in total.^[16]

Table 4: Padamshika Krama according to Arunadatta^[17]

Anna kala (Time of food intake)	Aharakrama
1	¾ Apathya ¼ Pathya
2	Complete Apathya
3	½ Apathya ½ Pathya
4, 5	Complete Apathya
6	¼ Apathya ¾ Pathya
7, 8, 9	Complete Apathya
10	Complete Pathya

Arunadatta follows *Annakala* rather than days as shown in table no 4.

It takes 10 *Annakala* to abandon *Apathya* completely and adopt *Pathya* when leaving takes place by 1/4th part. It takes 46 days when parting is done gradually by 1/16th part to reach complete *Pathya* as shown in table no 5.

Table 5: Reduction by Padamsha according to Arunadatta.

Annakala	Ahara Krama
1	1/16 Pathya 15/16 Apathya
2	Complete Apathya
3	2/16 Pathya 14/16 Apathya
4	Complete Apathya
5	Complete Apathya
6	3/16 Pathya 13/16 Pathya
7	Complete Apathya
8	Complete Apathya
9	Complete Apathya
10	4/16 Pathya 12/16 Apathya
11	Complete Apathya
12	5/16 Pathya 11/16 Apathya
13	Complete Apathya
14	Complete Apathya
15	6/16 Pathya 10/16 Apathya
16	Complete Apathya
17	Complete Apathya
18	Complete Apathya
19	7/16 Pathya 9/16 Apathya
20	Complete Apathya
21	8/16 Pathya 8/16 Apathya

22	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
23	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
24	9/16 <i>Pathya</i> 7/16 <i>Apathya</i>
25	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
26	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
27	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
28	10/16 <i>Pathya</i> 6/16 <i>Apathya</i>
29	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
30	11/16 <i>Pathya</i> 5/16 <i>Apathya</i>
31	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
32	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
33	12/16 <i>Pathya</i> 4/16 <i>Apathya</i>
34	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
35	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
36	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
37	13/16 <i>Pathya</i> 3/16 <i>Apathya</i>
38	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
39	14/16 <i>Pathya</i> 2/16 <i>Apathya</i>
40	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
41	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
42	15/16 <i>Pathya</i> 1/16 <i>Apathya</i>
43	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
44	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
45	Complete <i>Apathya</i>
46	Complete <i>Pathya</i>

Benefits of Padamshika Krama

Doshas which are pacified by following *Padamshika Krama* will not accumulate again. The benefits of

Hitakara Ahara will stay for long time.^[18] Here *Dosha* refers to the abnormality, which occurs due to the sudden sacrifice of *Pathya*. Sudden acceptance of *Pathya Anna*, which was not in practice will lead to diseases such as *Aruchi*, *Agnimandya*. Sudden leaving of *Apathya* and practice of *Pathya* will lead to *Sathmya* and *Asathmyaroga* (disease due to incompatibility).

DISCUSSION

Explanation of the concept of *Padamshika Krama* after *Vyayama* in *Charaka Samhita* clearly shows that it is not only restricted to *Ahara* but also relevant to *Vihara*. Another interpretation can be made that, as inappropriate and excess *Vyayama* leads to so many adverse effects, sudden departure from a food practice and beginning with new practice would lead to so many diseases. Same concept has been explained in the *Vimana sthana* of *Charaka Samhita* while explaining about the reduction in the intake of *Kshara*, *Lavana* and *Pippali* consumption when the above ingredients have become *Satmya* to the person. Even *Sushruta Samhita* opines same as that of *Charaka Samhita*.^[22]

In *Astanga Hrudaya* detailed explanation on this topic is found in *Annaraksha Adhyaya* and its applicability is found in *Rutucharya Adhyaya*. One has to follow the *Ahara* and *Vihara* of ongoing season for the purpose of *Swasthya Rakshana* (maintaining health), but the sudden quitting and adoption in a single day is harmful to health. Since the *Rutusandhi* is of 14 days, gradual retiring by 1/4th part from ongoing seasonal *Ahara*, *Vihara* and adopting by the same of next season is suitable. By the end of *Rutusandhi* one can completely shift to *Ahara Vihara* of ongoing season.

The terminologies *Prakshepa* and *Apachaya* refer to the qualitative analysis of food intake based on the parameter of *Hita* and *Ahita*. *Prakshepa* is the intake of *Hitakara Anna* and *Apachaya* is the scarifies of *Ahitakara Anna*. It is person specific rather than generalized observation. To justify the above statement *Acharya* has given a terminology *Kramena*. It means there is certain protocol for the intervention but it is systematic and scientific.

When a thorough study is done on *Padamshika Krama* in the literatures, it can be concluded that it is extension of *Samanya Vishesha* concept. *Padamshika Krama* follows *Vishesha* concept because *Apathya* is undergoing *Kshaya* and *Pathya* is undergoing *Vruddi*.

Both the opinions about the method of *Padamshika Krama* are practically viable because when the quantity of *Apathya* is more, reduction by 1/4th ratio will hamper the system. Reduction in a systematic way of 16 to 63 days i.e., gradual reduction will not cause imbalance of body constitution, and hence it stabilizes the healthy parameters without causing harm to the system. When the concentration of *Apathya* is less, easily and directly it can be reduced by 1/4th part without causing any disease. In Ayurveda health is define as an equilibrium state of all the *Doshas*, *Dhatus* and *Malas*. This equilibrium is *Dhatusmaya*. Disease is an imbalance of all these. This imbalance is *Dhatuvaishamyam* or *Vikara* Food consumed by a person takes minimum of 7 days to nourish the *Shukra Dhatu*.^[19] When the amount of *Apathya* is more *Padamshika Krama* of 15, 46 or 63 days can be followed. Hence *Acharya* has given above two opinion based on the quantity of intake of *Apathya* without causing any harm to system or body.

Alcohol withdrawal syndrome is the name for the symptoms that occur when a heavy drinker suddenly stops or significantly reduces their alcohol intake. This can be correlated to *Asatmyaja Roga*. The concept of tapering dose is found similar to *Padamshika Krama*. When there is a sudden change from *Asatmya* to *Satmya*, it can be considered as *Satmya Viruddha* and it will lead to *Viruddha Ahara Sevanajanya Roga*. *Asatmya Ahara* leads to *Agni Dushana* which inturn leads to *Ajeerna*.^[20]

The gradual discontinuation or reduction of a therapeutic dose of a particular drug required by a patient over a prolonged period of time is known as Tapering. The American Association of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), the largest organization of physicians and other addiction professionals in the United States, has developed formal guidelines for withdrawal management for a number of different

substances. These guidelines often include the implementation of a tapering strategy. In addition to using tapering methods to directly assist in withdrawal from a specific drug, replacement drugs like methadone, Suboxone, or benzodiazepines may be administered in place of the original drug the individual was abusing to aid the withdrawal process. Tapering consists of gradually weaning the individual off a medication or substance in order to minimize and reduce the withdrawal syndrome. The individual is administered decreasing dosages of the drug at specific intervals. A tapering strategy gives the individual's system time to adjust to slowly decreasing dosages of the medication/drug. In some cases, such as with alcohol withdrawal, individuals are administered a different substance. For example, for alcohol withdrawal, individuals are administered benzodiazepines. A tapering strategy is then initiated to minimize withdrawal symptoms, reduce potential dangers, and help the individual slowly adjust as they work toward complete discontinuation of the drug.^[19]

CONCLUSION

To summarize the concept of *Padamshika Krama*, it looks like a simple mathematical regression. Here the untoward things will be taken from the practice in a systematic way and inclusion of healthy things will be done. Choice of duration and method will be based on the chronicity and quantity of *Apathya*. *Padamshika Krama* makes the equilibrium of the body and it is a time-tested method. The modus operandi of this concept is very simple and realistic with valid approach. It can be considered as a technique for a person to transform his lifestyle. *Padamshika Krama* can also be considered as a method of prevention. The same concept is applied in the treatment of de-addiction centers.

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