



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 7 · Issue 3

April 2022

Journal of  
**Ayurveda and Integrated  
Medical Sciences**

*www.jaims.in*

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



**Maharshi Charaka**  
Ayurveda

Indexed

## Water in Veda and Upveda

Pooja Singh<sup>1</sup>, Vasu Singh<sup>2</sup>, R C Tiwari<sup>3</sup>, Rakesh Bhutiani<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Dept. of Agadtantra, Ankerite Ayurvedic Medical College, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India.

<sup>2</sup>Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of Samhita and Siddhanta, State Ayurvedic College, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India.

<sup>3</sup>HOD and Professor, Dept. of Agadtantra, Rishikul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.

<sup>4</sup>Assistant Professor (Environmental. Science), Gurkul Kangri University, Haidwar, Uttarakhand, India.

### ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is science of life, it emphasize that whatever is present in the universe or macrocosm is also present in the individual body or microcosm. Macrocosm is composed of five elements called *Panchmahabhutas* viz. *Akash* (Ether), *Vayu* (Air), *Agni*, (Fire), *Aap* (water), and *Prithvi* (Earth). Here, water is the most abundant and essential element of ecosystem. Human's body is composed mainly of water, which is about 70% of it. According to available data, Earth is the only planet with 70% of water, but only a small amount is fresh water. It is a wonderful saying "Jala hi Jeevana hai". Water has special value in our traditions also it worshiped as Mata Ganga, Yamuna and by many more names. There is a beautiful description of water in Vedas and Upvedas. Since water is the elixir and source of life, as well as essential to human civilization, human life, and to our economy and agriculture, water and its conservation have had an inevitably central place in Indian culture and ethos. In this article we will discuss about the importance and type of water in our Vedas and Upvedas.

**Key words:** Darshnik Jagat, Panchmahabhootas, Veda, Upveda, Ganga, Yamuna.

### INTRODUCTION

Life is impossible without water. Water has played an important role, not only in the history of countries, but also in mythology, art and religion. In many religions, water is considered as a means to cleanse the soul. India is a country having various lands from and rivers. Water has special value in our traditions also it worshiped as Mata Ganga, Yamuna and by many more names. There is a beautiful description of water in Vedas and Upvedas. There are 14 major rivers in

India, Ganga, Yamuna and many more worshiped as Mother.

### WATER REVIEW

**Nirukti**<sup>[1]</sup>

*Jalti Jivyati Lokan Jalti Achhadti Bhummyadinitiva*

In Devanagari lipi 'क' means *Jala*.<sup>[2]</sup>

**Definition**<sup>[3]</sup>

*Jala* is a clear, colourless, odourless liquid, obtained from natural sources such as rain, river and lakes and rendered fit for human consumption.

**Synonyms**

*Paniya, Nira, Udaka, Salila, Toya, Ambu, Daka, Ambha, Meghapushpa, Salira, Apa, Vari, Paya, Kilala, Bhuvana, Kabandha, Pushkara, Patha, Varunam, Varshambu.*

**Regional Language Names**

Ass. : *Pani*, Ben. : *Jal*, Eng. : *Water*, Guj. : *Paani*, Hin. : *Jala, Paani*, Kan. : *Munik*, Mal. : *Vellam*, Mar. : *Paani*,

### Address for correspondence:

**Dr. Pooja Singh**

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Agadtantra, Ankerite Ayurvedic Medical College, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India.

E-mail: drpoojasinghrac@gmail.com

Submission Date: 10/02/2022 Accepted Date: 28/03/2022

### Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: [www.jaims.in](http://www.jaims.in)

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Ori. : Paani, Pun. : Paani, Tam. : Tannir, Tel.: Neeru, Neellu, Urd. : Pani.

### Properties and Action

**Rasa** : Madhura

**Guna** : Laghu

**Vīrya** : Sheeta

**Vipāka** : Madhura

**Karma** : Āhaladana, Alasyahara, Balya, Buddhiprada, Dīpana, Hrđya, Hritvalakara, Kaphahara, Klamahara, Medohara, Nidrahara, Pacana, Pathya, Pittasamaka, Rucya, Santarpana,, Saumya, Śramhara, Tarpana, Vātahara, Visahara, Vrishya.

### Therapeutic Uses

Ajirna (Dyspepsia), Bhrānti (Mental confusion), Chardi (Emesis), Dāha (Burning sensation), Krodha (Anger), Moha (Delusion), Mukhashosa (Dryness of mouth), Mūrchā (Syncope), Shosa (Cachexia), Tandrā (Drowsiness), Trishna (Thirst), Vibandha (Constipation), Vishavikāra (Disorders due to poison)

### Dose

Quantum sufficit.

### Vedic Period

Vedas described the importance of water, some of the *Richas* with English translation are given below which highlights the importance of water.

### Regveda<sup>[4]</sup>

- We can get healthy body by drinking pure water and taking bath in it. (Regveda 10/01/04)
- Purwater cleans our body like mother. It makes us sacred with particles of energy present in it. It drains all pollutes and makes the man pious and energetic. (Regveda 10/17/10)
- Pure water is like nectar and has medicinal properties. (Regveda 1/23/11)
- Bathing in pure water and drinking it drains the impurities of the body. (Regveda 1/23/22)
- Using pure water a man become healthy. (Regveda 1/23/23)

### Yajurveda<sup>[5]</sup>

- By the help of scientific methods and natural methods passing sunrays through water purifies it. *Kusha* (grass) also purifies the water. (Yajurveda 1/12)
- Pure water contains energy, nectar, vigor and digestive power. (Yajurveda 2/34)
- Pure water enhances the digestive power when it reaches the stomach. It is divine, nectarous, tasty, disease prevention and curer, body purifier and life promoter. (Yajurveda 4/12)
- There are different type of water according to the soil which harvesting the grains and all human being. (Yajurveda 10/1)
- According to *Yajurveda* water is the elixir of life, it is source of energy. It governs the evolution and function of the universe on the earth. (Yajurveda 11/50)
- Water is the source of health, happiness, energy and piety and is life giving as mother. (Yajurveda 11/51)

### Atharvaveda<sup>[6]</sup>

There is some *Richas* mention the following types of pure water:

- Water from Himalayas
- Spring water
- Perennial water
- Rain water
- Desert water
- Hygroscopic water
- Underground water
- Pitcher water (Atharveda 19/2/1-2).

### Concept of Jala In Darshana<sup>[7]</sup>

In *Darshnik Jagat*

“Yatpinde Tad Brahmande, Yadbrahmande Tatpinde”.

**Pind Brahm and Nyaya**

Macrocosm is composed of five elements called *Panchmahabhutas*. Viz. *Akasha* (Ether), *Vayu* (Air), *Agni*, (Fire), *Aap* (water), *Prithvi* (Earth). In the serial of the evaluation and development of the Universe, *Jala Mahabhoota* is generated from *Agni Mahabhoota*.

**Qualities of Jala Mahabhoot**

According to *Prasastapada Bhasya* Fourteen attributes are available in *Jala Mahabhoot*.

**Table 1: Attribute (Guna) of water**

|                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <i>Rupa - Abhāsvar Sukla</i> | 8. <i>Samyoga</i>   |
| 2. <i>Rasa</i>                  | 9. <i>Vibhaga</i>   |
| 3. <i>Sneha</i>                 | 10. <i>Paratva</i>  |
| 4. <i>Sparsha</i>               | 11. <i>Aparatva</i> |
| 5. <i>Sankhya</i>               | 12. <i>Gurutva</i>  |
| 6. <i>Parimana</i>              | 13. <i>Dravatva</i> |
| 7. <i>Prathakatva</i>           | 14. <i>Samskara</i> |

**Division of Jala Mahabhoota**

*Jala* has got two type

1. *Nitya (Parmanu Rupa) Jala Mahabhoot* (eternal). It is that which is existent and uncaused. It remains as *Parmanu Rupa* (in the atomic stage).
2. *Anitya (Karya Rupa) Jala Mahabhoota* (non eternal). It is the substance which can be accounted only as the negation of eternal. The *Anitya* or product substance *Jala Mahabhoota* is again of three types:
  - a) *Sharir Sangyaka Jala*
  - b) *Indriya Sangyaka Jala*
  - c) *Visaya Sangyaka Jala*

**State of Jala**

- 1) *Ambha* – The water available at the above sphere of the Sun.

- 2) *Marichi* – The water present between the earth and the Sun.
- 3) *Mara* – The water available on the earth, such as river, sea, ponds etc.
- 4) *Ap* - The water available below the earth.

**Samhita Period****1. Charak Samhita (1000 B.C – 4<sup>th</sup> Cent. AD)**

*Acharya Charaka* differentiate *Jala* wholesome and unwholesome as *Antrikshamudkanaam* and *Varshanaadeyamudkanaam* respectively.<sup>[8]</sup>

*Acharya* also emphasised *Jala* as best among the assuring one.

| SN | <i>Divya Jala</i> <sup>[9]</sup> | <i>Bhaum Jala</i> <sup>[10]</sup> |
|----|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | <i>Yendra</i>                    | <i>Vaapi</i>                      |
| 2. | <i>Kaar</i>                      | <i>Koop</i>                       |
| 3. | <i>Him</i>                       | <i>Tadak</i>                      |
| 4. | -                                | <i>Utsa</i>                       |
| 5. | -                                | <i>Sar</i>                        |
| 6. | -                                | <i>Prasravan</i>                  |

**Pathya- Apathya river water<sup>[10]</sup>****Table 3: Pathya and Apathya Jala**

| <i>Pathya</i> (wholesome river water)         | <i>Apathya</i> (Unwholesome river water) |
|---|--|
| Rivers waters originates from <i>Himalaya</i> | <i>Sahya Poorvasamudraga</i>             |
| River water originates from <i>Malaya</i>     | <i>Pariyatra</i>                         |
| River water which is flowing toward west      | <i>Vindhya</i>                           |
| -   | <i>Sahya</i>                             |

In *Viman Sthana Acharya Charak* described *Janpadodvansha* in which *Dushita Jala* is important cause of epidemic diseases.

## 2. Harita Samhita (600-1000 B.C)<sup>[11]</sup>

In this Samhita Acharya described *Jala* under *Pani Varga*. According to Acharya there are 4 type of *Jala* –

- 1) *Papodaka*
- 2) *Rogodaka*
- 3) *Anshudaka*
- 4) *Aarogyodaka*

## 3. Sushruta Samhita (1000 B.C – 5<sup>th</sup> Century A.D)

**Table 4: Type of *Jala* in Sushrut Samhita**

| Antriksha Jala - 4 Type <sup>[12]</sup> | Bhaum Jala - 7 Type <sup>[13]</sup> |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Dhara</i>                            | <i>Kaup</i>                         |
| <i>Kara</i>                             | <i>Nadeya</i>                       |
| <i>Taushara</i>                         | <i>Sarasa</i>                       |
| <i>Haima</i>                            | <i>Tadaka</i>                       |
| -                                       | <i>Prasarvana</i>                   |
| -                                       | <i>Audbhida</i>                     |
| -                                       | <i>Chauntya</i>                     |

**Table 5: *Vyapannajala Lakshana* (Polluted water characteristics)<sup>[14]</sup>**

| Dosha                  | Lakshana   |
|------------------------|--|
| 1. <i>Sparsa Dosha</i> | <i>Tikshna, Sparshata, Picchilta, Ushnata, Dantgrahita</i> |
| 2. <i>Rupa Dosha</i>   | <i>Vividhavarnata</i>                                      |
| 3. <i>Rasa Dosha</i>   | <i>Vyaktarasata</i>  |
| 4. <i>Gandha Dosha</i> | <i>Anistagandhata</i>                                      |
| 5. <i>Virya Dosha</i>  | <i>Trishna, Gaurav, Shool, Kaphaprashek</i>                |
| 6. <i>Vipaka</i>       | <i>Chirad Patchayati, Vistambha</i>                        |

## *Peya Jala Guna* (Potable water)<sup>[15]</sup>

Water which has no smell, no prominent taste, quenches thirst, clean, cold, light and pleasing to the

mind is said to be best in qualities (suitable for drinking).

## *Pathya-Apathya river water*<sup>[16]</sup>

**Table 6: *Pathya and Apathya Water***

| <i>Pathya</i> (wholesome river water) | <i>Apathya</i> (Unwholesome river water) |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| River which flow westward             | <i>Sahya</i>                             |
| <i>Pariyatra</i>                      | <i>Vindhya</i>                           |
| -                                     | <i>Mahendra</i>                          |
| -                                     | <i>Himvat</i>                            |

In *Sushruta Samhita Vishajusht Dushit Jala Lakshana* and its *Shodhaka* drugs and method of purification are described in *Kalpasthan*.<sup>[17]</sup> Poisoned water will be slimy, possesses strong odour and forth, has line on their surface; frog and fish living in such water die of intoxication; birds living in marshy places fly around intoxicated; men, horse and elephants which immerse in this water will develop vomiting, delusion, fever, burning sensation and swelling. The *Doshas* which get aggravated in these animals should be eliminated and attempts should be made to purify the contaminated water.

*Dhava, Ashvakarna, Asana, Paribhadra, Paatala, Siddhaka, Moksaka, Rajadruma* and *Somvalka* ash from the burning of these should be spread over lakes, reservoirs and a small amount put in the pot containing drinking water to be used when necessary.

## 4. *Astang Samgraha* (6<sup>th</sup> Cent A.D)

Acharya described *Jala* under *Drava-Dravya Vigyaniya* chapter. He described properties of water and Hydrolic cycle.<sup>[18]</sup>

## Type of water<sup>[19]</sup>

There are two type of water mentioned - 1) *Gang* 2) *Samudra*.

*Bhauma Jala* are of eight type - *Kupa, Sarasa, Tadaka, Caunda, Prasrvana, Audbhida, Vapi, Nadi*.<sup>[20]</sup>

Table 7: Pathya-Apathya River water.

| Pathya (Wholesome) <sup>[21]</sup>       | Apathya (Unwholesome) <sup>[22]</sup> |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Rivers which flows into the western sea. | Prachya                               |
| Himalaya                                 | Avanti                                |
| Malaya                                   | Aparanta                              |
| Paariyatra                               | Mahendra                              |
| -  | Sahya                                 |
| -  | Vindhya                               |

Dushit Jala Lakshana and Karana mentioned and Jala Shodhana method described gracefully.

### 5. Astanga Hridaya (7<sup>th</sup> Century A.D)

Laghu Vagbhatt described Jala under Drava-Dravya Vigyaniya chapter.

Type of water – 1) Gang<sup>[23]</sup> 2) Samudra<sup>[24]</sup>

Apey Jala Lakshan described by Acharya.

Table 8: Pathya-Apathya river water<sup>[25,26]</sup>

| Pathya (Wholesome)                       | Apathya (Unwholesome) |
|--|-----------------------|
| Rivers which flows into the western sea. | Prachya               |
| Himalaya                                 | Avanti                |
| Malaya                                   | Aparanta              |
| Paariyatra                               | Mahendra              |
| -  | Sahya                 |
| -  | Vindhya               |

### Nighantu Period

Table 9: Water and its properties according to different Nighantus.

| Nighantu            | Varga     | Paryaya   | Guna Karma  |
|---------------------|-----------|---|---|
| Dhanvantri Nighantu | Suvarnadi | Paaniy, Ap, Keelal, Neer, क, Salil. Jala, Amrit, Varun, Toya, Vaari, Ambhas, Ambu, Udak, Payas. <sup>[27]</sup> | Ruchikaraka, Deepan-pachana, laghu, Shrm, trishna, Vaat-Kaph nashaka. <sup>[28]</sup> |

|                       |               |  |  |
|-----------------------|---------------|--|--|
| Kaideva Nighantu      | Dravya Varga  | Kamal, Salil, Path, Neer, क, Bhuvan, Van, Paaniya, Ap, Keela, Ambh, Arna, Jeevana, Amrita, Savarg, Padsadan, Sarvatomukh, Toya, Ksheer, Shiva, Neer, Vaar, Vaari, Ambu, Udak, Dak, Meghapushp, Ghanrasa, Kabandha, Pushkar, Pay. <sup>[29]</sup>                         | Sheetal, Ruchikar, Pavitra, Avyaktarasa, Laghu, Asyandi, Vishad, Hridya, Kinchit-ruksham. <sup>[30]</sup>  |
| Bhavaprakash Nighantu | Vaari Varga   | Paneeya, Salil, Neer, Keelal, Jala, Ambu, Ap, Vaar, Vaari, क, Toya, Pay, Path, Udaka, Jeevan, Van, Ambha, Arna, Amrit, Ghanrasa. <sup>[31]</sup>   | -  |
| Raj Nighantu          | Paneeya Varga | Paneeya, Jeevan, Van-amrita, Pushkrambha, Paath, Ambu, Shamber pey, Salil, Udaka, Ap, क, Varunaka, Bandha, Jala, Neer, Keelal, Vaari, Kamal, Visha, Arnas, Bhuvan, Dahan, Aarati, Vaar, toya, Sarvatomukha, Ksheer, Ghanarasa, Nimng, Meghaprasav, Rasa. <sup>[32]</sup> | Madur, Him, Ruchidm, Trishnavishoshap hm, Mohabhram apkarak, Bhukta-anna Pakti Param, Nidra-alasya nirasan, vishaharm, dheebalaviryatust ijanan, pushti pradam <sup>[33]</sup> |
| Shaligram Nighantu    | Vaari Varga   | Paneeya, Salil, Neer, Keelal, Jala, ambu, Ap, Vaar, Vaari,   | -  |

|                       |             |  |   |
|-----------------------|-------------|--|---|
|                       |             | Toya, payas, Udaka, Jeevaka, Van, Ambhas, Amrit, Ghanras <sup>[34]</sup> |   |
| <b>Priya Nighantu</b> | Drava varga | -  | Jeevan, Balkaraka, Malnisarak, Triptikr <sup>[35]</sup> |

**Table 10: According to Nighantus wholesome and unwholesome water.**

| Nighantu                                     | Type of Water  | Wholesome-Unwholesome Water  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Dhnavantri Nighantu</b> <sup>[36]</sup>   | Naadeya, Saras, Tadaak, Vaapi, Prasravana, Oudbhida, Kedar, Paalval, Samudra.  | Wholesome (Pathyatam): Himatvaprabhva, Malayaprabhva, Paschimabhimukha<br>Unwholesome (Apathyatam): Pariyaatra, Vidhya, Shya   |
| <b>Kaideva Nighantu</b> <sup>[37]</sup>      | 1)Divya Jala and 2)Bhaum Jala<br>Divya Jala further four types – 1) Dhaar 2) Kaar 3) Tushar 4)Hem<br>Bhaum Jala are of eight type – 1. Nadeya 2.Tadag 3. Sarsam, 4. Kaupyam 5. Vapya, 6. Chauntya, 7. Prasravan 8. Oudbhid | Wholesome (Pathyatam) – Himvatpaad Nisrta<br>Unwholesome (Apathyatam) – Malaya, Sahy, Vindhya, Prachyavantya, Mahendraprabhva. |
| <b>Bhavaprakash Nighantu</b> <sup>[38]</sup> | 1) Divya and 2)Bhaum<br>Divya Jala further four types – 1) Dhaarj 2) Karkabhav 3) Tushar 4)Hem<br>Bhaum Jala are of seven type-<br>1.Odbhid 2. Prasrvana 3. Sarasa 4. Tadaga 5. Vaapy 6. Koop 7. Chaunchya                 | Wholesome (Pathyatam) – Himvatpaad Nisrta<br>Unwholesome (Apathyatam) - Sahy.  |
| <b>Raj Nighantu</b> <sup>[39]</sup>          | 1)Antriksha Jala and 2)Bhaum Jala  | -  |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|   | Antriksha Jala further four types – 1) Dhaar 2) Kaar 3) Tushar 4)Hem<br>Bhaum Jala are of seven type-<br>1.Talab 2. Prasravana 3. Tadaga 4. Vaapi 5. Koop 6. Oudbhid 7. Kedar  |   |
| <b>Shaligram Nighantu</b> <sup>[40]</sup> | 1)Divya Jala and 2)Bhaum Jala<br>Divya Jala further four types – 1) Dhaar 2) Kaar 3) Tushar 4)Hem<br>Bhaum Jala are of eight type – 1. Nadeya 2.Tadag 3. Sarsam, 4. Kaupyam 5. Vapya, 6. Chauntya, 7. Prasravan 8. Oudbhid | - |
| <b>Priy Nighantu</b>                      | -  | - |

## DISCUSSION

Water is the elixir and energy source of life. As a key resource for human civilization, for human life, for our economy and agriculture, for every aspect of our existence, water and its conservation have inevitably had a central place in the *Bhartiya* culture. Water and water excess are key not just to country economic development but to socio-economic equity and gender justice. So this review article shows the importance and glory of water from ancient time.

## CONCLUSION

The recognition of water is important as shown “By means of water God gives life to everything” (Islam:Quran 21:30). Water and water access are key not just to country’s economic development but to socio-economic equity and gender justice. To put in a brief perspective, it can be said that water has an important role in the quality of our life. The theme for World Water Day 2019 is Leaving no one behind which is the central promise of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development: as sustainable development

and progress every one must benefit. Thus, the importance of water needs not to be over emphasized.

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**How to cite this article:** Pooja Singh, Vasu Singh, R C Tiwari, Rakesh Bhutiani. Water in Veda and Upveda. J Ayurveda Integ Med Sci 2022;3:113-120.

**Source of Support:** Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.

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