Absolute elucidating Pathya and Apathya w.r.t. Hita and Saathmya

Shruthi Panambur
Assistant Professor, Department of Ayurveda Samhita and Siddhanta, Shri S.B.S Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Mundargi, Karnataka, India.

ABSTRACT

Pathya, Hita and Saatmya are usually used as synonymous, though they are not. To elucidate the difference between Pathya, Hita and Saatmya words, present article is aimed at. Initially review on Pathya and Apathya, its importance and the difference between Pathya - Apathya, Hita - Ahita and Saatmya – Asaatmya is focused. Also, the clarity on, whether Pathya and Apathya is generalized? the method of adapting Pathya in person who is habituated for Apathya since longer duration, Pathya is considered as Chikitsa is been analyzed. Every Hita Ahaara may not be Pathya but all Pathya are Hita. Pathya and Hita should be always Saatmya for living healthy life.

Key words: Pathya, Apathya, Hita, Ahita, Saatmya, Asaatmya

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda propagates that knowing Hetu, Linga and Aushadha is necessary for both Swastha (healthy person) and Roga Avastha (diseased person).[1] Generally, Aahaara and Vihaara becomes the reason for both Swastha and Roga Avastha. For Swaasthya Rakshana (maintaining the good health) and Atura Roga Prashamana (treating the disease) one should follow Hita and Pathya Aahaara and Vihaara consistently. We have the references of the food articles and regimen that is Hita, like Rakthashaali, Gritha, Ksheera, Vyayaama, Abhyanga etc. And the word Pathya is usually used as a synonym for Hita. But Pathya is not only dependent on one particular Dravya or regimen and it is not universally common for all. The word Saatmya is also used synonym to Pathya which has difference meaning. Hence drawing the right meaning of Pathya and Apathya is necessary and an effort is made here.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nirukti

The root word and meaning of Pathya, Apathya, Hita, Ahita, Saatmya and Asaatmya are Pathya[2] - “Pathi Gatau”, “Maarge”, “Pathe Hite”- that which is beneficial to the channels (Srotas). Apathya[3] - “Pathyam Naasti Iti” - that which is not beneficial to the channels (Srotas). Hita[4] – “Hi Gatiprerase Dha Dhaoran Puheau” - the movement which is good and takes place for the purpose of sustaining or growth. Ahita[5] – “Na Hita”- that which is not good for sustenance and growth of the body. Saatmya - “Sukhajanakam”- that which is responsible for happiness. Asaatmya - “Na Sukhajanakam”- that which is responsible for sadness.

Synonyms

Synonyms of Pathya are Satmya, Swastha Hitakara, Upashaya, Swasthaparipalaka, Hita, Swasthaurjaskara, Dhatu Saamayakara, Dhatu Avirodhi, Sukhaparinaamakara.

Synonyms of Apathya are Asatmya, Swastha Ahitakara, Anupashaya, Ahitakara, Asukha Parinamakara, Dhatu Asamayakara.
**Chikitsa** is also called as *Pathya*.\(^6\)

**Definition**

*Pathya* is defined as-

> “*Pathyaṃ Patho Anapetam Yadyaccoktam Manasaḥ Priyam*”

Yaccāpriyamapathyam Ca Niyatam Tanna Lakṣayet |\(^7\) (Ch.Su.25/45)

*Pathya* is that which is right path, which does not create any trouble, and which is pleasant to the *manas*. “*Patha*” means various channels in the *shareera*.\(^8\) “*Anapeta*” means that which will not harm the *shareera*.\(^9\) “*Manasaha Priya*” that which is liked by the person.\(^10\) So generally, *Pathya* means that activities (*Ahaara* or *Vihaara*) which is not harmful to *shareera* and *manas*.

*Apathya* is defined as, that which is opposite to *Pathya* is *Apathya*. *Apathya* is that which is not a right path, troublesome and unpleasant to the *manas*.\(^7\)

*Hita* is defined as that which maintains an equilibrium state in *dhatus*, restores the *prakruthi* and brings the *vishamaDoshas* to normalcy.\(^11\)

*Ahita* is defined as that which deranges the equilibrium state in *dhatus* and creates *vikruthi* and leading to *vishamata* in the *Doshas*.\(^11\)

*Saathmya* is defined as that which suits the self\(^12\) and that which is used constantly has wholesome effect, those are *Saathmya* to *Gritha* (ghee), *Ksheera* (milk), *Taila* (oil), *Maamsa Rasa* (meat soup), *Sarva Rasa* (six taste).\(^13\)

*Asaathmya* is defined as that which is not suitable for self.

**Pathya Ghatakas**

As we know the selection of medicines to the patient is decided by considering *Desha, Dushya, Bala, Kaala, Anala, Prakruthi, Vaya, Sattva* and *Saatmya*. In the same way *Pathya Aahaara* and *Vihaara* to the person is also decided by *Pathya Ghatakas*, they are *Maatra* (quantity), *Kaala* (time), *Kriya* (preparation), *Bhoomi* (place), *Deha* (nature of the body), *Dosha* (*Vata, Pitta, Kapha*).\(^14\)

**Table 1: Pathya Ghatakas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maatra</th>
<th>Kaala</th>
<th>Kriya</th>
<th>Bhoomi</th>
<th>Deha</th>
<th>Dosha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laghu Aahaara - to be taken in the quantity which does not cause to much of satiety</td>
<td>Vaya</td>
<td>Samskaara</td>
<td>Aanoopa</td>
<td>Styulya</td>
<td>Vaata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guru Aahaara - should be taken before the person feels stomach is filled</td>
<td>Aha</td>
<td>Samyoga</td>
<td>Joangala</td>
<td>Krusha</td>
<td>Pitta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raatri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prakrithi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bhukta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kapha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Pathya being Apathya based on Pathya Ghatakas*

For Example - *Gritha* (ghee) which is always considered as *Hita Dravya*, sometimes it will become *Apathya*.\(^15\)

**Table 2: Gritha as Apathya on Pathya Ghatakas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pathya Ghataka</th>
<th>Gritha as Apathya</th>
<th>Reason for Apathya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maatra</td>
<td>Gritha is taken in Ati Matra</td>
<td>Gritha when taken in excess quantity, it diminishes the <em>Agni</em> and leads to <em>Ajeerna</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaala</td>
<td>Gritha is taken in Vasantha Ritu</td>
<td>Already in Vasantha <em>Ritu Kapha Dosha</em> will be in increased state. Upon that, the consumption of <em>Gritha</em> does the aggravation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kriya</td>
<td><strong>Gritha</strong> is taken with <strong>Madhu</strong> in equal quantity</td>
<td>The combination of both is considered to be <strong>Virudha Aahaara</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhoomi</td>
<td><strong>Gritha</strong> is taken in <strong>Anoopa Bhoomi</strong></td>
<td>By nature, <strong>Anoopa Bhoomi</strong> has <strong>Sheeta Guna</strong>, <strong>Gritha</strong> is also <strong>Sheeta Guna</strong>, thus increases <strong>Kapha</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deha</td>
<td><strong>Gritha</strong> is taken by <strong>Ati Sthoola</strong> (obese) person</td>
<td>There will be increase in <strong>Medas</strong> in <strong>Ati Sthoola</strong> person, the intake of <strong>Gritha</strong> also increases the <strong>Medas</strong> as it gives the Ashraya to <strong>Kapha</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dosha</td>
<td><strong>Gritha</strong> is taken in the condition of <strong>Kapha</strong></td>
<td><strong>Gritha</strong> when taken in <strong>Kaphaja</strong> condition will again become a reason for increase in the same <strong>Dosha</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Apathya being Pathya

The **Ahita Dravya** like **Visha** (poison) becomes **Pathya** when it is taken in **Tila Maatra**. It clears the channels and subside the **Doshas**.¹⁶

By above examples we can clearly understand that all the activities (**Aahaara** and **Vihaara**) are always dependent on the six factors, to consider it as **Pathya** (wholesome). There are no such activities (**Aahaara** and **Vihaara**) is always considered conducive to the body.

### DISCUSSION

#### What is the difference between Pathya, Hita and Saathmya?

**Shashtika Shaali, Mudga, Saindava, Amalaka, Yava, Aantariksha Jala, Ksheera, Gritha, Jaangala Maamsa, Madhu** is considered as **Hita Dravyas**.¹⁷ At times these food articles are not liked by the person or not suitable for the **Prakruthi** of the person or not to be given in that state of disease. As illustration stated in the review all the above **Dravyas** can also be put under **Pathya**.

**Ghatakas** like **Maatra** (quantity), **Kaala** (time), **Kriya** (preparation), **Bhoomi** (place), **Deha** (nature of the body), **Dosha** (Vata, Pitta, Kapha) along with **Manas** of the person and verified whether it is conducive or not in a given condition. Thus, **Hita Aahaara** and **Vihaara** cannot be considered as conducive at all times.

**Saathmya** not necessary it should be healthy to a person. It is a habitual entity; it may be healthy or may not be, it depends on what we follow and for how many days according to that it influences the body. Example if the person is habituated to ghee, milk, all six **Rasa**, he is strong and called **Pravara Saathmya** or it is called **Avara Saathmya** if he follows **Ruksha Ahaara**, only one **Rasa** or in between it is called **Madhyama Saathmya**.

**Why Pathya should be followed?**

As a small sparkle of fire flares up when it comes in contact with wind or wood and gets converted into huge flames of fire. Similarly, in a weak body in which previously a disease pathology had occurred and it has just removed from the disease, whenever it gets chance, the disease may relapse the body.¹⁸ Hence for the better results of the medicines administered, **Pathya** must be followed even after the disease symptoms are completely disappeared.

### Is Pathya and Apathya generalized?

No, by the definition of **Pathya** we can understand that doing wholesome activities (**Aahaara** or **Vihaara**) which is conducive to the **Shareera** and also pleasant to his **Manas**, is considered as **Pathya**. Always the likings differ from one person to another, so the **Pathya** and **Apathya** is obviously different from one person to another. Thus, it is not generalized. Also, we have a reference in **Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthaana**, if the patient is bored from taking the same food or does not relish the food, then food should be prepared by different methods which will be liked by the patient. If the food and other objects are liked by patient then only, he gets satisfaction, enthusiasm, energy, taste, strength and happiness which reduces the influence of disease.¹⁹
How to adapt Pathya in person who is habituated for Apathya since longer duration?

When a person is following Apathya for longer days and when he is suddenly switching over to Pathya, then there will be disorientation in the equilibrium of Manas, Doshas and Dhatus, which will hamper the functioning of the body. So, there is a method of gradually withdrawing the Apathya and adapting the Pathya. That is -

Table 3: Method to adapt Pathya in person who is habituated for Apathya since longer duration[20]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Withdrawing Apathya</th>
<th>Following Pathya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On 1st day</td>
<td>1/4th part of Apathya should be removed from regimen</td>
<td>1/4th part of Pathya to be adopted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On 2nd and 3rd day</td>
<td>1/2 part of Apathya to be removed</td>
<td>1/2 part of Pathya to be added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On 4th, 5th, 6th days</td>
<td>3/4th part of Apathya to be removed</td>
<td>3/4th part of Pathya to be added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On 7th day</td>
<td>Remove Apathya completely</td>
<td>Completely include the Pathya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Why Pathya is considered as Chikitsa?

Chikitsa is also called as Pathya, because the treatment in Ayurveda is not only related to Aushadha (drugs), it also includes Aahaara and Vihaara. This is because the reason behind the formation of diseases will be mostly through unwholesome Aahaara and Vihaara followed by the person. So, Proper Aahaara and Vihaara according to the Rogi Avastha and his mental status will help in stabilizing the Dasha and Dhaatu to normalcy thus the nomenclature as Pathya is ideally used for Chikitsa.

CONCLUSION

Pathya is customized that is individual specific (Pratipurusha Siddhanta) whereas Hita is generalized and Saathmya is not necessary healthy it depends on what we follow. Pathya and Apathya is related to Shareera and Manas. Pathya and Apathya depends on Maatra, Kaala, Kriyaa, Bhoomi, Deha, Doshai (Pathya Ghatakai). Pathya is also a synonym for Chikitsa because manifestation of a disease is primarily based on Apathya Ahaara and Vihaara. By following Pathya alone, a disease in its early stage can be eradicated. It’s Vaidya’s Yukti to convert Apathya to Pathya, hence all Dravyas are Pathya when it is used in proper, specific way and in specific condition.

REFERENCES


How to cite this article: Shruthi Panambur. Absolute elucidating Pathya and Apathya w.r.t. Hita and Saathmya. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2023;10:90-94. 
http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.8.10.13

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