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A critical review of *Pathya Apathya* in Dyslipidemia

Shraddha Sahu¹, Nikhila Ranjan Nayak², Aradhana Kande³

¹Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of Roga Nidana evam Vikriti Vigyana, Shri N.P.A. Govt. Ayurved College Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India.

²Professor & HOD, Dept. of Roga Nidana evam Vikriti Vigyana, Shri N.P.A. Govt. Ayurved College Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India.

³Lecturer, Dept. of Roga Nidana evam Vikriti Vigyana, Shri N.P.A. Govt. Ayurved College Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India.

ABSTRACT

According to Ayurveda, dyslipidemia and *Medoroga* are connected. *Medoroga* is a disease brought on by *Medovridhi*, which in turn prevents other *Dhatus* from receiving enough food. The major cause of the linked conditions *Medoroga*, *Prameha*, and *Sthaulya* is a vitiated *Medo Dhatu*. Thus, the management of these disorders is likewise comparable. *Rukshana*, *Udvardana*, *Ruksha-Ushna Basti*, *Virechana*, and *Shamana Prayogas* like *Guggulu*, *Shilajithu*, *Guduchi*, etc. are all used in *Ayurvedic* medicine to treat *Medoroga*. A condition of lipoprotein metabolism known as dyslipidemia can cause either an excess or a shortage of lipoproteins, or perhaps both. Atherosclerosis is a result of elevated amounts of atherogenic lipoproteins, mostly LDL but also IDL. This may then result in peripheral vascular disease (PVD), cerebral vascular disease (CVD), coronary artery disease (CAD), etc. According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) monitoring study, dyslipidemia is more common in young male industrial workers (62%) than it is in adults between the ages of 15 and 64. Dyslipidemia goes unnoticed and untreated until a problem, such as a myocardial infarction brought on by early atherosclerosis, occurs.

Key words: *Dyslipidemia*, *Medoroga*, *Pathya Apathya*.

INTRODUCTION

Indians have utilized the Ayurvedic medical system for ages and consider it to be the most effective. Lifestyle and metabolic disorders are classified as non-communicable diseases since they are caused by an individual's or a group's way of life. Some of the main causes of a sedentary lifestyle causing chronic diseases are overcrowding, increasing unplanned urbanization, and globalization of unhealthy behaviors. Arteriosclerosis, heart disease, stroke, obesity, type 2

diabetes, and illnesses brought on by smoking, drinking, and abusing drugs are among them. The role that metabolic risk factors, including poor nutrition, alcohol consumption, blood sugar, cholesterol, and blood pressure, play in health deterioration.^[1]

Diet is essential for supporting life, and a balanced diet is crucial for preserving good health. Rather than focusing just on the components of the food, such as proteins, carbs, and fats, contemporary medicine stresses the importance of a nutritious diet, which is detailed in Ayurveda. Ayurveda also addresses a number of additional factors, such as the mix of food items, their quantity, cooking style, emotional impact, consumer character, and environmental factors. Nearly all Ayurvedic therapeutic prescriptions include a large amount of *Pathya* and *Apathya Ahara* (dietary concern). Dietary control, or *Pathya-Apathya*, can occasionally be used as a stand-alone therapy.^[2]

A condition of lipoprotein metabolism known as dyslipidemia can cause either an excess or a shortage of lipoproteins, or perhaps both. Low plasma concentrations of high-density lipoprotein, higher

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Shraddha Sahu

Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of Roga Nidana evam Vikriti Vigyana, Shri N.P.A. Govt. Ayurved College Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India.

E-mail: shraddhasahu0810@gmail.com

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plasma cholesterol, raised TG levels, or a combination of all three of these conditions may be the symptoms of this illness. High levels of triglycerides, low levels of HDL, and high levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol are the three most prevalent forms of dyslipidemia. High levels of LDL cholesterol can cause fatty plaques to accumulate in the blood arteries, resulting in atherosclerosis and the development of peripheral artery disease, coronary heart disease, or stroke.^[3] The majority of the cholesterol in our bodies comes from animal dietary sources or is produced by the liver. Cholesterol is a key component of numerous membranes, which are produced by all cells. Since lipids (fats) cannot be carried directly in the blood, they are insoluble in plasma. It is now understood that lipoproteins carry lipids (fats/cholesterol) in a variety of forms.^[4]

The need for a healthy diet has also been stressed by Mahatma Gandhiji. He claims that "the body was never meant to be treated a refuse bin, holding all the foods that the palate demands" and that "the body was never meant to be treated as a refuse bin, holding all the foods that the palate demands"; consequently, the rise in obesity among adults and children in our nation is directly attributed to the overconsumption of foods high in fats, carbohydrates, and salt and calls for our immediate attention in order to reduce the harms caused by diabetes, heart diseases, cancers.^[5]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Numerous details on *Pathya Apathya* in *Shulya* have been gathered from a variety of classical literature, magazines, and online resources. Based on the facts gathered, a discussion and conclusion are made.

Definition of Pathya and Apathya

The *Ahar-Vihar* that calms the mind and is nourishing and helpful to the body is known as *Pathya*, while the contrary is known as *Apathya*. The root word "*Patha*," which literally means a path or channel, is the source of the term "*Pathya*." A product or regimen is deemed to be *Pathya* (wholesome) if it has no negative effects on the body or mind; otherwise, it is thought to be *Apathya* (unwholesome).^[6]

Synonyms

Pathya

- *Satmya*,
- *Swasth-Hitakara*,
- *Upshaya*,
- *Swavasthaparipaalaka*,
- *Hita Ahara*,
- *Swasthaaurjaskara*,
- *Sharmakara*,

Apathya

- *Asatmya*,
- *Swastha-Ahitkara*,
- *Anupashaya*,
- *Ahitkara*,
- *Asukha-Parinaamakara*,
- *Ashrmakara*

In *Ayurveda*, metabolism is seen as *Agni's* function. Numerous factors that contribute to metabolic syndrome, including sedentary behavior, fatty and high-calorie diets, excessive calorie intake, and insufficient physical activity, among others, primarily vitiate *Agni*, particularly *Medadhatvagni*. *Agni* is vitiated above *Nidana*, creating *Aam*, *Kapha*, and *Meda*. Consequently, metabolic syndrome is referred to as *Santarpanjanya Vyadhi*. *Santarpanjanya Vyadhi* includes disorders including obesity, type 2 diabetes, and dyslipidemia that are part of the metabolic syndrome.^[7] The characteristics listed above are a result of *Medovaha Srotodusti* in *Ayurveda*. Therefore, it may be claimed that the metabolic syndrome's early stages are comparable to *Medovaha Srotodusti*. Metabolic syndrome progresses to type 2 diabetes mellitus and coronary artery disease in the middle stage. Consequently, it might be referred to as *Sankara Vyadhi's* condition.^[8]

About the Pathya Apathya

Acharya Charak listed a few food items that healthy people should always eat. *Shashtika* (a kind of rice),

Shali (a variation of rice), *Mudga* (*Phaseolus radiatus* Linn.), *Saindhav*, *Amalaka* (*Embllica officinalis* Gaertn.), rainwater, *Ghee* (butter), meat from animals that live in dry climates, and honey are some of these dietary items. Similar to this, *Acharya Charak* has also suggested several food items that healthy people should avoid. Such foods include dried meat (*Vallura*), dried vegetables, lotus rhizome, and stem, and it's never a good idea to eat infected animal flesh.^[9]

Significance of Pathya Apathya

Since *Acharya Charaka* defined Pathya (wholesome) as a synonym for treatment, it is easy to see how important Pathya (wholesome) and Apathya (unwholesome) are in *Ayurveda*. He said that Pathya (wholesome) aids in the softening of *Srotasa* (channels of circulation) and the easing of *Dosha* when they become hard due to exacerbated and vitiated *Dosha*.^[10] He also went into great detail about the terms "Pathya" (wholesome) and "Apathya" (unwholesome), providing a general list of "Pathya" and "Apathya Dravya" (unwholesome) as well as "Pathya" and "Apathya Dravya" (unwholesome) that are "specific" for patients and "Sansarjana Karma" (a particular diet regimen) for those who have received Panchakarma Therapy.^[11] In the *Sutra Sthan*, *Acharya Susruta* had particularly prepared a chapter titled *Hita-Ahitiya Adhyay*.

Acharya Kashyapa studied the therapeutic potential of *Aahar* (food) as well as its preventative benefits for preserving health. He emphasized that the best medicine is food. No medication can equal the advantages of eating when someone is ill. A person can only remain healthy by eating good food.^[12]

Acharya Harita stressed the significance of Pathya (wholesome) and Apathya (unwholesome), saying that if someone consumes Apathya (unwholesome) and disregards the notion of Pathya-Apathya, disease will never leave the body.^[13]

According to *Yogaratanakara*, etiology, drug therapy, and Pathya (wholesome) are three crucial variables that should be properly investigated before beginning the treatment for disorders. *Yogaratanakara* compares a growing sickness to an *Ankura* (seedling). If this

Ankura (seedling) does not receive water nourishment, it would dry and perish; similarly, illnesses will perish if a patient does not take *Apathya Ahara* (unwholesome food).^[14]

When a patient consumes wholesome food, there is no need for medication, and vice versa if the patient consistently takes unwholesome food. This is how *Vaidya Lolimbiraja* emphasised the importance of *Pathya Ahara* (wholesome food). In the latter scenario, drugs won't work.^[15]

The benefits of Pathya and the drawbacks of Apathya are also discussed in the *Sutrasthana* of the *Bhela Samhita*. *Pathya Ahara* provides comprehensive nourishment for the body by nourishing all *Dhatu* (body components) and *Srotasa* (channels of circulation).^[16] By removing vitiated *Doshas*, it also aids in the body's detoxification process. In contrast, *Apathya Ahara* vitiates *Vatadi Doshas*, which results in a variety of illnesses. Therefore, *Pathya Ahara* should be eaten to maintain health and treat ailments.^[17]

Role of Pathya Apathya

The *Pathya Aharas* is detailed in *Ayurveda* regardless of the specific sick condition for each season. The use of Pathya-Apathya in accordance with the season would enhance general health.^[18] Taking ginger and salt before meals is recommended by *Bhavaprakasha* because it improves flavour, stimulates *Pachaka Agni* (digestive fire), and clears the throat and tongue. A few commonly consumed culinary items are also described by *Acharya Charaka* and *Vagbhata*. The foods that are said to be the most beneficial are *Raktashali*, *Mudga*, Rainwater, *Saindhava* (Rock Salt), *Jivantishaka*, Meat of *Aeda*, *Godha*, *Rohita Matsya*, Cow's Ghee, Cow's Milk, *Tila Taila*, Ginger, Grapes, Pomegranate, and Sugar.^[20]

However, there are detailed descriptions about them in other texts like *Sharangdhara Samhita*, *Pathyapathya Vibodhika*, *Bhaishajyaratnavali*, etc.^[21] Additionally, disease specific Pathya (wholesome diet/foods to consume) and Apathya (unwholesome diet/foods to avoid) are explained in various classical texts like *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtangahridaya*, etc.^[22] Here, we will use

Madhumeha as an example, who has diabetes mellitus and is on the following *Pathya- Apathya* regimen:

Pathya

Wheat, Green gramme (*Mudga*), *Kulattha*, pigeon pea (*Arhara*), *Alasi*, chickpea (*Chana*), Patola, bitter gourd (*Karavellaka*), *Amalaki*, *Haridra*, *Kapittha*, black pepper, honey, betel nut, and rock salt are among the other ingredients.^[23]

Apathya

Grains, rice, blackgram (*Udada*), sweet fruits, potatoes, etc. that have just been harvested. Alcohol, sugarcane products, betel products, milk, curd, buttermilk, clarified butter, oil, jaggery, eating before previous meals have been digested and incompatible foods.^[24]

DISCUSSION

Dyslipidemia increases the risk of atherosclerosis, which in turn increases the chance of catastrophic conditions including cardiovascular disease and cerebrovascular accidents. The reasons of this are lower levels of HDL-C and increased levels of atherogenic lipids such TG, LDL-C, and VLDL-C. Adopting a healthy lifestyle and making dietary changes can help to a greater extent in preventing dyslipidemia and its problems.^[25] Once the illness has begun, pharmacological managements will also be necessary. Lipid and *Medo Dhatu* are connected in *Ayurveda*. It is clear from studying the textual sources that the structural and functional characteristics of *Medo Dhatu* and lipid are identical.^[26] Dyslipidemia and *Medoroga* are connected, and they both have the same etiopathogenesis, clinical characteristics, and consequences. The main goals of treating dyslipidemia are to lower cholesterol synthesis and improve the elimination of high levels of circulating cholesterol. Similar *Ayurvedic* practices include *Virukshana* and *Chedana*. Both *Virukshana* and *Chedana Chikitsa* are capable of performing *Srotoshodhana* and *medoharana*, respectively.^[27]

All types of *Medopradoshaja Vikaras* are managed with a greater emphasis on *Pathya* and indifference. The *Medoroga Chikitsa* recommends *Kapha-Meda-Vata Hara Anna Pana* and *Viharas* such *Vyayama, Langhana*,

etc. This can also be used as a preventative precaution. Modern medicine also suggests non-pharmacological treatments such lifestyle modifications, dietary adjustments, and physical activity. When it comes to treating the ailment while focusing on its underlying cause, *Ayurveda* has an advantage.^[28] The *Ayurvedic* doctor focuses on attaining *Ayurveda's* goals of health promotion, illness prevention, and management for a healthy and happy existence in our failing society. According to a new study, lifestyle illnesses have supplanted conventional health risk factors (such as age, gender, addiction, etc.) as the cause of an increase in sickness and fatalities in India during the past two decades.^[29]

Acharya Charaka explained the significance of *Pathya* and its effect on illnesses in graphic detail. *Doshas* that have built up inside the body with *Kathinta* (difficulty) and *Unabhava* in a more heightened condition are frequently made *Mridu* and fewer in number, resulting in simple treatment of ailments, according to him.^[29] As a result, it may be concluded that *Pathyasewana* promotes the preservation of good health by maintaining the balance of *Doshas* and by managing the exacerbated *Doshas*, which result in diseases with little consequences and are therefore readily treatable.^[30] Additionally, *Acharya Charaka* claimed that therapeutic methods pleasing to the mind and senses encourage mental fulfilment and mental fortitude, which weakens the power of sickness.

According to *Ayurveda*, the majority of illnesses are caused by poor eating habits, hence *Ayurveda* treats them in a very scientific way using *Pathya Vyavastha* (diet planning and dietetics). The *Acharyas* incorporated daily routines, seasonal schedules, and other activities in the notion of *Pathya-Apathya* since they are essential for maintaining health.^[31]

CONCLUSION

Ayurvedic medications and therapeutic techniques are frequently used to treat dyslipidemia. The efficacy of the treatment can be increased by thoroughly comprehending the theoretical ideas and analysing the traditional *Medoroga* sources. Information about dyslipidemia and *Medoroga*, its *Ayurvedic* analogue, is

provided in this conceptual paper. This article discusses the similarities between dyslipidemia and *Medoroga* in terms of their etiopathogenesis, clinical characteristics, consequences, and therapy. In recent years, the frequency of these lifestyle disorders among Indians has increased to exceedingly alarming levels due to India's fast economic development and rising westernization of lifestyle. *Ayurveda* therefore inspires optimism for the greatest method to live a healthy existence. The *Pathya* regimen is one that keeps a person healthy, upholds normal bodily functioning, nourishes the mind and intellect, guards against illnesses, and simultaneously corrects any anomalies that the body may experience. The diet planning described in our ancient texts is incredibly logical and founded on specific concepts. Dietary preparation, quality, quantity, and consumption are all given a lot of consideration. Even the season, habitat, and personal preferences of the individual should be taken into consideration while planning the diet. Since prevention is so much better than mending since it spares the work of being ill, everyone should avoid practicing *Apathya* (unwholesome to the body) and instead practice *Pathya* (wholesome to the body).

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