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# An analytical study on *Sharad Ritucharya*

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## ABSTRACT

The newly emerging diseases and diminishing immunity have made humans to seriously think about their health. Lifestyle modulation and adaptation according to climate is the need of hour. The glorious *Ayurveda* has its principal focus of conserving health and prevention of disease before their occurrence.<sup>[1]</sup> *Acharya's* have described *Dincharya* (daily regimen) and *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen). One can cherish good health by following proper *Ritucharya*, described in classical texts of *Ayurveda*. The living beings especially humans are hugely affected by the change in climate. The features of all the *Ritus*, dietary and habitual modulation according to changing *Ritu* has been widely explained in the foremost texts of *Ayurveda*. Here, the *Sharad Ritu* which is one of the *Ritu's* of *Dakshinayan* is overviewed so as to present the dietary and behavioural regimen in this season. The *Sharad Ritu* marks the transition from summers to winters. The hot sun rays in *Sharad Ritu* exaggerate the *Pitta Dosha* which is already accumulated in body in the *Varsha Ritu*. So dietary and habitual modifications which are *Pitta Shamak* in nature should be followed in *Sharad Ritu* along with the *Shodhan* procedures like *Virechan* and *Raktamokshan*.

**Key words:** *Sharad Ritu, Ritucharya, Dakshinayan, Sharatritu, Ritucharya, Aharavihara, Hamsodaka.*

## INTRODUCTION

According to the topic of *Swasthivritta*, many principles of *Dincharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Aharavihara*, *Dharniya-Adharniya Vega*, *Sadvritta*, and *Achar Rasayana* are described in order to reach the first aim.

Seasons divide the year into six halves. When the Sun is in a northward position to the Earth, that time of year

is known as *Adana Kala* and includes three *Ritu* beginning with *Shishira*, *Vasanta*, and *Grishma*. When the Sun is in a position to the south of the Earth, the period is known as *Visarga Kala*, and it includes three *Ritu* beginning with *Varsha*, *Sharad*, and *Hemanta*. This year is divided into seasons for the purpose of *Swasthivritta* in distinct seasons.

The *Ritucharya* Chapter has also shed more light on the relationship between *Ritu* and Disease. With particular reference to *Sharad Ritu*, where *Agni* appears to be *Madhyam*, which may be the source of *Pittaj* Diseases. The connection between *Sharadkaleen Rogas* and non-observance of *Ritucharya* can be observed. Diseases characterized by *Pitta Dosha* occur as a natural phenomenon in *Sharad Ritu*. All pathophysiology involved in the initiation of exacerbated *Pitta Dosha* during *Sharad Ritu* is taken into considerations.

## NEED OF STUDY

According to *Acharya Vagbhata*, *Ritus* or seasons can be identified following one of three methods:

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1. Classification according to month.
2. Classification according to the sun in different zodiac.
3. Classification according to characteristics of *Sheeta*, *Ushna*, *Varsha*, animal activities, environmental conditions, flowering etc.<sup>[2]</sup>

*Ritu* identification based on month and zodiac is a preliminary estimate. Because the exact day or Tithi for any season cannot be specified, *Ritu* can only be identified based on *Ritu Lakshana*. *Ritu Lakshana* in *Ayurveda* is qualitative hence it must be quantitative for *Ritu* assessment.

In *Ayurvedic Samhitas Sharad* has been mentioned as month of *Pitta Prakopa* to establish this principle we need certain criteria to establish *Pitta Prakopa* in people in this *Ritu*.

As the *Ritu* affects the *Dosha*, *Bala*, *Agni*, and other conditions in the human body, a specific *Ahara-Vihara* is required for that season. The concept of *Ahara-Vihara* is explained in *Ayurvedic* literature with specific examples. However, because time has passed and people's dietary habits have changed, it is necessary to describe *Ahara-Vihara* in *Sharad Ritu* in light of a modern diet pattern.

As time passes, environmental conditions and people's *Ahara-Vihara* patterns change dramatically, necessitating the establishment of *Ritucharya* principles, standardisation of *Ritu*, and *Ahara-Vihara* in *Sharad Ritu* in accordance with the present.

## AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1. To standardize the *Sharad Ritu* as per modern meteorological factors.
2. To develop the criteria for assessment of *Pitta Prakopa* in *Sharad Ritu*.
3. To prepare an *Ahara-Vihara* module including contemporary diet pattern.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The references have been collected from various *Ayurvedic* texts and commentaries, modern texts,

connected websites, and previous study work. The collected references have been attentively observed, assembled, analysed, and thoroughly discussed. A common description of *Sharad Ritu* has been developed based on *Ayurveda Ritu Lakshana* and modern meteorological literature, such as temperature, pressure, humidity, rainfall etc.

The criteria for assessment of particular months corresponding to *Sharad Ritu* during months of September, October and November 2020, 2021, 2022 in Jodhpur were selected and observed.

A questionnaire has been created to determine *Pitta Prakopa* in people during *Sharad Ritu* so that the theory of *Pitta Prakopa* in *Sharad Ritu* can be confirmed in future research. Based on *Doshaprakopa* in *Ritucharya*, an established *Ahara Vihara* module with every current dietary article has been prepared.

## Concepts of Ritucharya and Ritu

### Classification of Ritu:

*Acharya Vagbhata* mentions the three methods listed below for determining the *ritus* or seasons:<sup>[2]</sup>

1. Classification according to month.
2. Classification according to the sun in different zodiac.
3. Classification according to characteristics of *Sheeta*, *Ushna*, *Varsha*.

The two different six *Ritus* combination kinds are present in all books, nevertheless. *Shishir Ritu* should come first, and *Pravat Ritu* should come second. The former combination is indicated for *Ritucharya*, whereas the latter one is for *Shanshodhana Karma*. The geographical division of India is yet another idea.

The six seasons *Varsha*, *Sharad*, *Hemant*, *Vasanta*, *Grishma*, and *Pravit* were once again used as a metaphor to describe the buildup, aggravation, and pacification of the physiological humours. When defining these six different sorts of seasons, neither *Acharya* made any mention of *Ayana Kala*. *Ayana* and the *Shishir Ritu* must be taken into account when *Ayurveda* discusses seasonal regimens for behaviour, according to this. The *Pravit Ritu* must be taken into

consideration, though, when sages spoke of purification.<sup>[3]</sup>

It should be noted that the *Ritu* factor plays a significant role in the *Dosha Prakopa* in regard to *Dosha* vitiation due to excess, deficiency, or any type of seasonal adversity. The distinction between *Prakrita* and *Vaikrita*, the two sorts of *Doshas Prakopa*, has been made quite clearly by *Acharyas*. Regarding the *Sanchaya*, *Prakopa*, and *Prashmana*, rites have been stated.

### Sharada Ritucharya

*Ritucharya* is the term used to describe following a set of rules and regulations in accordance with a certain *Ritu*. Only when one is aware of the specifics of the current *Ritu* may one follow the instructions provided in the *Ayurvedic* classics regarding *Ritucharya*. Changes in the environment and the physical descriptions of plants recorded in *Ayurvedic* scriptures during months of various seasons should be investigated to determine when a particular *Ritu* begins.

### Charak Samhita

#### Sharad Ritu (autumn season)

According to *Acharya Charka* in the *Sharada* (Autumn) season, the body's stored *Pitta Dosha* frequently becomes worsened when a body used to cold and rain is suddenly exposed to the heat of the sun.

In this season food and drinks predominantly of sweet, light, cold and slightly bitter qualities and having *Pitta* alleviating properties should be taken in proper quantity, only when there is good appetite.

The meat of *Lava* (common quail), *Kapinjala* (grey partridge), *Ena* (antelope), *Urabhra* (sheep), *Sharabha* (wapiti), and as well as *Shalli* rice (*Oryza sativa* Linn), barley, and wheat, should be consumed in *Ghanatyaya* (*Sharada Ritu*).

In *Sharada*, purgative use, bloodletting and consumption of *Tikta Ghee* (*Ghee* medicated with bitter substances) are advised whenever the rain clouds vanish. It is not advised to consume curd, alkaline preparations, meat from aquatic and marshy animals, or to expose yourself to the sun or consume

muscular fats and oils during this season. Restrict exposure to the easterly breeze and avoid sleeping during the day.<sup>[4]</sup>

*Hansodak*- During the *Sharad Ritu*, *Acharya Charaka* and *Acharya Vagbhat* particularly referenced *Hansodaka*, a water with properties similar to nectar. The word *Hansodak* comes from the fact that a swan only consumes the cleanest form of water, hence in *Sharad Ritu*, water that is detoxified by the rising of *Agasti* star as well as by harsh sun rays is regarded to be in the purest form. According to the *Acharyas*, the *Hansodak* is heated by the strong rays of the sun during the day and chilled by the soft moonlight at night. *Hansodaka* is known as *Anshudak* according to *Acharya Bhavmishra*. According to *Acharya Vagbhatt*, it is free of physical, chemical, and biological contaminants, free of toxic materials, non-arid, pacifies the *Dosha*, and *Anabhishtyansdi* (does not hinder the *Rasvaha Sira*). This *Hansodak* is suitable for drinking, bathing, and swimming.<sup>[5]</sup>

### Sushruta Samhita

The sun has a soft golden hue in the autumn. On the deep, dark blue of heaven, huge masses of white clouds can be seen sailing. Ponds are decorated with fully developed lotus blossoms, which are stirred by the wings of diving swans. The high areas get dry, but the lowlands continue to be muddy. The level plains are covered in underbrush and bushes, and numerous species of plants and trees, including *Vana*, *Saptahva*, *Vandhuka*, *Kasha*, and *Asana*, flower there.<sup>[6]</sup>

### Ashtanga Hridaya

In the autumn season, the bodies of the creatures that are suffering from water and therefore have coldness, there is *Pitta*. After that, when autumn comes, suddenly the *Pitta* formed in the rain in the bodies of the Animals, heated by the strong rays of the sun, becomes angry at this time. In order to overcome age, that is, it should not create any kind of *Pittaj* disorders, for this, *Tikta Gharatpaana*, *Virechana* and *Raktmokshana* should be done.<sup>[7]</sup>

### Ashtanga Sangraha

The Earth is a little muddy in fall, and the sky is clouded in white. As they begin to bloom, the water lily



(*Nymphaea alba* Linn), *Kash* (*Saccharum spontaneum* Linn), and *week* (*Samarpan Alstonia scholaris* RB) enhance the beauty of the ground. The sun is the object (*Kapil*) since the group of clouds has been removed, allowing the sun's piercing rays to fall on the planet. When bird garlands begin to fly in them, the directions become quite clear. When fish and swans, which are hidden between lotuses, collide, tremendous waves are created in *Sar* (lakes), but the water is still pure. The bile in the *Bangas* who encounter rain and cold is abruptly deprived of rain and cold by the sun's beams.

#### Properties and Pathogenic effects of Pitta Dosha

All of the diseases of the *Pittaja* variety listed above should be recognised and treated as *Pitta* disorders even if only a small portion of the vitiated *Pitta* manifests. For instance, *Pitta's* distinctive characteristics include heat, sharpness, liquidity, minor unctuousness, all hues other than white and red, a fishy odour, a pungent and sour taste, and fluidity. However, *Pitta's* manifestations might vary depending on the organs they affect.<sup>[8]</sup>

#### Management of Pitta Dosha

Drugs with sweet, bitter, astringent, and cooling properties should be used to treat abnormal *Pitta* Disorders. Any treatment modalities used, such as oleation, purgation, fasting, affusion, massage, etc., must have anti-*Pittaja* qualities and must be used in the proper dose and amount of time. Purgation is considered to be the most efficient kind of treatment for the management of *Pittaja Vyadhi* out of all the techniques previously described. *Pitta* diseases in other areas of the body are naturally controlled when *Pitta* in the *Amashaya* is subdued through the administration of purgative drugs, much to how a fire chamber cools off after the fire is put out.<sup>[9]</sup>

#### Panchakarma Procedures During Sharad Ritu<sup>[10]</sup>

**Virechan** - *Virechan* is the most important *Panchkarma* process to perform during the *Sharad Ritu* due to the *Prakopa Avastha* of *Pitta Dosha*. *Virechan* is the most effective method for expelling overly vitiated *Pitta Dosha* from the body via the anal canal with purgation.

**Raktamokshan** - During *Sharad Ritu*, each individual's *Rakta* becomes naturally vitiated due to the presence of excessive *Pitta*, giving rise to a variety of skin ailments. So, for the goal of *Rakta Shuddhi*, *Tikata Ghrita* should be consumed, followed by *Raktamokshan* (bloodletting).

#### Aahara and Vihara to be consumed in Sharad Ritu

##### Ahara

- *Rasa* - Food stuffs with *Tikta*, *Madhura* and *Kashaya Rasa* should be taken.
- *Guna* - *Sheeta* and *Laghu Gunatmak Aahara*.
- *Shuk Dhanya* (Cereals) - *Shaali* rice, wheat, Barley and *Sathi* rice.
- *Shimbi Dhanya* (legumes) - pulses like *moonga*.
- Foodstuffs like milk, products of sugarcane according to *Acharya Sushrut*.
- Fruits and vegetables - *Amalki*, *Draksha* and *Patola*.
- Non vegetable food- Meat of birds and animals which are habitats of *Jangal Desha*, like *Lava*, *Kapinjhal*, deer, reindeer, lamb and rabbit.
- *Hansodak*, sugar dissolved water and Honey are ideal fluids during *Sharad Ritu*

##### Pathya Aahara

One should consume *Aahara* which is light and predominant in *Madhura*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa* when hungry.

It has been recommended by *Acharya Vagbhata* to consume *Ruksha Dravya* in *Sharada Ritu*.

It has been mentioned to consume *Sheeta*, *Laghu Ahara* predominant in *Madhura*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa*.

*Acharya Charaka* has mentioned use of *Madhura*, *Laghu*, *Sheeta*, *Tikta*, *Rasa* predominant *Aahara Dravya* having potential to alleviate *Pitta*, should be taken in proper quantity when there is good appetite.

*Acharya Bhavaprakasha* and *Acharya Yogaratnakara* has mentioned that in *Sharada Ritu*, one should consume *Dravya* which are *Sheeta* and predominant in *Madhura*, *Kashaya*, *Tikta* and *Patu (Lavana) Rasa*.

## DISCUSSION

### Meteorological environment changes

The criteria for assessment of particular months corresponding to *Sharad Ritu* during months of September, October and November 2020,2021,2022 (i.e., *Ashwin* and *Kartika*) in Jodhpur were selected according to *Sushrut Samhita (Sharad Ritu. corresponding months- Ashwin and Kartika)*, 3th September 2020 to 30th November 2020, 21th September 2021 to 19th November 2021 and 11th September 2022 to 8th November 2022. These months were noted.

Maximum and minimum temperature during period of *Sharad Ritu*. Data is presented as follows:

Hindi Months and Year	Maximum temperature in °C	Minimum temperature in °C
<i>Ashwin</i> and <i>Kartika</i> - (2020)	39.4°C	11.0°C
<i>Ashwin</i> and <i>Kartika</i> - (2021)	38.1°C	12.3°C
<i>Ashwin</i> and <i>Kartika</i> - (2022)	37.4°C	16.7°C

### Humidity

Hindi Months and Year	Maximum relative humidity in %	Minimum relative humidity in %
<i>Ashwin</i> and <i>Kartika</i> - (2020)	97	35
<i>Ashwin</i> and <i>Kartika</i> - (2021)	98	21
<i>Ashwin</i> and <i>Kartika</i> - (2022)	98	21

### *Pathya Aahara Dravya* to be consumed during *Sharada Ritu*

One should consume *Aahara* which is light and predominant in *Madhura, Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa* when hungry.

It has been recommended by *Acharya Vagabhata* to consume *Ruksha Dravya* in *Sharada Ritu*.

It has been mentioned to consume *Sheeta, Laghu Ahara* predominant in *Madhura, Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa*.

*Acharya Charaka* has mentioned use of *Madhura, Laghu, Sheeta, Tikta, Rasa* predominant *Aahara Dravya* having potential to alleviate *Pitta*, should be taken in proper quantity when there is good appetite.

*Acharya Bhavaprakasha* and *Acharya Yogaratnakara* has mentioned that in *Sharada Ritu*, one should consume *Dravya* which are *Sheeta* and predominant in *Madhura, Kashaya, Tikta* and *Patu (Lavana) Rasa*.

### Cereals or Millets

- ***Pathya*** - *Yava* (Old *Hordeum vulgare* barley), *Godhuma* (Old wheat), *Shali* rice (*Oryza sativa* Linn), *Sathi* rice (red rice), *Shashtika* rice (*Oryza sativum*) different varieties of old rice and Different varieties of old millets should be taken.
- ***Apathya*** - *Bajara* (pearl millet), *New Shoka Dhanya* etc.
- ***Pathya Prepared food items*** - *Roti, Khichdi* (Rice and moong), different recipes of old Rice Puffed rice etc.
- ***Apathya prepared food items*** - *Ushana* (hot dry) *Dravya, Kshara* (alkaline preparations), oils and fat are contraindicated.

### Pulses

- ***Pathya*** - *Mudgal Dal* (green grams),
- ***Apathya*** - *Channa, Rajma, Urada, Masura Dal* (lentil), *Masha Dal* (black gram).

### Non veg

- ***Pathya*** - The meat of *Lava* (common quail), *Kapinjala* (grey partridge), *Ena* (antelope), *Urabhra* (sheep), *Shrabha* (wapiti) should be taken. Flesh of *jangala* animals (arid habitat).
- ***Apathya*** - *Anupa* (animals of marshy land) and *Audaka* meat (meat of aquatic animals) are contraindicating. High fat meat like broiler chicken, pork, etc. is to be avoided in this season.

**Vegetables**

- **Pathya** - *Parval* (pointed ground), ladyfinger, *turyi* (angled luffa) *Karela* (bitter guard), patola, bottle gourd, bitter gourd, ash gourd.
- **Apathya** - Cauliflower, cabbage, potato.

**Drinks**

- **Pathya** - rain-water, Juice of bitter gourd, Juice of Amalaki, Juice of aloe vera. Milk, ghee, Sugar and sugarcane. *Tikta Sarpi* (ghee prepared out of bitter drugs), river water, *Hamsodak* Pond water, Heated water are intake.
- **Apathya** - Drinking excess water, excess oil, excess wines, rum, whiskey, vodka etc.

**Milk and milk products**

- **Pathya** - butter milk, Ghee, *Tikta Sarpi*, Skimmed milk.
- **Apathya** - alkaline preparations and curd are contraindicated.

**Sugarcane and products**

- **Pathya** - Honey, *Draksha*, Sugar candy, Pure Sugar. Slightly cool and easy to digest foods and drinks.
- **Apathya** - *Gud* (Jaggery) and *Sakkar*

**Salt**

- **Pathya** - *Saindhav*
- **Apathya** - *Samudra*

**Vihara****Pathya**

- Anointing the body with the paste of *Chandana* *Ushira* and *Karpura*.
- Wearing garlands of pearls.
- Dressing up with light coloured and clean clothes.
- To reside in the house painted with lime root.
- *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation) and *Raktamokshana* (bloodletting).
- Garlands of seasonal flowers, spotless clothing (apparel), and exposure to the moon's rays in the

early evenings are all highly recommended in the *Sharada Ritu*.

**Apathya**

- One should avoid taking Sun bath, sleep during day time, exposing himself to frost and easterly winds in *Sharada Ritu*.
- *Diwaswapna* (sleeping during day time), *Ratrijagrana* and *Maithuna Karma* are contraindicated.
- *Vyayama* is also contraindicated in *Sharada Ritu*.

**CONCLUSION**

*Ritucharya* is a fundamental principle of *Swasthivritta* and therefore performs a significant role in maintaining health. Meteorological parameters like as temperature, humidity, pressure and rainfall are considered in the standardisation of *Sharada Ritu*. Temperature and humidity play a significant role in the standardisation of *Sharada Ritu*. Pressure and rainfall perform no major role in the standardisation of *Sharada Ritu*. The range for maximum and minimum temperature during period of *Sharad Ritu* 2020, 2021 and 2022 is 39.4°C to 11.0°C, 38.1°C to 12.3°C and 37.4 to 16.7°C respectively in Jodhpur city. The average relative humidity in *Sharad Ritu* lies between 93% in the beginning of season, to 78% at the ending of the season in Jodhpur city. A table of questions has been created for analysing *Pitta Prakopa* in people during the *Sharada Ritu*, including the symptoms of *Amlika* (Sour belching), *Pipasa* (Thirst) and *Paridaha* (Burning sensation). It has been recommended by *Acharya Vagabhata* to consume *Ruksha Dravya* in *Sharada Ritu*. It has been mentioned to consume *Sheeta*, *Laghu Ahara* predominant in *Madhura*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa*. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned use of *Madhura*, *Laghu*, *Sheeta*, *Tikta*, *Rasa* predominant *Aahara Dravya* having potential to alleviate *Pitta*, should be taken in proper quantity when there is good appetite.

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