An analytical study on Sharad Ritucharya

Vinod Bajiya¹, Pramod Kumar Mishra², Brahmamand Sharma³

¹Post Graduate Scholar, P.G. Department of Swasthvritta and Yoga, PGIA, PGIA, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India.
²Professor & HOD, P.G. Department of Kayachikitsa, PGIA, PGIA, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India.
³Professor & HOD, P.G. Department of Swasthvritta and Yoga, PGIA, PGIA, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India.

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.¹¹ 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, Aharavishu, Hamsadaka.

INTRODUCTION

According to the topic of Swasthvritta, many principles of Dincharya Ratricharya, Ritucharya, Ahara-Vihara, Dharmiya-Adharmiya 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 Swasthvritta 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:
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.[3]

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:[3]

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.[3]

It should be noted that the Ritu factor plays a significant role in the Dosha Parkopana 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 Prakopana, has been made quite clearly by Acharyas. Regarding the Sanchaya, Prakopana, 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 Charaka 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 Ghanataya (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.[4]

Hansodak- During the Sharad Ritu, Acharya Charaka and Acharya Vagbhata 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 Aacharya Vagbhhatt, it is free of physical, chemical, and biological contaminants, free of toxic materials, non-arid, pacifies the Dosha, and Anabhisheyansdi (does not hinder the Rasvaha Sira). This Hansodak is suitable for drinking, bathing, and swimming.[5]

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, Kashra, and Asana, flower there.[6]

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 Gharatapoana, Virechana and Raktmokshana should be done.[7]

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 unctuosity, 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.[8]

**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-Pitta 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 Pitta 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.[9]

**Panchakarma Procedures During Sharad Ritu**[10]

**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, Tikta 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.
- **Shimb Dhany**a (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, Kapinjal, 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindi Months and Year</th>
<th>Maximum temperature in °C</th>
<th>Minimum temperature in °C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashwin and Kartika- (2020)</td>
<td>39.4°C</td>
<td>11.0°C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashwin and Kartika- (2021)</td>
<td>38.1°C</td>
<td>12.3°C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashwin and Kartika- (2022)</td>
<td>37.4°C</td>
<td>16.7°C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Humidity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindi Months and Year</th>
<th>Maximum relative humidity in %</th>
<th>Minimum relative humidity in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashwin and Kartika- (2020)</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashwin and Kartika- (2021)</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashwin and Kartika- (2022)</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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, Uradha, Masura Dal (lentil), Masha Dal (black gram).

Non veg

- **Pathya** - The meat of Lava (comman quail), Kapinjala (greypartridge), Ena (antelope), Urabhra (sheep), Shrabsa (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 aloevera. 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


- **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 *Swasthvrdda* 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.

**REFERENCES**

1. Pt. Kashinath Pandey, Dr. Gorakhnath Chaturvedi, Charak Samhita Vidyotini in Hindi commentary,
How to cite this article: Vinod Bajiya, Pramod Kumar Mishra, Brahmanand Sharma. An analytical study on Sharad Ritucharya. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2024;2:122-128. http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.9.2.19

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