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# Millets: Forgotten Grains with Potential Health Benefits in Ayurveda w.s.r. to *Kodrava*

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## ABSTRACT

Small-seeded millets like finger millet (*Ragi*), pearl millet (*Bajra*), and foxtail millet (*Kangni*) have been farmed for thousands of years in dry regions of Asia and Africa due to their endurance. They are rich in protein, fiber, vitamins, and minerals, making them significant in traditional diets and health food industries. In Ayurveda, millets are recognised for their balance-promoting characteristics and holistic benefits. Ancient writings like the *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita* outline their health advantages. Millets help reduce inflammation, regulate diabetes, and promote digestion due to their cooling and light properties. Finger millet is recognised for its high calcium content, pearl millet for its iron, making both excellent for bone health and anemia prevention. Their high fiber content also aids in controlling blood sugar and promoting cardiovascular health. *Kodrava* (Kodo millet) is acknowledged in *Ayurveda* for its medicinal and nutritional properties. It balances *Vata* and *Kapha* Doshas and is helpful for treating obesity, hemorrhoids, cough, poisoning, and skin diseases. Nutritionally, *Kodrava* is rich in protein, fiber, phosphorus, riboflavin, and niacin. This historical relevance shows millets' resurgence in modern health, integrating old wisdom with contemporary nutritional science.

**Key words:** Food, Health, Kodo, *Kodrava*, Millets, Millets Recipes

## INTRODUCTION

Millets, a group of ancient grains, have recently garnered attention for their nutritional richness and potential health benefits. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has recognized the importance of Millets and declared Millets comprising of Sorghum (*Jowar*), Pearl Millet (*Bajra*), Finger Millet (*Ragi*/Mandua), Minor Millets i.e., Foxtail Millet (*Kanngani* / kakun), Proso Millet (*Cheena*), Kodo Millet

(Kodo), Barnyard Millet (*Sawa/Sanwa/Jhangora*), Little Millet (*Kutki*), Brown top millet and two pseudo millets i.e., Buck-wheat (*Kuttu*), Amaranth (*Chaulai*) as Nutri-Cereals for production, consumption and trade point of view. India celebrated 2018 as "The Year of Millets" and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has declared 2023 as International Year of Millets. All these substantiate the importance of millets.

**According to fssai Millets - The nutri-cereals-8 Millets are Miracle crops.<sup>[1]</sup>**

### a) Good for the consumer:

- Address vitamin and mineral deficiencies (iron, zinc, folic acid, calcium, diabetes).

### b) Good for the planet:

- Thrive on low-fertility soils, reclaim soils, and need no artificial fertilizers.
- Pest-free, grow better without chemical fertilizers, using eco-friendly manure.
- Millet fields are biodiverse, climate change-compliant, and ensure food safety.

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## AIM AND OBJECTIVES

- To assess, elaborate, and discuss the millets from various Ayurveda Samhita
- To learn the fundamentals of nutrition.
- Correlate the application of *Kodrava* in Ayurveda and in modern medical science.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

References pertaining to millets are compiled from modern textbooks and Ayurvedic classics.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### In Ayurveda *Kodrava* Guna

#### 1. *Charaka*<sup>[2]</sup>

सकोरदूषः श्यामाकः कषायमधुरो लघुः । वातलः कफपित्तघ्नः शीतः सङ्ग्राहिशोषणः ॥ च.सू. २७/१६

"*Koraḍūṣaḥ* (Kodo millet), *Shyāmākaḥ* (barnyard millet), are astringent and sweet in taste, light (to digest), increase *Vata*, reduce *Kapha* and *Pitta*, are cooling, binding, and drying."

#### 2. *Sushrut*<sup>[3]</sup>

उष्णाः कषायमधुरा रूक्षाः कटुविपाकिनः । श्लेष्मघ्ना बद्धनिःस्यन्दा वातपित्तप्रकोपणाः ॥२२॥ कषायमधुरस्तेषां शीतोः पित्तापहः स्मृतः । कोद्रवश्च सनीवारः श्यामाकश्च सशान्तनुः ॥२३॥ सु.सू.४६/२२-२३

Hot, astringent, and sweet, they are dry and pungent in their post-digestive effect. They reduce *Kapha* (phlegm) and cause constipation. They increase *Vata* (wind) and *Pitta* (bile). Among them, those that are astringent and sweet are considered to be cooling and *Pitta*-pacifying. *Kodrava* (Kodo millet), along with *Sanivāra* (wild rice) and *Shyāmāka* (barnyard millet), have a calming effect.

#### 3. *Vagbhat*<sup>[4]</sup>

कङ्गुकोद्रवनीवारश्यामाकादि हिमं लघुः ॥११॥ तृणधान्यं पवनकृल्लेखनं कफपित्तहृत् । कोरदूषः परं ग्राही स्पर्शं शीतो विषापहः । वा.सू. ६ / ११-१३

"*Kaṅgu* (Italian millet), *kodrava* (kodo millet), *Nivāra* (wild rice), *Shyāmāka* (barnyard millet), and similar

grains are cooling and light. These grasses and grains increase *Vata*, are scraping in nature, and reduce *Kapha* and *Pitta*. *Koraḍūṣa* (kodo millet) is highly astringent, cool to the touch, and alleviates toxins."

#### 4. *Bhavprakash*<sup>[5]</sup>

कोद्रवः कोरदूषः स्यादुद्दालो वनकोद्रवः ॥१०१॥ श्यामाकः पित्तहा शीतः कोद्रवो विषपित्तजित् । हिमः स्पर्शं हिमो ग्राही वीर्याष्णो वनकोद्रवः ॥१०२॥ भावप्रकाश धान्यवर्ग.

*Koḍravaḥ* (Koḍu millet) is known as *Koraḍūṣa*. *Uddāla* is the wild variety of *Koḍrava*.

*Shyāmāka* (barnyard millet) alleviates *Pitta*, is cool (in potency), and *Koḍrava* (Koḍu millet) counteracts poison and *Pitta*. *Uddāla* is cool to the touch and has a cooling effect, is binding, but its potency is hot.

### Uses of *Kodrava* according to *Samhita*

#### *Charak Samhita*

According to *Charaka Samhita*, *Kodrava* has several uses in different medical contexts:

1.	अष्टौनिन्दितोऽध्यायः - मेदोरोग चिकित्सा <sup>[6]</sup> ( <i>Medoroga Chikitsa</i> )	<i>Kodrava</i> is recommended for the treatment of disorders related to fat metabolism or obesity.
2.	अर्शचिकित्सा - रक्तार्श पथ्य <sup>[7]</sup> ( <i>Arsha Chikitsa</i> )	It is prescribed as a dietary recommendation for the treatment of hemorrhoids or piles.
3.	कासचिकित्सा - पित्तज कास पथ्य <sup>[8]</sup> ( <i>Kasa Chikitsa</i> )	<i>Kodrava</i> is suggested as a dietary therapy for managing cough caused by <i>Pitta</i> dosha imbalance.
4.	विषचिकित्सा - विष विकारात् पथ्य <sup>[9]</sup> ( <i>Visha Chikitsa</i> )	In cases of poisoning or toxic conditions, <i>Kodrava</i> is recommended as a dietary option.
5.	उरुस्तम्भचिकित्सा - पथ्य <sup>[10]</sup> ( <i>Urustambha Chikitsa</i> )	It is advocated as a therapeutic diet for the management of stiffness or pain in thighs.

These references highlight *Kodrava's* versatility in *Ayurvedic* medicine, where it addresses health issues like obesity, hemorrhoids, cough, poisoning, and muscular stiffness.

### Sushrut Samhita

According to *Sushruta Samhita*, *Kodrava* is used in various medical contexts:

1.	स्थौल्य चिकित्सा <sup>[11]</sup> ( <i>Sthoulya Chikitsa</i> )	Treatment of obesity or excessive fat accumulation.
2.	हिताहितीयाध्यायः- सामान्यतः पथ्यतम <sup>[12]</sup> ( <i>Hitahitiyadhyaya</i> )	Generally recommended as a wholesome and beneficial dietary option.
3.	व्रणप्रश्नाध्याय- वात प्रकोपज कारणे <sup>[13]</sup> ( <i>Vranaprashnaadhyaya</i> )	Used in cases where <i>Vata</i> aggravation is the cause of wound formation.
4.	महावातव्याधिचिकि त्सितम् - उरुस्तम्भ पथ्यकर आहार <sup>[14]</sup> ( <i>Mahavata Vyadhi Chikitsitam</i> )	Prescribed as a therapeutic diet for stiffness or pain in the thighs.
5.	कुष्ठचिकित्सितम् - कुष्ठ पथ्यकर आहार <sup>[15]</sup> ( <i>Kushtha Chikitsitam</i> )	Recommended as a therapeutic diet for skin diseases.
6.	प्रमेहचिकित्सितम् <sup>[16]</sup> ( <i>Prameha Chikitsitam</i> )	Used as a dietary recommendation for managing diabetes.
7.	विसर्पनाडीस्तनरोग चिकित्सितम् - नाडी व्रण वर्ती चिकित्सा <sup>[17]</sup> ( <i>Visarpanadistanarogachikitsitam</i> )	Employed in the treatment of <i>Nadi Vran</i> .
8.	क्षुद्ररोगचिकित्सितम्- दारुणक चिकित्सा <sup>[18]</sup> ( <i>Kshudrarogachikitsitam</i> )	Used in the treatment of <i>Darunak</i> .

9.	वृश्चिक विष चिकित्सा <sup>[19]</sup> ( <i>Vrishchika Visa Chikitsa</i> )	Prescribed for the treatment of scorpion sting poisoning.
10.	स्वस्थवृत्ताध्यायः - वसंत ऋतूचर्या <sup>[20]</sup> ( <i>Svasthanvuttadhyaya</i> )	Included in the lifestyle recommendations for the spring season.

These references show *Kodrava's* wide use in *Ayurvedic* medicine, including treatments for obesity, wound healing, skin diseases, urinary disorders, and seasonal lifestyle recommendations.

### Vagbhat Samhita

In *Vagbhata Samhita*, *Kodrava* is mentioned in various chapters for different medical purposes:

1.	स्नेहविधिमाध्यायः - स्नेहव्यापद चिकित्सा <sup>[21]</sup> ( <i>Snehavidhimadhyaya</i> )	Prescribed in the treatment of <i>Snehavyapad</i> .
2.	गर्भव्यापदं शरीर - आम जन्य गर्भव्यापद - पथ्या <sup>[22]</sup>	<i>Garbhavyapadam Sharira</i> : Recommended as a wholesome dietary option for common <i>Aamjanya Garbhvyapad</i> during pregnancy.
3.	अर्श निदानम् - उदावर्त हेतू <sup>[23]</sup> ( <i>Arsha Nidanam</i> )	Mentioned as a therapeutic diet for hemorrhoids, especially when caused by <i>udavarta</i> .
4.	कासचिकित्सितम् - पित्तज कास <sup>[24]</sup> ( <i>Kasa Chikitsitam</i> )	Used in the treatment of cough, especially when it is due to <i>Pitta</i> aggravation.
5.	छर्दिहृद्रोगतृष्णाचिकित्सित म्- तृष्णाचिकित्सितम् <sup>[25]</sup> ( <i>Chardihridayrogatrishnachaikitsitam</i> )	Utilized in the treatment of thirst, possibly related to heart disease or vomiting.

6.	उदरचिकित्सित- जलोदर पथ्य [26] (Udarachikitsitam)	Prescribed as a dietary remedy for dropsy or ascites.
7.	कुष्ठचिकित्सितम् [27] (Kushthachikitsitam)	Included in the treatment of skin diseases.
8.	वातव्याधिचिकित्सितम् - ऊरुस्तम्भे [28] (Vatavyadhi Chikitsitam)	Used for treating stiffness or pain in the thighs.
9.	सर्वाक्षिरोगप्रतिषेधमध्यायः - नेत्र पथ्यकर [29] (Sarvakshirogapratished hamadhyayah)	Recommended as a dietary option for promoting eye health.
10.	मुखरोगप्रतिषेधमध्यायः - कफज गलगंडा [30] (Mukharogapratishedha madhyaayah:)	Mentioned in the treatment of oral diseases like Galaganda (goiter) caused by Kapha.
11.	शिरोगप्रतिषेधमध्यायः - दारुणक [31] (Shirorogapratishedham adhyaayah)	Utilized in the treatment of dandruff.
12.	शिरोगप्रतिषेधमध्यायः - पलितचिकित्सा [32] (Shirorogapratishedham adhyaayah)	Possibly employed in the treatment of hairfall.

These references highlight *Kodrava's* diverse Ayurvedic uses, including treatments for digestive disorders, respiratory ailments, skin diseases, and pregnancy-related conditions.

### In Modern

*Kodo* millet (*Paspalum scrobiculatum* Linn) is a nutrient-rich, gluten-free grain high in carbs, protein, fiber, vitamins, iron, and calcium. It helps regulate blood sugar and aids digestion. Versatile in porridges, pilafs, salads, and baked goods, it may also combat

oxidative stress. Thriving in harsh conditions with minimal water, *Kodo* millet is a nutritious, adaptable, and eco-friendly choice.

Nutrient	Quantity (per 100g)
Moisture	11.6 g
Protein	10.6 g
Fat	4.2 g
Fiber	10.2 g
Ash	2.95 g
Calorific value	346 kcal
Carbohydrate	59.2 g
Minerals	4.4 g
Calcium	27 mg
Phosphorus	188 mg
Iron	0.5 mg
Riboflavin	0.09 mg
Niacin	2.0 mg

This table format clearly organizes *Kodo* millet's nutritional information, making it easy to read and compare components.

**Here are some points that denote *Kodrava* as *Kodo* millets:**

**Synonymous Usage:** *Kodrava*, also known as *Kodo* millet, is referred to interchangeably in Ayurvedic texts and modern scientific literature, indicating they are the same grain.

**Botanical Identification:** *Kodrava* is scientifically identified as *Paspalum scrobiculatum* Linn., confirming its classification as *Kodo* millet.

Attribute	Detail
Common Name	Kodo Millet



Scientific Name	<i>Paspalum scrobiculatum</i>
Family	Poaceae
Genus	Paspalum

### Ecology Kodrava

*Kodrava*, or *Kodo* millet, thrives in warm climates (25°C to 35°C) with 600-1000 mm annual rainfall, preferring sandy loam soils, and can grow up to 2000 meters. Cultivated in India, Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Americas, these resilient millets flourish in poor soil and limited water.

Millets, including *Kodrava*, enhance food security, reduce poverty, and combat malnutrition. They improve health, support rural livelihoods, education, and gender equality. Requiring less water and using clean energy, they promote climate resilience and biodiversity, advancing UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Prime Minister *Modi's* Shree Anna project promotes millets to improve farmers' income and public health, supported by government policies, research funding, and infrastructure development, restoring millets as a nutritious and sustainable food source.

### Ayurvedic Principle of Healthcare and the Role of Kodo Millets

“स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्य रक्षणं, आतुरस्य विकार प्रशमनं। (चरक संहिता सूत्र ३०।२६)”

The Ayurvedic principle outlined in the *Charaka Samhita* emphasizes the dual objectives of healthcare: preserving the health of individuals who are already healthy and treating the ailments of those who are unwell. This holistic approach underscores the importance of preventive medicine in maintaining overall well-being while also addressing the specific needs of patients who require medical intervention.

Kodo millets play a significant role in promoting health and well-being, aligning with the Ayurvedic principle. They serve a dual purpose:

**Preservation of Health:** Kodo millets are rich in nutrients, vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber,

promoting digestive health, boosting immunity, and supporting optimal bodily functions. Consuming Kodo millets as part of a balanced diet helps maintain good health and prevents various diseases.

**Treatment of Ailments:** Kodo millets possess therapeutic qualities according to *Ayurveda*, with cooling properties (*Sita Virya*) that can balance *Pitta Dosh*. This makes them beneficial in managing conditions such as hemorrhoids, cough, and skin issues. Additionally, their ability to bind and retain fluids (*Grahi* property) aids in managing ailments like diarrhea and excessive mucus production.

By incorporating Kodo millets into one's diet, individuals can adhere to the principles of Ayurvedic healthcare by both preserving their health and addressing specific health concerns through the therapeutic properties of these nutritious grains.

### Culinary Uses of Kodrava

Millets, rich in protein, fiber, vitamins, and minerals, promote health and aid digestion. Their gluten-free nature makes them perfect for various dishes like kodo millet kheer, dhokla, appapam, paniyaram, adai, payasam, khichari, and methi rice. FSSAI's "Millet Recipes: A Healthy Menu for Canteens" encourages healthier eating.

1. Kodo Millet Kheer: Creamy dish with kodo millet, milk, sugar, and almonds.
2. Kodo Millet Dhokla: Steamed snack with black gram and kodo millet, served with chutney.
3. Kodo Millet Appapam: Crispy breakfast with kodo millet, coconut, and rice flakes.
4. Kodo Millet Paniyaram: Savory dish with vegetables and urad dal.
5. Kodo Millet Adai: Spiced snack with kodo millet and dals, served with chutney.
6. Kodo Millet Payasam: Dessert with nuts, milk, sugar, saffron, and kodo millet.
7. Kodo Khichari: Spicy stew with kodo millet, moong dal, and vegetables.

8. Kodo Millet Methi Rice: Dish with fenugreek leaves, spices, and kodo millet, served with raita.

## DISCUSSION

The traditional Ayurvedic wisdom, along with modern scientific research, shows the benefits of Kodo millets. This mix underlines Ayurveda's relevance in today's healthcare and the potential of traditional grains like Kodo millets in addressing current health concerns. Emphasizing their nutrient-rich composition, the talk urges for adding Kodo millets into modern diets to boost general health and well-being. Kodo millets are also environmentally friendly, thriving in arid circumstances and boosting soil health and biodiversity, coinciding with global initiatives to address climate change and food security. The article underlines the importance of government funding, research collaboration, and global awareness, highlighting initiatives like Prime Minister Modi's "Shree Anna" campaign. It envisions future opportunities in millet research, advocacy, and investment, striving to explore the full potential of Kodo millets for sustainable development, nutrition security, and public health improvement.

## CONCLUSION

*Kodrava*, or Kodo millet, combines ancient Ayurvedic wisdom with modern science, offering significant health benefits and supporting environmental conservation. Rich in fiber, vitamins, and minerals, it aids digestion, manages diabetes, and reduces inflammation. Its culinary versatility makes it a nutritious, gluten-free alternative to rice or wheat. *Kodrava*'s sustainable cultivation aligns with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), promoting food security, economic opportunities for farmers, gender equality, and reduced chemical use. Initiatives like Prime Minister Modi's "Shree Anna" highlight *Kodrava*'s potential to enhance health, agriculture, and global food systems, fostering a sustainable and nutritious future.

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