



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 4 · Issue 5

Sept-Oct 2019

Journal of
**Ayurveda and Integrated
Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



Charaka
Publications

Indexed

Anupana - A Critical Review

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has a unique approach to maintain health of an individual and to cure diseases. According to Ayurveda, there does not exist anything which is not medicinal. The food we eat and the water we drink, can influence the status of our body. *Anupana* is a unique concept mentioned in our science, in which various liquid as well as solid items are logically administered along with various food and medicine. In context of food, *Anupana* helps in its better digestion and absorption and provides complete nourishment to the body. While in the administration of medicine it is not only for palatability but for carrying the drug to target site by which it increases its absorption and bio availability to target sites. The terms which can be taken to understand the concepts of *Anupana* from modern system of medicine are vehicle, adjuvant or synergist and carrier through which the actions like drug absorption, drug companion, drug delivery and bioavailability of the drug takes place. The mode of action of *Anupana* explained by *Acharya* is that, as the oil spread in the water, the medicine also get spread by the effect of which the drug action get enhanced. *Anupana* plays a major role in potentiating drug action through pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics. However, its importance and practical utility is not fully recognized and applied in clinical practice.

Key words: *Anupana, Vehicle, Adjuvant, Synergist, Carrier, Bioavailability.*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the science of life deals with unique treatment modalities and it is a well-established science with its own various concepts in curing diseases. One among these peculiar concept is the distinctive way of administration of *Ahara* and *Aushada* along with different types of *Anupana* based on the *Dosha, Roga, Kala* etc. which yields different therapeutic effect.

Anupana is one of the unique concept in Ayurveda

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Submission Date: 17/09/2019 Accepted Date: 25/10/2019

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

Published by Maharshi Charaka Ayurveda Organization, Vijayapur, Karnataka (Regd) under the license CC-by-NC-SA

which plays an important role in the treatment. Mainly *Brihatrayis* emphasized *Anupana* with respect to *Ahara*, but in medieval period *Anupana* with *Aushada* was given more significance. The action of *Anupana* is cited with a simile as, when a drop of oil dropped in vessel containing water it spreads quickly, similarly when *Anupana* is administered, it pervades the medicine all over the body quickly. It can increase the palatability of the food or medicine, can improve the digestion and absorption and also act as a vehicle which carries the drug to their target site. Hence in clinical practice, the knowledge of specific action of drug with particular *Anupana* should be taken into consideration.

Derivation

The word *Anupana* is derived out of two words: *Anu+Pana*

The word *anu* indicate the meaning *Paschat* (after), where as *Pana* is derived out of "*Paa*" *Dhatu* and "*Lyt*" *Pratyaya* and the word is indicated as drinking.^[1]

Definition

In classical text books of *Ayurveda*, *Anupana* is defined as a specific liquid material, which is taken along with or after the intake of *Aushada* or *Ahara*. The book *Rasatarangini* defines *Anupana* as “*Thaththath Rogagna Baishajyam Beshajasy Anupeeyate, Yacha Sahayakarisyat Anupanam Thaduchyathe*”.^[2] The one which is taken after the medication and having the properties that can counteract the disease and can facilitate the drug action.

Historical review

The references of *Anupana* is not directly available in vedic period, but can be traced with the help of different aspects like *Aachamana*, the *Pana* which is taken for some of the regimens to cure the diseases. In *Vishnupurana* it is mentioned that while consuming *Ahara*, *Jala* has to be taken in between and after food. And *Garuda Purana* has been mentioned usage of *Shaalī Tandula Churna* along with *Ksheera*. *Anupana* is explained by all *Brihatrayis* in detail. In *Charaka Sutrasthana*, detailed description of different *Anupanas* including *Asavas* are mentioned.^[3] In *Susrutha Samhitha*, *Sutrasthana*, there is a *Varga* known as *Anupana Varga* explained.^[4] Then some of the *Madyakaleena Granthas* like *Dravyaguna Sangraha*, *Kayyadeva Nigantu*, *Raja Nigantu* etc. given a detailed explanation on *Anupana*. Where in *Rajanigantu* there is a classification of *Anupana* into *kramana* and *Pachana*.^[5] Later we get references of *Anupana* from *Rasashastra Granthas* like *Rasa Tarangini*, *Rasa Jala Nidhi* etc. and some of the books like *Anupana Manjari*, *Anupana Darpana* and *Anupana Kalpatharu* also gives an explanation on *Anupana*.

Classification of Anupana

- 1) Based on derivation, *Sahapana* and *Paschatpana* are taken as the types of *Anupana*.
- 2) Based on the usage, *Anupana* can be classified into *Aharopayogi Anupana* and *Aushadopayogi Anupana*.

Sahapana

The word *Sahapana* is not found in any of the Ayurvedic textbook prior to *Rasa Tarangini* and it is defined as “*Yathayogena Rasadeenam Vibhaktha Paramanavahadrutham Angeshu Sarpanthi Sahapanam Thaduchyathe*”^[6] administration of medicine by mixing with another substance which can facilitate easy disintegration, absorption and uniform distribution of medicine all over the body.

Aharopayogi Anupana

The concept *Anupana* is explained by all *Brihatrayis* after the detailed description of *Bakshya Varga* or *Krithanna Varga*, which means they gave prime importance to *Anupana* in the context of food. In these chapters *Acharyas* also given the nature of *Anupana* concerned to food only such as “*Anupana* should be dissimilar to the qualities of food. But it should not be opposite to the qualities of *Dhatus*”.^[7,8] In *Susrutha Samhitha*, *Acarya* specially mentioned about the effect of *Anupana* according to the time of administration in relation to the food. i.e., *Anupana* taken before food causes *Karshana*, taken along with food causes *Sthiratha*, and after food causes *Brimhana*.^[9]

Aushadopayogi Anupana

The later *Granthas* like *Yogaratanakara* mentioned that, the *Anupana* is not limited to food, but it is administered with *Oushada* also. The *Oushada* become more potent when given with suitable *Anupana* by considering the *Avastha* and *Bala* of the *Rogi* and *Roga*.

Effects of Anupana

To understand the effect of *Anupana*, the knowledge of its *Gunakarma* is most essential. There is a detailed description on *Guna* and *Karma* of *Anupana* in *Brihatrayis* tabulated as follows.^[10-13]

Guna Karma	C.S	S.S	A.S	A.H
Refreshing	✓	✓	✓	×
Pleasing	✓	×	✓	×
Gives energy	✓	×	✓	✓

Nourishing	✓	✓	✓	×
Brings satisfaction	✓	×	✓	×
Steadiness in the food consumed	✓	×	✓	×
Breakdown food particles	✓	×	✓	✓
Softens the food	✓	✓	✓	×
Brings unctuous to food	✓	×	✓	✓
Helps in digestion	✓	×	✓	×
Proper assimilation	✓	×	✓	×
Helps in instant diffusion of food	✓	×	✓	×
Improves taste	×	✓	×	×
Aphrodisiac	×	✓	×	×
Dissolves the accumulated <i>Dosha</i>	×	✓	×	×
Removes lethargy	×	✓	×	×
Relieves fatigue	×	✓	×	×
Appetiser	×	✓	×	×
Alleviates <i>Dosha</i>	×	✓	×	×
Quenches thirst	×	✓	×	×
Bestows strength	×	✓	×	×
Improves complexion	×	✓	×	×
Helps in digestion of heavy meals	×	✓	×	×
Brings satisfaction	×	×	×	✓
Spread food or medicine	×	×	×	✓
Brings strength to body	×	×	×	✓

Selection of Anupana

The main factors considered for the selection of Anupana are *Dosha*, *Roga*, *Aushadha* and *Ahara*.

Anupana according to *Dosha*^[14]

Vata - *Snigdha*, *Ushna* (*Sura*, *Sauviraka*, *Tushodaka*, *Dhanyamla*, *Phalamla* etc.)

Pitta - *Seethe*, *Madhura* (*Mridwika Swarasa*, *Ksheera*, *Amalaki Swarasa* etc.)

Kapha - *Ruksha*, *Ushna* (*Madhu*, *Kashaya*, *Mutra* etc.)

According to *Roga*

Specific types of Anupanas are mentioned in different disease conditions. Clever physician can select the suit Anupana according to the disease. For example

Takra - *Grahani*

Ushnodaka - *Ajeerna*

Puranagritha - *Unmade*

Guduchiswarasa - *Vatarakta*

According to *Aushada*

Different Anupanas are mentioned along with both single drugs and formulations. Thus physician can use same drug with different Anupanas in different conditions.

Single drug with different Anupanas^[15]

Dravya	Vikara	Anupana
Guduchi	Vatavikara	Ghrita
	Pitta Vikara	Sita
	Kapha Vikara	Madhu
	Vibandha	Guda
	Vatarakta	Eranda Taila

Some formulation indicated in different diseases with different Anupanas^[16]

Formulation	Indicated condition	Anupanas
Yogaraja Guggulu	Vatavyadhi	Rasnadikwatha
	Prameha	Darvikwatha
	Pandu	Gomutra
	Medovridhi	Madhu
	Kushta	Nimbakwatha

	<i>Vataraktha</i>	<i>Amrithakwatha</i>
	<i>Netraroga</i>	<i>Triphalakwatha</i>
<i>Kankayana Gulika</i>	<i>Vatikagulma</i>	<i>Madya</i>
	<i>Pittikagulma</i>	<i>Goksheera</i>
	<i>Kaphajagulma</i>	<i>Gomutra</i>
	<i>Tridoshajagulma</i>	<i>Dasamulakwatha</i>
	<i>Raktajagulma</i>	<i>Ushtraksheera</i>

Anupanas indicated in different types of Ahara^[17]

Aharopayogi Anupanas are well described in *Brihatrayis*. Some of them are tabulated below.

Ahara Dravyas	Anupanas
<i>Yava , Godhuma, Dhadhi, Madhu</i> etc.	<i>Sheetha Jala</i>
<i>Pishtanna</i>	<i>Koshna Jala</i>
Food prepared with pulses, vegetables	<i>Mastu, Takra, Dhanyamla</i>
<i>Mamsa</i>	<i>Madya</i>

Role of Anupana in Rasaoushadhis

Importance of *Anupana* along with *Rasa Oushadhis* were well explained in *Rasa Tarangini* by using the terms *Anupana* and *Sahapana*, which has been already elaborated, where *Acharya* gave a clear explanation on definition of these terms. *Anupanas* having more function in *Rasa Oushadhis*. Firstly it removes the toxicity of *Rasaoushadha*, it decreases the *Tikshnatha* of medicine and makes it suitable for the body. Most of the *Rasaoushadhas* are advised to be taken in a very minute quantity, so *Anupanas* can help in carrying the small quantity of medicine to the target site. Hence it increases the bioavailability. Almost all *Rasaoushadhis* have different system wise action with different *Anupanas*. For example some of the specific *Anupanas* of *Rasa Sindura* are tabulated below.^[18]

Disease condition	Specific Anupanas
<i>Ajirna</i>	<i>Madhu, Musthakwatha</i>
<i>Aruchi</i>	<i>Matulungaswarasa</i>

<i>Bagandhara</i>	<i>Triphala</i> and <i>Vidangakwatha</i>
<i>Chardi</i>	<i>Elakwatha</i> or <i>Madhu</i>
<i>Kasa</i>	<i>Vasa Swarasa, Pippali</i> and <i>Madhu</i>
<i>Murcha</i>	<i>Narikela Jala</i>
<i>Sotha</i>	<i>Punarnavadikwatha</i>
<i>Rakthapitha</i>	<i>Draksha</i> and <i>Ela</i>
<i>Swasa</i>	<i>Vibhitakikwatha, Vasa Swarasa</i>
<i>Pandu</i>	<i>Lohabhasma</i>
<i>Unmada</i>	<i>Kushmandaswarasa</i>

Role of Anupana in Sneha preparation^[19]

Importance of *Anupana* in sneha preparation also enlightened as *Ushnajala* in *Grithapana*, *Yusha* in *Taila* and *Manda* in *Vasa* and *Majjapana*.

Contra-indications of Anupana

Anupana is contraindicated in conditions like *Urdhajatrugataroga*, *Swasa*, *Kasa*, *Hikka*, *Urakshata*, *Peenasa*, *Swarabeda*, *Geetha-Bashya-Adhyayana Prasaktha*.^[20]

In *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Acharya* mentioned about some disease conditions like *Prameha*, *Gala* and *Netraroga*, *Praklinnadeha*, *Vrana* where excess intake of water is contraindicated.

Some specific anupanas are contraindicated in some conditions, for example *Ushnajala* is contraindicated with *Dadhi*, *Madhu*, in *Bhallataka* and *Tuvaraka Rasayana* and in *Paittika* diseases like *Daha* and *Brama*.

If *Anupana* given in contraindicated patients it causes the *Ashayadushti*. It makes disturbance in stomach and chest, increases moisture of the food in the throat and causes watery discharge from the tissue and produce indigestion, vomiting and other diseases.^[21]

Concept of Anupana in modern medicine^[22]

The terms which can be taken to understand the concepts of *Anupana* from modern system of medicine are vehicle, adjuvant or synergist and carrier through which the actions like drug absorption, drug companion, drug interaction, drug delivery and bioavailability of the drug will take place.

Vehicles are the substances used for the administration of medicine. They allow the local release of suitable amount of active drug to the target site and also helps for the physical actions like smoothening, lubricating, cooling etc.

Adjuvant is that which assist, especially a drug added to a prescription to hasten or increase the action of a principal ingredient. It is a non specific stimulator of the immune system.

Synergist is a word synonymous to the adjuvant which means the facilitation of a pharmacological response by the concomitant use of two or more drugs, where the total effect is greater than the sum of their independent action.

A molecule that when combined with another substance is called **carrier**. When it combined with another substance, it can pass through a cell membrane, as occurs in facilitated diffusion or some transport mechanism.

Mode of action

Mode of action of *Anupana* explained by *Acharya Sarnagadhara* with a simile that, as the drop of oil put on stable water spreads so quickly, in the similar way *Anupana* helps for quick absorption and assimilation of the drug in the body.^[23] When we administer the medicines along with proper *Anupana*, it spread quickly due to the *Yogavahi* and *Vyavayi* properties of the base. Honey is the most commonly used *Anupana* in Ayurvedic medicine, due to its *Yogavahi* property. Sometimes *Agryoushadhas* or other medicines which pacify the disease is also used as *Anupanas*. *Anupanas* can also be used for sustaining the drug action as in chronic diseases like *Tailapana* in *Vatavyadi*. *Vishahara* properties of *Anupana Dravyas* also a probable mode of action in *Rasa Oushadis*.

Significance of Anupana

Anupana along with *Aushadha* not only acts as a vehicle for it but also a very important factor which helps in absorption and assimilation of the same.

Anupana act as an adjuvant or synergist to the drug in treating the disease.

Anupana increases drug palatability by improving taste, consistency and by masking the odour of the drug.

Some drugs produce ill effect if not purified properly, here *Anupana* may mask or reduce the undesired effect of the drug.

Anupana helps in quick distribution and disintegration of medicine molecules and hence medicine get absorbed very quickly.

Though medicines have multiple disease curing property, *Anupana* takes medicine to the right pathway and helps in getting desired action.

Significance of *Anupana* along with ahara should be understood from its *Guna Karma* elaborated in *Brihatrayis*. According to *Charaka Samhita* proper administration of *Anupana* with *Ahara* brings refreshment of body quickly, helps in easy digestion resulting in the promotion of longevity, strength, pleasure etc., softening and liquefying the hard mass of food. *Susruta Samhita* highlighted some specific points on importance of *Anupana* related to *Ahara*, the food which is defective or heavy or taken in excess quantity is digested easily by *Anupana Dravyas*. If a small quantity of water is not consumed frequently during a meal, the food will not remain moist. Instead it become dry and cause many ailments in the body. Therefore, *Anupana* is required for proper digestion of the food.

Does it mean Prakshepa?

While going through the details of *Anupana* the term *Prakshepa* can not be avoided. Because in Kerala *Anupana* is considered as *Prakshepa* by the name "mempodi" The term *Prakshepa* is not mentioned in *Brihatrayis*. Later, it was introduced in the context of *Aushadha Kalpana*, *Vasti Kalpana* etc. The word

meaning indicate that one which is added to the medicine. *Prakshepa* can be of any form, may liquid or solid. Compared to *Anupana* the quantity of *Prakshepa* is very less, but similar in action of *Anupana*. *Prakshepa* is specifically indicated for *Aushadha* whereas *Anupana* is applicable both for *Aushadha* and *Ahara*.

DISCUSSION

From *Nirukthi* and *Paribhasha* of *Anupana* it seems to be the drink which is taken after food or medicine. By compiling all the definitions, *Anupana* can be understood as a specific substance to be administered at proper time and in prescribed method along with or after *Ahara* and *Aushadha* to get the desired effects. But from definition in *Rasa Tarangini*, *Rogagna Beshaja* can also be used as *Anupana*. The same book define another term *Sahapana* as a media which is administered along with medicine, spreads very quickly as *Agni* and brings separation of *Paramanu*. Both these terms have important role in context of *Aushadhopyogi Anupanas*. Because in most situations we people administer the medicine by mixing with another substance as like *Sahapana*. *Anupana* is considered as a liquid media by *Vagbhata*, *Charaka*, *Susrutha* and *Sharngadhara*. But we can also find the solids like *Guda*, *Sitha* etc. mentioned as *Anupana* in some specific formulations. This reveals *Anupana* can used in the form of liquid or solid both. Usually in clinical practice, solid *Anupanas* like *Guda* added to *Kwatha* like formulation in the name *Prakshepa* whereas formulations like *Gulika*, *Churna*, *Avaleha* etc. are taken along with liquid *Anupanas* like milk, hot water, butter milk etc.

Effect of *Anupana*, *Lakshanas* and contraindications all are explained by *Brihatrayis* in relation to the *Ahara Dravyas*. Its significance along with *Aushadha* is highlighted mainly by later *Granthas* like *Sharngadhara Samhitha*, *Yogaratanakara* and *Rasa Tarangini*. We should understand that along with *Ahara*, *Anupana* act as a digestant, appetizer etc. but along with *Aushada* it enhances the bioavailability, absorption, potency etc. Contraindication of *Anupana* means water, milk etc. as *Anupana* after the food is

contraindicated in patients with *Swasa*, *Kasa* and especially in *Jatroordha Vikaras*. Therefore, quantity of *Anupana* is more important when it is used in treatment. It should be moderate, otherwise it causes some discomforts.

CONCLUSION

Concept of *Anupana* is a unique contribution and it plays a crucial role when used both with *Ahara* and *Aushadha*. With the help of same drug, we can treat many kinds of diseases with different *Anupanas* which means *Anupana* can easily intervene the mode of action of main drug. Both solids and liquids can be used as *Anupana*. In *Keraleeya Chikitsa* the solid *Anupanas* are used as *Prakshepa* in the name *Mempodi*. The limitation of non-feasibility of advocating many classical *Anupanas* can be overcome by logical administration of suitable *Anupanas* according to the disease. That means, we can use *Agryoushadhas* also in the form of *Anupana*. Hence the pharmacological actions of Ayurvedic drugs can be made faster when we practice the usage of *Anupana* along with our *Oushadha*.

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How to cite this article: Dr. Jaseela V K, Dr. Jyolsna G. Krishna. Anupana - A Critical Review. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2019;5:311-317.

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