

**THERAPEUTIC CONCEPT OF WATER - AN AYURVEDIC VIEW****Dr. Preeti***

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ABSTRACT

Therapeutics is to study remedial action of any agent, in Ayurveda we work on the concept that whatever *Dravya* existing in universe had some therapeutic action, nothing is useless so being a science of life Ayurveda focus on the concepts of healing via various agents, like water, food articles etc. being water a part of body formation had impact on health also. It is well seen by merely controlled or cautious intake of water can prevent diseases or can help in their management. It helps in balancing Tridosha because of its constitution as well as balance *Manasik Bhavas* i.e. *Triguna*, helps in excretion of *Trimala* also and being a part of structural units of human or universe i.e. *Panchamahabhoota* it has impact on formation and destruction of living beings. To balance this, various forms of intake of water are

mentioned in *Ayurvedic* classics. Like various type of boiled waters, infusions according to *Doshas*, its metabolism in body and so on. Along with it there are indication and contraindication of water intake in various conditions according to *Dosha*, *Agni* etc factors. Thus water shows various therapeutic impacts on one's health. By knowledge towards therapeutic action of water in present stage and by giving information to the population can decrease the load of diseases on health system along with it by adopting it as measure of lifestyle one can live a healthy life as jargon used 'Be Mindful during drinking water' can bring major change in concept of health maintenance. Even though if knowledge of Ayurvedic concept at ground level can make people to be healthier ever before.

KEYWORDS: Therapeutics, *Dravya*, *Tridosha*, *Triguna*, *Pancha Mahabhoota*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda being an eternal science had a huge and detailed heritage of different aspects of life along with the substance present in surrounding. In Ayurveda we considered every substance had its therapeutic properties so as water also which is discussed in detail in our classics. It is way of our sages to give importance, that consideration of any in form of religious aspect. And in this way water is considered as sacred. And the great principle of Ayurveda which brings in account that whatever is existing in outer world same is in inside body. As in world if it increases or decreases from its limits can cause harm or destruct the humanity similarly in body also. That's why in classics there is indication of cautious intake of water. In Ayurveda water is given a great importance as it is categorized as *Mahabhoota* because it is essential for formation of the universe or also said as *Shristi Utappati*. Being responsible for formation, its equilibrium is needed to live healthy because "As we are i.e. *Purusha* is combination of *Panchamahabhoota* and *Shariri*"^[1]. As looking towards its importance concept of *Tridosha*, *Triguna* as well as *Sapta Dhatu* there is need of *Jala Mahaboot* for maintenance of equilibrium. As per philosophical perspective it is very much important entity for formation of *Shristi*.

When comes to health and diseases concept, amount of water intake can determine health as well as determine occurrence of diseases. There are huge examples of these. It not only related with physical or physiological arena but also with psychological condition of one.

Our ancient sages knows about the importance of water, its mode of intake, amount to be taken, processing with herbs according to condition as well as according to environmental changes, place of origin or from where water is collected, these were a tool of identification or differential diagnosis of the diseases too.

Qualities of warm and cold water are discussed according to their therapeutic uses and for health maintenance can be said as per '*Swaasthvrittomatam*'. Separate qualities are mentioned for warm, boiled, half left boiled etc.

Diseases are also mentioned with cause of origin of excessive intake of water and there also indication of conditions in which one should take less amount of water or should avoid. A separate disease named *Trishna* is also mentioned in Ayurveda classics in which there is specific clinical feature of desire of intake of excessive water.

Intake of water just before waking up in a decided amount from mouth as well as from nostril is also mentioned because of their therapeutic uses. By viewing towards different important uses in diseases causation as well as in maintenance of health, Water or *Jala* can be considered as an important part of life. To be healthy one must know how to deal with it. In modern world also it is considered as an important part for maintaining health of human as it constitutes approx 70% of gross body, needed for balancing homeostasis, ionic equilibrium maintenance, digestion, excretion and so on. It is vital part for life which is well known from ancient time. To show its importance a variety of religious context came like worshipping *Jala* as a deity, which was a mode of sages to bring out focus on therapeutic importance and one should respect water in life. Thus on focusing on its importance as part of life its therapeutic properties are discussed below.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

As it is a review article ancient classical references along with various journals can be considered as materials and method is collection and interpretation is done.

Therapeutics of water

Remedial action of water was well described in ancient classics, but to bring down the burden of diseases i.e. prevention it is must to consider it in a practical way. Water is the substance which we intake and use in different forms daily, even without water survival is not possible. In Ayurveda the time when there is formation of universe or can be considered as human, role of water starts at minute level, where it is considered as *Mahabhoota*. In late life there is need of water to maintain physiological functions and so on.

According to relation with *tridosha* and *triguna* and *sapta dhatu*

As per description in ancient classics *Jala Mahabhoota* is formed with the help Agni Mahabhoota and as per description in *Jala/ water* there is existence of *Satva Guna* and *Tamoguna* both (Su.Sha. 1/27)^[2]. *Satva Prakshaka*. (Bh. Pu. 2/4)^[3] so it the quality which is helpful in maintenance of one's health and as well as psych. As per existence of Tama Dosha in it, can create heaviness in body and sluggishness in ones behavior. That's why whenever we are boiling or heating water due to *Agni Sannikarsha* there is increase of Satva Guna and lightness is the effect of that. That's why there is huge important of warm, boiled water in classics.

In Tridosha “*Ambha Prithvibhyam Shleshma*” is said which means *Kabha dosha*’s amount is determined with the help of *Jala Mahabhoota*. That’s why in ancient classics in various diseases amount of water taken is restricted. And excessive intake is also mentioned in *Hetu* of various diseases. As *Tridoshas* are considered as physiological or functional unit of human body, to maintain health or over all function it is necessary to maintain water also.

As per *Panchabhautik Sangathana* also there is influence of *Jala* in formation and maintenance of amount and health of Dhatu.

When it comes to *Shada Rasa*, there is detail description that how it exists in them and what is the function of water on the body. Water is constituent of Madhura Rasa (Jala+ Prithivi), Lavan (Jala + Agni)^[4], but when it comes to perception of any taste only *Jala* is the medium because when come to its specific qualities Rasa is said for jala and to perceive these senses *Rasanendriya* i.e. tongue is considered as main organ of taste.

Qualities of water

Qualities of water, however dependent upon the vessel in which it is collected as well as the geographical area where it is existing , timings and so on . Purest form of water is considered which come from rain and collected, examined and used. Specific qualities of water are mentioned such as

Anirdeshya Rasa, Amritama, Jiviniya, Tarpana, Dharan, AAshavasaJananam, Shramakalamapipasamada Murcha Arta Tandra Nidra Daha Prashmana Ekantatam Pathyatam.^[5]

Water shouldn’t have any specific taste, it brings life, satiety, and can subside tiredness, delirium, unconsciousness, sleepiness etc. These are qualities and therapeutic properties of pure water mentioned in ancient classics along with the different forms and infusion of water with other adjuvant qualities are also mentioned.

In present era where there are various discussion on the memory of water, one should be more meaningful when treat water or use it, it was well described in ancient era.

Quenching of thirst is not only a talk of gross level but inside body there are various chemical changes occurs to balance that.

It is also mentioned as a *Ekantantam Pathyatam* which means *Sarva Kale Desh Purush Vyadhishu pryogyoasya dhyotyete (Dalhana)* can also be said as pure water is good for all in every condition.

Along with it, its effect is also dependent on the person or constitution (*Prakriti*), *Kaal* etc.

Digestion of water

As other food articles or medicines taken, take times in proper digestion same as water, that's why one should take water cautiously, which form of water one should take and in which amount.^[6]

Table no. 1.

<i>Type of water</i>	Duration of metabolism
<i>Aama Jala (unprocessed)</i>	1 <i>Yaam</i> aprox 3 hours
<i>Shrita Sheet</i>	$\frac{1}{2}$ <i>Yaam</i> aprox 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hour
<i>Boiled Hot</i>	$\frac{1}{4}$ <i>Yaam</i> aprox 45 minutes

Usha Jalapan therapeutic properties^[7]

Intake of *Paryushita Jala* (unprocessed water kept overnight) before sunrise can pacify *Tridosha* because of heaviness of water and coolness it can pacify *Pitta* and *Vata Dosh*a, helpful in proper excretion, along with it can prevent disorders related to digestive system *Mandagni*, *Arsha*, *Shostha*, *Jwara*, *Kustha*, *Medo Vikara*, *Mutraghata* etc. amount mentioned in classics is *Astha Prasarat* (aprox 640ml), before sunrise.

Effects of water intake via nasal route

It is also mentioned in classics with therapeutic properties. Amount taken is *Trya Prasiriti* (aprox 240ml). By intake of water via nasal route one can gain good vision resembled with *Garud*, can prevent signs of ageing i.e. wrinkling of skin and graying of hairs etc. it can be primary prevention of rhinitis etc.

Shitodaka therapeutic properties^[8] (cold water properties)

Cold water is considered beneficial in certain conditions because of its properties. As it is said that it pacifies *Pitta Dosh*as, Toxicity and stage of delirium, can be used in condition related to blood, diarrhea. In this way it can be said that whenever there is vitiation of *Pitta Dosh*a and *Rakta* disorders one should be advised to take cold water.

Ushanodaka therapeutic properties^[8] (hot water)

In *Ayurveda* hot water is said about the water which is boiled and half left, without any movement, bubbles and it should be clean.

Therapeutic uses are in *Kapha Dosha*, *Vatik disorder*, *Medo Dosha*, *Deepan*, *Bastishodhan*, *Kasa*, *Shavasa*, *Jwarahara*, *Pathya*.

Shritsheet jala (boiled cold water) therapeutic properties

Indication in abdominal disorders like *Gulma*, *Arsha*, *Kshaya*, *Mandagni*, *Pandu*, *Vrana* *Atisara* etc. with specific precaution that one must take care that its amount should be taken less.

Therapeutic indication of ushnoaudaka^[8] (hot water)

It is indicated or said to be beneficial in vitiated *Kapha Dosha* or in general conditions if taken much of *Kapha* dominated food or can be said as *Guru Aahar*. It also pacifies *Vata Dosha* and manages *Ajeerna*.

There is detailed description of water which is responsible for diseases according to geographical area distributed according to rivers which cross that particular area in ancient time but due to wide variety of changes in geographical distribution there is still controversy in their distribution.

Water as body cleansing agent in yogic literature^[13]

In Yogic literature when there is indication of cleansing of body, *Shatkarmas* are described as in Ayurvedic texts description of *Panchakarma Shuddhi*. In Yoga these cleansing processes are performed with the help of water which brings its importance in cleansing i.e. in *Varisar Dhauti*- there is intake of water for upper GIT cleansing, *Moolshodhan* and *Jala Basti* for Lower GIT, *Jala Neti* for *Kappal shuddhi* for ENT etc. there is description of therapeutic actions over different *Doshas* also.

DISCUSSION

Therapeutic of water is well known to the society from ancient period of time, to bring it in front or at ground level our sages give it a name of sacred agent, that's why in India it is very popular, even in other countries also. Various studies done in recent years regarding effect of water on health, memory of water by crystal structural changes, harmful effects on

health of living beings if an optimum level of water is not taken as excess or less water can cause load on kidneys and disbalance in ionic equilibrium.

Imbalance of intake of water – this leads to volume overload is taken in excess amount, due to which the excessive water can go to extracellular fluid and can cause oedema, overload over kidneys. Volume overload can be mentioned as expansion of extracellular fluid, which can occurs in heart failure, renal failure, along with it there can be sodium imbalance its deficiency or excess can show effect on physiology. Because amount of water intake and excretion regulate its amount in body if it is not balanced can cause ch. Renal disorders or heart disease.^[10]

In other condition if fluid or water intake is less or fluid loss from the body is high like in condition of renal disorders, diarrhea etc there is depletion of volume, extracellular fluid concentration, which results in hypotension, tachycardia etc. If there is hypovolemia can cause less circulating volume, which cause decreased perfusion in organs and can leads to clinical conditions.^[11]

In this way it can be said that as per Ayurvedic principal it is well described to take less or moderate water in specific conditions as mentioned in Table no. 4.

Contraindication of intake of water^[8]

Table no. 4.

Cold water (<i>Sheetodaka</i>)	Specifically in respiratory tract infectious conditions and indigestion e.g. <i>Parshva Shoola, Pratishayaya, Vataroga, Gala Graham, Adhamana, Shadhashusha, Navajwara, Hikka</i> etc
Excessive intake (should take less amount of water) i.e. <i>Mandamaacherat</i> – indication towards less amount and frequency	Specifically in the condition where there is formation of <i>Aama Dosha</i> e.g. <i>Arochaka, Pratishayaya, Praseke, Shvathu, Kshaya, Mandagni, Udar Roga, Netra Roga, Vran, Madhumeha</i> If taken more amount of water it can increase <i>AamaDosha</i> , Hamper <i>Agni</i> and cause <i>Ajirna</i> sequentially <i>Jwara</i> , later <i>Dhatu Nasha</i> and finally systemic disorders.

As there is indication of intake towards cold water also, in Ayurveda it is said that in specific conditions one should not take cold water, its properties are also mentioned, because it is seen in present studies also that whenever we take cold water out body starts working on balancing

the temperature of that water rather than digesting it. A small study was done in 1978 which shows that a small group which take cold water shows thicker mucus and other respiratory symptoms which resemble the factors indicated in Ayurveda thousand years back along with it that another group given hot water helped peoples to breath properly.^[12] These just few studies done on water intake its form and amount, there is way more discussion on the topic. In such way it can be said that if one started taking water by the rules of Ayurveda that can bring positive changes in them

However there is type of water or with different infusion mentioned like in Table no. 2, it meet the needs of huan in specific conditions. And as seen in Table no. 3 where different type of water mentioned, shows by the means of Doshik predominance and to manage that conditions it was mentioned in classics.

Table no. 2.

Mode of water intake ^[9]	Therapeutic uses
3/4 left boiled water (<i>Pada Bhag heen</i>)	Beneficial in all condition (<i>Pathya</i>) Therapeutically pacifies <i>Vata Dosha</i>
½ left boiled water (<i>Ardhaashon</i>)	Used in pacifying <i>VataPitta</i> dominant conditions
¼ left boiled water (<i>Padapraya</i>)	It can pacify Tridosha
Water treated with red hot stone or soil <i>Pinda/ Nirvapit Jala (Tapta Pind Sansikta)</i>	It is beneficial <i>Sarvadoshahar, Pathya, Narujyakarakam.</i>
Water infused Shunthi (dried ginger), Yavani (ajwayan)	In Kapha Dosha In Vata Dosha
Water mixed with sweeteners - Sharkara Sita/ Sitopala Guda	Increase Kapha Dosha and pacifies Vata Shukra Dosha nasana Mutrakrichanashana and Pita Shelshamakara

Indication of water intake during different season^[9]

Table no. 3.

Season	Water intake rules
Sharad Ritu	Ardhapaden i.e 1/8 evaporized 7/8 left
Hemant Ritu	Padaheen i.e. ¼ evaporized ¾ left
Shishir, Vasant, Grishma Ritu	Ardhaavashesta ½ left
Pravat Ritu and in Ritu Viprayaya(opposite signs of specific season)	Asthaavshesit 1/8 left

CONCLUSION

- On behalf of above discussion it can be concluded that water is not merely a substance which it taken to fulfill our thirst. But had great therapeutic properties.

- At minute level it affect the psychic level as it is influencing *Mansik Bhava* i.e. by taking cold water one is dealing with Tama and Satva but when comes to hot water due to influence of Agni it increase some Satva and decrease Tama Guna by it antagonist Guna existing in Agni.
- When it comes to Tridosha it also had effect according to its mode of intake.
- By intake of water consciously one can prevent a lots of disease and can mangle vitiated Dosh.
- Where there is indication and contraindication of water intake is scientific and applicable even in present condition.

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