



**International Journal of Biology, Pharmacy
and Allied Sciences (IJBPAS)**
'A Bridge Between Laboratory and Reader'

www.ijbpas.com

A LITERARY STUDY ON *KARSHYA* – A NUTRITIONAL AILMENT IN AYURVEDA

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Received 12th Dec. 2021; Revised 14th Jan. 2022; Accepted 7th Feb. 2022; Available online 5th March. 2022

<https://doi.org/10.31032/IJBPAS/2022/11.3.1029>

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda priorities prevention over cure. The first of the three pillars, *Ahara* (Food), is followed by *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*. A balanced diet can help you avoid a lot of common health concerns. Food is significant as a nutritional source, as well as having therapeutic value, and it plays a crucial part in regaining strength lost due to the disease's detrimental effects throughout the post-treatment phase. *Ayurvedic* scriptures explain nutritional issues in a haphazard manner. Childhood malnutrition is thought to be the cause of 35% of all fatalities in children under the age of five, as well as 21% of total worldwide disability adjusted life years lost in children under the age of five. *Karshya* is a malnutrition-like illness. Similarly, diseases described by diverse *Ayurvedic* authors as *Parigarbhika*, *Phakka*, *Balashosha*, and *Shuska Revati* might be linked to undernutrition based on clinical symptoms. These illnesses were linked to one another. The *Ayurvedic* perspective on dietary disorders such as protein energy deficiency is highlighted in this article.

Keywords: *Karshya*, Undernutrition, Protein energy malnutrition etc.

INTRODUCTION

Undernutrition occurs when nutrients are consumed insufficiently, absorbed poorly, or lost excessively. Malnutrition is a phrase that encompasses both under- and over-

nutrition. Malnutrition and protein energy malnutrition (PEM) are terms that are occasionally used interchangeably with undernutrition¹. Children who are still

growing are the ones who are most affected. Their nutritional condition is a sensitive indication of the health and nutrition of their community².

Ahara is one of life's three sub-pillars³. Various explanations for this crucial pillar of life have been included in Indian traditional medicine. The '*Agni*' or digestive fire, which forms the architecture upon which the *Ayurvedic* system is founded, is the converting unit from 'food' into nutrition⁴. According to *Acharya Charaka*, over lean (*Atikrushya*) people, as well as over fat (*Medasvi*) people, are classified as eight vile people (*Ashtau-ninditiya Purusha*).

There are numerous diseases in the realm of pediatrics for which modern medical science has no or limited answers. Growth and development are a physiological process that occurs when all of the components that influence it are in good health. When these components are missing, failure to flourish or being undersized for age occurs, which is referred to as *Karshya* in *Ayurveda*.

METHODOLOGY

The material related to *Karshya* article collected from Parul institute of Ayurveda Central library Limda, Vadodara.

EPIDEMIOLOGY

Childhood malnutrition is thought to be the cause of 35% of all fatalities in children

under the age of five, as well as 21% of total worldwide disability adjusted life years lost in children under the age of five. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) , which was conducted in 2004-08, 50% of India's children under the age of three are underweight, 45 percent are stunted, and 27% are wasted⁶. Almost 12 million children will die before reaching the age of five, with four million of them dying in their first month. Nearly one in every two youngsters in India goes to bed hungry⁷. Undernutrition affects both girls and boys in the same way. Rural regions have a greater prevalence of undernutrition (53%) than urban areas (33 percent). Twenty to thirty percent of children are malnourished during their first six months of life, frequently as a result of low birth weight. Because of the introduction of unclean food consumption after 4-6 months of age, the proportion of children who are undernourished begins to rise, leading to an increase in the risk of malnutrition⁸.

NIDANA OF KARSHYA

Excessive exposure to evacuative therapy), *Shoka* (Grief), *Chinta* (Worries), *Bhaya* (Fear), *Shrama* (excessive physical and mental activity), *Vega- Nidra-Trusha* – *Kshudha - nigraha* (Suppression of natural urges, such as sleep thirst and hunger), *Atishrama*, *Ati maithuna*, *Atisnana abhyasa* (Excessive Physical exertion, over-

saturation, hunger, thirst, sickness, and narcotics, as well as excessive cold, heat, and sexual intercourse, are not tolerated by the slim person¹⁰.

LAKSHANA OF KARSHYA

Shushka-sphic, udar, greeva (dried up buttocks, abdomen, neck), *Dhamanijala santataha* (prominent vascular network), *Twagasthi shesho, Ati krusha* (remnant of skin and bone), *Sthoola parva* (thick joints), *Vyayam Atisauhityam* (the over lean

does not tolerate physical exercise, over saturation).

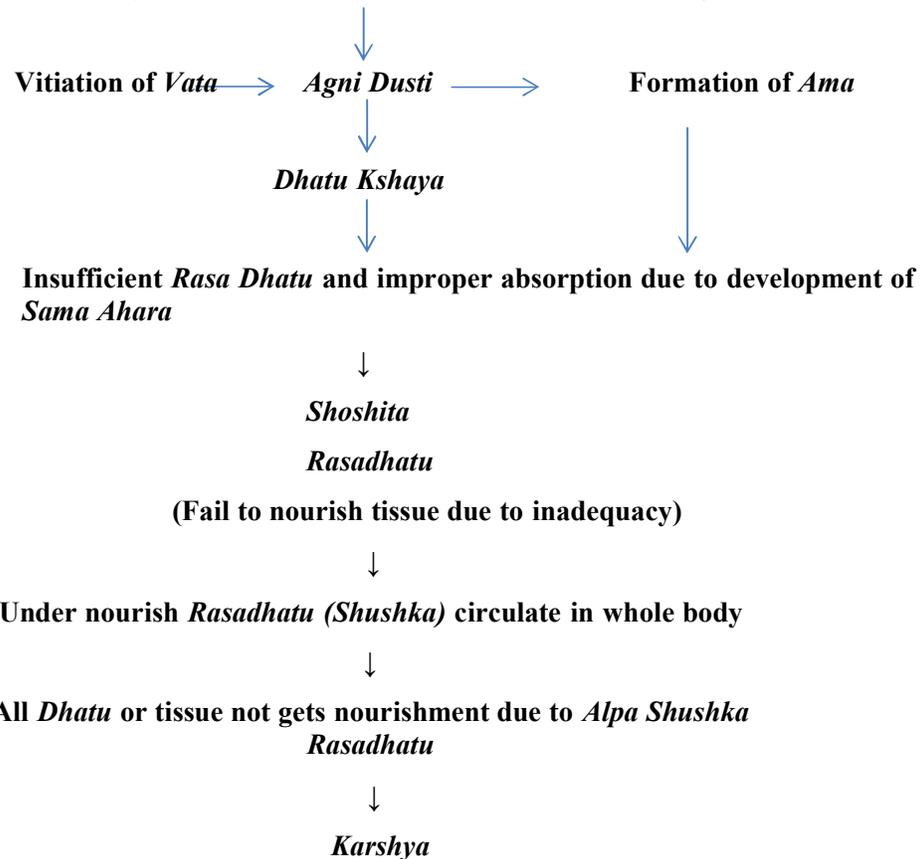
SAMPRAPTI

Those who engage in *Vata*-promoting diet, physical exercise, excessive sexual intercourse, strenuous study, anxiety, wakefulness at night, thirst, hunger, taking of astringents, partial starvation, etc., circulating *Rasa* being reduced in quantity fails to nourish the tissue due to insufficiency; thus, extreme *Karshya* (leanness/emaciation) occurs¹².

KARSHYA SAMPRAPTI

Etiological feature diet and physical work

(Nidana Sevana – Vata vardhaka Ahara-Vihara)



FACTORS INVOLVE IN KARSHYA

Dosha – Vata, Dushya – Rasa, Srotas – Rasavaha, Srotodushti – Sanga, Adhishthana – Pakvashaya, Vyaktisthana – Whole body are all factors that play a role in the aetiology of *Karshya (Samprapti Ghatak)*. Spleen (enlargement), cough, wasting, dyspnea, gaseous tumours, piles, abdominal sickness, and *Ghrahani* (Gastro-intestinal track) disease are all complications of *Karshya* disease¹³. children up to the age of five who have significantly less physical development than their peers of the same age and gender.¹³ Weight below the 3rd or 5th centile, inability to gain weight over time, or a shift in growth rate that has crossed two major centiles, e.g., 75th to 50th, during a period of time are all examples of failure to thrive.¹⁴

KARSHYA DESCRIPTION ACCORDING TO SAMHITA

Balashosha and Kshiraja Phakka are two separate descriptions of a nutritional deficiency illness.¹⁵ *Balashosha* is caused by *Shlaishmika anna sevana* (excessive energy packed food), *Shitambupana* (drinking cold water), and *Diva swapna* (excessive day sleep), as well as consuming *Slesma*-vitiated breast milk, which causes *Kapha* to obstruct the *Rasa* (first fluid liquid) channel.^{16,17} *Arochaka* (reduced digestive capacity), *Pratishaya* (runny

nose), *Jwara* (fever), and *Kasa* (cough) are clinical symptoms; if not diagnosed early, these conditions might progress to *Shosha* (emaciation) with unctuous (grassy) and white eyes^{18, 19}. Wet nurses with *Kapha*-vitiated breast milk are said to have *Phakka*-causing milk in the *Kshiraja Phakka*. Because of emaciation, a youngster that consumes milk develops *Phakka* (marasmic condition)²⁰.

Parigarbhika / Garbhaja Phakka occurs when a child is fed *Alpa Poshaknsha* (nutrient deficiency) breast milk from a pregnant mother. The *Garbhaja Phakka* condition occurs when a child's mother becomes pregnant, and the kid becomes malnourished or even dies as a result of the early discontinuation of breast milk. This marasmus is caused by the embryo/effect²². fetus's

Vyadhi Sambhavaja Phakka is a starvation state caused by a chronic ailment. On the whole, *Vyadhija Phakka* refers to severe forms of malnutrition, where the child suffers from fever, endogenous and exogenous disease, and his flesh, strength, and luster deteriorate. *Shuska Sphik* and *Shuska Bahu* (wasting of buttocks and upper limb), *Shuska uru* (wasting of thigh), *Mahaudara* (abdomen becomes protuberant), *Mahoshiara* (comparatively skull, the face becomes more *Kaya Nischeshta Adho* (lower body part is

emaciated, weak), discharges too much urine on a daily basis, the lower body becomes inert or crawls with hand and knee, the lower body has less activity owing to weakness, and the lower body is overpowered by flies, insects, and worms, resulting in sickness. This marasmic has dry, erect, and stiff body hair, large nails, bad Odour, dirty, irritable, dyspneic, feels as if entering the dark, passes copious faeces, urine, and abnormal thick nasal discharge²³.

Shuska Revati: is a *Graha* (devil) that affects children and reflects the sickness spectrum that results from *Sarvangakshya* (infection) (emaciation). Even when the child eats a variety of foods, he or she grows underweight and has shrunken eyes. When a youngster experiences hair loss, dislike to eating, a feeble voice, *Vivarnata* (discoloration/loss of lusters), *Nanavidhashakrita* (variegated colour stool), *Udara granthi* (abdominal nodular enlargement), depression in the center of the tongue, and the palate turns black²⁴. At the start of the clinical disease, which might be abdominal tuberculosis, the child displays gradual emaciation.

DISCUSSION

Karshya is a nutritional illness listed in the *Ayurveda Samhita*, which may be linked to malnutrition. Children under the age of five account for 35% of all fatalities and 21% of

all global disability adjusted life years. *Acharya Charaka*, according to him *Ashtauninditiya* (eight nasty people) and excessively fat (*Ati Sthula*) people are both characterized as *Ati Karshya* people. *Shushka-sphic*, *Udara*, *Greeva* (dried up buttocks, abdomen, neck), *Dhamanijala santataha* (prominent vascular network), *Twagasthi Shesho*, *Ati Krusha* (remainder of skin and bone), and *Sthoola Parva* (remainder of skin and bone) are all symptoms of an overly slim individual (thick joints). *Karshya* is not well described in *Ayurveda*, particularly in children. *Vyadhi Sambhavaja Phakka* is a condition akin to malnutrition, according to *Acharya Kashyap*.

Acharya Vagbhata and *Acharya Kashyap*, respectively, cite nutritional deficiency disorders *Balashosha* and *Kshiraja Phakka*. Similarly, *Parigarbhika* and *Garbhaja Phakka* are induced by a kid who is fed *Alpa Poshakansha* breast milk by a pregnant mother (poor nutrients). *Shuska Revati*, one of the *Grahas* (demons) that affects the kid, indicates an infectious spectrum of sickness that results in *Sarvanga Kshaya* (emaciation), and the infant becomes emaciated despite eating a variety of foods. All of the diseases listed in Ayurvedic scriptures are linked to one another and can be linked to malnutrition, such as protein energy deficiency (PEM).²⁵

The key etiological causes for *Karshya* include *Dosha* such as *Alpashana* and *Vishamashana*; *Vihara Dosha* such as *Atishrama*; and *Manasika Bhava* such as *Shoka*, *Bhaya*, and *Krodha*.

Karshya is a term that refers to a wide range of disorders caused by starvation. Malnutrition nowadays is classified by weight, BMI, and other factors. *Karshya* can be a sign or consequence of various ailments, and it can also be a *Swatantra Vyadhi*.²⁶ This is how *Karshya's* Samprapti looks: All *Dhatu Utpati Alpa Karshya Utpati Nidana Sevana Vata Prakopa Shoshita, Rasadhatu* History, Subjective Parameters – clinical symptoms, anthropometry, and Hematological and Biochemical Investigations are all used to determine the severity of the disease. *Karshya* is a *Janya Vyadhi* who belongs to the *Apatarpana* family. As a result, *Santarpana –Brumhana* is in charge of it.

CONCLUSION

Malnutrition is a term used in contemporary medicine to represent a condition that is related to Ayurveda's *Karshya*, *Phakka*, and *Balshosha* nutritional disorders. A holistic examination of these illnesses provides insight into the dangers of nutritional insufficiency and reflects many elements of nutritional deficiency, as well as a good knowledge of the pathophysiology of the

condition, which is crucial for efficient care.

Conflict of Interest – Nil

Source of Support -None

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