

THE ROLE OF ASHWAGANDHA GHRITA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF KARSHYA
W.S.R TO MALNOURISHED CHILDDr. Tulsiram Alawe^{1*} and Dr. Mahesh Narayan Gupta²¹PG Scholar, Dept. of Kaumarbhritya, State Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Lucknow (U.P.).²Reader, PG Dept. of Kaumarbhritya, State Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Lucknow (U.P.).

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ABSTRACT

Aim Of Study: Karshya, a prevalent condition among children aged 6 months to 5 years, is characterized in Ayurveda as Apatarpanajanya vyadhi, resulting from Rasavaha Shrotodusti, where Vata dosha plays a crucial role in its pathogenesis, accompanied by vitiated Pitta. **Methodology:** A literary review was conducted using prominent Ayurvedic and modern textbooks, research papers, and journals to gather information on Ashwagandha Ghrita. The description of Karshya aligns with undernutrition, and it is discussed in various samhitas from both preventive and curative perspectives. Ashwagandha Ghrita is mentioned in Chakra Dutta (63/70), Yog Ratnakar (Bal rog Chi. 44), and Bha. Rat. (71/132), comprising Goghrita, Ashwagandha Kalka, Godugdha, and Water. Karshya is directly linked to recurrent infections."

KEYWORDS: Karshya, Undernutrition, Malnutrition, Apatarpanajanya vyadhi, rasavaha Shrotodusti, Antimicrobial activity, Ashwagandha Ghrita.

INTRODUCTION

"According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) conducted in 2015-2016, a significant percentage of Indian children under three years old suffer from malnutrition: 36% are underweight, 38% are stunted, and 21% are awasted. Approximately 11 million children die before reaching the age of five. Both boys and girls are equally affected by undernutrition, which is more prevalent in rural areas (46%) than urban areas (33%). During the first six months, 20- 30% of children are already malnourished, often due to low birth weight. After six months, the risk of undernutrition increases due to unhygienic food intake.

In Ayurvedic classics, food (Aahara) is considered one of the three essential sub-pillars of life. Faulty dietary habits (Ahara Dosha) are the primary cause of Karsya (undernutrition), particularly due to reduced food intake (Alpashana) and unhealthy eating habits (Vishamashana). Undernutrition significantly impairs physical, psychological, and intellectual development. Recent research suggests that childhood undernutrition is linked to an increased risk of developing heart disease, hypertension, and type-2 diabetes later in life."

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A literary review was conducted using several important Ayurvedic and modern textbooks, research papers, and

journals to collect information on Ashwagandha Ghrita, which is used to manage Bal Karsya (Childhood Undernutrition).

Undernutrition is a condition characterized by inadequate consumption, poor absorption, or excessive loss of nutrients. The term Malnutrition refers to both undernutrition and overnutrition. However, sometimes Malnutrition and PEM (Protein-Energy Malnutrition) are used interchangeably with undernutrition.

Causes of Malnutrition

- Low dietary intake
- Low birth weight
- Recurrent infections (diarrhoea, pneumonia, etc.)
- Acharya Dalhan described Ati-Karshya as a reduction in Upachaya, Rupa, and Bala.

Causes of Karshya

- Dietary causes: excessive consumption of bitter tastes, inadequate food intake, dry food, etc.
- Lifestyle causes: excessive exercise, excessive mental work, suppressed emotions, etc.
- Psychological causes: fear, anxiety, anger, grief, etc.

Samprapti/Pathogenesis

Karshya is correlated with undernutrition, which may be an independent disease or a complication of other

diseases. It is caused by inadequate nourishment (Apatarpana Janya Vyadhi), where Vata dosha plays a crucial role, along with vitiated Pitta. Impaired digestion (Agni Dushti) leads to depletion of body tissues (Anuloma Kshaya).

Samprapti Ghatak

- Dosa - Vata
- Dusya - Rasa dhatu
- Agni- Jatha-ragni (Mandagni)
- Ama- formation of Ama due to
- Agnimandya
- Vyadhi-Sthan -Amasaya
- Srotas affected –Rasa vaha, Raktavaha, Meda vaha
- Type of Srotodusti -Sanga
- Rogamarga – Abhyantar-rogamarga
- Vyaktasthan -Sphiga, Udar, Uriba,
- Twak, Asthi
- Vyadhiprakar - Chirakari.
- Sadhyasadyata – Kricchasadya

Rupa (Clinical Features of Karshya)

- Emaciated buttocks, abdomen, and neck region
- Prominent venous network
- Skin-bone appearance
- Prominent joints
- Intolerance to excessive exercise, hunger, thirst, and medications

Upadrava (Complications of Karshya)

- Patients are prone to developing diseases like Pleeha, Kas, Kshaya, Swas, Gulma, Arsha, Udar, and Grahani.

Principle of Management (Chikitsa Sutra)

1. Laghu-Dravya-Santarpan Chikitsa should be advised in Karshya-Rogi.
2. Refreshing therapy should be administered slowly depending on physical constitution, digestive power, Doshas vitiated, nature of therapy, dose, season, and time of administration.

Yuktivyapashraya Chikitsa (Combination Therapy)

- Vidarikandadi Churna with milk and honey
- Talamkhana with goat milk
- Laja-Adi Yog (combination) is useful in malnutrition
- Bringan Chikitsa is helpful in Karshya
- Vidarikandadi Yog is a useful drug due to its nourishing effect
- Indigenous diet, drug Shoshjit Yog, along with standard diet, is a good alternative for treating malnutrition

Note The roots of *Withania Somnifera* (Ashwagandha) are used extensively in Ayurveda as a Rasayana to promote physical and mental health and provide defense against diseases.

Panchakarma Therapy (Purification)

In Karshya (Undernutrition), the prominent Dosha is Vata, making Basti the best therapy to counteract Vata dosha. A combination of Kshira Paka and Kshira Basti therapy in Karshya yields better results than individual therapy due to their synergistic effect.

Drugs and Combinations Used in Malnutrition

- Ghrit: Ashwagandhaadi, Shishu Shosh Nashak, Kalyank, Shatpal, Trivrit, Brahmi ghrit
- Tail: Lakshaadi Taila, Shosh-Nashak Taila, Raj Taila
- Kwatha: Kakoli, Shirkakoli with goat milk
- Churna: Swarn Bhasm with Ghee & honey, Kusta and Vitisansavaha,

Pathya-Apathya (Congenial and Non-Congenial Diet) - Pathya (Congenial Diet)

Aahar Freshly harvested rice, Mansa rasa of domestic marshy aquatic animals, Dadhi, Ghee, milk, Sugarcane, Shali rice, Masa, Wheat, Sugar, and candy preparations.

Vihar Sleep, joy, comfortable bed, abstinence from anxiety, sexual acts, and physical exercise, pleasant sight, regular oil massage, unctuous unctuous bath, use of perfume and garlands.

Ousadh Enema consisting of unctuous and madhura drugs, elimination of Dosas in time, and administration of rejuvenating and aphrodisiac drugs like Payashya, Ashwagandha, Salparni, Shatavari, Bala, Atibala, Nagbala, etc. Madhura drugs should be administered.

Apathya (Non-Congenial Diet)

- Avoid intake of pungent, bitter, and astringent substances
- Avoid oilcake of mustard and til, honey, sexual indulgence, night awakening, excessive physical and mental exercise in Karshya.

CONCLUSION

Karshya is a disease characterized by nutritional deficiencies, leading to gradual emaciation of the body. The gluteal region, abdomen, and neck exhibit significant muscle loss and subcutaneous fat depletion, similar to undernutrition. The efficacy of Ashwagandha Ghrita in treating Shishu Karshya (underweight children) is described in various Ayurvedic Samhitas (Chakradutta 63/70 Page 273, Yog Ratna Balroga Chi. (443), Bha. Rat. 71/132). Ashwagandha Ghrita contains natural steroids that enhance protein synthesis and lipophilic activity, allowing it to penetrate cell membranes. This leads to increased capacity of internal organs, likely due to increased alveolar line proteins in the lungs. The presence of alkaloids and steroids in Ashwagandha, combined with the yogvahi and sanskaranuvarti properties of ghrita, contributes to increased body mass.

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