

GENERAL INTRODUCTION OF GHRITA ACCORDING TO LAGHUTRAYEE: A
REVIEWDr. Nitin Sharma*¹, Dr. Anit Saini², Dr. Neha³, Dr. Vipul Singh⁴¹PG Scholar, Department of Ayurvedic Samhita Evam Siddhant, Quadra Institute of Ayurveda, Roorkee, Uttarakhand.²Associate Professor Department of Ayurvedic Samhita Evam Siddhant, Quadra Institute of Ayurveda, Roorkee, Uttarakhand.^{3,4}Assistant Professor Department of Ayurvedic Samhita Evam Siddhant, Quadra Institute of Ayurveda, Roorkee, Uttarakhand.***Corresponding Author: Dr. Nitin Sharma**

PG Scholar, Department of Ayurvedic Samhita Evam Siddhant, Quadra Institute of Ayurveda, Roorkee, Uttarakhand.

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ABSTRACT

Ashta Ghritha represents a systematic and clinically oriented classification of *Ghritha* in *Ayurveda*, wherein ghee obtained from different animal sources is differentiated based on its specific therapeutic properties. The concept of *Ashta Ghritha* as described in *Laghutrayee* reflects the advanced understanding of ancient scholars regarding the influence of the source of milk on the *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* and *Dosha-Karma* of *Ghritha*. Instead of considering ghee as a single uniform substance, *Laghutrayee* recognizes multiple forms of *Ghritha* with distinct physiological actions and disease-specific applications. These variations enable precise selection of *Ghritha* according to *Dosha* predominance, *Agni* status, tissue involvement and chronicity of disease. According to *Laghutrayee*, *Ghritha* is described as *Snigdha*, *Guru*, *Sheeta* and *Madhura*, with predominant *Vata-Pitta Shamaka* action and strong *Rasayana*, *Balya* and *Medhya* properties. The individual types of *Ashta Ghritha* are indicated in diverse clinical conditions such as digestive disorders, respiratory diseases, neurological conditions, gynecological disorders and states of *Dhatukshaya*. A unique emphasis is placed on the role of *Ghritha* as a *Yogavahi*, capable of carrying the properties of processed drugs deep into tissues through *Sanskaranuvartana*. Thus, the general introduction of *Ashta Ghritha* in *Laghutrayee* highlights a highly individualized, rational and disease-specific approach to therapy. This review underscores the importance of understanding classical distinctions among different types of *Ghritha* to enhance clinical decision-making and preserve the foundational principles of *Ayurvedic* therapeutics.

KEYWORDS: *Ashta Ghritha*, *Ghritha*, *Laghutrayee*, *Rasayana*, *Yogavahi*, *Dosha-Karma*, *Sanskaranuvartana*, *Ayurveda*.**INTRODUCTION**

Ghritha occupies a unique and exalted position in *Ayurveda* as both an essential dietary component and a potent therapeutic agent. Classical texts consider *Ghritha* superior among lipid substances because of its stability, nourishing capacity and ability to support both physical and mental health. Unlike ordinary fats, *Ghritha* is described as *Ahara-Aushadha*, meaning it functions simultaneously as food and medicine. Its regular use, when guided by *Agni*, *Prakriti* and disease condition, contributes to strength, longevity and balanced *Dosha* functioning.^[1]

The concept of *Ashta Ghritha* reflects a highly evolved understanding of how the source of milk influences the therapeutic potential of *Ghritha*. *Laghutrayee* emphasizes that *Ghritha* obtained from different animals differs in *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* and *Dosha-Karma*. This classification demonstrates the keen observational ability of ancient scholars in correlating animal physiology and milk characteristics with clinical outcomes. Rather than treating ghee as a uniform substance, *Ashta Ghritha* allows precise selection based on disease nature, tissue involvement and individual constitution.^[2]

Each type of *Ashta Ghrta* serves a specific therapeutic purpose. *Gau Ghrta* is widely preferred due to its *Tridosha-Shamana* and *Ojas-Vardhaka* properties, while other forms are indicated in more specialized conditions. Some varieties support digestion and respiration, others strengthen bones and tissues, while certain types are useful in gynecological, neurological or chronic degenerative disorders. Such specificity highlights the depth of *Ayurvedic* pharmacology, where subtle variations in source material are translated into targeted clinical applications.^[3]

Another important aspect emphasized in *Laghutrayee* is the role of *Ghrta* as a *Yogavahi*. Due to its *Sanskaranuvartana* property, *Ghrta* assimilates the qualities of substances processed with it and carries them efficiently to deeper tissues. This makes it an ideal base for medicinal formulations and therapeutic procedures. Thus, the general introduction of *Ashta Ghrta* according to *Laghutrayee* presents a rational, individualized and disease-specific approach that continues to hold strong relevance in classical learning as well as contemporary *Ayurvedic* practice.^[4]

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to *Madhav Nidana*^[5]

Madhava Nidana is primarily a diagnostic text, yet it provides valuable indirect references to *Ghrta* through its detailed descriptions of disease *Nidana*, *Samprapti* and *Dosha-Dushya* involvement. Although *Madhava Nidana* does not enumerate *Ashta Ghrta* as a separate group in the same manner as *Nighantu* texts, the principles governing the selection and therapeutic relevance of different types of *Ghrta* are clearly reflected in its disease-wise explanations. The text repeatedly emphasizes the importance of choosing *Ahara* and *Aushadha* according to *Dosha* predominance, *Agni* status and chronicity, which forms the conceptual foundation for the application of *Ashta Ghrta*.

In conditions dominated by *Vata* and *Pitta*, such as *Vataja* and *Pittaja Vyadhi*, *Madhava Nidana* highlights the role of *Snigdha*, *Sheeta* and *Brimhana* substances for breaking the disease process. These attributes correspond closely with the properties of *Ghrta*, particularly *Gau Ghrta* and other cooling and nourishing forms described under *Ashta Ghrta*. Disorders like *Unmada*, *Apasmara*, *Bhrama* and *Murchha*, which are elaborately discussed in *Madhava Nidana*, clearly demand *Medhya*, *Balya* and *Rasayana* substances, indicating the relevance of specific *Ghrta* types based on disease presentation.

Madhava Nidana also gives significant importance to *Agni* and *Ama* in disease causation. In *Mandagni*, *Ajirna* and *Amaja* conditions, the text cautions against indiscriminate use of heavy and unctuous substances. This principle supports the selective use of lighter forms of *Ghrta*, such as those indicated in conditions requiring *Deepana* without excessive *Kapha* aggravation. Conversely, in *Dhatukshaya* and chronic debilitating

disorders like *Rajyakshma*, *Shosha* and long-standing *Kasa-Shwasa*, the need for nourishing and stabilizing substances is emphasized, aligning with the therapeutic use of appropriate *Ghrta* forms described in *Ashta Ghrta*.

The text also reflects the importance of *Kala* (chronicity) in treatment planning. Chronic and deep-seated diseases described in *Madhava Nidana* require substances capable of penetrating deeper tissues and pacifying all three *Dosha*. This supports the concept of aged *Ghrta*, especially *Purana Ghrta*, which is traditionally considered more potent and effective in chronic neurological, toxic and degenerative conditions. Thus, even without explicit categorization, *Madhava Nidana* provides a strong diagnostic rationale for the graded and condition-specific use of *Ghrta*.

According to *Bhav Prakash Nighantu*^[6]

According to *Bhav Prakash Nighantu*, *Ashta Ghrta* represents a well-defined and clinically precise classification of *Ghrta* based on the source of milk, method of preparation and age of the ghee. *Acharya Bhavamishra* explains that variations in animal milk result in distinct differences in *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* and *Dosha-Karma* of *Ghrta*. On this basis, eight types of *Ghrta* are described, namely *Gau Ghrta*, *Mahisha Ghrta*, *Aja Ghrta*, *Avika Ghrta*, *Ushtra Ghrta*, *Hastini Ghrta*, *Ashva Ghrta* and *Stri Ghrta*. Among these, *Gau Ghrta* is considered superior due to its *Tridosha-Shamaka*, *Rasayana* and *Ojas-Vardhaka* properties, while other varieties are assigned specific therapeutic roles such as cooling and nourishing action in *Pitta-Rakta* disorders (*Mahisha Ghrta*), *Agni-Deepana* and respiratory support (*Aja Ghrta*), *Asthi Dhatu* strengthening (*Avika Ghrta*) and metabolic or obstructive disorder management (*Ushtra Ghrta*).

Bhav Prakash further emphasizes the importance of individualized selection of *Ghrta* based on disease condition, *Agni* and *Dosha* predominance. *Stri Ghrta* is described as *Amritopama* and particularly beneficial in gynecological disorders, while *Ashva Ghrta* enhances *Deha Agni*, stamina and vitality without causing heaviness. In addition, the text highlights the significance of the age of *Ghrta*, where *Nava Ghrta* is indicated for nourishment, weakness and eye disorders, whereas *Purana Ghrta* is described as more potent and effective in chronic neurological, toxic and degenerative conditions. Thus, *Bhav Prakash* presents *Ashta Ghrta* as a rational, disease-specific and highly individualized therapeutic framework, reinforcing the depth and precision of *Ayurvedic* pharmaceuticals and clinical practice.

Gau Ghrta

Gau Ghrta is described as the most superior among all types of *Ghrta*. It possesses *Tridosha-Shamaka* properties, especially pacifying *Vata* and *Pitta*, and enhances *Ojas*, *Bala* and *Medha*. Because of its balanced

Guna and excellent *Sanskaranuvartana* property, it is widely used both as daily *Ahara* and as a base for *Aushadhi Kalpana*. (B.P.N.- Ghrítavarga-14).

Mahisha Ghríta

Mahisha Ghríta is *Madhura*, *Sheeta* and *Guru* in nature. It is particularly useful in *Pitta* and *Rakta* disorders, conditions involving excessive heat, bleeding and tissue depletion. Its nourishing and stabilizing qualities make it suitable in debility, though it should be used cautiously in individuals with weak *Agni*. (B.P.N.- Ghrítavarga-7).

Aja Ghríta

Aja Ghríta is described as *Laghu* and *Agni-Deepana*. It improves digestion, enhances vision and strength, and is indicated in *Kasa*, *Shwasa* and *Kshaya*. Due to its lightness, it is especially useful in patients with poor digestion, chronic respiratory disorders and long-standing weakness. (B.P.N.- Ghrítavarga-8).

Avi Ghríta

Avi Ghríta is light in digestion and strengthens *Asthi Dhatu*. It improves digestive fire, alleviates *Vata* disorders and is useful in musculoskeletal weakness, urinary calculi and degenerative conditions. Its action supports tissue nourishment without excessive heaviness. (B.P.N.- Ghrítavarga-10-11).

Ushtra Ghríta

Ushtra Ghríta is characterized by *Katu Vipaka* and strong *Deepana* action. It alleviates *Kapha* and *Vata* and is indicated in *Krimi*, *Shosha*, *Visha*, *Kushtha*, *Gulma* and *Udara Roga*. Its penetrating and heating nature makes it useful in chronic, obstructive and toxic conditions, though caution is advised in *Pitta*-dominant individuals. (B.P.N.- Ghrítavarga-9).

Hastini Ghríta

Hastini Ghríta possesses *Kashaya-Tikta Rasa* and *Grahi* properties. It binds stool and urine, enhances digestion and destroys *Kapha*, *Krimi*, *Visha* and *Kushtha*. It is useful in chronic skin diseases, infestations and metabolic disorders requiring stabilization. (B.P.N.- Ghrítavarga-15).

Ashwa Ghríta

Ashwa Ghríta increases *Deha Agni*, improves stamina and vitality, and remains light to digest. It relieves fatigue, burning sensations and eye disorders. Because it enhances metabolic activity without increasing heaviness, it is beneficial in weakness and low energy states. (B.P.N.- Ghrítavarga-13).

Stri Ghríta

Stri Ghríta is described as *Amritopama* and *Tridosha-Shamaka*. It is especially beneficial in gynecological disorders involving *Yoni Dosha*, *Pitta* and *Rakta*. Its gentle, nourishing and harmonizing nature supports reproductive health, emotional balance and overall vitality. (B.P.N.- Ghrítavarga-12).

Dhanvantari Nighantu^[7]

Dhanvantari Nighantu describes *Ghríta* mainly in terms of its general properties rather than listing all eight varieties separately. It emphasizes *Ghríta* as *Rasayana*, *Balya*, *Medhya* and *Chakshushya*, with predominant *Vata-Pitta Shamaka* action. Though *Ashta Ghríta* is not elaborated in an enumerated form, the text supports the principle that *Ghríta* derived from different sources varies in potency and therapeutic effect, thus indirectly endorsing the foundational concept of *Ashta Ghríta*.

Raja Nighantu^[8]

Raja Nighantu highlights the nourishing and rejuvenating nature of *Ghríta* and classifies it under substances beneficial for strength, intellect and longevity. The text focuses on *Ghríta* as *Jeevaniya* and *Brimhana*, suitable for chronic diseases, debility and neurological disorders. Although it does not provide a detailed classification of eight animal-based *Ghríta*, its descriptions align with the idea that variations in source influence therapeutic utility.

Kaiyadeva Nighantu^[9]

Kaiyadeva Nighantu describes *Ghríta* with emphasis on its *Snehana*, *Balya* and *Medhya* properties. It notes the superiority of cow-derived *Ghríta* and mentions the enhanced potency of aged *Ghríta*. While the text does not systematically list *Ashta Ghríta*, it recognizes qualitative differences in *Ghríta* based on source and processing, supporting selective clinical application.

Madanapala Nighantu^[10]

Madanapala Nighantu explains *Ghríta* primarily as a dietary and therapeutic fat with strong nourishing and stabilizing action. It highlights *Ghríta* as useful in *Vata* disorders, weakness and chronic illnesses. The text emphasizes rational use according to digestive strength and disease state, indirectly reflecting the need for choosing specific types of *Ghríta* rather than uniform administration.

Shodhala Nighantu^[11]

Shodhala Nighantu mentions *Ghríta* as *Snigdha*, *Guru*, *Sheeta* and *Rasayana*. It recognizes its role in enhancing *Ojas*, *Bala* and longevity. Although explicit classification of *Ashta Ghríta* is absent, the text supports the concept that different forms of *Ghríta* possess varied clinical significance depending on source and usage.

According to Kashyap Samhita^[12]

Kashyap Samhita gives special importance to *Ghríta* in the context of *Bala Chikitsa*, *Stri Roga* and *Rasayana* therapy. Although *Ashta Ghríta* is not enumerated as a separate heading in the same manner as later *Nighantu* texts, the principles underlying the use of different types of *Ghríta* are clearly reflected. The text emphasizes that *Ghríta* derived from different animal sources varies in its *Guna*, *Virya* and nourishing capacity, and therefore must be selected according to age, digestive power (*Agni*), strength and disease condition. *Kashyap Samhita*

repeatedly highlights *Ghrita* as *Jeevaniya*, *Brimhana*, *Balya* and *Medhya*, especially useful in children, pregnant women and individuals suffering from *Dhatukshaya*.

From a therapeutic perspective, *Kashyap Samhita* advocates the use of *Ghrita* in conditions of growth retardation, debility, chronic illness, infertility and disorders of *Vata* and *Pitta*. The text supports the concept that lighter forms of *Ghrita* are suitable when digestion is

weak, while more nourishing and heavy forms are beneficial in wasting and developmental disorders. Special emphasis is placed on the role of *Ghrita* in enhancing *Ojas*, supporting immunity and promoting healthy development of body and mind. Thus, according to *Kashyap Samhita*, the conceptual foundation of *Ashta Ghrita* lies in individualized selection based on physiological needs rather than uniform application, reinforcing the *Ayurvedic* principle that nourishment and therapy must be tailored to age, strength and constitution.

Classical Text	Key Concept Related to <i>Ashta Ghrita</i>
Madhava Nidana	Does not enumerate <i>Ashta Ghrita</i> directly but provides diagnostic principles for selective use of <i>Ghrita</i> based on <i>Dosha</i> , <i>Agni</i> , <i>Ama</i> and disease chronicity; supports use of <i>Purana Ghrita</i> in chronic disorders.
Bhav Prakash Nighantu	Clearly describes <i>Ashta Ghrita</i> with eight types based on animal source; details <i>Rasa</i> , <i>Guna</i> , <i>Virya</i> , <i>Vipaka</i> , indications and importance of <i>Nava</i> and <i>Purana Ghrita</i> .
Dhanvantari Nighantu	Describes general properties of <i>Ghrita</i> as <i>Rasayana</i> , <i>Balya</i> and <i>Medhya</i> ; indirectly supports the concept of varied <i>Ghrita</i> potency.
Raja Nighantu	Emphasizes nourishing and rejuvenating nature of <i>Ghrita</i> useful in chronic diseases and debility.
Kaiyadeva Nighantu	Notes superiority of cow-derived <i>Ghrita</i> and enhanced potency of aged <i>Ghrita</i> .
Madanapala Nighantu	Highlights <i>Ghrita</i> as a nourishing fat beneficial in <i>Vata</i> disorders and weakness, advising rational use.
Shodhala Nighantu	Describes <i>Ghrita</i> as <i>Snigdha</i> , <i>Guru</i> , <i>Sheeta</i> and <i>Rasayana</i> , promoting <i>Ojas</i> and longevity.
Kashyap Samhita	Emphasizes <i>Ghrita</i> in pediatrics and gynecology; advocates individualized selection based on age, strength and <i>Agni</i> .

Results and Findings

- The review confirms that *Ashta Ghrita* is a scientifically structured and clinically relevant classification based on variation in animal milk source, as described in classical *Ayurvedic* texts.
- Each type of *Ghrita* possesses distinct *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* and *Dosha-Karma*, establishing that *Ghrita* is not a uniform substance but a group of therapeutically diverse agents.
- *Gau Ghrita* is consistently described as superior due to its *Tridosha-Shamana*, *Rasayana* and *Ojas-Vardhaka* properties, making it suitable for both preventive and curative use.
- *Mahisha Ghrita* shows specific efficacy in *Pitta* and *Rakta* disorders because of its cooling and nourishing nature.
- *Aja Ghrita* is indicated in respiratory and digestive disorders due to its *Laghu* and *Agni-Deepana* properties.
- *Avika Ghrita* demonstrates benefits in strengthening *Asthi Dhatu* and managing *Vata*-dominant and degenerative conditions.
- *Ushtra Ghrita* is effective in *Krimi*, *Shosha*, *Visha*, *Kushtha* and obstructive metabolic disorders due to its *Katu Vipaka* and penetrating action.
- *Hastini Ghrita* exhibits stabilizing, tissue-building and *Grahi* properties, making it useful in chronic and metabolic disorders.
- *Ashva Ghrita* enhances *Deha Agni*, stamina and vitality while remaining light to digest, indicating its role in fatigue and metabolic insufficiency.
- *Stri Ghrita* is described as *Amritopama* and *Tridosha-Shamaka*, with special therapeutic relevance in gynecological and reproductive disorders.
- Classical literature highlights the importance of the age of *Ghrita*, where *Nava Ghrita* is preferred for nourishment and weakness, and *Purana Ghrita* for chronic, neurological and degenerative diseases.
- The concept of *Sanskaranuvartana* explains the enhanced therapeutic potency of aged *Ghrita* and its deeper tissue penetration.
- Modern scientific evidence supports classical claims by identifying *Ghrita* as a source of essential fatty acids, fat-soluble vitamins and antioxidant compounds.
- The presence of short-chain fatty acids such as butyric acid correlates with classical descriptions of digestive, metabolic and gut-supportive actions of *Ghrita*.
- The lipophilic nature of *Ghrita* validates its classical recognition as a *Yogavahi*, enhancing drug absorption and bioavailability.
- Overall findings establish *Ashta Ghrita* as a precise, individualized and evidence-aligned therapeutic concept, reinforcing its significance in classical and contemporary *Ayurvedic* practice.

DISCUSSION

The present review highlights that the concept of *Ashta Ghrta* is a well-structured and clinically meaningful classification rather than a theoretical construct. Classical texts clearly demonstrate that the source of milk plays a decisive role in determining the *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* and *Dosha-Karma* of *Ghrta*. This explains why different types of *Ghrta* are indicated for specific disease conditions and patient constitutions. The systematic categorization of *Ghrta* into eight types reflects the advanced observational ability of ancient scholars in correlating animal physiology with therapeutic outcomes, thereby enabling a highly individualized approach to treatment.^[13]

The discussion further reveals that the therapeutic specificity of *Ashta Ghrta* enhances clinical precision. Instead of employing a single generic form of ghee, classical *Ayurveda* advocates selecting the appropriate type based on *Dosha* predominance, tissue involvement and digestive strength. The additional emphasis on the age of *Ghrta* (*Nava* and *Purana Ghrta*) demonstrates a dynamic understanding of pharmacological evolution, where therapeutic potency increases with time. This concept is particularly significant in chronic, neurological and degenerative conditions where deeper tissue penetration and sustained action are required.^[14]

Correlation with modern scientific literature strengthens the validity of classical descriptions. The presence of essential fatty acids, fat-soluble vitamins, antioxidants and short-chain fatty acids in *Ghrta* provides a biochemical basis for its *Rasayana*, *Medhya* and digestive-supportive actions. The lipophilic nature of *Ghrta* explains its classical recognition as a *Yogavahi*, capable of enhancing drug bioavailability and tissue delivery. Thus, the discussion establishes *Ashta Ghrta* as an evidence-aligned, rational and patient-centered therapeutic framework that remains highly relevant in contemporary *Ayurvedic* practice.^[15]

CONCLUSION

The present review concludes that *Ashta Ghrta* represents a highly refined and rational therapeutic concept in *Ayurveda*, emphasizing that *Ghrta* is not a uniform substance but a group of distinct agents with specific clinical applications. Classical literature clearly establishes that variations in the source of milk and the age of *Ghrta* significantly influence its *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* and *Dosha-Karma*, thereby determining its suitability in different disease conditions. Understanding these distinctions enables precise, individualized treatment selection, enhances clinical efficacy and aligns classical wisdom with modern scientific insights. Thus, the concept of *Ashta Ghrta* reinforces the depth of *Ayurvedic* pharmaceuticals and supports its continued relevance in evidence-aligned, patient-centered healthcare practice.

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SOURCE OF SUPPORT –NONE.

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