

## NUTRACEUTICALS IN AYURVEDA; A REVIEW

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## ABSTRACT

As the time advances, many new concepts regarding food and medicines in modified form are in vogue. One such concept had emerged recently and is gaining popularity due to its ease in utility and proving to be beneficial. Food and medicines based upon calorific value are gaining wide acceptance and are in practice largely. Calculation of body requirement for calories according to one's routine and then opting for certain nutraceuticals is fashion now a days. Ayurveda as most primitive science of life had experimented and lead some diets rules which when followed gives sound health in long run. This are based upon some sets of principles which work on *Prakruti*, *Desh* and *Kala* of consumer. This modern day part of nutraceuticals is also covered in this and if followed according to Ayurveda, then it would fetch more promising outcomes.

**KEYWORDS:** Nutraceuticals, *Prakruti*, *Desh*, *Kala*.

## INTRODUCTION

In today's fast moving world the pace of day to day life had sidelined the importance of sound health. Pandemic situation had made human race to introspect the importance and need of optimum health to withstand the deliberate effects of ever newly emerging emergencies. Modification of lifestyle and change in one's diet had gained focus. In this context an emerging synergism of 'Nutrients' in Pharmaceutics had attracted the attention of many pharma companies. Thus begun the manufacturing of number of Nutraceuticals. These are based on supply of required nutrients to body in the form of pharmaceutical dosage form. Many health centers worldwide recommend usage of this products to gain desired outcomes. Low calories high in protein and also types are proteins supplements are been used largely. Many a times the outcomes of this causes heavy impact on ones bodily organs in long run. These heavy to digest nutraceuticals cannot pass first metabolism in liver and thereby led to malfunctioning of the organ. Several cases are reported develop liver toxicity after use of such products for long period of time.

If we thoroughly study and research the Ayurveda classics, we come to know that our ancestors had used this technique in a very unique fashion. Description of *Aahar varga*, *Ashto aaharvishi visheshayatana* and concept of *Rasayana* covers almost all aspects of modern

day nutraceuticals and justify it in a proper manner. Here a brief collection of these references is made which enables us to know the age old nutraceuticals and its therapeutics.

**Concept of Nutraceuticals**

Nutraceutical, a fusion of the words "nutrition" and "pharmaceutical" and was coined by Dr. Stephen L. DeFelice, founder and chairman of the Foundation of Innovation Medicine (FIM), Crawford, New Jersey. The term is applied to products that range from isolated nutrients, dietary supplements and herbal products, specific diets, genetically modified food, and processed foods such as cereals, soups, and beverages. These products were derived from various food sources that would provide extra health benefits in addition to nutritive value found in regular foods.

**Nutraceuticals in Ayurveda**

As mentioned earlier, Ayurveda had cover this under various heads like, *Aahar varga*, *Ashto aaharvishi visheshayatana* and *Rasayana*. Here *Acharya* advocates the use of various groups of foods in peculiar fashion according to desired outcome. Ayurveda classics enlist this groups and their properties by virtue of this they can be used in day to day life.

Following is brief presentation with its importance

As mentioned in 5<sup>th</sup> chapter of Ashtanga Hrudaya, the groups of liquids – Drav Dravya are

<b>Drav Dravya</b>	<b>Importance</b>
<i>Toyavarga</i> – Water	According to origin of water/ its source the properties and their health effects are mentioned
<i>Kshirvarha</i> – Milk	Milk obtained from various animals and their therapeutics are mentioned
<i>Ikshuvarga</i> – Cane juice	Products obtained from Sugarcane juice with their health effects are mentioned
<i>Madhuvarga</i> – Honey	Honey collected from different sources and their properties are stated
<i>Tailvarga</i> – Oils	Oils derived from various sources and their effects on health is given
<i>Madyavarga</i> – Alcohol preparations	Alcoholic prepared from specific procedures forms types of alcohols with different therapeutics
<i>Motravarga</i> – Urine	Urine of animals have specific properties and are beneficial in various conditions

Anna varga as mentioned in 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of Ashtanga Hrudaya

<b>Anna varga</b>	<b>Importance</b>
<i>Shookdhanya varga</i> – monocots	Types of various grains in accordance to their properties are enlisted
<i>Shimbidhanya varga</i> – dicots	Types of various pulses and cereals in accordance to their properties are enlisted
<i>Krutannvarga</i> – cooked food	Which foods are to be cooked for their optimum benefit and procedures for making it is described
<i>Mamsavarga</i> – meat	Meat of various animals along with their properties
<i>Shakvarga</i> – leafy vegetables	Green leafy veges with their therapeutics and also nutritive importance given
<i>Phalavarga</i> – fruits	Specific types of fruits along with their properties and usage are been mentioned
<i>Aushadhivarga</i> –	Here some drugs in groups or singularly are mentioned in this chapter which can be used for providing extra nutritive value to food

#### Concept of Ashto Ahar Vidhi Visheshayatan

Acharya Charak had elaborated factors which determine the right utility of food in order to have wholesome beneficial effect on body as well as mind. This term includes following aspects;

1. *Ahar vishesh* – having special properties, specific intended effects
2. *Vidhi vishesh* – special arrangement, set of rules to be followed
3. *Ayatan vishesh* – cause, relevance, *Hetu*

*Ashto Ahar Vidhi Visheshayatan* –

1. *Prakruti* – nature of *dravya*
2. *Karana - samskara*
3. *Kala* – time
4. *Samyoga* - combination
5. *Rashi* – amount

Acharya Sharangdhara had mentioned a very particular use of *Rasayana* according to decades of life. These are as follows.

<b>Decade</b>	<b>Avastha</b>	<b>Rasayana</b>
0-10	<i>Balya</i> (corpulence)	<i>Ksheera, ghrita, Gambhari</i>
11-20	<i>Vridhhi</i> (growth)	<i>Bala, Amalaki</i>
21-30	<i>Chhavi</i> (luster)	<i>Amalaki, Haridra</i>
31-40	<i>Medha</i> (intellect)	<i>Brahmi, Sankhapushpi</i>
41-50	<i>Twak</i> (skin quality)	<i>Bhringaraja, Haridra</i>
51-60	<i>Drishhti</i> (vision)	<i>Thriphala, Jyothishmathi</i>
61-70	<i>Sukra</i> (virility)	<i>Aswagandha, Kapikachu</i>
71-80	<i>Vikrama</i> (physical strength)	<i>Amalaki, Bala</i>
81-90	<i>Buddhi</i> (thinking)	<i>Brahmi, Sankhapushpi</i>
91-100	<i>Karmendriyapadavum</i> (sensory perception)	<i>Bala, Sahachara</i>

6. *Desh* – regional specification
7. *Upayog Samstha* – ethics to be followed
8. *Upayokta* – individual entity

#### Concept of Rasayana in Ayurveda

##### Definition

As stated in *Charaka samhita*, these are the procedures/ drugs/ foods which act beneficial for producing optimum quality of all *Dhatu*.

The word is made up of *Rasa* and *Ayana*. *Rasa* which primarily means the essential vital liquid content present in body (*Sapta dhatu Saar*) and *Ayana* means the path or channel to the same. So this provide proper growth, sharp intellect, helps to stay young and maintains sound general health.

**Other Rasayana formulations which can be used as nutraceuticals**

<b>Rasayana</b>	<b>Effects</b>
<i>Chawanprash Rasayana</i>	Maintaining respiratory health
<i>Brahma Rasayana</i>	Nervine health
<i>Chandraprabha Vati</i>	Reproductive health
<i>Ashwagandha (Powder)</i>	Vitality and muscular strength
<i>Shilajit</i>	All body rejuvenation
<i>Arjun Ksheerpak</i>	Cardiac health
<i>Phala Ghrut</i>	Healthy for reproductive organs
<i>Dhatu Bhasma</i>	Enhancing potency and micro level cellular action
Mercurial preparations	Used in all diseases and also beneficial for longevity

**Inference**

Ayurveda emphasis on usage of food as nutraceutical which confer required antioxidant, nutritive, fiber rich, including pre and probiotics food that is best for ones *Prakruti*. It improves health, increase life expectancy, delay ageing process with minimal or no side effects. A through and single entity research is needed to amplify the present study.

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