

## KARKIDAKA TREATMENT: THE SCIENTIFIC WAY

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### ABSTRACT

As per Malayalam calendar, last month of a year is Karkidakom and it falls in the month of July or August. With the starting of this season (monsoon) rainfall enters the final phase in Kerala. In karkidakom (Monsoon) strictly following the regimen is prescribed as the health of the person in this season is minimal due to environmental influence which means the digestive capacity and health will be reduced making it more susceptible to infections and diseases. This is explained as “aama” in Ayurveda which is due to “agnimandya (impairment in digestion)” making imbalance in the tridoshas. In varsharitu, the agni debilitated by greeshma undergoes further decrease and gets vitiated by the doshas (Vata, pitta, kapha). They get aggravated by the effect of the thick cloud, sudden blowing of the cold wind (after scorching heat of the sun in greeshma) resulting in amlapaka (Sourness) in turn causing pitta vardhana. Because of the cold rain, cold wind, vatakopa and solidification of kapha occurs resulting in vitiation of the tridoshas. This article gives information regarding karkidaka treatment which is widely practiced in Kerala and its importance in maintenance of healthy life.

**Keywords:** karkidaka, agnimandya, aama, vatakopa, tridoshas

### INTRODUCTION

*“Just as the rising sun removes the darkness of the sky, similarly the scientific knowledge of cosmic manifestation removes all illusory duality from mind, even if illusion enters the heart, it cannot remain there” - Srimad Bhagvatam 11-24, 28.*

The revolution of the Earth around the Sun is the reason for creation of day and night and seasons. The seasons are called as ‘ritu’. One of the fundamental understandings in Ayurveda is the seasons and its regimen and is termed as ‘Ritucharya’.<sup>1</sup>

Ritu- fixed or appointed time or season  
Charya- regime or routine.

The six seasons<sup>2</sup> described by Ayurveda acharyas are: Shishiram (Jan21-Mar20), Vasantha (Mar21- May21), Grisma (May22-

July22), Varsha (July23-Sept22), Sharadh (Sep23-Nov21), Hemantha (Nov22- Jan20).

On June 21, the first day of summer and the longest day of the year, the sun rises not directly in the east but northeast. Exactly after six months, Dec 21 the first day of winter and the shortest day, sun rises in the south east. This means that between the longest day and the shortest day, sun has been rising each day a little more towards south. This southern course of the sun is called ‘Dakshiyayana’ in ayurveda and from December 21 to June 21, the movement of the sun in the reverse direction i.e. towards north is called ‘Uttarayana’.

Why is this sun movement important?

It is believed in all cultures that auspicious things are done in light like stepping into a

new house, install a sacred image, start a business during the northern course of the sun i.e Uttarayana.

Geographically, during this period sun is above the north of the equator, earth decreases its moisture content and the air has become dry and hence Ayurveda acharyas named it as Adanakala.<sup>3</sup>

The atmospheric changes through the changing of the seasons create a disturbance in the equilibrium of the mahabhutas(five elements) and gunas (qualities)<sup>4</sup> in that specific season.

This actually is the first stage of the disease. With the continued change of the season it further aggravates the doshas. This is the second stage of the disease. But due to the mercy of the nature, the next season balances and brings the doshas to normalcy. Hence through ayurveda one can know the geographical condition of the season and its changes occurring in the body.

*Seasons and Ayanaas:*<sup>5</sup>

Uttarayana: Sisiram, vasantam, greeshmam  
Dakshiyayana: Varsha, sharad, Hemantha.

What is karkidakom? Why is it important?

As per Malayalam calendar, last month of a year is Karkidakom and it falls in the month of July or August. With the starting of this season (monsoon) rainfall enters the final phase in Kerala.

Ayurvedic science which is holistic by nature aims<sup>6</sup> in:

- 1) To maintain the health in the healthy
- 2) To cure the disease.

Keeping this in view, Ayurveda advocates to follow certain regimen daily (dinacharya)<sup>7</sup> and seasonal routine (Ritucharya) so that balance of tridoshas(Ayurvedic principle of being in health) is maintained and natural

immunity is boosted to surpass the negativity of the environment.

In karkidakom (Monsoon) strictly following the regimen is prescribed as the health of the person in this season is minimal due to environmental influence which means the digestive capacity and health will be reduced making it more susceptible to infections and diseased. This is explained as “aama” in Ayurveda which is due to “agnimandya<sup>8</sup>(impairment in digestion)” making imbalance in the tridoshas.

In varshartu, the agni debilitated by greeshma undergoes further decrease and gets vitiated by the doshas(Vata, pitta, kapha). They get aggravated by the effect of the thick cloud, sudden blowing of the cold wind (after scorching heat of the sun in greeshma) resulting in amlapaka(Sourness) in turn causing pitta vardhana. Because of the cold rain, cold wind, vatakopa and solidification of kapha occurs resulting in vitiation of the tridoshas.

The diseases usually seen in this season are fever, diarrhea and dysentery, abdominal discomforts and water borne diseases.

### **DIET TO BE FOLLOWED DURING KARKIDAKOM**

- Ajamamsa rasa (goat meat soup) recommended to boost the immunity.
- Food prepared from old grains, wheat, yava(puranadhanyas).
- Yusha to be taken (seasoned vegetable soup.)
- Mastu(thairvellam) processed with sauvarchala salt (intuppu), powder of panchakola<sup>9</sup>( group of 5 drugs pippali, pippalimula, chavya, chitraka, nagara) is used.

- Rain water or water from deep wells, well boiled is used for drinking.
- On a very cloudy day(durdinam), food should be predominantly sour, salty, snehadravya(ghee/oil). Easily digestible foods are taken.
- Intake of honey is advised.
- Use of mardhikya Madhya(wine) and arishta Madhya<sup>10</sup>
- The use of karkidaka kanji is quite useful and important diet taken in this season.

#### REGIMEN

- Fumigate the house at dusk so that it will be devoid of moisture
- Spiritual recitation to invoke the 'satwika' nature of mind.
- Use perfumes and expose the clothes to fumigation.
- Usage of footwear and umbrella during this season.

#### AVOID

- Excess exertions( vyayama)
- Day sleeping
- Exposure to sun
- Sheetaahara, vihara(expose to cold): Kala virudham(if taken may cause toxic effects)
- Fish in diet
- Avoid potatoes, curd, excess use of garlic, and pulse like gram as it causes abdominal discomfort.

#### KARKIDAKA KANJI

Karkidaka kanji is the famous dietary form of medicated preparation to boost the immunity and regain the shareerikabala of the individual. In early days, in this season people used to take rest as there was no job (due to heavy rainfall), so they had taken medicinal herbs and prepared the

diet(karkidaka kanji) which is now found to be extremely useful in regaining their strength. But now it has merely turned out to be a flourishing business.

#### RELEVANCE OF KARKIDAKA KANJI

Why in kanji form?

Kanji is the diet which is more satmya to Keralites. Moreover, kanji(peya) is indicated in kshut(Hunger), trshna(thirst), glani(tiredness), daurbalya (weakness), kukshiroga(abdominal discomforts), jwara(fever). It allows anulomana to mala and vata(prevents constipation), agnidipti.

If used in other form much result are not expected. As in kashaya form it can cause sthambhana(kashaya rasa) and vata can be vitiated.

Kanji can be used as both ahara and oushada and moreover is satmya to all people and high quantity can also be consumed.

A) What are the ingredients of karkidaka kanji?

Njavara rice: 50gm

Coconut: 250gm

Ghee: 1tsp

Jaggery: sufficient quantity

Aushadhachurna: 7gm.

Method of Preparation:<sup>11</sup>

- Boil Njavara rice. When half boiled add the swarasa(the juice) and powder of herbal medicine.
- Add jaggery in liquid form,strained in accordance to taste of the person.
- Add coconut milk to this and ghee.

B) What is the Oushadhachurna?

Ajamodakam(*Trachyspermumammi*), chukka (*Zingiberofficinale*), asali(*Lepidiumsativum*), uluva(*Trigonellafoenum-graecum*), jeeragam(*Cuminumcuminum*), elavangam(*Syzygiumaromaticum*),

jati(*Myristicafragrans*), malli(*Coriander sativum*), kurunthotti(*Sidacordifolia*), putharichunda(*Solanumanguivi*)etc can be taken.Swarasaof dasapushpam, thazhuthama(*Boerhaviadiffusa*) etc.

In normal healthy individual these can be taken depending on the availability of the above said drugs as there is no “specific recipe” for karkidika kanji.

In case of diseased, ingredients can be varied in accordance to the disease condition. In case of diabetic patient, jaggery can be avoided and cherupayar(*Vignaradiata*) can be taken as the main ingredient. In case of patients with renal complaints, thazhuthama is selected as the main ingredient.In case of patients who are hyperlipidemic, ghee is avoided and malli leaves, uluva, curry leaves, thazhuthama, muthira are added.In case of hypertensive patients, thazhuthama, muringaela(*Moringaoleifera*) are selected.In asthmatic patient, putharichunda, jeerakam, chukka, kurunthotti are selected.

The karkidaka kanji is available in market, prepared by different Ayurvedic pharmacies in Kerala. This is recommended only for healthy individual. In case of diseased, the individual are requested to consult expert vaidya as some complications such as hypotension, hypoglycemia, loose motions are observed in some cases.

karkidakom has maximum absorption rate of medicines and food thereby increasing the ‘bioavailability’ making the ideology more substantiative.

Hence with these shodhanakarma<sup>12</sup>(purificatory measures) under the supervision of an expert vaidya is highly beneficial.

By all these, traditional system of Ayurvedic medicine in karkidakom helps an individual in harmony with the nature and helping him to lead a healthy life.

“Sarvejanasukhinobhavanthu Sarvesanthuniramaya”

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