



# A Pragmatic approach to *Madhura Rasa Sevana Siddhanta* in Ayurveda for Healthy Lifestyle

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## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is traditional system which states food as an integral part of our human body for healthy living. Regular food regime should consist *Madhuradi Shad-Rasa* (six tastes), also it should be taken appropriate quantity. Modernised lifestyle approach has grossly led to diet modification. This modification mainly includes food types which contain less or no *madhura rasa*. *Madhura rasa* is accustomed since birth (*Ajanma-satmya*), initiates body growth in children and maintains good health in old age. It is important in production of *dhatu*s and *Oja*, also triggers longevity of life. Absence of *Madhura Rasa* in daily diet is adversely affecting human body and leading to compromised immune response, thus culminating into multiple immunological disorders. Ayurveda practitioners should spread awareness about applicability of *Madhura rasa* for maintaining good health through concealing, consultation and treatment at various professional levels by utilising the guidelines in *samhitas*.

**Key Words:** *Six tastes, diet, Madhura rasa Sevan, Diet modification, Immunity*

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is traditional health care system which deals with maintenance of human health through multi-focal approach. Ayurvedic contexts aid apex priority to food, considers it as a medicine<sup>1</sup>. Food acts as building block of our body and our health strictly is dependent on the food we eat<sup>2</sup>. A normal or diseased person would show physiological or pathological changes whether good or bad depending upon the nutrient value of the diet that individual takes. The concept of Food consumption is multi-focal and it varies through geographical areas, communities, climate changes, lifestyle pattern, profession, age etc. However, Ayurveda proposes basic principles of

food consumption which is a mid-line approach to good health. *Ayurveda* texts states that diet should be inclusive of all 6 taste (sweet, sour, salty, bitter, pungent, and astringent)<sup>3</sup>. The chronological order of *rasa* and their *Panchabhautikatva* is as follows- *Madhura Rasa* (sweet)- *Prithvi* and *Aapa*, *Amla rasa* (sour) – *Tej* and *Prithvi*, *Lavana Rasa* (salty)- *Tej* and *Aapa*, *Tikta Rasa* (bitter)- *Aakaash* and *Vayu*, *Katu rasa* (pungent)- *Tej* and *Vayu*, *Kashaya rasa* (astringent)- *Prithvi* and *Vayu*<sup>4</sup>. Significance of this chronology is that there has to be a quantitative decrease in consumption as we go further i.e. *Madhura rasa* is expected to comprise dominant<sup>5</sup> share in total quantitative food intake followed by others.



Individualised quantitative approach of rasa should be dependent on the person's Age, *Agni* and *Prakruti*<sup>6</sup>. Quantity of food also depends on *guruta* and *laghuta* of *dravya*. *Guru dravya* should be consumed in lesser quantity than *laghu dravya*<sup>7</sup>.

Considering nutritive benefits of food to the body, including all six tastes in regular diet should be highlighted. Each taste (*Rasa*) has its unique independent effect on the body and mind, also side effects when taken in excessive quantity<sup>8</sup>. *Madhura rasa* is considered dominant one amongst all *rasa* due to its universal health benefits.

Madhura rasa -

The *rasa* which smears/coats the oral mucosa on intake, gives pleasant feeling, and is dear to ants and other insects is termed as *Madhura Rasa*.<sup>9</sup>

Qualities of Madhura rasa –

Madhura *rasa* – it is *Guru*, *Sheeta*, *Snigdha* in nature, being accustomed since birth (*Aajanmasatmya*) initiates growth in seven *dhatu*s (*Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Asthi*, *Majja*, *Sukra*) beneficial in childhood (*Baalya awastha*); old age (*Vruddha-avasta*); physically weak (*Kshatakshina*); healthy skin pigmentation (*Varnya*); hair growth (*Keshya*); good health of body senses (*Indriya*); triggering immunity (*Ojas*), it brings about nourishment to body (*Brunhana*); melodious voice (*Kanthy*a); healthy breast milk (*Stanya*); wound repair (*Sandhana*); longevity of life (*Ayusho-jeevana*). *Madhura rasa* counteracts the effects of *Pitta dosha*, *Vaatadosha* and *veesha* as it is of opposite *guna* in nature. Its

excessive consumption can lead to *Kapha-medoja* diseases like obesity, indigestion, numbness in limbs, diabetes and benign growth<sup>10</sup>.

Madhura *rasa skandha* (*Rasa* oriented group of drugs) -

Ayurveda does not consider *madhura rasa* as a food substance which tastes sweet but a substance with above mentioned qualities is listed as *madhura rasa*. *Madhura rasa skandha* includes ghee, walnut, jack fruit, milk, sugarcane, honey, grapes, dates, wheat, rice, barley, moong daal. Among these milk, ghee, rice, moong daal, honey are to be consumed daily for good health<sup>11</sup>.

Modern approach to diet –

Today's modernisation and modified lifestyle pattern has led to drastic changes in food habits both qualitatively and quantitatively leading to lifestyle disorders. Diabetes, obesity, hypertension are few diseases prevalently considered as life style disorders. Concept of low fat and high protein diet, keto diet, no sugar diet etc. are being practiced to avoid such diseases. This modernised diet is basically *Ruksha* and *Laghu* in nature as it contains high amounts of pungent, astringent and bitter tastes as compared to sweet taste (*madhura rasa*). *Ruksha guna* is responsible for depleting the tenderness, lust and oleation in the body, leading to *Kshaya* in all the *dhatu*s and *Upa-dhatu*s. *Laghu guna* decreases the *Dhatu* abundance in the body, crabs the body of necessary nutrition. Excessive intake of bitter, pungent etc. *rasa* leads to derangement in the *dhatu* production.

This altered unbalanced diet of low nutritive value is causing rise in cases of nutrition deficiencies



and immunological diseases ranging from viral infections to autoimmune diseases. There will be an upcoming era where hike in infective diseases, deficiency disorders and lifestyle disorders will be seen. Complete abstinence from traditional food system being the prime reason for it. Ayurveda suggests *Nidanaparivarjana* (isolation from bad food habits); *Pathya- apathya according to Prakruti, Desha, Kaal, Vyadhi; Dinacharya; Ritucharya; Rasayana and Vajikarana*.

All these principle guidelines will result in good health. But for earning this health individual guidance through counselling and awareness is necessary. Ayurveda pioneers should take initiative to reframe these principles in a comprehensive pattern to make it serene while communicating to general population.

## DISCUSSION

Health is a primary aspect for any individual as well as a community. Righteous approach towards diet is important. Principles in Ayurveda have applicability in today's era as well. As described above diet should be excellent in quality and in appropriate quantity. Any deviation to this will lead to compromised immunity and diseases. Showcasing plastic bodies rather than fit ones is new concept of healthy. Physician appearance has become more important than core strength. All of this is culminating into faulty marketing and misleading advertisements.

This approach towards health needs to be changed through awareness about what's right for your body and what is not. Today's generation believes

in applicability and practical values. Hence, it becomes important to communicate them the necessity of *Madhura rasa* in diet, its nutritive value and its long standing effect on health. This can be done through person to person concealing, group concealing, through social media publications, article writing.

Also, inter disciplinary approach is must. Medical professionals practicing in other alternate medicines also should be concealed through mutual meetings, conferences etc. This will be stepping stone in creating awareness above healthy diet in association with six tastes and mainly sweet taste (*madhura rasa*).

## CONCLUSION

All principles stated in ayurvedic context have practical applicability even today. The only necessity is to decode this knowledge in a way that the general public can understand. Once the individual understands the benefits inculcating the regime in his daily life will become more handy and smooth. Awareness has to be created about the same by the once who have this core knowledge, mainly Ayurveda practioners. Good health is a community right, and Ayurveda pioneers can definitely guide every individual todo it through united approach and strategies.



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