

# Management of Atisara (Diarrhoea) with Diet (Pathyapthya) from Ayurveda perspective: A Review

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## Abstract

Atisara (diarrhoea) is a fairly prevalent disease in the modern day, due to irregular and harmful practices related to ahara and vihara, which cause sarira and manavaigunyata (physical and psychological involvement). Although atisara (diarrhoea) rarely poses a threat to health, it can persist and be quite painful. Atisara (diarrhoea) is becoming more common every day. Because of the influence of western eating habits, bad nutrition practises and mental stress. Here, we address Nidana Panchaka with a focus on Samprapti of Atisara (diarrhoea) as mentioned in Ayurvedic literature. Understanding the Nidana Panchaka and the samprapti in-depth allows for the formulation of appropriate management of diet (Ahara) for preventive measures of Atisara.

**Keywords:** Diarrhoea; Psychological; Ayurvedic; Physical.

## INTRODUCTION

In clinical practise, diarrhoea is the most often encountered ailment. Diarrhea, one of the many lists of gastrointestinal disorders, holds a special place in people's lives because everyone experiences it at least once in their lifetime. According to ICD 10, there are various types of diarrhoea, including functional diarrhoea, non-infective diarrhoea, infected diarrhoea, and irritable bowel syndrome with diarrhoea. One of the top 10 diseases that contribute to world wide DALY is diarrhea.<sup>1</sup> There are three clinical types of diarrhoea:

- Acute watery diarrhoea lasts several hours or days, and includes cholera.

- Acute bloody diarrhoea – also called dysentery.
- Persistent diarrhoea – lasts 14 days or longer.

In Ayurveda diarrhoea can be corelated to atisara. Ati and saranam together make to the word atisara (diarrhoea). Ati denotes excess, while saranamde notes flow. Therefore, atisara (diarrhoea) is a condition in which excessive numbers of watery stools are passed on a daily basis.

Mandagni is the most significant factor in the pathogenesis of Atisara (diarrhoea). Mandagni is the underlying cause of amadosha and a key factor in the presentation of most disorders, including Atisara (diarrhea).<sup>2</sup> Amadosha is the consequence of agnidushti brought on by mithya-aharavihara (mal practice of food and conduct), and it eventually takes the form of Atisara (diarrhea). Therefore, poor eating habits are a significant factor in the development of atisara (diarrhoea), and advice to practise correct ahara-vidhividhana is part of the treatment. The digestive system in humans is incredibly sensitive and reacts to both internal bodily processes and emotional stasso appropriately.<sup>3</sup>

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### Nidanas of Atisara (Etiology)

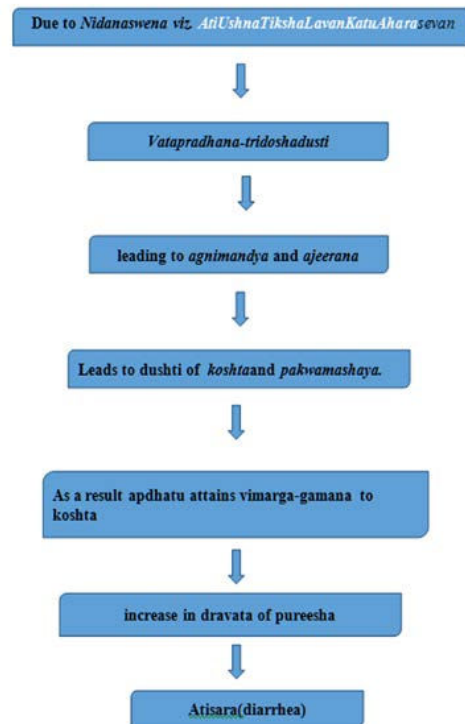
- According to ayurveda texts, nidanas (causes) of Atisara (diarrhea) can be identified under four broad headings as viz. Aharaja, viharaja, manasika (emotional etc.) and agantuja (external factors viz. Bacteria, virus etc.) nidanas.<sup>4</sup>
- Acharya Sushruta in Uttarasthana mentions guru (heavy), snigdha (unctuous), ruksha (dry), ushna (hot), drava (liquid), sheeta padartha sevanana, sanyoga viruddha, samskara viruddha ahara sevana, adyasana (eating before the digestion of previous meal), ajeerna, asathmya bhojana, increased snehapana, bhaya (fear), visha (use of poison), shoka (grief), dushta ambu-paana (drinking of contaminated water), madyapana (alcohol consumption), rithusaathmya (change of season of physical contrarities), vega varodha (suppression of natural urges), krimi and arshas.<sup>5</sup>
- Acharya also mentioned that atisara can also be caused due to krimii.e, pathogens like bacteria, amoeba, viruses etc. as told in contemporary science.
- Vagbhataa charya opines that consumption of rukshamamsa, mamsa derived from lean animals or preparations of tila or germinating seeds, Krimi and Arshas<sup>3</sup> are responsible in causation of Atisara (diarrhea).<sup>6</sup>

### Types of Atisara

- The Brihatrayees (three elaborated samhitas of ayurveda literature) list six different varieties of atisara (diarrhoea). Six categories were mentioned by Acharya Charaka, Vagbhata, and Sushruta as:
  1. Vataja
  2. Pittaja
  3. Kaphaja
  4. Sannipataja
  5. Bhayaja, and } Agantuja (Exogenous causes)
  6. Shokaja }
- Although Acharya Sushruta has specified amaja kind of Atisara (diarrhoea) rather than bhayaja variety.<sup>7</sup>
- In addition to adding one additional type as raktaja, Madhava Nidana and Sarangadhara adopted Sushruta's interpretation, making a total of seven varieties. Eight varieties are listed

by Bhaishajya Ratnavali, including the jwaraja type.

- Bhavaprakasha classified Atisara (diarrhea) based on avastha as amavastha, pakwavastha and raktavastha.<sup>8</sup>
- Hareetasamhita mentions only one type as



jwaraatisara.

- Acharya Charaka mentioned 36 types of Atisara (diarrhea) in sidhisthana.<sup>9</sup>

### Samprapti (Pathophysiology)

#### Samprapti Ghatakas:

1. Doshas-Vata-Pradhana Tridoshaja
2. Dushaya-Udaka, Purisha
3. Agni-Jatar Agnimandya
4. Ama-Ajeerna-Jnyaama/Mandagni-Jnyaama
5. Srotas-Purishvah, Udakavaha, Annava-ahasrotas
6. Srotodusti-Ati-pravarti
7. Udbhava-sthan-Pakwashaya
8. Adhisthana-Pakawashaya/guda
9. Svabhava-Ashukari
10. Sadhyasadhyata-Kruchasadhyas/sadhya

### Lakshanas (Sign and Symptoms)

Type of Atisara	Lakshanas
1. VatajaAtisara	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The stool is slimy and mixed with Mucus (Ama)</li> <li>2. The stool floats on water</li> <li>3. The stool is rough and liquid</li> <li>4. Defecation is associated with colic pain</li> <li>5. Colic pain is brought on by the exacerbated Vayu (flatus), which moves obliquely in the Kostha (gastrointestinal tract) and makes gurgling noises.</li> </ol>
2. PittajaAtisara	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The patient voids frequent loose motions which are either yellow, green blue or black in color</li> <li>2. The stool is mixed with blood and bile, and it is excessively foul smelling and</li> <li>3. The patient suffers from Trishna (excess thirst), Daha (burning sensations, Atisweda(excessive sweating), Murcha (fainting), etc.</li> </ol>
3. KaphajaAtisara	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The patient voids stool which is Snigdha (unctuous), Shwetam (white), Picchila (slimy), mixed with mucus as well as undigested food particles, Guru (heavy), Durgandham (foul-smelling).</li> <li>2. Badhhashoola (continuous pain)</li> <li>4. Pravahikam</li> <li>5. Heaviness in the abdomen, in the region of urinary bladder and in the pelvic region</li> <li>6. The patient feels the urge for passing another bout of stool even after evacuation.</li> <li>7. Loma harsha (horripilation), Utklesha (Nausea), Atinidra (excessive sleep), Aalasya (indolence), Sadana (prostration) and Annadveshi (dislike for food).</li> </ol>
3. Sannipataja Atisara	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stool having yellow (like the color of turmeric), green, blue, reddish (like the meat is Manjistha), pink (like the color of water in which meat is washed), red black, white and yellowish (like the color of the pig-fat) in color.</li> <li>2. The patient suffers from continuous pain.</li> <li>3. All the symptoms mentioned in vataja, pittaja and kaphajaatisara.</li> </ol>

**Shokaja and bhayaja:** This sort of diarrhoea is brought on by sadness or fear. These emotional variables vitiate pitta and vata, which results in atisara, or frequent passing of watery stools.<sup>10</sup>

#### Treatment of Atisara (Diarrhoea) from Ayurvedic perspective:

According to Ayurveda it is primarily consist of nidana parivarjana and shamana chikitsa (pacification methods), including langhana, pachana, deepana (hunger inducing methods), and stambhana (stops diarrhoea). Only when there is an imbalance in the doshas or when toxins have accumulated is shodhana (purification) treatment, such as virechana and basti, recommended.<sup>11</sup>

- *Nidana parivarjana:* It is nothing but avoid the causes of atisara, such as drinking too much water, eating too much, not spacing meals out enough, drinking bad water, or eating particularly hot, dry, hard, cold, or unfamiliar

foods.

- *Shamanachikitsa:* It consists of pacification methods for the prakupita doshas by following methods.
  - i. *Langhana:* This involves fasting or eating fewer or smaller portions of food, which aids in the body's digestion of ama and eliminates the disease's primary cause.
  - ii. *Pachana and deepana:* Foods that increase appetite and digestives help the body get rid of ama more quickly by strengthening the digestion fire.
- The stambhana chikitsa shouldn't be administered initially because it aggravates the doshas and could induce serious updrava. Stambhana medications are administered to stop atisara after the ama has been digested.
- *Virechana (Purgation therapy):* The main purpose of virechana is that the entire ama must be

eliminated from the body. Both haritaki and pippali are used for virechana.

- *Basti (Ayurvedic medicated enema)*: The kashaya of fennel, bilwa, licorice, and tila (sesame oil) oil in cow's milk is administered with asthapanabasti. It aids in lowering intestinal motility, which lowers the frequency of faeces. In Pittaja Atisara, it is suggested.<sup>12</sup>

Pichabasti is also suggested for pittajaatisara and raktajaatisara.

#### Ekamoolika Prayoga (Single drugs) used in Atisara:

1. Haritaki with milk or honey
2. Kutaja
3. Bilwa
4. Jatiphala

#### Ayurvedic medicines for Atisara:

1. Kutaja Ghanavati<sup>8</sup>
2. Laghusutashekhar Rasa
3. Bilvadileha
4. Takrarishta
5. Shunthi, Indrayava, Musta Churna
6. Dadimastakachurna
7. Bilwadileham

#### Management according to Modern science

Management of acute diarrhea should include the clinical evaluation of the patient, including risk factors for specific etiology and dehydration; rapid diagnosis of viral diarrhea; and treatment, including rehydration, antibiotic treatment and symptomatic treatment. Rehydration is a major

therapeutic measure. Oral rehydration has a higher risk of paralytic ileus, but intravenous rehydration exposes patients to risks of intravenous therapy.<sup>13</sup>

#### Diet for Atisara as Pathyapathya:

Ayurveda deals extensively with pathyapathya, also known as upashaya anupashaya of Atisara. Fruits, grains, and hot water are categorised as pathya in the Kasyapa Samhita, while apathya includes the consumption of lashuna (garlic), sweet substances, meat soup, and sudation. A detailed explanation of pathyaapathya has been provided by Yogaratnakara.<sup>14</sup> Important pathya include nidra, langana, milk from cows and goats, ghrita, butter made from cow or goat milk, and curd, buttermilk made from cow or goat milk. Apathya includes eating and drinking a lot of calories.

At appropriate meal time, if the patient feels hungry, light food should be given to eat.

It enhances the appetite and stimulates agni and as a result the strength is promoted immediately.

Depending upon the whole someness (satmya) of the patient, light food along with buttermilk or kanji (a sour drink), yavagu (thick gruel), tarpana (roasted flour of serials mixed with water), or alcoholic drink or honey should be given. Then gradually yavagu (thick gruel), vilepi (a sticky gruel), khanda (a sour appetiser), yusha (vegetable soup) and boiled rice mixed with meat soup which are prepared by adding digestive<sup>16</sup>, stimulants and astringent (constipative) drugs should be given.

Ingredients which are dipana (digestive stimulant) and grahi (constipating) are described in (Cha. Sa. Sutra Sthana 4/9) should be administered<sup>15</sup> A proper diet plane should be followed for the

Threapeutic Diet chart for Atisara (Diarrhoea)

	Timing	Food item options (for vegetarians and for non-veg)	Serving size details	Other details
Wake up drink	5.30 am to 6 am	• BalaBilva Juice	01 cup-50/100 ml	Should cover properly night
		• Coconut water		
		• Dhanyakahima (dhanyaka kept in water over night)		
		• Chandan with madhu+sharkra drink		
	6 am to 7 am			• Cooling Pranayama
Morning drinks	6 am to 7 am	• Lemon tea /Green tea	01 cup-50/100 ml	Ginger should be added in tea preparation
Breakfast	9 am	Main dish		Chapati should be serve with cow/goat ghee
		• Mudgadasha with navneet		
		• Uradadasha		
		• Chappathi (2/3) with goduma/ yava		

Table cont....

		Curry / chutney		
		• Sambar with less dal		
		• Balabilva + ginger chutney		
		• Aamlaki chutney		
Drinks		• Bilva juice	I cup – 100 ml on each serving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panaka 1 part drug and 16 part water.</li> <li>• Panakas can change daily</li> <li>• Ginger/ lemon and ela can be added in juice</li> </ul>
		• Black jeera water		
		• Dhanyaka water		
		• Carrot juice		
		• Radish juice		
		• Alovera juice with honey		
		• Watermelon juice		
		• Takra		
		• Moong + Uradpeya (Bala, Shtavri siddha)		
		• Vilepi (Jiraka and Ajmoda)		
		• Moolak Yush		
		• Shtavri Bala Ksheerpaka		
Lunch	1 to 2 pm	Main dish		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It should consume hot in nature</li> <li>• In between food one should have any above mentioned Yusha which is hot in nature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lemon pickle</li> <li>• Amlaki pickle</li> <li>• Carrot pickle</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
		• Shali rice / brown rice		
		• Chappathi (2/3) with godhuma / yava With little amount of ghee		
		Sabji		
		• Drumstick subji		
		• Banana flower subji		
		• Pumpkin sabji		
		• Radish subji		
		• Cluster bean sabji		
		• Bitterguardsabji		
		• Mugdasabji		
		• Subji prepared with bean		
		Curry		
		• Sambar with drumstick		
		• Curd curry with ginger, jeera.		
		• Kushmanda dhal curry		
		• Dhanyayusha		
		• Moong dal and old rice krishra with curd		
		• Khadayusha		
		Mamsa		
		• Goat		
		• Hen		
		• Sheep		
		• Small fishes		
		Salads and fruits		
		• Water melon		
		• Apple		
		• Radish		
		• Blurberry (Jambu)		

Table cont....

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banana</li> <li>• Lemon</li> <li>• Muskmelon</li> </ul>		
Evening snacks/ snacks all over day	5 pm - 6 pm	Green tea / Herbal tea/Lemon tea	01 cup - 100 ml	
Dinner	8 pm	Main dish		
		• Peya with rice and mudga		
		• Brown rice /rice		
		• Chappati with yava		
		Sabji		
		• Kushmandasabji		
		• Bottle guard sabji		
		• Snake guard subji		
		Curry		
		• Rasam with ginger		
• Mudgadaal				
• Masoordaal				
Other advices	-	-	-	Practice Cooling Pranayama <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shitli</li> <li>• Shitkari</li> </ul>
Apathya	<p>Ahara</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Leafy Vegetables (Patrashaka)</li> <li>• Garlic</li> <li>• Sugarcane</li> <li>• Wheat (Godhum)</li> <li>• Black gram</li> <li>• Mango</li> <li>• Aamalki</li> <li>• Barley</li> <li>• Betel nuts</li> <li>• Drakshaw</li> <li>• Ruksha, Guru, UshnaAahara</li> <li>• Spicy salt food, (Lavana and Amla Rasa)</li> <li>• Cow meat</li> </ul> <p>Vihara</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malavegadharana</li> <li>• Ativyayama</li> <li>• Aatapasevana</li> </ul> <p>Masnika</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kroda</li> <li>• Shoka</li> <li>• Bhaya</li> </ul>			

prevention and the cure of atisara (Diarrhoea). A proposed diet chart has been explained below:

## DISCUSSION

As mentioned in Ayurvedic text, Dosh Dushti is

Pitta pradhan Tridosh dushti, as there is Amlodgar, Urodaha, Trushna lakshnas present. Due to increased Drava, Sara and Ushnaguna of Pitta leads to Agninish and Purishbheda.

Atisara leads to the depletion of water and beneficial salts, causing dehydration in the body.

This provokes vata, and therefore requires taking special care of vata, particularly if, the atisara is caused by all the three dosha. Hydration of the body by means of oral administration of milk, buttermilk and various liquid preparations is advised. Goat's milk is very useful in Raktaja diarrhea. Hence adequate prophylaxis measures should be taken to prevent the infectious diarrhoea.

The unripe fruit is said to be an excellent remedy for diarrhoea and is especially useful in chronic diarrhoeas.<sup>16</sup> The effectiveness of *A. marmelos* fruit in diarrhoea and dysentery has resulted in its entry into the British Pharmacopoeia.<sup>18</sup> More over, Chopra<sup>16</sup> has appropriately stated that "No drug has been longer and better known nor more appreciated by the inhabitants of India than the Bael fruit." Charaka has described this plant as a Rasayana.<sup>17</sup>

Aloe vera (AV) is an herbal medication used as a remedy for various diseases in traditional medicine. It has been shown to have hepato-protective, anti-inflammatory, and anti-ulcerative benefits.<sup>18</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Sangrahi (astringent or anti-diarrheals) therapies are not advisable in the initial stage of the disease because of presence of ama inside the body. Instead, mild laxative should be given to eliminate the accumulated dosha. Diarrhea should be allowed to continue and should not be stopped by constipating or bowel binding drugs. The patients shall be managed with light to digest, nutritive and liquid diet regimen which enhances the power of agni as well as it helps to stop diarrhea.

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