

A CRITICAL EVALUATION ON SARVAM SAKHAM ACHAKSHUSHIYAM

Niranjana Gopal K¹, Jishnu R²¹ Doctor, Guest lecturer , Dept. Samhitha & Siddhantha, Government Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram.² Associate professor, Dept. Samhitha & Siddhantha, Pankajakasthuri Ayurveda Medical College & Post Graduate Centre, Kattakada , ThiruvananthapuramCorresponding Author: niranjanagopalk@gmail.com<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj1811122023>

(Published Online: December 2023)

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Article Received: 13/11/2023 - Peer Reviewed: 30/11/2023 - Accepted for Publication: 13/12/2023.



ABSTRACT

Generally, green leafy vegetables are believed to be an important part of a healthy diet as was considered having the capacity to enhance the eyesight, by its phytonutrients etc. This maybe the biggest myth perpetuated for longer times on human beings .This paper may be the one which are going to say that green leafy vegetables are not that much good for Eyesight. The truth behind this concept is to be repaid with supporting facts and evidence. When we look around, we can find that mostly vegan are suffering from nutritional deficiency and poor vision. So, this concept must be evaluated and understood in actual sense.

When we go through our classics, we may hit on many concepts which are favorable to this theme. Despite of this there are many causative factors which are widely mentioned that leaf vegetables are not good for health mostly related to eye. And we are not giving much significance for that and simply running behind the modern concept. So, it is very inevitable to explore and rebuild the myth and reality.

Title quotes itself is that “*Sarvam sakamachaksusyam chaksusyam sakapanchakam jeevanthi vasthu matshakshi meghanaada punarnavaa*” is selected from the *Nimi Tantra* which is famous book on *Shalakyia Tantra* (ophthalmology) clearly mentioned that all leafy vegetables are *achashushiya* in nature expect *shaka panchaka* . It is very necessary to detangle the myth and reality behind this concept with the help of our science. So, through this we can explore the concept and decipher the actual sense. It will be astonishing knowledge to the doctors as well as awareness to the people.

Keywords: Chakshusya, Sakapanchaka, Nimi Tantra, phytonutrients

INTRODUCTION

Green leafy vegetables are not only considered to be an important part of health but also very much important part in eyesight by its phytonutrients such as xanthine, lutein etc. But still the myth behind this need to be revealed with the supporting factors and evidence, so let's explore whether the green leafy vegetables are actually good for eyesight or not. In the olden days there were certain advertisements which promoted those green leafy vegetables are good for your eyesight but still the truth should be deciphered. That green leafy vegetables are not at all that much good for eyesight on the grounds of Ayurveda. So it's very important to detangle the myth behind this statement and get into a valid conclusion.

METHOD AND MATERIALS

Acharya Yogaratnakara quoted "Sarvam sakamachakshusyam chakshusyam sakapanchakam jeevanthi vasthu matshakshi meghanaada punarnavaa" in his *Yogaratnakara* ^[1]

It's clearly mentioned that all the *shaka* (leafy vegetables) are *achakshushiya* (not good for eyes) in nature mainly concentrating on the green leafy vegetables which are not at all good for eyesight. And then an exception is mentioned for five leafy vegetables, which are *chakshushiyam*, (promotes vision).

So, it's very necessary to understand why it's *achakshushiyam* in nature.

When we look into the general causative factors of *netra roga*, there mention, that all the factors that vitiates *pitta* are the primary causative factor for *netra roga* ^[2] (eye diseases). It's clear that the substances that are *vidhahi* and *vishtambhi* in nature are directly leading to eye disorder. ^[3]

When we look into the general qualities of *shaka varga* ^[4], it stated as leafy vegetables possess the quality like *vidhahi* and *vishtambi* in addition to that its guru in nature too. These all directly lead to *pittadushti*, which is in turn lead to eye disorder. In

same reference of general qualities of leafy vegetables, it's stated that it causes *varna vinashana* ^[5]. It indirectly mentioned that they have influence in *pitta* as well as the *agni mahabhutha*. The prime *mahabhutha* in eye is *agni*, so the leafy vegetables can affect in *mahabhutha* level.

From the above we can get into an inference that the *shaka varga* will act as a major *nidana* for the eye diseases as it directly causes *pitta dushti*, where *pitta dushti* is the major culprit on eye diseases. Similar reference can be seen in some of the culinary book specially Kshemakuthuhalam, which favoring the primary statement, as most of the leafy vegetables are typically *achakshushiyam* as well as leading to many eyes disorder and having quality like *vistambi*, *vidhai* and also leading to *pitta dushti*.

Afterwards there mention five exceptional drugs, they are *Jivanthi*, *Vasthuka*, *Matsyakshi*, *Meganadha*, *Punarnava*. *Punarnava*.

Boerhaavia diffusa known as *punarnava* (*Punar + nava*). *Punar* means - again, *nava* means - becoming new (renews the body and re-grows). Literally the word *punarnava* means it will dry up during the summer season and regrow again during the rainy season. Besides to it it also states it helps in regrown and renews the body tissue.

Leptadenia reticulata (Retz), traditionally known as *Jivanti*, is also considered as the *shaka shreshta* [5]. It is a much-branched twining shrub belonging to the *Asclepiadaceae* family.

Chenopodium album is common weed during summer and winter seen in fields.

Amaranthus graecizans, is an annual species commonly called as pig weed. Amaranth consists of 60-70 species.

Alternanthera sessilis Linn. commonly known as sessile joy weed a well-known herb with fleshy leaves.

Table 1.1: Scientific Classification

Classification	<i>Punarnava</i>	<i>Jivanthi</i>	<i>Vasthuka</i>	<i>Meganada</i>	<i>Matshakshi</i>
Botanical Name	Boerhaavia diffusa	Leptadenia reticulata (Retz)	Chenopodium album	Amaranthus gracizans L.	Alternanthera sessilis (L.) R.Br
Kingdom	Plantae	Plantae	Plantae	Plantae	Plantae
Class	Magnoliopsida	Angiospermae	Magnoliopsida	Magnoliopsida	Magnoliopsida
Order	Caryophyllales	Gentianales	Caryophyllales	Caryophyllales	Caryophyllales
Family	Nyctaginaceae	Asclepiadaceae	Chenopodiaceae	Amaranthaceae	Amaranthaceae
Genus	Boerhaavia	Leptadenia	Chenopodium	Amaranthus	Alternanthera
Species	Boerhaavia	Reticulate	Album	gracizans L.	sessilis (L.)R.Br

RESULT

In Ayurveda proper diet and regimen plays a major part in maintaining health of a person. Food is considered as one of three pillars of our life ^[6] as well as providing strength and stability to us ^[7]. So improper food habits will surely affect our health. As eyes are considered to be an important part of our sense as well as body organ, so it very necessary to protect with almost care. When we go through the classics, we get clear evidence that the *shaka varga* are *achakshushiyam* and also, we get enough statements which are favoring to it. Even though when we go through the treatment of *netra roga* we can see that most of the treatment formulations are made of animal product as well as non-herbal in nature. So, in a general sense we have to say that all the *shaka varga* that, the leafy vegetables are *achakshushiyam* in nature expect the five, are *jeevanthi*, *vasthuka*, *matshyakshi*, *meghnadaha* and *punarnava*.

DISCUSSION

They mention that all the green leafy vegetables are not good for the eyes. But of most the time we cannot completely avoid leafy vegetables from our diet. Certain scenarios like vegan or starvation etc. There, we have to think of a solution that, how we can incorporate these green leafy vegetables in our diet.

Some processing techniques are mentioned in our classics ^[8], the leafy vegetables should be boiled or steamed in water then squeeze off the extra water then it should be fired in oil or ghee. So, this technique will help to reduce the *vishtami* nature of the green leafy vegetable as well as will not lead to *pitta dushti* ^[9]. So, after this processing technique green leafy vegetable will not act as a prime causative factor for eye diseases. Even though we can add certain adjuvants at the time of cooking, this also will help to change the property of *shaka varga* and will not cause ill effects. In ancient times this technique of

cooking was a mandatory process of preparation of leafy vegetables. This processing technique is not mandatory for the leafy vegetables in Amaranthaceae family because already its mention in the exceptional group.

CONCLUSION

One of the most precious organs in the human body is our eyes, and the diseases of eye should give extra care than any other physical disability in ayurveda leafy vegetables and vegetables are used in wide range and its medicinal values are well documented in Ayurvedic classical texts. Especially when we go through the *netra roga chikitsa* we can find many non-herbals as well as animal products as treatment that indirectly denoting that animal products are better than going herbal in case of eye disorder. *Acharya Yogarathnakara* exclusively mentioned all leafy vegetables are *achakshusya* except *Sakapanchaka* i.e. *Jivanthi*, *Vasthuka*, *Matsyakshi*, *Meganadha*, *Punarnava*

On the grounds of Ayurveda, all *shaka* are *achakshushiyam* in nature expect the five, *jivanthi*, *Vasthuka*, *Matsyakshi*, *Meganadha*, *Punarnava*. By certain cooking process we can incorporate those leafy vegetables in our diet.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Here by I acknowledge my gratitude to my most respected and beloved sir DR.SUNDRAN.K Dean of PG studies Pankajakasthuri Ayurvedha Medical College & Post Graduate Centre And my CO-PG who gave me full support in working on this concept.

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Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Nīranjana Gopal K & Jishnu R: A critical evaluation on sarvam sakḥam achakḥshushiyam. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2023 {cited December 2023} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/3085_3088.pdf