



## UNLOCKING THE POWER OF CURD: AYURVEDA INSIGHTS AND CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES W.S.R. TO ITS USAGE IN VARIOUS FORMS IN DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

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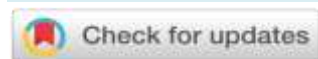
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### ABSTRACT

*Dadhi* (Curd), or yoghurt, is a widely consumed dairy product with many health benefits. In Ayurveda, *Dadhi* has been used as a food & also used as an ingredient in various formulations. This paper explores the properties of curd and its consumption rules in Ayurveda, focusing on its usage in multiple forms in day-to-day life. This article reviews available literature related to the research question to enlighten the role of curd in digestive disorders. Being the richest source of probiotics, curd offers beneficial and healthy microflora to our alimentary canal. Curd is a widely consumed dairy product with many health benefits. The properties of *Dadhi* are *Rochana* (increases appetite), *Deepana* (carminative), *Vrushya* (aphrodisiac), *Snehana* (unctuous), and *Balavardhaka* (increases strength). *Amla vipaka* (Sour taste after digestion), *Ushna Virya* (hot in potency), *Vataghna* (alleviates *Vata*) and *Brumhana* (nourishing)<sup>1</sup>. **Aims & Objectives:** To compile information related to *Dadhi* consumption guidelines & its usage in various forms with current practices. **Material & Method:** The data is collected from multiple classical books & articles related to *Dadhi*. Curd is highly regarded in Ayurveda for its numerous health benefits. This article will provide a brief overview of the qualities, types, indications, contraindications, current practices of curd consumption and practical applications in everyday routines.

**Keywords:** Dadhi, Curd, Ayurveda, Probiotic, Consumption, Doshas.

## INTRODUCTION

In day-to-day life, the curd is consumed in various forms, such as lassi, buttermilk, and raita, and as a base for marinades and sauces, & curries. There are multiple opinions regarding its consumption. There are references from which few conclude that it's not suitable for consumption & few highlight its benefits in health promotion. So, there is ambiguity regarding *Dadhi*. Secondly, when & how it should be consumed is equally important as it changes its benefits. In Ayurveda, many more references are available, such as the properties of *Dadhi*, types, consumption rules, preparation methods, indications, contraindications, formulations using *Dadhi* and its utility in treating diseases. As per Acharya Sushruta<sup>2</sup>, *Dadhi* has three types, i.e. *Madhura* (sweet), *Amla* (sour) & *Atyamla* (extreme sour). It has *Kashaya Anurasa* (astringent after taste). It is helpful in *Vishamajwara* (intermittent fever), *Atisara* (diarrhoea), *Arochaka* (tastelessness), *Kashaya* (emaciation), *Mutrakruchra* (burning micturition), & its *Vrushya* (aphrodisiac). Whereas Vagbhata<sup>3</sup> says *Dadhi* has *Amla Vipaka*, it is *Grahi*

(absorbs water from the stool) in nature, so used in diarrhoea, vitiates *Kapha*, *Rakta*, *Pitta* and aggravates *Shopha* (oedema), increases *Agni* (appetite), *Shukra* (sperm) and produces taste.

### METHOD OF PREPARATION OF CURD

*Dadhi* Is prepared using the milk of a cow, buffalo, goat, or another animal. As per Ayurveda, curd prepared from boiled milk is the best one & because it alleviates *Vata* and *Pitta Dosha*. It enhances taste & strengthens *Dhatwagni*<sup>4</sup>. The curd is relatively firm when buffalo milk is used because of the higher total solids (16-19%) than cow milk (12%). *Dadhi* is formed by the process known as Lactic Acid Fermentation. Microorganisms involved in the preparation of *dadhi* are streptococcus cremoris, *S. lactis*, *S. thermophiles*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *L. acidophilus*, *L. helveticus* and *Lactobacillus cremoris*. A small amount of fermented curd is used as a starting mixing material. The *Dadhi* has a thick top layer, and its surface is usually smooth and glossy.

### TYPES OF DADHI -

Table no. 1: Types of *Dadhi*<sup>5</sup>.

Sr. No.	Type	Features	Qualities
1	<i>Manda</i> (Unset)	Which is like milk, semisolid (Yet not formed) & not having any prominent taste	Causes easy evacuation of fecal matter & urine. Alleviates <i>Tridosha</i> & causes burning sensation in body.
2	<i>Swadu</i> (Sweet)	Properly formed, thick in consistency, Sweet in taste	<i>Abhishyandi</i> (Causes secretion in body), increases <i>Meda</i> (Fat), <i>Kapha</i> & <i>Veerya</i> (Sperm)
3	<i>Swadu Amla</i> (Sweet - Sour)	Thick in consistency, Sweet in taste with astringent at the end	Similar to normal (well prepared curd)
4	<i>Amla</i> (Sour)	Sour with little bit sweet taste	Carminative, increases <i>Kapha</i> , <i>Pitta</i> & blood borne diseases
5	<i>Atyamla</i> (Extreme Sour)	1. Which is too sour & causes tingling sensation in teeth, burning sensation of throat	Carminative, causes extreme vitiation of <i>Vata</i> , <i>Pitta</i> & <i>rakta</i> (Blood)

**INDICATIONS OF DADHI<sup>6</sup>** – *Pinasa* (rhinitis), *atisara* (diarrhea), *Sheeta* (feeling of coldness), *Visham jwara*, *Aruchi* (anorexia), *Mutrakruchra* (difficulty in micturition), *Karshya* (emaciation) in these conditions curd is indicated.

### CONTRAINDICATIONS OF DADHI<sup>7</sup>-

In *Sharad*, *Vasant* and *Grishma*, *Ritu Dadhi* is contraindicated. In *Raktapitta* (bleeding disorder) and *Kaphaja vyadhi* *Dadhi* is harmful. Curd should not be consumed at night. Otherwise, if curd is to be taken, it should be mixed with ghee, sugar, green gram

soup, honey or *Amalaki* (*Emblica officinalis* Gaertn.). It should not be heated also.

### **AYURVEDIC GUIDELINES FOR CONSUMPTION OF DADHI:**

According to Ayurveda, the timing and method of consuming curd play a crucial role in its effectiveness. Consuming curd during the day, preferably during lunch, and avoiding having it at night is recommended. Additionally, Ayurveda suggests combining curd with specific ingredients to enhance its properties and minimize potential adverse effects on digestion. Immature or partly formed curd aggravates all three *Dosha*, and mature curd effectively treats *Vata*. The cream of curds is seminiferous, and the whey is considered effective in treating *Kapha* and *Vata* and cleaning the channels.<sup>8</sup> *Manda* is the curd, which is (more) like milk, does not gain taste (of curd) & a little coagulated. *Manda* curd causes a burning sensation, excess of faeces & urine & causes aggravation of all three *Doshas*, so it should not be consumed.<sup>9</sup>

### **PRACTICAL APPLICATION IN EVERYDAY ROUTINES:**

Curd can be incorporated into various forms in daily life, such as in the preparation of raita, lassi, and buttermilk. These preparations add flavor to meals and provide additional health benefits, making curd a versatile ingredient in culinary practices. There are lots of formulations or food recipes with Curd as an ingredient in Ayurveda, i.e., *Tryushanadi ghrita*, *Hapushadi ghrita*, *Neelinyadi ghrita*, etc.

### **THE CURRENT SCENARIO OF CURD IS CONTRARY TO AYURVEDA.**

In Ayurveda, the traditional system of medicine originating from India, certain combinations of foods are believed to be incompatible and may lead to digestive issues or other health problems. These are known as *Viruddha Ahara* (incompatible food combinations). While curd itself is considered a wholesome food in Ayurveda, specific combinations are advised against. Here are some food combinations involving curd that are contrary to Ayurveda.<sup>10</sup>

**Curd with Meat:** Combining boar, porcupine, deer & chicken meat with curd.

**Curd with Fruits:** According to Ayurveda, combining curd with fruits can lead to digestive problems, such as curd with the fruit of *Atrocarpus lakoocha* or banana.

This combination is believed to create an imbalance in the digestive fire (*Agni*) and produce toxins in the body.

**Curd with Milk:** In Ayurveda, mixing curd with milk is considered incompatible. This combination is believed to be heavy for digestion and may lead to the formation of toxins (*ama*) in the body. Consuming curd and milk separately, preferably at different meals, is advised.

**Curd with Starchy Foods:** Combining curd with starchy foods like potatoes, sweet potatoes, or bananas is incompatible with Ayurveda. This combination is believed to cause fermentation in the stomach, leading to gas, bloating, and other digestive discomforts.

**Curd with Fish or Seafood:** In Ayurveda, combining curd with fish or seafood is considered incompatible. This combination is believed to produce toxins in the body and impair digestion.

### **There are a few examples of the usage of curd in day-to-day life that are contrary to Ayurveda.**

Curd is consumed solely or used as a base for preparing various food articles. There is no doubt that curd enhances the taste and nutritive value of the food, but one should be aware of its rules and regulations for consumption. Most of the recipes are not in accordance with the principles given in Ayurveda, and consumption of such food articles in the long run can harm the individual. The following are a few examples in which curd is used either as an ingredient or as a base<sup>11</sup>.

Table No. 2: Food recipes with curd as an ingredient or base material.

Sr. No.	Recipe Name	Reason for Contra indication
1	Punjabi Kadhi Pakoda	Curd is heated
2	Dahi Mutton curry	Curd with meat
3	Dahi Tikari	Curd is heated
4	Dahi Aloo	Curd is heated
5	Curd Rasam	Curd is heated
6	Dahi Bhindi	Curd is heated
7	Kashmiri Dum Aloo	Curd is heated
8	Dahi ka Ghosht	Curd with meat
9	Dahi Wali Abri	Curd is heated
10	Dahi ke Kabab	Curd is heated
11	Dahi Aloo Tiki	Curd is heated
12	Mixed fruit raita	Curd with fruits

## DISCUSSION

Curd is a good source of protein, calcium, vitamins, and minerals source. It provides essential nutrients that support bone health, muscle function, and overall immunity. However, Ayurveda emphasises the importance of mindful eating and cautions against over-consumption of any food, including curd. In Ayurveda, substances are explained based on *Sparsh* (touch) & *Veerya* (potency). *Dadhi* is cold in *sparsh* but *Ushna* (hot) in potency. So, people mistakenly consume curd in summer, considering it cool, but ultimately, after digestion, it will aggravate the *pitta* & heat in the body. So, as per Ayurveda, it should be avoided in summer. *Dadhi*, a tasty, popular staple diet, is also therapeutic. *Chikitsa* is mentioned as *Aahar* (diet), *Vihar* (regimen) and *Aushadhi* (*Shodhana*, *Shaman*). Curd consists of various properties, and it is noted to include as a diet in diseases such as *Atisara* (diarrhoea), *Grahani* (malabsorption syndrome), *Arsha* (hemorrhoids), and *Peenas* (chronic rhinitis). It is found that an indication of a curd is commonly mentioned in Ayurveda regarding digestive disorders. Curd as a diet consists of *Deepan* (appetizer), *Ruchi-prada* (enhancing taste) and *Vataghna* property. It is readily available and economical. Adding a curd to the diet of patients suffering from digestive disorders is beneficial for adequate recovery. The curd has

also been associated with a decreased risk of developing colorectal cancer.

While Ayurveda advises against heating curd, there are exceptions. For instance, the curd is intentionally heated in specific recipes or culinary traditions, such as savory dishes or desserts. However, Ayurveda emphasises moderation and mindful consumption to maintain balance and support overall health. In Ayurveda, heating curd is generally discouraged as it is believed to alter its properties and nutritional profile, increase *Ama*, aggravate *Pitta*, digestion and imbalance in *Doshas*. It is important to remember that Ayurveda is highly individualized, and what might be suitable for one person could be unsuitable for another. Even though those eating heated curd are not getting any diseases, it may be because of their *Vyadhikshamatwa* (Immunity). *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned that mere consumption of causative factors will not cause the disease, but another contributing factor is equally essential in the manifestation of dishes.<sup>12</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In Ayurveda, curd promotes clarity of mind and a sense of peace. However, its effects can vary depending on an individual's *Dosha* constitution and how it's consumed. So, one can conclude that the usage of *Dadhi* in

- *Vata, Pitta, and Kapha* are associated with different elements and bodily functions for balancing doshas. Curd is often recommended for balancing excess *Vata*, as it is sour in taste and hypocritical in nature. However, for those with a predominantly *Kapha* constitution, excessive consumption of curd may exacerbate *Kapha* imbalances due to its heavy and *Abhyashyandi* (causes secretion in channels) qualities.
- For Digestive - Curd is rich in probiotics, beneficial bacteria supporting gut health and digestion. According to Ayurveda, a healthy digestive system is crucial for overall well-being, as poor digestion can accumulate toxins in the body. Modern culinary practices often include heating curd in various recipes for flavour, texture, and consistency & for thickening sauces, adding richness and creaminess to dishes, or enhancing flavours through caramelisation or Maillard reactions. Culinary traditions vary across cultures and regions; heating curd is typical in many cuisines worldwide. Whether consumed as a snack, blended into smoothies, or used as a base for sauces and dips, curd offers culinary delight and nutritional benefits for individuals of all ages and dietary preferences. However, it's essential to consider individual health needs, cultural practices, and personal preferences when incorporating curd into the diet to ensure a balanced and nourishing approach to food consumption. Heating of curd or combination with incompatible food substances should be avoided gradually to maintain health.
- In conclusion, curd is significant in Ayurveda due to its health benefits. Understanding its properties and following Ayurvedic guidelines for its

consumption can contribute to overall well-being and a balanced *Dosha*.

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