



A REVIEW ON AYURVEDIC AND MODERN CONCEPT OF APPETIZERS

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Article Received: 06/01/2025 - **Peer Reviewed:** 30/01/2025 - **Accepted for Publication:** 09/02/2025.**ABSTRACT**

Purpose: The system that controls energy intake (food consumption) and related motivational states like hunger is called the appetite system. The need to eat is a psychological and physiological phenomenon. An appetizer is a part of a food item that stimulates and makes you eat more. It might be a food ingredient or a small portion of food that activates the digestive system. The underlying cause of illness, according to Ayurveda, is *Mandagni* (suppression of fire). Other Ayurvedic ideas are connected to the concept of *Ahara* (food), which keeps the digestive fire in a balanced state. *Ahara Kalpanas* (food preparations) are mentioned in classics as appetizers consumed before or after a meal. *Deepana* and *Hridhya Dravya* serve as appetizers in Ayurveda. According to Ayurveda, *Deepana* is a substance that stimulates the digestive system but does not digest *Ama*. The term that is healthy for the heart and mind is referred to as *Hridhya*. This literary analysis tries to clarify the modern and Ayurvedic concepts of appetizers, the drawbacks of modern appetizers and the benefits of Ayurvedic food appetizers. Using ancient food preparations as appetizers should encourage the development of policies that lessen and prevent the adverse effects of modern appetizers.

Keywords: Appetite, Agni (digestive fire), Appetizers, Ahara Kalpna (food preparations), Deepana.

INTRODUCTION

Appetite, by definition, is the system that influences energy intake (food consumption) and associated motivational states, such as hunger. It is a psychophysiological phenomenon referred to as the urge to have food¹. An appetizer is a component or food item that exerts stimulating action, creating the desire to consume food². In *Ayurveda*, appetite can be correlated with *Kshudha Vega* (appetizing sensation). Digestive fire is assessed by ingestion and digestion power (Abhyavarana and Jarana Shakti). Digestion of food is also affected by the type and amount of food consumed. As earlier said, the *Ahara Matra* (quantity of food) depends upon the strength of digestive fire and the food substance. Food is the main pillar among *Trayopastambha* (three sub-pillars) of *Ayurveda* showing its importance in one's life³. There are some rules and regulations related to food which are focused on maintaining digestive fire and digestion. In *Ayurveda*, the substances which enhance digestive fire are known as *Deepana* (Ayurvedic appetizers). "Deepana" means 'inflaming the fire' or 'stimulating fire'. Acharya *Sharangadhara* defined Ayurvedic appetizers as the substance that enhances *Agni* but does not digest *Ama*. *Mishi*⁴. Ayurvedic appetizers are also discussed in *Brihatrayis*; Acharya *Charaka* has mentioned *Deepaniya Mahakashaya*. Acharya *Gangadhara Sen*, in his commentary, mentioned Ayurvedic appetizers as the substance helpful to stimulate *Agni*, and Acharya *Yogindranath Sen* defined it as '*Antaragni Sandhukshana*'⁵. Acharya *Sushruta* also discussed appetizing properties in some specific groups like *Pippalyadi Gana*, *Brihat Panchamoola*, *Trikatu*, *Triphala*, *Guduchyadi Gana* and *Aamlakyadi Gana*⁶. Acharya *Yogindranath Sen*, in his commentary on *Charaka Samhita*, mentioned a group of *Triptighna* substances as Ayurvedic appetizers and also known as *Rochana*⁷. These substances can be called *Swadu*, *Hridhya*, and *Priya*, which please the heart and mind like sour substances. Ayurvedic appetizers have attributes of *Katu* (pungent), *Amla* (sour), and *Lavana* (salty) in *Rasa*, *Ushna* (hot) in *Veerya* (potency), and *Teekshna* (sharp), *Ushna* (hot), and *Laghu* (light) in qualities. According to Acharya *Bhavam-*

ishra, these substances comprise *Agni* and *Vayu Mahabhuta*.

In food technology, hospitality, and medicine, appetizers are a food category used as adjectives. Adipose tissue, the hypothalamus, several hormones, and other neurophysiologic components, among others, play unique roles in the expression and control of appetite. The expression of appetite is influenced by a person's physiological state, food consumption, and feelings of fullness⁸. In today's society, pre-meals consist of sophisticated appetizers in a tiny amount of food. These can be sold in ready-to-eat, ready-to-drink, or ready-to-reconstitute forms. Due to their potent active ingredients, including gingerol, capsaicin, piperine, cavacrol, etc., spices and herbs increase appetite and gastric juice output. The appetizers are used as packed mixes and preservatives and are available in ready-to-cook form. These appetizers can hurt health due to their constituents like preservatives, flavor enhancers, colors, etc. *Ayurveda* emphasises more focus on the rules of food in which there's the concept of a complete plate that consists of all *Rasa*, solid diet, liquid diet, appetizers and mouth-clearing substances. *Ayurveda* has the idea of preparing appetizers in the form of food, which can be used as an alternative to modern appetizers.

Material and methods-

In this review, *Ayurveda* classics and international databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Medline (using PubMed as the search engine) were searched for keywords "Appetite," "Agni," "Appetizers," and "Deepana" in fields, title, abstract, and keywords.

Observations-

Modern and Ayurvedic appetizers and their health effects-

Modern appetizers- Appetizers in the Western world are an old concept that updated time. It has many different varieties. It is classified as follows:

1. Cocktails—usually juices of orange, pineapple, grapefruit, or tomatoes served with cold salad dressing. They may be fruit or vegetable juice mixed with a small alcoholic beverage or seafood

like shrimp, crabs, or lobsters served with a slightly seasoned sauce.

2. Hors D' Oeuvres- "Outside the work", a small portion of highly seasoned foods, a combination of canapes, olives, stuffed celery, pickled radishes, and fish.
3. Canapes are made out of thin slices of bread in different shapes. The bread may be toasted, sauteed in butter, or dipped in a well-seasoned mixture of egg, cheese, fish, or meat, then deep fat fried.
4. Relishes/ Crudites are pickled raw, crisp vegetables such as julienne carrots or celery sticks.
5. Petite salad- small portions usually display the characteristics found in most salads.
6. Chips and Dips- popular accompaniments to potato chips, crackers, and raw vegetables.
7. Fresh fruits and vegetables- an attractive appearance, fragrance, appealing taste and delicious flavor.
8. Anything smaller- any food item could be picked up with fingers.

Other classification in use

1. Cocktails.
2. Hors d' oeuvres.
3. Canape.
4. Relishes/Crudites.
5. Salads.
6. Soup & Consommé
7. Chips & Dips.

Soup: soup in the diet is a long-standing concept in almost all cultures. It specifically belongs to the Stone Age, when man started boiling food. Soup was initially used as a main meal, but nowadays, it has become an appetizer. The general approach to using soups as appetizers was to stimulate digestive fire through spices, temperature, and the active ingredients of vegetables.

Types of Soups-

soup has been classified as thin, thick, cold or international. Broadly, it is classified into thin and thick. Thin means clear and is categorised as passed and unpassed. Thick consists of cream, puree, etc. Now, soup mixes are available in the market and ready to cook. Some of the soup types with their ingredients are given below in Table 1.

Table 1. The ingredient profile of commercial soup mixes⁹

s.no.	Soup	Ingredients
1.	Vegetarian Sweet corn Vegetable Soup	Corn flour, Dehydrated Vegetables, sugar, salt, Fat powder, Edible vegetable fat, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, green chili powder, garlic powder, yeast extract powder, soy sauce powder, flavor enhancer-627 and 631, spices and condiments, traces of wheat and nuts
2.	Thick Tomato Soup; Homestyle Rich Tomato Soup	Refined wheat flour, Corn flour, tomato powder, sugar, salt, Fat powder, Edible vegetable fat, onion powder, beetroot juice powder, garlic powder, yeast extract powder, dehydrated coriander leaves, Acidity regulator-330, Flavor enhancer-627 and 631/635, spices and condiments, traces of soy and nuts
3.	Hot and Sour Vegetable Soup, Homestyle Hot and Sour Vegetable Soup	Corn starch, maltodextrin, sugar, iodized salt, soy sauce powder, onion, tomato powder, colour 150d, edible vegetable oil, carrot flakes, green bell pepper, wheat flour, noodle bits, garlic powder, cabbage bits, mixed spices, acidifying agents-330, coriander leaves, flavor enhancer-627, traces of almond and milk
4.	Home-style Mixed vegetable soup, Mixed Vegetable Soup	Wheat flour, corn starch, sugar, salt, edible vegetable oil, milk solids, cabbage, carrot, peas, onion powder, garlic powder, acidifying agent-330, Flavor enhancer-635/627/631, mixed spices, traces of soy and nuts

5.	Baby corn spring onion soup concentrate	Baby corn, spring onion, ginger, garlic, sugar, salt, chili powder, citric acid, corn flour, spices
6.	Non-Vegetarian Sweet corn chicken	Corn flour, Dehydrated vegetables, salt, dehydrated chicken shreds, edible vegetable fat, dried glucose syrup, hydrolyzed vegetable proteins, green c chili powder, garlic powder, yeast extract powder, soy sauce powder, flavor enhancer-627 and 631, spices and condiments, traces of wheat, milk and nuts
7.	Classic hot and sour chicken soup	Corn starch, refined wheat flour, sugar, salt, soy sauce powder, dehydrated vegetables, dried glucose syrup, dried chicken, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, green chili powder, garlic powder, yeast extract powder, flavor enhancer 627 and 631, acidity regulator [296 and 451(i)], spices and condiments, softening agent (500-ii)

Probable harms of soup mixes-

1. **Maize starch/ corn flour**—Commercial soup mixes contain starch as their major ingredient, which gets gelatinized during reconstitution and imparts thickening, but it also gives a feeling of fullness, which suppresses appetite.
2. **High-carbohydrate and high-fat soups have been shown to reduce food intake and suppress appetite.**
3. **Palm oil/palm oil use has increased along with increased processed food production and consumption. Palm oil is a source of saturated fatty acids, which have been found to cause increased blood levels of atherogenic LDL and higher mortality from ischemic heart disease¹⁰.**
4. **Acidity regulators-** Chromosomal aberration, mutation, dental cell toxicity¹¹
5. **Flavor enhancer**—Monosodium glutamate (MSG) is a known flavor enhancer commonly used in Asian cuisine and processed foods. Its adverse effects include headaches, serious allergic reactions, nausea, chest pains with heart attack-like symptoms, brain oedema, weakness, and so forth.¹²
6. **Refined wheat flour** contains high starch and less fibre, raising blood sugar and insulin and causing metabolic dysfunction. It increases the risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, cancer, cardio-

vascular diseases, stroke, etc. It is depleted in nutrients and contains harmful additives. The refining process results in nutrient loss, along with the addition of harmful bleaching agents such as potassium bromate, chlorine gas, or benzoyl peroxide¹³.

7. **Dehydrated vegetables**—Any deteriorative impact of dehydrated vegetables is not found, even though they are concentrated sources of energy and dietary fibres.
8. **Colorants-** cancer, hyperactivity, asthma, migraine, headaches, DNA damage¹⁴
9. **Sweeteners-** leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma and cancer¹⁵.

Ayurvedic concept of appetizers-

Acharya Sushrut stated that the person should have citric fruits like pomegranate, and liquid substances should be consumed before solid food. The Amalaka fruit can be consumed before, after or during the meal. Before food, vegetables like *Mrinala*, *Bisa*, *Kanda* or *Ikshu* should be consumed¹⁶. *Acharya Bhavamishra* also gave the example of an appetizer as Adraka Lavana before consumption of food, and in a review on *Bhavprakash Nighantu*, almost 71 drugs were found with *Deepana* quality¹⁷. So, some food preparations mentioned in *Ayurveda* classics that can be used as appetizers are given below in Table 2 with their health effects.

Table 2. List of appetizers according to Ayurveda classics-

Ayurvedic appetizers category	Appetizers	Health effects	References
Citrus fruits	Orange	Alleviates <i>Vata</i> and <i>Pitta</i> , slightly aggravate <i>Kapha</i> , fragrant, appetizing and mouth-clearing	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 11/4
	Lemon	Fragrant, digestive, pleasant, alleviates <i>Kapha</i> and <i>Vata</i> , enhances digestive fire and clears the mouth.	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 11/6
	<i>Amlaka</i> (Indian gooseberry)	Alleviates <i>Vata</i> , <i>Pitta</i> and <i>Kapha</i>	<i>Sushrut Sutra</i> 46/469 <i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 11/27
	<i>Dadima</i> (pomegranate)	<i>Vatanulomana</i> and stimulate digestive fire	<i>Sushrut Sutra</i> 46/467
Parts of plants	<i>Shigru</i> root	Alleviates <i>Vata</i> and <i>Kapha</i> aggravates <i>Pitta</i> , is a good remedy for haemorrhoids, and cures the disease of <i>Snayu</i> .	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 11/25
	<i>Mrinal</i> (stem of lotus)	Increase instant appetite, treat bleeding disorders, astringent, tasty, difficult to digest	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 11/24
	Flowers and sprouts of mango	It stimulates digestive fire, alleviates <i>Kapha</i> and <i>Pitta</i> , is pleasant to the heart, removes bad taste in the mouth, and improves appetite.	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 11/20
	<i>Adraka Lavana</i>	Stimulates digestive fire and cleanses tongue and throat.	<i>Bhavprakash Purva Khand</i> 5/130
<i>Paanak</i>	Mango	Alleviate <i>Vata</i> and slightly aggravate <i>Kapha</i> and <i>Pitta</i> , strengthening, appetizing, sour, heavy and pleasant to heart and aphrodisiac.	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 12/53-55
	Tamarind	Act as an appetizer, alleviate <i>Vata</i> and slightly aggravate <i>Kapha</i> and <i>Pitta</i> .	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 12/56-58
	Lemon	Pacify pain, indigestion, cough, cold, anorexia, aggravated <i>Vata</i> and constipation.	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 12/61-62
	<i>Parushaka</i>	Pleasant to mind and heart	<i>Charak Sutra</i> 27/280
<i>Takra</i>	<i>Takra Shunthi</i>	Strengthens digestive fire instantly	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 11/1
	<i>Takra Saraka</i>	Enhances appetite, alleviates <i>Kapha</i> and <i>Vata</i> and slightly aggravates <i>Pitta</i>	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 11/2
	<i>Sattaka</i>	Pleasant, fragrant, sweet, light, unctuous and alleviates <i>Vata</i> and <i>Pitta</i> , satiating, strengthening and appetizing	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 11/14
	<i>Vishyandana</i>	Strengthening, heavy, appetizing, tasty, and good for the heart, it promotes growth, increases semen quantity, and alleviates <i>Pitta</i> and <i>Kapha</i> .	<i>Kshemakutuhulam</i> 11/19
	<i>Shukta</i>	Pleasant, <i>Vatanulomana</i>	<i>Charak Sutra</i> 27/284
	<i>Aasuta</i>	Pleasant, <i>Vatanulomana</i>	<i>Charak Sutra</i> 27/284
	<i>Shindaki</i>	Pleasant, <i>Vatanulomana</i>	<i>Charak Sutra</i> 27/284
Grains	<i>Manda</i>	Stimulate digestive fire and sweat, <i>Vatanulomana</i>	<i>Charak Sutra</i> 27/251-252

	<i>Peya</i>	Stimulate digestive fire, induce sweat, <i>Vata</i> and <i>Mala Anulomana</i> ,	<i>Charak Sutra 27/250</i>
	<i>Laja peya/ Laja manda</i>	Induce digestive fire	<i>Charak Sutra 27/253</i>
Others	<i>Kanji</i>	Pacify burning sensations and fever, alleviate <i>Vata-Kapha</i> , cure constipation and act as an appetizer.	<i>Charak Sutra 27/192</i>
	<i>Raag-Shadav</i>	Pleasant to mouth and heart, stimulate digestive fire, improve appetite	<i>Charak Sutra 27/281</i>
	<i>Chutney</i>	Strengthening, nourishing, appetizing	<i>Charak Sutra 27/282</i>
	<i>Tila Kalka</i>	Improves appetite, provides strength, stimulates digestive fire and alleviates <i>Vata</i>	<i>Kshemakutuhulam 11/12</i>

DISCUSSION

Appetizers are an essential part of meals according to Ayurveda and Western culture. The appetizers in use nowadays are popular as ready-to-cook or ready-to-eat forms. They are widely available as packed and processed food to achieve this aim. These packed and processed foods contain food additives which have shown harmful effects. Such food additives are acidity regulators, colours, flavor enhancers, artificial sweeteners, emulsifiers, etc. The most common harmful effects of these additives are headaches, allergic reactions, DNA damage, cancer, cardiovascular diseases and other metabolic disorders. Ayurvedic appetizers can be a good choice to avoid these harmful effects. Ayurvedic literature has given numerous appetizers that are easy to prepare, palatable, and have a good shelf life, such as citrus fruit salad with spices like orange or lemon, Indian gooseberry and pomegranate, etc. Roots or stems of some plants with spices also work as appetizers, like the *Shigru* root, the stem of the lotus, etc. Another category is *Panaka*, which can be made of raw mango, tamarind, lemon, dates, Parushaka, etc. *Takra* is a good appetizer and the basis for other appetizing preparations such as *Sattak*, *Vishyandana*, *Shukta*, *Aasuta*, *Shindaki*, etc. Different forms of appetizers are *Kanji*, *Raag-Shadav* and *Chutney*. Food preparations from grains like *Manda*, *Peya* or *Laja manda* stimulate digestive fire and increase sweat production, which is remedial for *Jvara*. Along with these preparations, some other ones with the qualities of Ayurvedic appetizers can be used and promoted to avoid packed or ready-to-eat appetizers. These Ayurvedic appetizers can be stand-

ardised further, and their nutritive values can be evaluated.

CONCLUSION

This article aimed to highlight the concept of Ayurvedic appetizers and the drawbacks of modern appetizers in trend. After carefully reviewing the idea of modern appetizers, it has been found that food additives in these appetizers have harmful and deteriorating effects on health. To avoid these damaging effects, Ayurvedic preparations are mentioned in classics as appetizing food that can be used as appetizers with new modifications according to a new era. Among these preparations, some could be commercialized and developed with new techniques according to their accessibility and availability to the public.

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