

**KARKIDAKA MASA CHARYA: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY IN THE LIGHT OF VARSHA RTU CHARYA**Divya Ramachandran¹, Shreevathsa²¹Final year PG scholar, Department of PG studies in Ayurveda Samhita and Siddhanta, GAMC, Mysuru, Karnataka, India²Prof. & HOD, Department of PG studies in Ayurveda Samhita and Siddhanta, GAMC, Mysuru, Karnataka, IndiaCorresponding Author: aashishvengara@gmail.com<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj0510072022>

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**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda is a *sastra* that has given equal importance to the maintenance of health in healthy individuals and the treatment of diseases in diseased individuals. This bi-faceted approach is clearly explained in the *Trisutra* mentioned in this *sastra*, as it is meant for the *Swastha* and *Atura* with equal emphasis. As a part of *Swastha Rakshanam*, *Dinacharya*, *Rtucharya*, *Rtusodhana*, etc have been explained. *Varsha rtu charya* have been elaborately explained with the dos and don'ts, its impact on health, and the practices to be followed to cope with the changes in the *Loka bhava* and the resultant effect in the *Purusha Bhava*. *Karkidaka Chikitsa* (*karkidaka* is the last month in the Malayalam calendar falling approximately between July 15 to August 15) is a part of *Rtucharya* modified according to the *desha* and *satmya*. As Kerala is a state witnessing heavy torrential rainfall, which becomes unprecedented during the month of *Karkidakam*, the floods make people unemployed (especially in the olden days), and due to the *Vata Pradhana Tridosha dushti* occurring to the *sareera*, make people easily susceptible to various diseases (as *Bala* is the least in this month). Therefore, in order to ward off the fury of nature, people have observed this month with various religious, spiritual, cultural, and health-related practices. The information regarding *Karkidaka masa charya* is not detailed in any of the available textbooks of Ayurveda but is a practice since antiquity in the state of Kerala.

Keywords: Swastha rakshanam, Rtucharya, Varsha Rtu Charya, Karkidaka Masa Charya

INTRODUCTION

“Nagaree nagarasyeva rathasyeva rathee yatha.....” the golden words of Charaka Samhita symbolizing the comprehensive approach of Ayurveda sastra, keeping the sareera at the core – ‘swasthasya swasthya rakshanam and aturasya vikaara prasamanam’ being its two facets, is once again delineating the unparalleled orientation of this science. The rationale for the observance of day-to-day swasthya charya is for the ‘anutpatti’ of ‘ajaata vikara’ as two distinct nidarsanas have been quoted by Acharya Chakrapani to substantiate the same. One should follow the swasthya charya, firstly for the protection and promotion of ksheeyamana dhatu by following visudha ahara – achara and secondly to prevent the factors that cause the diminution of the sareera. Just like the light of a lamp is safeguarded in two manners, by pouring oil at regular intervals and keeping away the fire extinguishers like flies, wind, etc, in a similar manner, the body is also to be nurtured and nourished to maintain a healthy state¹.

INDICATIONS IN AHARA AND VIHARA

Ayurveda stresses the importance of ‘Ritucharya’ or the diet and lifestyles to be followed in particular season, to be free from the harmful effects of climatic changes.

AHARA ⁷	VIHARA ⁸
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use kshoudra for pana, bhojana and samskara Vyakta amla – lavana - sneha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pragharsha udwartana, snana.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yava, Godhuma, purana sali, jangala mamsa, Sam-skrita yusha. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gandha Malya dharana, laghu Sudha Ambara dharana Agaru Dhoopana (Su. U)¹¹
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mardhweeka, arishta, little honey added to mahendra jala or tapta seeta jala or kupa jala or sarasa jala. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reside in akleda sthanam Stay in harmya prshta (upstairs of a house)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asthapana (AH. Su)⁹ 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mastu added with souvarchala and panchakola (AH. Su)¹⁰ 	

Susruta Samhita has told us to use food articles predominant of kashaya – tikta – katu rasam, ushna guna, na Atisnidha - na Atirooksha guna, and deepana karma and devoid of drava guna for two reasons:

1. Kleda visudhyartham
2. Dosha samharanaya

Acharya Susruta has given importance to Kleda and has begun the Varsha rtu charya with the statement, ‘Praklinnatwat sareeranam’.¹²

OBJECTIVES

1. To compile the various religious, spiritual, cultural, and medical practices associated with the month of Karkidaka in the state of Kerala.
2. To analyse the Karkidaka masa charya in the light of Varsha Rtucharya.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The information regarding Karkidaka masa charya which is an age-old tradition passed through generations has been gathered from various articles, internet sources, the practices followed and from old people, and the same is analysed in the light of Varsha rtu charya described in the textbooks of Ayurveda.

VARSHA RTU CHARYA

Varsha rtu is characterised by the following features:

1. Vata pradhana Tridosha dushti²
2. Agni mandya³
3. Ambulambambude ambare⁴
4. Bhubashpa⁵
5. Amlapaka⁶

CONTRAINDICATIONS IN AHARA AND VIHARA

AHARA ¹³	VIHARA ¹⁴
Udamantha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divaswapna, avasyaya, nadee jalam, vyayama, atapa, vyavaya • Apaadachari (AH.Su)¹⁵ • Ajeerna, atyambupana pana (Su. U)¹⁶

“तस्मात् साधारणः सर्वो विधिर्वर्षसु शस्यते”¹⁷

In the event of the body already weakened by the effect of *Adana Kala*, *Agni* also gets weakened (वर्षास्वप्निबले क्षीणे). The introduction of *Varsha* is similar to pouring cold water into a container kept on fire. This sudden shift disturbs the body causing *tridosha dushti* and hence ‘*Agni samrakshana*’ becomes very important. The factors that cause vitiation of *vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha* are the water vapour coming out of the earth, showers as a result of heavy clouds, and *amla paka* occurring in the earth groundwater. This is explained by Acharya Chakrapani as,

1. The *tridosha dushti* occurring in the *varshu rtu* is due to the *Bhubashpa*. *Bhubashpa* is *Tridoshakaraka* by *Prabhava*.¹⁸
2. *Megha nisyanandana* is *Vata – Sleshmakaraka*.¹⁹
3. The *Amlapakatha* occurring to *Jala* is due to *varsha rtu swabhava* which is *Pitta – Sleshmakaraka*.²⁰
4. Due to the *Apaka* and *Vidaha* occurring as a result of *Agnimandya*, it is *Kapha – Pittakara* and due to the *dhatu poshaka rasa anutpadana* (non-production of nutritive fluid) it proves to be *dhatukshayakara* and hence *Vatakara*.²¹

So, *Sadharana vidhi* here refers to the *charya* that doesn't cause disturbance much to *vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha* – i.e., the regimens meant for *vata samana* should not ultimately cause *kapha vrddhi* and likewise.

KARKIDAKA MASA CHARYA

Kerala is a state which has a wide pattern of religious and spiritual values inbuilt in the most sacred way. The practice of various traditional values goes back to very early times and they have an in-depth value of health and prosperity hidden within themselves.

The revolution of the earth around the sun is the reason for the creation of day & night as well as seasons. As 6 seasons are described by Ayurveda, the division is not exactly like this in Kerala. Here, especially in

the present times, mainly two *rtus* are evident - *Varsha* and *Greeshma*.

Karkidaka masam, as per the Malayalam calendar, is the last month of a year which extends from the mid of July to the mid of August (i.e., *Varsha Rtu*) according to the Gregorian Calendar. With the starting of this season, South – West monsoon enters the final phase in Kerala. Kerala monsoon, especially in *Karkidaka masam* is famous for its heavy and unprecedented torrential rainfall with thunderstorms and wind. Owing to this and also due to the increased moisture in the atmosphere, the body will be prone to diseases such as fever, cough, cold, etc, and water-borne diseases will also emerge. Unhealthy food habits and improper activities during this time lead to the imbalance of *Doshas* and thereby make the body susceptible to diseases. In this season, certain regimens are advocated as the health of the person is minimal. The *Tridoshas* aggravate in the body and there will be a decrease in *Agnibala* and *Shareerikabala* making the *sareera* susceptible to infections.

In *varsha rtu*, the *agni* debilitated by *greeshma* undergoes further decrease and gets vitiated by the *doshas*. They get aggravated by the effect of the thick cloud, sudden blowing of the cold wind (after the scorching heat of the sun in *greeshma*) resulting in *amlapaka* in turn causing *pitta vardhana*. Because of the cold rain and cold wind, *vatakopa* happens and solidification of *kapha* occurs, altogether resulting in the vitiation of the *tridoshas*.

The practices during the month of *Karkidaka* can be attributed to two broad categories, viz.,

1. Religious and Spiritual practices
2. Health-related practices

Religious and Spiritual practices

Karkidakam is a season of tears for the common man as heavy floods take away their crops. During the olden days, majority of the people depended on agriculture and due to floods, people cannot go out to work and is the poorest season in terms of availability

of food. Owing to this specialty, it is known as 'Pan-ja masam', meaning the month of poverty. Therefore, to ward off the fury of nature, people observe this month as the period of spirituality and devotion in Kerala. It is having cultural significance, bound with the life of Keralites – part of the mother culture transmitted to successive generations. It is considered a lean month and is therefore not considered for any auspicious ceremonies like marriages, housewarmings, etc. However, the month is ideal for treatments, pilgrimage, and worship.

1. *Karkidaka sankramam* (Beginning of *Karkidaka*)

The period when the sun passes from one 'rasi' to the next is termed 'Sankramam'. Lighting the traditional lamp (*Nilavilakku*) and chanting prayers in praise of the Sun God during this time is considered auspicious.

People clean the houses on the day before *Karkidaka Sankramam* and sprinkle water mixed with cow dung, reciting 'Chetta po.....Sheepothy va'. This ritual is carried out to expel 'Chetta Bhagavathy', representing poverty from the house and welcome *Sheepothy*, i.e, Goddess Lakshmi to their house. In the evening, the elderly woman in the house takes bath and lights the 'Nilavilakku', to receive the 'Sri Bhagavathy'. There is a practice of keeping the 'Ashtamangala Vastu' near the *nilavilakku*, signifying *Bhagavathy* is welcome to the house. Also, *Dasapushpam* is kept, to please all the Gods. This is because each flower constituting the *Dasapushpam* represent different Gods. From place to place within the state of Kerala, rituals may be a bit different.

2. *Ramayana parayanam*

Karkidakam is observed as a holy month; the period of which is sacred for Hindus, which is observed as 'Ramayana Masam'. To get rid of the black marks of *Karkidakam*, and lesson its worries as a result of the unemployment created and remaining at home due to heavy rains, people read *Adhyatma Ramayanam* in their homes. In every temple, it is observed as a ritual. It is read aloud through the mikes, in a particular tune so as to be heard throughout that village.

Ramayanam, consisting of the words 'Rama' and 'Ayana' representing Rama's 'journey of virtue to annihilate vice', the Sanskrit epic was written by *Valmiki Maharshi*, translated into the Malayalam language by 'Thunchath Ezhuthachan' (the father of Malayalam language) known as 'Adhyatma Ramayanam Kilipattu' (Kilipattu means the song of the bird – it is rhyming, easily understandable and creates interest for the readers), is read, starting from the first day and completed by the last day of the month.

The rituals of *Ramayana masam* should be performed with the utmost care, devotion and involves a rigorous routine. All the family members gather together after lighting the *Nilavilakku* in the evening and narrate the verses of *Adhyatma Ramayana*. The recitation should begin from the *Bala Khanda*; (*Uttara Khanda* of *Ramayana* should not be read) chapters starting from the birth of Sri Rama till his coronation only should be read.

Why is Ramayana selected for parayanam?

- ✓ Valmiki Maharshi after completing the composition of *Ramayana* called Lava and Kusha first recited the text, which happened in the month of *Karkidaka*. It is also believed that Rama was born in the *Karkidaka Lagna*.
- ✓ It is in this month that *Dakshinayana* starts. It is believed that *Uttarayana* is daytime for *Devas* and *Dakshinayana* is the night, where the month of *Karkidakam* falls in dusk. During this time, reciting *Ramayanam* which is a composition of *Bhakti*, *Yukti*, and *VI bhakti* is considered auspicious.

3. *Nalambala Darsanam* (visiting 4 temples)

Hindus undertake a pilgrimage to the 4 temples of Lord Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Shatrugna. Visiting the 4 temples of the 4 sons of King Dasaratha in a single day, starting with dawn break and ending before noon is believed to be auspicious, that the devotees' wishes would come true.

There are around five sets of *Nalambalams* in Kerala, the most famous among them being the four temples located in Thrissur and Ernakulam districts, namely *Thriprayar Sree Rama Swamy Temple*, *Koodalmani-*

kyam Bharatha Temple, Moozhikkulam Lakshmana Temple, and Payyammal Shathrughna Temple.

4. *Aadi vedan theyyam*

It is an age-old tradition of practice in the northern parts of Kerala – Malabar area, which is believed to alleviate the monsoonal diseases and ill-effects of *Karkidakam*. ‘*Vedan*’ is lord Shiva and ‘*Aadi*’ is his consort, Goddess Parvathy. The root of this tradition can be traced back to the ‘*Vana Parva*’ of Mahabharata. The specialty is that children of a specific community, with all religious rituals, will dress in *Aadi* and *Vedan* and go to all the houses in the village. Specific rituals are performed at each house; it is believed that once the *Vedan* does this ritual, the household is purified of all the evils.

Besides the ‘*Aadi Vedan Theyyam*’, other forms of ‘*Theyyam*’ such as ‘*Koohaamoori*’, ‘*Uchaar Pottan*’, and an assortment of *Maari theyyam* also will appear for mitigating the monsoonal miseries.

5. *Karkidaka vayu*

The Amavasya of *Karkidaka masam* is dedicated to ancestors. On this day, Hindus perform special rituals close to water bodies for the attainment of peace of their deceased family members. On the same day, they will offer a feast at their homes for their forefathers.

Health-related practices

Karkidaka is considered a month suitable for various types of external and internal procedures. *Karkidaka Chikitsa* is a tradition that has been in practice since antiquity in Kerala i.e., in *Varsha Rithu*. It is said that in the month of *Karkidakam*, medicines and food have maximum absorption rate and thereby increased ‘bioavailability’ making the ideology more substantive. This may be the principle behind adopting these herbal recipes by traditional practitioners of Kerala. This is an example of *Ritucharya* modified according to *Desha* and *Satmya*.

1. *Karkidaka kanji*

Kanji (*Yavagu*) is the diet, which is *Satmya* to the Keralites, as it has more water content to compensate for the water loss through sweat as a result of the high humidity.

The usual ingredients of *Karkidaka kanji* are *Chandrasura*, *Methika*, *Jeeraka*, *Dhanyaka*, *Haridra*, *Sunti*, *Lavanga*, *Mudga*, *Bala*, *Punarnava*, *Shashtika*, *Godhuma*, *Nalikera*, *Dasamoola* etc. The ingredients vary from place to place and the method of preparation too. Some people prepare the *Kashaya* of the *dravyas* and in that *Kashaya*, *Shashtika* is cooked and finally, *Nalikera* is added as grated or its milk is poured, whereas certain people tie the drugs inside a cotton cloth into a bolus and allow it to cook along with the *Shashtika*.

- ✓ In normal healthy individuals, these can be taken depending on the availability of the above-said drugs as there is no "specific recipe" for *Karkidaka kanji*. In the case of diseased, ingredients can be varied in accordance with the disease condition.
- ✓ In the case of a diabetic patient, jaggery can be avoided and *cherupayar* (*Mudga -Vigna radiata*) can be taken as the main ingredient.
- ✓ In the case of patients with renal complaints, *thazhuthama* (*Punarnava*) is selected as the main ingredient.
- ✓ In the case of patients who are hyperlipidaemic, ghee is avoided and *malli* leaves (*Dhanyaka*), *uluva* (*Methika*), curry leaves (*Kaidarya*), *thazhuthama* (*Punarnava*), and *muthira* (*Kulatha*) are added.
- ✓ In the case of hypertensive patients, *thazhuthama* (*Punarnava*), and *muringa ela* (*Moringa oleifera*) is selected.
- ✓ In asthmatic patients, *putharichunda* (*Vyaghri*), *jeerakam* (*Jeeraka*), *chukku* (*Sunti*), *kurunthotti* (*Bala*) are selected.²²

It is believed that the *kanji* will be providing immunity for the upcoming year. These ingredients are a therapeutically active source of drugs for various diseases and ailments. Still there exists a lot of possibilities for investigating the potential pharmacological activities of these plants. Thus, systematic documentation of such a traditional system indicating the importance of plants opens up the opportunity for future research.

2. *Pathila thoran*

- ✓ *Pathila Thoran* is a side dish prepared out of locally available tender fresh leaves of 10 herbs.
- ✓ The 10 leaves include *Punarnava*, *Dalasarini*, *Palakya*, *Chakramarda*, *Nishpava*, *Dusparsaka*, *Surana*, *Kushmanda*, *Pita Kushmanda*, and *Trapusa*.
- ✓ The recipe act as *Ahara* and *Pathya* and helps in digestion improves immunity and prevents the common ailments of the rainy season. It is the simplest way for seasonal rejuvenation, as all the ingredients used are easily & abundantly available locally.

3. *Mukkudi*

Mukkudi is a preparation with *Takra* which is mentioned in the textbook, *Chikitsa Manjari*. Drugs like *Mandukaparni*, *Charngeri*, *Kutajabeeja*, *Maricha*, *Dhanyaka*, *Jeeraka*, *Sunti*, *Methika* and *Haridra* are blended with *Takra* to prepare this special curry.

Other practices²³

1. *Oushadha seva*

Usually, it is practiced in Kerala on *karkidaka* month's 16th day. On this day, certain medicines are given to the person for developing immunity. Usually used medicines are *chitraka* (grinded paste) + cow's ghee mixture. It is given in very little quantity in the early morning after bath with prayers. The quantity is justified as the ring finger is inserted into the mixture and how much ever is adhered to the finger, that much quantity is taken.

2. *Panchagavya sevana*

This is also a custom followed in the temples of Kerala or is made at home. *Panchagavya* is a mixture that is prepared by mixing five ingredients. The three direct constituents are cow dung, urine, and milk; the two derived products are curd and ghee. These five things are mixed together and taken in the early morning. This helps to boost immunity and helps in brain function.

3. **Internal medications**

During this time, the custom of using '*chuvannaratha kashaya*' (*Chuvannaratha - Rasna*) is quite famous. This is nothing but the *Rasnerandadi kashaya* which is used for a different types of *vata* disorders. This

was taken along with ghee fortified with *jeera*, taken for 7 or 14, or 21 days. Another form of using this *kashaya* is by adding a goat's legs or head into the *kashaya*, according to the logic of the physician.

People consider *Karkidaka* as the most effective month for *Kashaya Pana*, as whatever medicines are taken during this month bring out an instantaneous result. Since the *Kleda* in the environment becomes high, the subsequent effect will be seen in the *sareera*, and *Kashaya pana* is the most desirable remedy to bring out *Kledaharatwa*. According to the various complaints presented, *Kashayas* are selected and advised.

4. **External therapies**

- ✓ The application of oil on the body and head was a long-run custom in Kerala. Here *abhyanga* is done to the body and head. It is considered that *Abhyanga* and *Snana* are especially important in this season.
- ✓ *Kizhi* (*pottali sweda*), *pizhichil*(*Kayaseka*), *udwartana*, and various other treatments according to the need are done. *Sirodhara* is usually contraindicated during this time due to the intense cold climate of varsha rtu.

5. **Application of Panchakarma**

Vamana, *Virechana*, *Nasya*, and *Vasti* are practiced according to the condition of the patient. The patient who has undergone the *Poorvakarma* of *Snehana* and *Swedana* is given the various Panchakarma therapies based on the predominant vitiated *dosha*.

In *varsha ritu*, *vasti* is the most preferred *sodhana* therapy. So *vasti* can be administered during this season to eradicate the vitiated doshas. *Madhupalika vasti* is generally done in *swastha* condition. But according to *roga avastha - dwipanchamoola vasti*, *vaitharana vasti*, *rajayapana vasti*, and *lekhana vasties* are also practiced.

6. **Karkidaka leham**

Usually used as *Leham*, but in certain regions and according to the interest of certain people, medicines are powdered together and used in the form of *choorna*.

Ingredients – *Ajamoda*, *Methika*, *Kathaka*, *Chandrasura*, *Satapushpa*, *Dhanyaka*, *Haridra*, *Jeeraka*,

Sunti, Maricha, Tila, Cuscus seeds – black and white variety, *Aswagandha, Amalaki, Tavaksheeri, Ela, Jati, Kapikacchu, Godhuma, mudga*, etc, (ingredients will be added and deleted according to the condition; this is the usual yoga) are powdered and dissolved in huge quantities of coconut milk; *tila taila, ghrta, Sitopala, guda*, etc are added and cooked to the consistency of *leham*.

DISCUSSION

Karkidaka Masa Charya which even though the direct textual description is not available, is a tradition that has been followed in Kerala from the past and is still alive, has its foundations in the *Varsha Rtu Charya* mentioned in detail in the *Ayurveda Samhitas*. When it is a heavy monsoon in Kerala, the northern part of the country will be under intense summer. This variation in the seasons has led to the development of distinct cultural and health practices in different parts of the country. One such well-

known practice in Kerala in the month of *Karkidaka* is the special *Karkidaka Masa Charya*.

The Religious and Spiritual practices are aimed at a psychological purification of the individual since the month of *Karkidaka* is considered an ill season in terms of its effect resulting due to the heavy unprecedented rain. As a remedy for this, people divert their minds by indulging in devotional practices like *Ramayana Parayanam, Nalambala Darsanam*, etc.

The health-related practices are aimed at purifying the body as well as developing immunity.

The concepts of *Vata pradhana tridosha dushti, Ksheena Agnibala*, and *Heena Bala* of the individual are considered while adopting each and every treatment modality. Besides various types of *Bahiparimarjana Chikitsa*; *Asthapana* is the widely practised mode of *sodhana* in the *varsha rtu*. Altogether the practices are aimed at purification of the body and developing immunity so as to make the body fit for survival in the hornet's nest.

Sl.No	Practice	Affect
1	<i>Karkidaka Kanji</i>	Majority of the drugs used in <i>Karkidaka Oushadha Kanji</i> are <i>Balya, Deepaka, Pachaka & Vatahara</i> .
2	<i>Mukkudi</i>	It performs the <i>karmas</i> of <i>Deepana, Pachana, Vatanulomana</i> and is <i>Ruchikara</i> .
3	<i>Pattila Thoran</i>	While analysing the ingredients of the leafy vegetable dish, " <i>Pathila Thoran</i> " it can be observed that the majority of them are <i>Pittaanihara, Deepaka, Pachaka, Ruchya</i> , and <i>Balakara</i> . Leafy vegetables are abundant in antioxidants, mineral salts, vitamins, and fiber, which help in reviving the immune system and are used as a food supplement.
4	<i>Oushadha Sevana</i>	<i>Chithraka + ghrta</i> mixture is <i>deepana</i> and <i>vata samana</i>
5	<i>Panchagavya Sevana</i>	It helps in developing the <i>vyadhikshamatwa</i> of the individual
6	<i>Antaparimarjana Chikitsa</i>	As <i>vata pradhana dosha dushti</i> occurs in an individual, <i>Asthapana</i> is the most preferred <i>Antaparimarjana Chikitsa</i> . But if other doshas are found to be vitiated more, accordingly other <i>Antaparimarjana Chikitsa</i> is also done.
7	<i>Bahiparimarjana Chikitsa</i>	<i>Abhyanga, Udwartana</i> , etc are advocated which are aimed mainly at the correction of <i>Vata dosha</i> .
8	<i>Karkidaka Leham</i>	This in <i>Leha</i> form is preferred mainly for the correction of <i>Vata dushti</i> . <i>Choorna</i> is usually prescribed for obese individuals. The medicine, whether it be <i>choorna</i> or <i>leha</i> form is

	aimed at developing immunity.
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Ayurveda *sastra* has given much importance to *Ahara*, where it has been called '*Mahabhaishajya*'. '*Na hi ahara samam kinchit bhaishajyam upalabhyate*', '*Ahara sambhavam vastu ro-gascha ahara sambhava:*', are all signifying the importance of *ahara* in maintaining the healthy and diseased states of *sareera*. The food items desirable for a particular individual will not suit another individual in its complete sense as every person is different from the other and henceforth Ayurveda teaches that while administering *Ahara* as well as *Oushadha*, follow the principle of '*Purusham Veekshya.....*' This notion centralises the whole principles followed in Ayurveda, as there occurs a wide variation in the food practices, *desha satmya*, *rtu satmya*, etc of the people, and explaining a single walk of life may not benefit all. This is the concept behind adopting varied combinations of the drugs used in *Karkidaka Kanji*.

Through the observance, all-around protection of the individual in terms of his physical, mental, spiritual, and social wellbeing is aimed. His body will be refined in multiple dimensions so that the *Bala* or *Vyadhikshamatva* will be brought to the peak point. *Bahiparimarjana*, as well as *Antaparimarjana Chikitsa*, are performed for this purpose. This addresses the idea of *Rtusodhana* mentioned in Ayurveda *Sastra*, as *Karkidaka masa* is taken as the ideal time for the same.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda which has its roots in *Loka Purusha Samya Siddanta* has spoken about its application in very detail in the form of *Rtucharya*. Based on the characteristic features of a *rtu*, the person should adapt himself to lead his life, as every season has its impact on the person. Moreover, this *sastra* also focusses on *Trisutra* for *swastha* too, where *Rtucharya* plays an important contribution.

Similar to this, the *karkidaka* rituals and regimens were formed based on the culture and climatic specialities. These have found a great result in people's life-promoting immunity and good health. Since this era is facing a lot of challenges to the traditional prac-

tices, due to the improved living conditions, advancement in education and employment circumstances, though there occurred some deviations from following it in the actual form, still it exists, in Kerala as *Karkidaka masam* is none other than *Ramayana Masam* here.

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