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A Conceptual Review of *Takra* (Buttermilk) as Pathya in Management of Crohn's Disease

Sanap A.¹, Kadam M.²

1. Final year Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of Dravyaguna Vigyan, Y.M.T. Ayurvedic Medical College and PG Institute, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai.
2. Professor and HOD, Dept. of Dravyaguna Vigyan, Y.M.T. Ayurvedic Medical College and PG Institute, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai.

ABSTRACT:

Crohn's disease which is a type of Inflammatory Bowel Disease is a chronic and relapsing idiopathic inflammatory bowel disease characterized by skip lesions and transmural inflammation that can affect the entire gastrointestinal tract from the mouth to the anus. Pathogenesis of this disease results from the interactions of the factors like environmental factors, immune system, susceptibility genes and host's microbiome changes that leads disruption of the intestinal mucosa. There is need to manage symptoms and progression of CD with the help of diet along with the conventional medical treatments. Ayurveda Classics like *Charak Samhita*, *Madhavidan* and *Ashtang Hruday* describes various *lakshanas* of *Grahani* and *Sangrahanirog* that have similarities in symptoms of CD. *Charak Samhita*, *Bhavprakash Nighantu* and *Sushrut Samhita* describes properties of *Takra* that can be applied to manage symptoms of CD like abdominal pain, flatulence, decreased appetite, weightloss, diarrhea, etc. *Takra* (buttermilk) being an *aahar dravya* is recommended in *Grahani rog*, can be helpful to manage CD, by looking at the similarities of the symptoms between both diseases and hence can be used as a *pathya* in CD.

KEYWORDS:

Crohn's disease, Inflammatory bowel disease, *Grahani*, *Sangrahani*, *Takra*

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Dr. Anagha Amaresh Sanap

Final year Post Graduate Scholar,

Dept. of Dravyaguna Vigyan, Y.M.T. Ayurvedic Medical College
and PG Institute, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai.

Email: dranaghasanap@gmail.com Mobile no: 7276057490

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INTRODUCTION:

Crohn's disease is a chronic and relapsing idiopathic inflammatory bowel disease characterized by skip lesions and transmural inflammation that can affect the entire gastrointestinal tract from the mouth to the anus.^[1] It is a type of Inflammatory Bowel Disease, other type being Ulcerative Colitis. IBD has been classified into auto-immune disorder with its cause being unknown. The incidence of Crohn's disease has a bimodal distribution with the onset occurring most frequently between two different age groups - 15 to 30 years and 40 to 60 years.^[2]

Pathogenesis of this disease results from the interactions of following factors that leads disruption of the intestinal mucosa:

1. Environmental factors
2. Immune system
3. Susceptibility genes
4. Host's microbiome changes

It runs a relapsing and remitting course. While relapsing multiple times the CD can progress from initially mild to moderate inflammatory conditions to severe penetrating or stricturing disease. Following are the main symptoms of CD^{[3][4]}:

1. Abdominal pain, that is the hallmark of CD and is dependent upon anatomic location
2. Diarrhea
3. Weight loss
4. Blood, mucus or both in stools
5. flatulence/bloating
6. Fever
7. Anaemia
8. Fatigue
9. Decreased appetite during periods of disease exacerbation

Its extraintestinal manifestations are:

1. Peripheral arthritis
2. Aphthous stomatitis
3. Ankylosing spondylitis
4. Psoriasis etc.

RATIONALE

1. Sustainable solutions for management of symptoms and progression of Crohn's disease is required in today's era.
2. *Takra* (Buttermilk) being economic, easily available, affordable and commonly consumable *Aahar Dravya* in India can be one of the best solutions to manage various symptoms of this disease.
3. The properties of *Takra* make it an ideal *Aahar* as well as *Aushadhi dravya* in managing symptoms of CD.

METHODS

Various research articles were reviewed to understand the concept of Crohn's Disease in Modern Science and Ayurveda. Ayurvedic Classics like *Charak Samhita*, *Madhav Nidan* and *Ashtang Hruday* were reviewed to understand the concepts of *Agni*, *Aam*, *Grahani* and *Sangrahani*. *Charak Samhita*, *Bhavprakash Nighantu* and *Sushruta Sanhita* were referred to understand the properties of *Takra*. Various research articles were also referred to understand the role of *Takra* in GIT disorders and its composition and properties in Modern science.

OBSERVATION & RESULTS

By studying the overall manifestations of Crohn's disease, the *Lakshanas* of *Grahani rog* and *Sangrahani Rog* can be co-related with the overall general symptoms of Crohn's disease.

Co-relation with *Grahani Rog* and references is as follows ^{[5][6][7]}:

Sr. No.	Reference	Lakshans	Symptoms of CD
1	Madhavnidan	Saruj, Muhurbaddha muhurdravam (mal)	Abdominal pain with diarrhea
2	Cha. Chi. 15	Atishrushtam vibaddha va dravam (mal)	Diarrhea, flatulence
		Ashiparvaruk	Joint pain
		Jwar	Fever
3.	A.H.Ni. 8	Karshya	Weightloss
		Jwar	Fever

The chronicity of CD along with the relapse of the episodes of this disease can be co-related with *Sangrahani Rog* as follows ^[8]:

Reference	Sr. No.	Lakshans	Symptoms of CD
Madhavnidan	1	Antrakujan	Abdominal cramps
	2	Aalasya	Fatigue
	3	Dourbalya	Fatigue
	4	Sadan	Bodyache
	5	Dravam, Shitam, Dravam, Snighdham, Sakatikavedanam Shakrut	Diarrhea, blood with mucus in stool with backpain
	6	Pakshat, masaat, dashahatvat nityam vaapi munchati	Relapsing pattern
	7	Durvidneya, Dushchikitsya, Chirakalanubandhani	Chronic and can only be managed not completely cured

Properties of *Takra* as per Ayurveda Samhitas is as follows ^{[9][10][11][12]}:

Sr. No.	Reference	Ras	Virya	Vipaka	Guna	Karma	Doshaghnata	Rogaghnata
1	Cha. Chi. 15	Kashay Amla	Ushna	Madhur	Laghu, Ruksha	Deepan, Grahi, Vikasi	Tridoshghna	Grahanirrog, Arsha
2	Bhavprakash - Takravarga	Kashay Amla	Ushna	Madhur	Laghu	Grahi, Deepan Vrushya Preenan	Vaataghna	-
3	Su. Su. 45	Madhur Amla Kashay	Ushna	Madhur	Laghu	Deepan, Hrudya	kaphavaatghna	Shopha, Grahani, Atisara, Pandu, Arsha, Pliha, Gulma, Arochak, Visham-jwar, Trsuhna, Chhardi, Praseka, Shool, Mutrakricchra, Snehavyapat

By studying the above properties of *Takra*, it can help manage symptoms of Crohn's disease in following ways:

Symptoms of CD	Properties of <i>Takra</i> that help in management
Abdominal pain, flatulence/ bloating, Joint pain	Alleviate <i>Vata dosha</i> by <i>Amla Ras</i> , <i>Ushna Veerya</i> , <i>Madhur Vipaka</i>
Weight loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevents excessive loss of fluids by <i>Sangrahi Karma</i> and <i>Kashay Rasa</i> which helps to maintain weight. <i>Kashay rasa</i>, <i>Madhura vipaka</i> alleviates <i>Pitta dosh</i>, that reduce inflammation, which increases absorption of nutrients from colon that results in weight gain.
Diarrhea, Blood, mucus or both in stools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Agnideepan</i> by <i>Deepan Karma</i>, Prevents excessive loss of fluids by <i>Sangrahi Karma</i> and <i>Kashay Rasa</i>
Fever	<i>Aampachan</i> by <i>Amla Ras</i> , <i>Ushna Veerya</i>
Decreased Appetite	<i>Agnideepan</i> by <i>Deepan karma</i> , <i>Ushna Veerya</i>
Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Aampachan</i> by <i>Amla Ras</i> and <i>Ushna Veerya</i>, <i>Balya karma</i> by <i>Madhur Vipaka</i>

As per modern research articles the anti-inflammatory activity of buttermilk minimizes intestinal inflammation, it may reduce symptoms such as abdominal pain and discomfort. Probiotic action manages diarrhea, help strengthen the digestive system and the immunity of the body.^[13] It is a rich source of Calcium and Potassium that helps strengthen bones. It is a rich source of Vit. B12 that helps to reduce stress and anemia. Potassium, vitamin B-12, calcium, phosphorous and probiotics present in buttermilk help strengthen the digestive system and the immunity of the body. Riboflavin (Vit B2) and Vit B12 provides energy to combat fatigue caused by CD. Buttermilk is very easy in digestion so it is suggested in the digestive problems. The lactic acid of buttermilk is much friendly on digestive tract

than that of lactose of whole milk.^[14] Hence overall it is a Superfood to combat CD in long term.

DISCUSSION:

Crohn's disease shows symptoms that closely resemble the Ayurvedic descriptions of *Grahani* and *Sangrahani*, especially in terms of digestive disturbances and inflammatory bowel issues. From an Ayurvedic perspective, the *samprapti* (pathogenesis) of Crohn's disease can therefore be co-related with the disturbances seen in these conditions. *Takra* (buttermilk), which is traditionally recommended both as *aahar* (diet) and *aushadha* (medicine) for *Grahani roga*, becomes an important dietary option here. Its *kashaya rasa* and *madhura vipaka* help to calm aggravated *Pitta dosha*, reducing inflammation and associated pain. Meanwhile, the combination of *amla rasa*, *madhura vipaka*, and *ushna virya* works to

pacify *Vata dosha*, thereby helping relieve abdominal cramps, flatulence, and even joint pain. Additionally, its *deepana* and *grahi* properties support digestion, reduce diarrhea, and help manage blood or mucus in stools. The nourishing nature of *madhura vipaka* also supports patients experiencing fatigue and weight loss. Its *deepana karma* further helps improve appetite and tackle low-grade fever.

CONCLUSION:

Considering both Ayurvedic principles and modern scientific evidence, buttermilk stands out as a supportive dietary component in the management of Crohn's disease. Its ability to balance *Vata* and *Pitta*, improve digestion, and nourish the body makes it a suitable *pathya* (wholesome dietary choice) for such patients. Modern research also confirms that buttermilk promotes gut health^[15], aligning with Ayurvedic recommendations. Thus, incorporating *Takra* into the daily diet may help alleviate several symptoms and improve overall digestive well-being in individuals with Crohn's disease.

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