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JALA– The Elixir for Life

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Abstract: The ancient science of life has considered jala to be the life (ayushya) for all. It is believed that jala has the ability to cure various diseases and this jala therapy is established as an important non-invasive Medicine in the medical field. The importance of jala for life expectancy (ayushya) has been explored in the literature of Ayurveda. Ayurveda has mentioned the role of each type of jala for humans and also describe the right method of intake of jala. The origin of Rasa is due to Jala. Jala is not essential for metabolic actions but also necessary to perform daily routine work. Various researchers have investigated the role of water in different diseases like; acute toxicity, ascites, gastric burn, and constipation. This article summarizes the ayurvedic perspective of jala as per the ancient science of life.
Keywords: Jala, Guna, Karma, Kaal, Vidhi, Ayushya.

I. INTRODUCTION

Life is not possible on Earth without water. All kinds of creatures depend on water for their own lives in one way or the other. Ancient texts also believed that civilizations Started around water sources. According to modern science, water performs various important functions in humans. Water acts as a solvent for ions, cell signaling, mineralization of organic compounds, and activation of enzymes. Water helps in digestion, elimination of toxins, and transportation. In *Ayurveda,* Acharya Bhavaprakash mentioned the importance of *jala*. He said that water intake is essential for life, so do not prohibit water intake. Water is considered as *Jeeva* (life) and *pranadharan* (life- giver) in *Ayurveda*. *Guna* of water is *Madhura*, *Sheetala* and *Ruchikaraka*. As per *Ayurveda* water help in *trishna* (thirst), *Bhrama* (giddiness), *anindra* (sleeplessness), *Visha-vyadhi* (toxins), *Bala* (strength), *Veerya* (potency: the ability to function), *Pushti* (energy). *Ayurveda* described the importance of purified water and *ayurvedic chikitsa granthas* have mentioned various therapeutic roles of water and purification techniques of impure water while Nighantus explained types of water, their properties, and actions.

A. Synonyms for Jala

1) *Paniya*: water for drink,
2) *Nira*: clear Jala
3) *Jeevana*: life
4) *Amruta*: good quality of water
5) *Ambhu*: rainy water
6) *Salil*: Flowing water
7) *Keelal*: drink like nectar
8) *Toya*: water of ocean

II. TYPES OF *JALA* (WATER)

Based on occurrence • *Divya Jala* • *Bhauma Jala* • *Dushtajala* • *Hamsodaka*
Based on *Kala* • *Sarojata Jala* • *Tadagaja Jala* • *Nairjara Jala* • *Divya Jala* • *Sarva Jala*
Based on property • *Sheetajala* • *Ushnajala*
And based on *paripaka*

A. Based on Occurrence

1) *Divya jala*-It is also known as *Antariksha jala* means rain from *akash*. It has *Avyakta rasa, laghu guna* and *Madhur vipaka*. *Divya jala* shows *klamahar, pipasanashak, tandranashak and shramhar* property. Further, it is classified into four types- *Dhara, Kara, Taushar, and Haima*.
2) *Bhauma jala*-It represents all water sources of land (*bhauma*). It is the main and important source of drinking water. Ex- *Kaupa jala, Nadeya jala, and Tadaga jala*.

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3) *Dushta jala*- It means polluted water and not used for drinking.
4) *Hamsodaka*- It means the water of *sharad ritu* which gets heated by the sun rays in the day and cooled by the moon during night known as *Hamsodaka jala*. This is pure and uncontaminated *jala*. It has *rasayan, balkaraka, sheetal, laghu* property.
5) Based on *Kala*- Acharya Bhavaprakasha described various types of *jala* according to use in different *kala(ritu*) such as; *Nairjhara jala* in *Vaishakh, Audhbidha jala in jyaistha, Divya jala in Shravana, Tadaga jala in Magha, Sarojata jala in Pushya ritu and Sarva jala in Margasirsa kala.*

B. Based on the Property

1) *Sheetajala*- It means cold water which used in *murcha, daah, visha, vaman, tamaka swasa, raktapitta, madatya*, and in *pitta vikaar.*
2) *Ushnajala*- It means hot water which used in *aama, kaas, throat pain, kapha* and to boost digestion.
3) *Based on paripaaka*- According to *Acharya Bhavprakash* normal water digest in 2 *prahar* (6 hours), normal water after boiling digest in 1 *prahar* (3 hours), and lukewarm water after boiling it digest in ½ *prahar* (1 hour and 30 minutes).

Properties of water according to soils

TYPE OF SOIL	PROPERTY OF WATER
White soil	*Kashaya rasa*
Pandur (pale coloured) soil	*Tikta rasa*
Kapila (brown coloured) soil	*Ksharayukta* (saline)
Ushara soil	*Lavana rasa*
In hilly area	*Katu rasa*
Krushna (black coloured) soil	*Madhura rasa*
Rain water, hailstone water, snow water	*Avyakta rasa*

Properties of water according to *Panchamahabhuta*

PRADHAN MAHABHUTA	PROPERTY OF WATER
Prithwi mahabhuta	*Lavana, Amla rasa*
Aap mahabhuta	*Madhura rasa*
Teja mahabhuta	*Tikta, Katu rasa*
Vayu mahabhuta	*Kashaya rasa*
Akash mahabhuta	*Avyakta rasa*

Properties of water according to *Ritu*

RITU (SEASON)	PROPERTIES
Varsha	*Guru, Abhishyandi, Madhura rasa.*
Sharada	*Laghu, Anabhishyandi.*
Hemanta	*Snigdha, Balya, Guru, Shukravardhaka*
Shishira	It is lighter than *Hemanta rutu jala*, alleviates *kapha-vata.*
Vasanta	*Kashaya-madhura rasa, ruksha guna.*
Greeshma	*Anabhishyandi.*

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III. *JALAPANA NIYAM* (RULES TO DRINK WATER)

A. Purified water should be used for drinking.
B. At the time of taking meals human beings should drink a little water repeatedly to increase the digestive fire.
C. Water should not be consumed if it is too cold or too hot. Excessive intake of water should not be consumed just before meal and after meals.

1) *Jalapana Phala:* In a healthy person, water intake through the proper method of *jalapana vidhi* is increasing the life span (*Ayushya*) of person.
2) *Jalapana Matra:* In *Ayurvedic* texts ideal conditions for stomach filling have mentioned like 2/4th of the stomach should be filled with foods, 1/4th part with *Jala* and 1/4th empty for air.
3) *Avidhi purvaka jalapana phala:* This expressed the effect of drinking water with food, consumption of water before a meal may lead to *Karshya sharira,* and after meals may leads *Sthula sharira* respectively.
4) *Jala* as a *Anupana: Jala* is also useful as an *anupan dravya*. It helps in absorption of medicine as well as nutrients of food. According to diseases, seasons, foods and body nature water is use as *anupana* in different forms hot, cold, with honey, with wine and salt.

IV. METHODS OF WATER PURIFICATION ACCORDING TO *AYURVEDA*

1) Seed of *nirmali* (Strychnos potatorum)
2) *Gomeda mani*
3) *Kamal nal* (Nelumbo nucifera)
4) *Shewal mool* (Algae)
5) *Mukta*
6) *Saphatik*
7) Filter by clean cloth

All these are kept in the pot which is filled with unpurified water for large time duration approximately 2 to 4 hours after it this water is filter with simple clean cloth. This water is ready for drinking.

Some drinkable water for *ayushya* according to *Ayurveda*
a) *Shrutashita jala*: water itself cools after boiling.
b) *Hamsodaka*: Exposure to sun rays during day and moonlight during nights in *Sharad ritu.*

V. UTILIZATION OF TRADITIONAL HERBS WITH WATER

A. Tulsi (Ocimum sanctum),
B. Patragah (Cesalpinia sapan)
C. Jeera (Cuminum cyminum)
D. Lemon grass (Cymbopogon citrates)
E. Lemon (Citrus lemon)
F. Khadir (Acacia catechu)
G. Dhaniya (Coriandrum sativum)
H. Tejpatra (Cinnamomum)
All these herb powder may dissolve in drinking water to enhance health benefits of desirable persons according to suitability.

VI. PHYSIOLOGICAL ROLE OF WATER

A. According to *Ayurveda Rasanendriya, Sweda, Kleda, Rakta, Shukra,* etc, are the expression of *Jala mahabhuta* as elements of body fluid.
B. *Jala* also helps in the regulation of *Apan Vayu* and thus leads to *Ayushya.*
C. Water helps in the purification process by removing toxins through the excretory system from the body.
D. Water facilitates the transport system of the body and thus the transport of essential components of foods to their target body organs.

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E. The *jala* controls irregularities associated with the *Viruddha Ahara* harmonizes balances of *Dhatus* in the body.
F. *Jala* is essential for human beings to relieve thirst and promote *Jatharagni*.
G. Water helps maintaining body temperature and acts as a thermostat.
H. *Jala* is the chief component of various body fluids like Urine, Rakta, blood lymph, etc
I. *Jala* participates in a various biochemical processes in the body as a solvent which is required for various physiological functions.

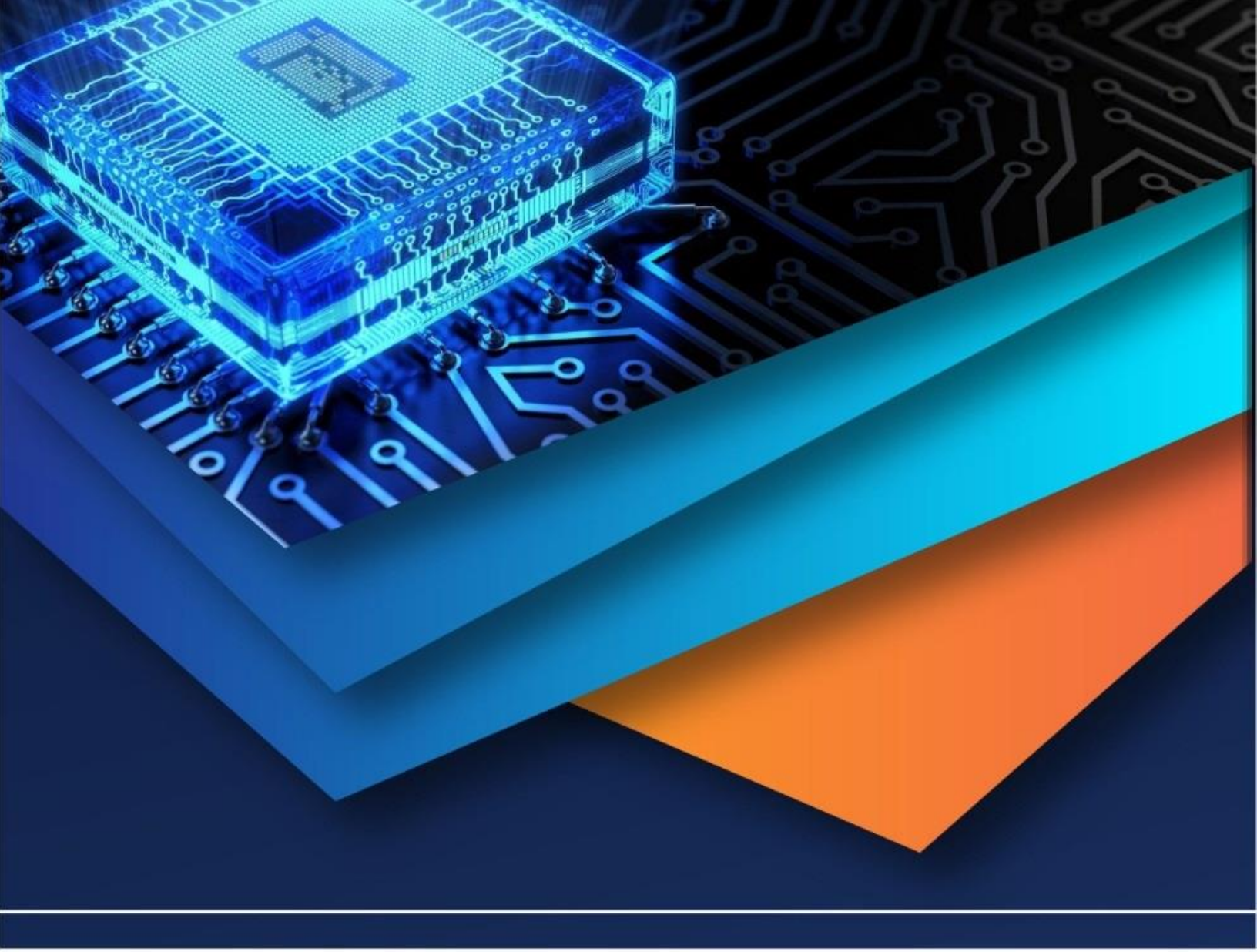
VII. CONCLUSION

This article summarizes various *ayurvedic* aspects of water (*Jala*) based on its importance for the life of human beings (*Ayushya*) in terms of physiological role as well as environmental significance. The article also described *ayurvedic* textual approaches of classification of water based on its sources, origin, and digestion effect which help to ensure its characteristic and purity. Hence, this article presents an *ayurvedic* overview of *jala* for *ayushya* and the uses of various types of *jala* in various therapeutic purposes.

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