



# All About Food – Part 1 (Annaswaroopā Vijnaneeyam)

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ASHATANGA HRIDAYAM WITH DR. REKHA RADHAMONY

# Introduction

6th Chapter of Ashtanga Hridayam  
Sutra Sthanam – Part 1

Talks about grains, legumes, pulses,  
non-veg, veggies, fruits, salts etc

The image is a collage of various grain-related items. In the top left, a wooden bowl is filled with whole grains. A wooden scoop is positioned in the center, overflowing with grains. To the right, a burlap bag is tipped, spilling a large quantity of flattened grains. The background features several stalks of grain with long, thin spikes. The overall scene is set on a dark, textured surface, possibly a wooden table. A dark, semi-transparent rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text.

Grains with spikes  
(Shooka dhanya varga)

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# Rice

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Sweet taste, sweet post digestive taste

Unctuous

Aphrodisiac

Constipating

Reduces the volume of feces

Mild astringent taste

Good for daily consumption

Light

Diuretic

Cooling

# Types of rice

Rakta (red), mahan (big sized rice), kalama, turnaka, shakunahruta, saaramukha, deerghashuka (having long sharp spike at the ends), sugandhika (having good smell), rodhrashuka, pundra, pandu, pundarika, pramoda, gaura (white rice), sariva, kanchana (golden colored rice), mahisha, shuka, dushaka, kusumandaka, langala lohavala, kardama, sheetabheeruka, patanga, stapaneeya (bright red) – these varieties of rice are good for consumption



# The best variety of rice

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Raktashali (red rice) is the best variety of rice

Relieves thirst

Balances all three doshas

Next best is Mahan (big sized rice)

Yavaka,  
Haayana,  
Paamshu,  
Vashpa,  
Naishadha  
varieties

Sweet

Hot in potency

Hard to digest

Increases Kapha and Pitta

Unctuous

Post digestive taste – sour

Increases bulk and volume of feces  
and urine

Yavaka is better, Naishadha is worse

# Paddy that matures in 60 days (Shashtika Shali)

Best among all paddy (paddy is rice with husk)

Unctuous

Constipating

Useful in diarrhea

Light

Sweet

Balances all 3 doshas

Cooling

Stable

It is of two types - gaura & asita- guara – white and blackish white

# Mahavrihi

Next inferior to shashtika is mahavrihi, next to that is krishnavrihi and the others such as jatu mukha, kukkutandaka, lavaka, paravataka, sukara, varaka, uddalaka, ujvala, cina, sarada, dardura, gandhana and kuruvinda.

All other forms are rice has the below qualities:

Sweet

Post-digestive taste – sour

Increases Pitta

Hard to digest

Increases volume of urine and feces

Increases body heat

Vitiates Tridosha



# Grains from grass-like plants (trina dhanya varga)

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Kangu, Kodrava, Neevara, Shyamaka and other grains

Cold in potency

Light - easily digestible

Increases Vata

Lekhana (scraping)

Balances Kapha and Pitta

Priyangu helps in fracture healing, nutritive, nourishing and is hard to digest

Koradusha is constipating, coolant and anti-poisonous



# Barley (Yava)

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Dry

Cooling

Heavy to digest

Sweet taste

Laxative

Increases the bulk of feces

Causes flatulence

Aphrodisiac

Increases body stability

**Anuyava (a small sized barley) is inferior in qualities to that of Yava. Venuyava (seeds of bamboo) is non-unctuous and hot in potency**



# Barley in disease conditions

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Urinary disorders

Diseases due to Pitta – Kapha imbalance

Allergic rhinitis

Asthma, COPD, wheezing, breathing difficulty

Cough

Stiffness of thighs

Diseases of the throat

Skin diseases



# Wheat

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Aphrodisiac

Cold

Heavy to digest

Unctuous

Jivaniya – enlivening

Balances Vata and Pitta

Heals fractures and wounds

Sweet taste

Increases body stability

Laxative

Can be taken daily

# Nandimukhi wheat

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Good for health

Cold

Astringent & sweet tastes

Light to digest



# Legumes & Pulses (shimbi dhanya varga)

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# Green gram (mudga), toor dal (adhaki), lentil (masura) etc

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Constipating

Astringent & sweet taste, post digestive taste – pungent

Cold

Easy to digest

Reduces kapha, pitta, fat & blood

Great for external application & for bathing



# Green gram

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Green Gram is the best – causes mild increase of vata

Round pea (kalaya) – causes vata increase, dryness, hard to digest, forms more feces

Rajamasha (big sized black gram) – vata increasing, dry, heavy, increases bulk of feces



# Horse gram

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Hot

Post-digestive taste – sour

Cleanses semen

Increase urine production



# Horse gram for diseases

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Urinary stones

Asthma

Rhinitis

Cough

Vata diseases

Not good for menorrhagia

# Flat bean (nishpava)

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Aggravates pitta

Causes bleeding disorders

Increases breast milk

Heavy

Increases urine

Laxative

Increases burning sensation

Not good for the eyes & semen quality

Decreases Kapha & inflammation



# Black gram (masha)

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Increases strength

Unctuous

Increases kapha & pitta

Increases bulk of feces

Laxative

Heavy

Hot

Reduces vata

Sweet taste

Increases semen & ejaculation strength



# Similar to black gram qualities

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Fruits of kakandola  
(kapikachu) (*mucuna  
pruriens*) – Itchy velvet  
beans





# Sesame seeds (tila)

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Hot

Good for the skin

Cold in touch

Good for hair

Strengthening

Heavy

Produces little quantity of urine

Post digestive taste – Katu

Increases intelligence

Increases digestion

Increases Kapha & Pitta



## Linseed (seeds of Uma) & Kusumbha (safflower oil seeds)

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Unctuous

Sweet & bitter taste, post digestive taste - katu

Hot

Increases Kapha & Pitta

Heavy

Not good for the eyes

Not good for semen





# Inferior varieties

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Among legumes (shimbi dhanya) – Black gram

Among cereals (shuka dhanya) – Yavaka (small barley)



# Fresh & old grains

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Just harvested - abhishyandi

One year old – easy to digest

Those grains that are easy to digest

1. Those which grow fast
2. Husk removed off
3. Properly cooked

Prepared/cooked  
foods  
(kritaanna varga)

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# Manda

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The thin fluid resembling water, drained out immediately after boiling

The best & easiest to digest

Restores normalcy of health of tissues & channels

Kindles Agni

Helps movement of feces and flatus

Relieves thirst and exhaustion

Nullifies residual doshas

Usually given as the diet after Panchakarma, when all doshas are eliminated

# Peya

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Slightly thicker to Manda, but in liquid form

Relieves thirst, hunger, exhaustion, tiredness, diseases of the abdomen, fevers

Can be taken by anyone

Helps movement of feces

Kindles appetite & helps digestion

# Vilepi

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The stage next to peya with more of solid grains & less of fluid

Constipating

Good for the heart, relieves eye diseases, ulcers

Also advised after Panchakarma treatment if the patient is weak

Given to patients who have been given fats for drinking (Snehana)  
before Panchakarma

# Odana

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Solid without the fluid portion

Difficult to digest compared to Manda

Grains are washed well, cooked and the entire water is evaporated, which is devoid of smoke, is called odana

Can be prepared with hot potency medicated decoctions – more digestible

If prepared with milk & meat etc - hard to digest

# Meat soup (Mamsa Rasa)

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# Meat soup (mamsa rasa)

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Nourishing

Gives satisfaction

Aphrodisiac

Good for the eyes

Heals wounds and ulcers



# Green gram soup

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Good for health

Ideal for those who have  
undergone Panchakarma  
purification therapies

For those suffering from ulcers,  
diseases of the throat and eyes

# Horse gram soup

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Initiates normal movement of Vata (Vata anulomi)  
Useful in abdominal tumors & pain in the groin

# Ayurveda does not advise the following:

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Foods prepared from tila (sesame seeds)

Pinyaka – the residue of sesame seeds once oil is extracted

Dried leafy vegetables

Germinated grains

Balls of fried rice dried in sun and then fried in oil

These are not good for the eyes, increases tridoshas, cause weakness, hard to digest

# Rasala

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Rasala is curd churned and added with pepper powder & sugar

Increases body weight

Aphrodisiac

Unctuous

Improves strength

Improves taste

# Vegetable & fruit juices (Panaka)

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Hard to digest

Stays long in the stomach

Diuretic

Good for the heart

Relieves exhaustion, hunger, thirst, fatigue, gives satisfaction

Other qualities depends on the fruits and veggies from which it is prepared



# Laja (popped rice)

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Relieves thirst, vomiting,  
diarrhea, diabetes, obesity

Reduces Kapha & Pitta

Constipating

Reduces cough

Increases hunger

Easy to digest

Cold



# Poha (Prithuka)

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Hard to digest

Strengthening

Increases kapha

Causes constipation

# Dhana (fried barley powder)

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Dhana is made by frying barley soaked in water

Stays long in the stomach

Causes indigestion

Dry

Satisfying

Hard to digest

# Roasted flour of cereals (saktu)

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Easy to digest

Relieves hunger, thirst, fatigue, eye diseases, wounds

Nutritious

Taken as a drink, gives strength immediately

Should not be eaten without drinking water in between

Allowed only once daily

Should not be taken at night

Take alone, do not mix with any other kinds of foods

Have this before meals

Should not be hard to chew

Should not be taken in excess quantity

# Pinyaka

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The residue after oil is extracted from sesame, groundnut and other seeds

Produces giddiness

Indigestion

Dryness

Affects vision

# Veshavara

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Meat cut into small bits, added with spices like pepper, ginger etc, roasted/fried

Vegetable vesavara is made the same way with pulses/flours

Hard to digest

Unctuous

Increases strength, body building

Vesavara from green gram - hard to digest

# Preparation & ease of digestion

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Steaming < Baked on hot mud/ iron pan < vessel over stove < baked directly on coal

Foods baked directly on coal is easier to digest than foods cooked by steaming

# Meats (mamsa varga)

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Jangala  
(dry shrubby  
forests with less  
rainfall)  
Vata dominant

# Deer, etc (mriga varga)

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Harina (antelope)

Kuranga (a type of deer)

Arksa (white footed antelope)

Gokarna (deer antelope)

Mrigamatrika (red colored hare-like deer)

Shasha (rabbit)

Shambara (deer with branched horns)

Charushka (gazelle)

Sarabha (an eight footed animal)



Jangala  
(dry shrubby forests with less rainfall)  
Vata dominant

# Deer, etc

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These are different kinds of deer, antelope and bucks. Some of them have horns, some are hornless, all of them are herbivorous and inhabit dry regions especially shrubby forests.

In olden days deer was hunted mainly for food.



# Rabbit

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Enhances hunger

Pungent after digestion

Water absorbent (constipating)

Cold in potency

## Vishkira

Vartika( bush quail)	Kapinjala (black partridge)	Tittiri (grey partridge)
Vartaka (button quail)	Kukkubha (wild cock)	Sikhi (peacock)
Kurubahava	Raktavartma (red eyed owl)	Tamracuda (domestic cock)
Chakora (Greek pheasant)	Vartira (rain quail)	Bakara (small creane)
Upachakra (small Greek pheasant)	Lava (bustard quail)	Gonarda (Siberian crane)
Girivartika (mountain quail)	Sharapada (a kind of sparrow)	Varata (goose)
Indrabha (hedge sparrow)		

Birds which scratch the ground with legs to pick food (vishkira varga)



Jangala  
(dry shrubby forests with less rainfall)  
Vata dominant



Jangala (dry  
shrubby forests  
with less rainfall)  
Vata dominant

# Birds that peck the food and eat (pratuda)

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Jivanijivaka  
(Greek  
partridge )

Datyuha  
(gallinule)

Bhrunagahwa  
(shrike)

Suka  
(parakeet)

Sarika  
(mynah)

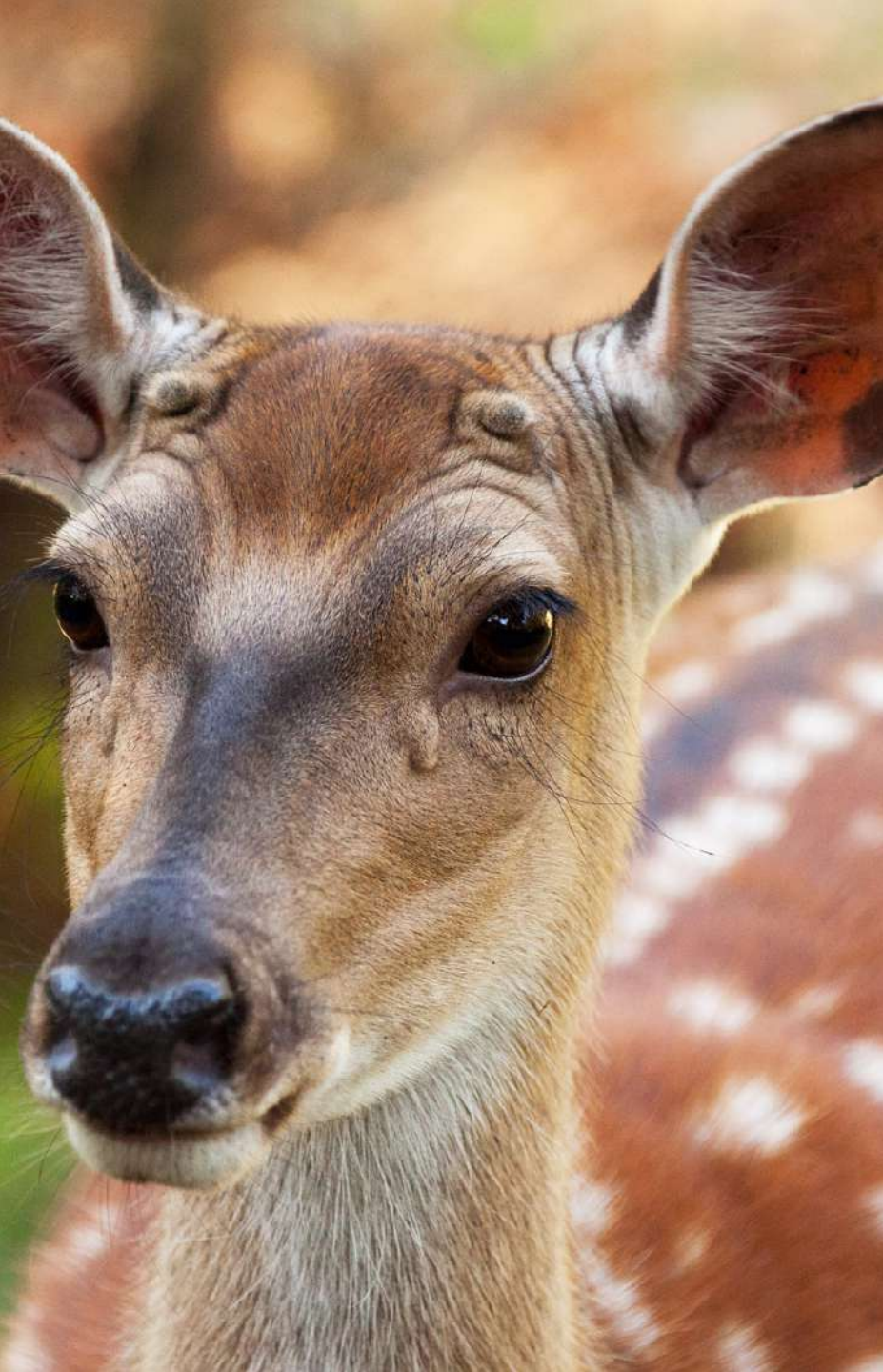
Latva (wild  
sparrow)

Kokila  
(cuckoo)

Harita (grey  
pigeon)

Kapota  
(wood  
peigon)

Chataka  
(house  
sparrow)



# Jangala group (mriga, vishkira, pratuda)

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Meat of the Jangala group are the best

Constipating

Cold

Easily digestible

Good in sannipata conditions with great increase of pitta and moderate increase of vata, mild increase of kapha

# Creatures that live in burrows (Bileshaya)

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Hard to digest

Hot

Unctuous

Sweet


Increases semen

Increases urine

Strengthening

Balances Vata

Increases Pitta & Kapha



Bheka (frog)

Godha (iguana lizard)

Ahi (snake)

Swavid (hedgehog)

Sadharana (neither dry, neither wet)

Tridosha balancing

# Creatures that catch food with teeth, tear and eat (prasaha varga)

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Sadharana (neither dry, neither wet)  
Tridosha balancing



## PRASAHA

Cow

Camel

Lion

Donkey

Horse

Monkey

Mule

Leopard

Cat

Rat

Tiger

Jackal

Mongoose

Hyena

Fox

Hawk

Golden eagle

Dog

Vulture

Owl

Crow

Sparrow

Honey buzzard

Anoopa (plenty of  
rainfall/water logged)  
Kapha dominant

Varaha (boar)

Mahisa (buffalo)

Nyanku (dog deer)

Rohita (big deer)

Ruru (swamp deer)

Varana (elephant)

Sarmara (Indian wild boar)

Chamara (yak)

Khadga (rhinoceros)

Gavaya (Goyal ox)

## Big animals (mahamriga)

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Cold

Carnivorous animals have  
salt as its secondary taste

Post digestive taste katu

Increases muscles of the  
body

Ideal for long-standing  
haemorrhoids

Good for disease of the  
duodenum

# Aquatic birds (apchara varga )

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Hamsa (swan)

Sarasa (Indian crane)

Kadamba (grey legged goose)

Baka (heron)

Karandava (white breasted goose)

Palva (pelican)

Balaka (crane)

Utkrosa (mattard)

Chakrahva (ruddy Sheldrake)

Madgu (small cormorant)

Krouncha (pound heron)



Anoopa (plenty of  
rainfall/water logged)  
Kapha dominant

Anoopa (plenty of  
rainfall/water logged)  
Kapha dominant



# Fish (matsya varga)

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Rohita (red fish)

Pathina (boal)

Kurma (tortoise)

Kumbhira (gavial, alligator)

Karkata (crab)

Sukti (pearl mussel)

Sankha (conch shell)

Urdu (otter)

Sambuka (common snail)

Safari (large glistening fish)

Varmi candrika (a kind of catfish)

Culuki (porpoise, sea hog)

Pakra (crocodile)

Makara (crocodile)

Sisumara (dolphin)

Timingala (whale, shark)

Raji (snake fish)

Cilicima (red striped fish)



# Meat group

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We talked about 8 different kinds of meat

Goat and sheep are not included in any group because of their mixed heredity and living in all types of lands

The flesh of peacock is not very good generally but good for the ears (hearing), voice, ageing (to slow down ageing), and eyes (vision)

Black partridge - increases intelligence and digestion, is good for the heart



# Chicken (kukkuta)

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Wild cock - like peacock meat & aphrodisiac

Domesticated chicken – Increases Kapha & difficult to digest

Chataka (cuckoo) - Increases Kapha, is unctuous, mitigates vata and best to increase semen



# Goat meat (aja)

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Not very cold in potency (na ati sheetam)

Heavy

Fatty

Does not aggravate doshas (similar to human doshas)

Anabhisyadi

Nourishing

Causes weight gain

(Meat of sheep has opposite qualities, similarity – weight gain)



# Beef (flesh of cow, bull, bullock) gomamsa

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Cures dry cough

Relieves exhaustion, excess hunger, intermittent fevers, rhinitis

Reduces diseases caused by Vata



# Buffalo meat (mahisha)

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Hot

Difficult to digest

Produces sleep

Gives strength and stoutness to the body



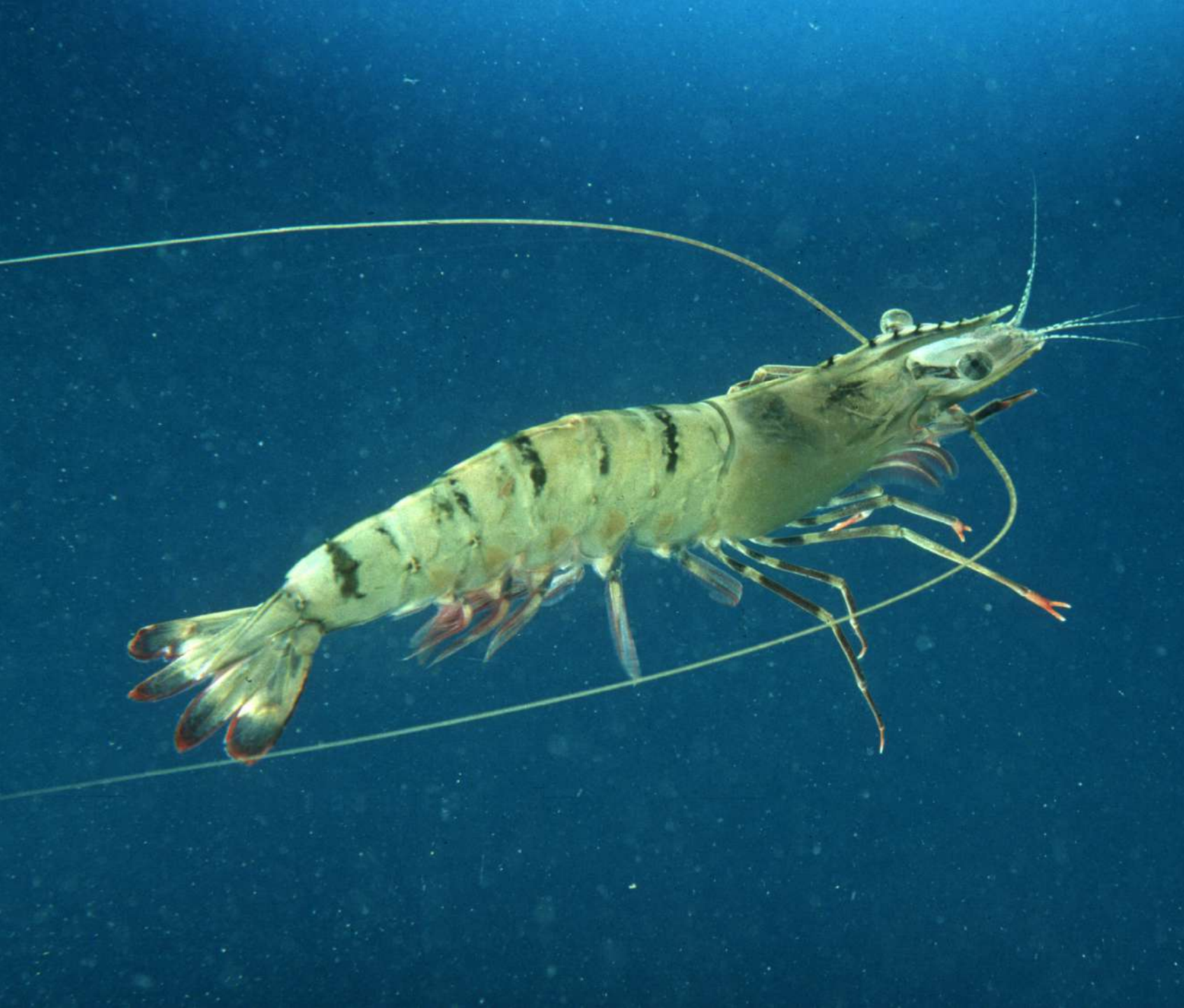
# Pork (varaha)

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Similar to buffalo meat

Relieves fatigue

Increases taste, semen, strength



# Fish

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Increases kapha profoundly

Prawns (chilichima fish) –  
increases all 3 doshas

# Meat rules

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Meat of animals which have been just killed, which are pure (uncontaminated) must be used

Only adult animals only should be used as food

Meat of dead animals, of those which very emaciated, which are very fatty, and of those animals which are dead due to diseases, water (drowning) and poison should be rejected

# Part of meat & digestion

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Hard to digest are the following:

- Meat obtained from the parts above the umbilicus of male animals
- Meat obtained from the parts below the umbilicus of female animals
- Meat obtained from the pregnant animal
- Meat obtained from the head, neck, thighs, back, waist, forelegs, stomach and intestines
- Meat from the testicles, penis, kidneys, liver and rectum (are harder to digest than the flesh)

Among the quadrupeds, the flesh of females is easily digestible

Among the birds, flesh of males are easily digestible



# Leafy Vegetables (shaka varga)

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Cissampelos  
pareira (patha,  
velvet leaf,  
paadathali,  
akanadi)

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Hedychium spicatum  
(spiked ginger  
lily / shathee / kachola  
m / kachoor)

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Senna occidentalis  
(susha /kasamarda  
/mattantakara /kas  
unda)

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*Marsilea quadrifolia*  
(four leaf clover,  
sunishanna,  
nalilakkeera)

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Increases hunger

Aphrodisiac

Locally (Kerala) used in  
uterine bleeding



# Euphorbia hirta (Rajakshava, chittira pala, bada dudhi)

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Cures abdominal diseases

Haemorrhoids

Also known as Asthma  
plant



Chenopodium  
murale (Vastuka,  
goyalo, parippu  
cheera)

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Breaks up hard feces



# Solanum nigrum (kakamachi (mulaku thakkali, makoy plant)

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Balances tridoshas

Good for skin diseases

Aphrodisiac

Hot

Rejuvenating

Laxative

Good for voice.



# Oxallis corniculata (changeri, teen pattiya, puliyarila)

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Sour taste

Kindles Agni

Good for duodenal diseases

Good for hemorrhoids

Reduces Vata and Kapha

Hot

Constipating

Easy to digest



# All these leafy veggies

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Balances tridoshas

Light

Constipating

Increase appetite

Aphrodisiac

*Trichosanthes dioica*  
– Patola, pointed  
guard, kattu  
padolam, palwal

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Patola is good for the heart

Useful in worms

Post digestive taste sweet

Gives taste



Azaadiractus  
indicus – nimba,  
neem leaves

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Green milk weed  
climber  
(Sharngeshta,  
akad bael,  
kodippala)

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# Psoralea corylifolia (Bakuchi, karkokil)

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Breaks hard feces

Improves digestion



Tinospora  
cordifolia  
(amrut, guduchi,  
giloy)

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# Calamus rotang (vetra, rattan, chooral)

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SHOOTS OF THE PLANT



Solanum indicum  
(Indian nightshade,  
brihati, jangli  
bhata, vazhutina)

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The two Brihatis (Brihati  
and Kantakari) increases  
Pitta, promotes hunger,  
breaks down hard faces



*Adathoda vasica*  
(nees/vasha/vaasa  
/adalodakam)

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Vrusha (Vasa) cures  
vomiting, cough and  
reduces hemorrhage



Centella asiatica  
(Indian pennywort,  
manduka parni,  
gotu kola)

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# Properties

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Cold

Bitter taste

Post digestive taste katu

Constipating

Increases Vata

Reduces Kapha & Pitta

Plus, these:

Karkota

karavella (bitter gourd)

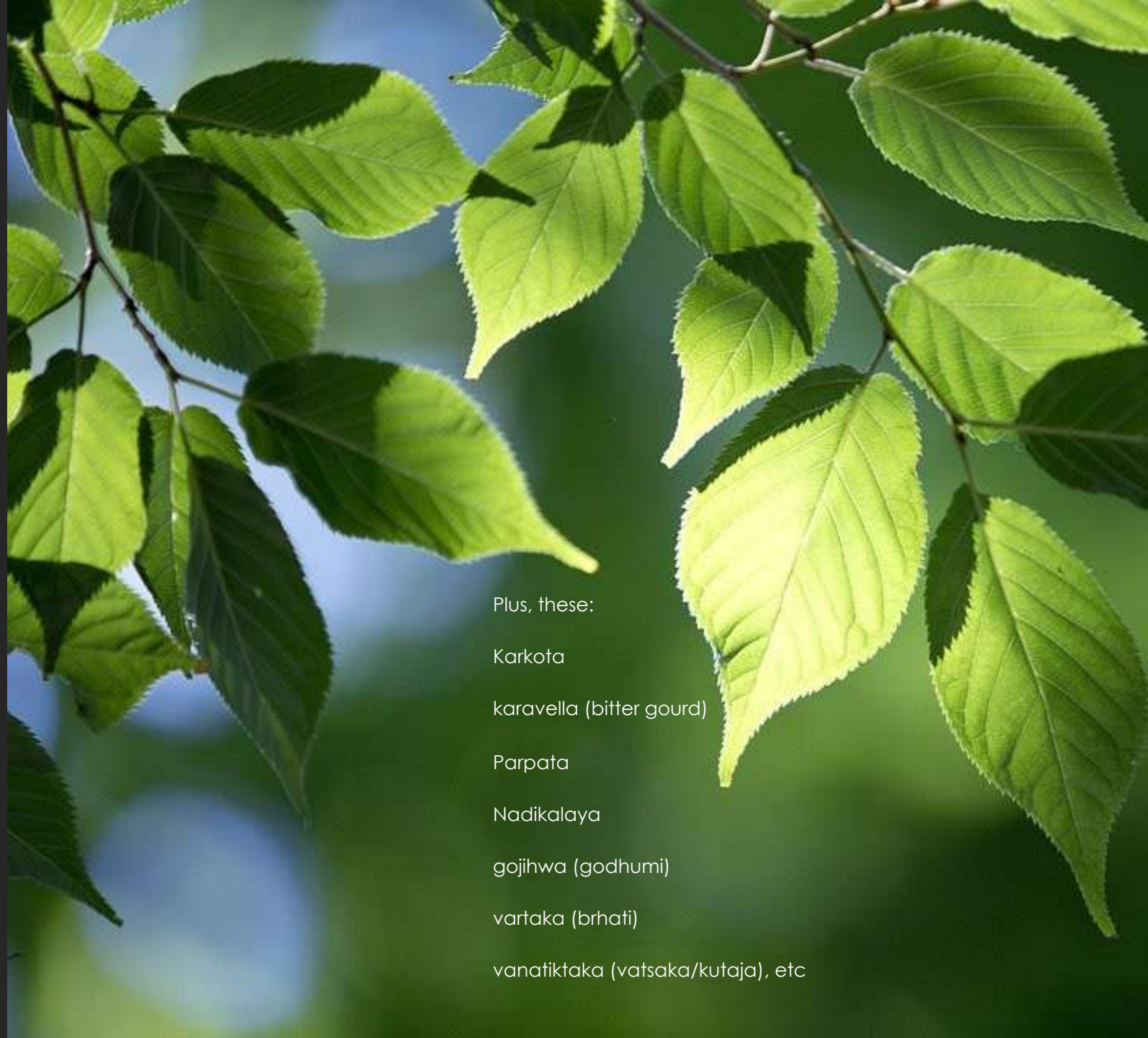
Parpata

Nadikalaya

gojihwa (godhumi)

varataka (brhati)

vanatiktaka (vatsaka/kutaja), etc



# Bitter guard (karavella)

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Bitter taste

Kindles Agni

Mitigates Kapha and Pitta



# Brinjal

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Pungent, bitter taste

Hot

Mitigates Kapha and Vata

Slightly alkaline

Kindles Agni

Improves taste

Does not aggravate pitta



# Karira (Capparis decidua,

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Karira produces distention  
of the abdomen

Astringent, sweet and  
bitter in taste



# Kosataki (Ridge guard)

---

Breaks hard feces

Improves digestion



Spicy amaranth  
(*Amaranthus spinosus*,  
Tanduleeya, jungle  
chaulai, kuppa  
cheera)

---

Cold

Dry

Sweet rasa & vipaka

Light

Cures intoxication,  
poisoning

Balances Pitta



Orchis latifolia  
(Munjata, salep  
orchid, saalam,  
saalamisri )

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Reduces Vata and Pitta

Unctuous

Cold

Hard to digest

Sweet taste

Makes the body stout

Increases semen



# Palankya (Spinach)

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Palankya is hard to digest,  
and laxative.



# Malabar spinach (upodika)

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Relieves intoxication



# Vidari (Vidarikand pueraria)

---

Reduces Vata and Pitta

Diuretic

Sweet taste

Cold

Prolongs life (by giving strength)

Makes the body stout

Good for the throat

Hard to digest

Aphrodisiac

Rejuvenating



# Jivanti (Leptadenia reticulata,

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Good for the eyes

Balances all 3 doshas

Sweet taste

Cold



# Ash guard (kushmanda)

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Best among the creepers

Reduces Vata and Pitta

Cleanses urinary bladder

Aphrodisiac



Q+A

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