

CHARAKOKTA YAVAGU KALPANA - A TRADITIONAL APPROACH TO FUNCTIONAL NUTRITION**Dr Pooja N**

Assistant Professor, Department of Ayurveda Samhita & Siddhanta, Rajeev institute of ayurvedic medical sciences and research centre, Hassan, Karnataka, India

Corresponding Author: poo.acharya7@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj0714092026>

(Published Online: September 2026)

Open Access

© International Ayurvedic Medical Journal, India 2026

Article Received: 18/08/2026 - **Peer Reviewed:** 12/09/2026 - **Accepted for Publication:** 20/09/2026.

**ABSTRACT**

Modern dietary trends focus on nutrient-dense foods along with specific health benefits. *Ayurveda* considers *Ahara* as ‘*Mahabhaishajya*’¹, because no therapeutic interventions succeed without supportive diets. Ayurvedic texts highlight the multidimensional action of *Ahara*, which changes through various processing modalities detailed in a dedicated section called *Kritanna varga*. Among these, Acharya Charaka emphasises the unique clinical position of *Yavagu Kalpana* after being *Aushadha Sadhita*. This technique of converting food into medicine establishes an ancient conceptual platform for modern functional food science. This study aims to explore preparation methods, therapeutic scope and modern nutritional relevance of *Yavagu Kalpana*.

Keywords: *Charaka Samhita, Ahara, Yavagu, Functional foods*

INTRODUCTION

Ahara is considered as ‘*Prana*’². Among the *Trayopasthambha*, *Ahara* is a major supporting pillar that sustains life and maintains health. In all classical texts, a section is dedicated to describing *Ahara* in detail. *Charaka* detailed qualitative aspects, metabolic processing, dietetics protocols,

preventive-chronobiological aspects and *Ahara* as direct therapeutics in the *Samhita*. *Ahara* and *Chikitsa* are not distinct entities but rather points along the same functional spectrum. In *Sutra Sthana*, Acharya Charaka describes the concept of *Aushadha Sadhita Yavagu Kalpana*; through this

concept, Ayurveda introduces a time-tested approach to treating illness through easily digestible, herb-infused foods designed specifically for individuals with compromised *Agni*. This article explores the classical framework of *Yavagu Kalpana*, its *Guna*, *Karma* and relevance to modern clinical nutrition.

Materials and methods

Literary references from *Charaka Samhita* related to *Yavagu* were collected from relevant *Sthana* and articles. References related to functional foods were searched on Google, PubMed, and other relevant search engines; relevant articles were considered. All the articles and references from classical texts were compiled, compared and critically analysed.

Review

Acharya Charaka systematically arranged Ayurvedic concepts in the form of *Chatushka* in

Sutrasthana. It is the *Shira* of the *Tantra*. *Bheshaja Chatushka* is one of the *Sapta Chatushka*, focusing on principles of treatment, therapeutics, various drugs, and medicinal properties. *Shodhana Uparkama* is one of the complex and highly efficacious therapies. *Pathya Kalpana* is a part of *Shodhana* throughout its course. *Charaka* describes various *Yavagu Kalpana* in the 2nd *Adhyaya* of *Sutra Sthana*, named *Apamarga Tanduliya Adhyaya*, which are useful to improve *Agni Bala* and manage complications arising from improper administration of *Shodhana*³.

Yavagu kalpana

Yavagu is to be prepared by adding 6 parts of water to 1 part of rice³. It is processed with various medicinal drugs in different quantities.

The drugs useful for *Yavagu Kalpana* are³

1. *Veerya Pradhana (Aushadha Dravya)* – it is of 3 types

Table 1. Showing types of *Veerya Bhedena Dravya* and their dosage

Sl no	Veerya	Dosage used for the Yavagu preparation
1.	<i>Teekshna</i> (Eg- <i>Shunti</i> , etc)	1 Karsha
2.	<i>Madhyama</i> (Eg- <i>Bilva</i> , <i>Agnimantha</i> , etc)	½ Pala
3.	<i>Mrudu</i> (Eg- <i>Amalaki</i> etc)	1 Pala

The amount of *Aushadhi dravya* varies from person to person depending on factors like *Dosha*, *Agni*, *Bala*, *Vaya*, *Vyadhi*, *Dravya*, and *Koshtha*.

2. *Rasa Pradhana (Ahara Dravya)*

Properties of Yavagu

Yavagu, being *Laghu* and *Ushna* in *guna* and *Bastishodhana*, *Agni Dipana* in *Karma*, acts as *Trishnanghna*, *Jvarahara*, and in *Atisara Vyadhi*⁴. After *Shodhana Karma (Vamana, Virechana)*, if *Samyaka Shodhana* is attained, the patient should be given *Manda Kalpana* followed by *Yavagu Kalpana*. Still, if the body is not properly cleaned, the patient should not be given *Yavagu Kalpana* because *Yavagu* aggravates *Kapha* and will affect *Jathragni*⁵. Normally, *Yavagu* possesses *Grahi*, *Balya*, *Tarpana* and *Vatahara* *karma*.

Acharya Charaka describes 28 *Yavagu Kalpana*⁶ including preparation and indications, as follows.

Table 2. Showing 28 Yavagu Kalpana

Sl No.	Ingredients of Yavagu	Phala Shruti
1	Pippali, Pippali mula, Chavya, Chitraka, Shunthi	Agni Deepaka, Shula nashaka
2	Kapitha, Bilwa, Changeri, Takra, Dadima	Pachaneeya, Grahi
3	Brihat Panchmoola	Vatika Atisara nashaka
4	Shalparni, Bala, Bilwa, Prishniparni, Dadima	Kapha pittaja Atisara Nashaka
5	Goat milk mixed with half the amount of water along with Hriversa, Utpala, Nagara Mustaka.	Raktatisara Nashaka
6	Ativisha, Nagara, Amla Dravya	Amatisara Nashaka
7	Gokshura, Kantakari, Phanita	Mutra kriccha Nashaka
8	Vidanga, Pippali mula, Shigru, Maricha, Takra, Suvarchika.	Krimi Nashaka
9	Mriduvika (Draksha), Sariva, Laja, Pippali, Madhu, Shunthi	Pipasa Nashaka
10	Yavagu processed with Somaraji	Vishaghana
11	Varaha Mamsa Siddha Yavagu	Brihmaniya
12	Bhrishta Gavedhuka along with Madhu	Karshaniya
13	Yavagu made of Tila, Sneha, Lavana	Snehana
14	Yavagu processed with Kusha, Amalaki, Shyamaka	Rukshana
15	Yavagu processed with Dashamoola	Kasa, Shwasa, Hikka, Kapha hara
16	Yavagu made with Yamaka Sneha and Madira	Pakvashaya shula nashaka
17	Yavagu processed with Mamsa rasa, Shaka, Tila, Masha	Varcha karaka
18	Yavagu processed with Seeds of Amra, Jambu, Dadima, Bilwa	Sangrahi
19	Kshara, Chitraka, Hingu, Amlavetasa	Bhedana
20	Yavagu processed Abhaya, Pippali mula, Shunti	Vata anulomana
22	Takra, Pinyaka Siddha Yavagu	Taila Vyapad Nashaka
23	Yavagu processed with Gomamsa rasa and Amla dravya	Vishama javara nashaka
24	Yavagu processed with Yava, Pippali, Amlaki, Yamaka Sneha	Kanthaya
25	Yavagu made with Tamra chuda rasa (Kukuta Mamsa)	Retomarga ruja nashaka
26	Yavagu made with Masha, Ghrita, and Dugdha	Vrishya
27	Yavagu processed with Upodika shaaka and Dadhi	Medo Roga Nashaka
28	Apamarga Tandula, Godha Mamsa Rasa.	Kshudha Nashaka (Decreases appetite and useful in Teekshna Agni)

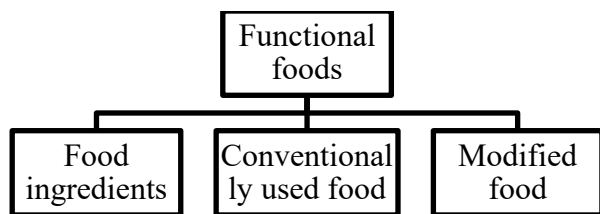
Concept of functional food⁷

Functional foods have attracted increasing scientific and commercial interest due to their potential roles in health promotion and the prevention of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

In 2014, the Functional Food Centre (FFC) offered a comprehensive definition of functional foods as “Natural or processed foods that contain

biologically active compounds which, in defined, effective, and non-toxic amounts, provide a clinically proven and documented health benefit utilising specific biomarkers for the prevention, management or treatment of chronic disease or its symptoms”.

Classification of Functional Foods⁷



1. **Food ingredients** - Includes isolated bioactive components that are added to other food products.

Ex- Dietary fibre, catechin and Lycopene

2. **Conventionally used food- unmodified food** products

Ex - Fruits, Fish, Dairy, Grains and Vegetables

3. **Modified food-** Food products that have been reformulated, enriched or fortified with specific nutrients or bioactive components to improve their health-promoting properties.

Ex - Functional coffee with medicinal mushrooms, bread enriched with folate, beverages fortified with vitamins and food products supplemented with omega-3 fatty acids.

Bioavailability and Efficacy of Functional Foods⁷

Functional foods are characterised by highly complex food matrices that contain a diverse range of bioactive components, including polyphenols, vitamins, minerals and other phytochemical compounds. These bioactive compounds collectively contribute to the biological activities and health-promoting effects of functional foods through their antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and metabolic-regulating properties.

DISCUSSION

Ahara is considered one of the Trayopasthambha. Pathya Ahara plays a key role in restoring the Samya Avastha; Dhatu treatment becomes incomplete if Pathya is not indicated along. Pathya means those diets that do not adversely affect the Srotomaya Sharira and are Priya for Manas as well⁸. Food articles and drugs have a variety of

effects depending on dosage, time, mode of preparation, geographical location, the patient's body constitution, and Dosha⁹.

Considering the mode of preparation as a key basis, Acharya has described Kritanna Varga, which includes various preparations such as Manda, Peya, Vilepi, Yavagu, Mamsa Rasa and so on, in which Samskara plays an important role. Samskara refers to processing; it makes food palatable and modifies the Guna so that it becomes beneficial to Sharira if taken consciously¹⁰. All of them have individualistic properties and capacity to impart different effects on the status of Samya or Vaishamy Avastha of Dhatu. The 28 types of Yavagu mentioned by Charaka exemplify the concept of Aushadha Siddha Ahara, wherein Yavagu own the Guna of Aushasha Dravya and are processed without leaving their primary nutritive value. Deepana, Pachana, Shulaghna Yavagu utilise Katu-Tikta Rasa, Ushna Veerya Dravya, Yava Kshara for Agni Deepana, Ama Pachana, and Kleda Shoshanartha in Agnimandya, Anaha. In Atisarahara, Kashaya-Amla Rasa and one with Grahi, Pachana Guna like Takra is used. Stambana Dravya, Pittahara in Raktatisara, for Vatanulomana-Srotoshodhana Dravya with Laghu, Ushna, Snigdha, and which corrects the Vata Karma-Marga are used; Dravya that promotes Dhatu Upachaya for Brimahana, Vrishya, Ruksha-Tikta for Karshaniya, and Lekhaniya for Medoahara preparations are used. Specialised Dravya for target conditions, like Vidanga for Krimihara and Somaraji for Vishahara, are also used. Thus, through Dravya Samyoga and Agni Samskara, these 28 Yavagu modify the status of Agni and provide disease-curative and health-promoting benefits.

Modern functional food focuses on providing physiological benefits by incorporating bioactive components into food to modulate metabolic pathways. They deliver targeted health benefits beyond basic nutrition. Yavagu Kalpana can be considered a sophisticated framework of functional food classification, systematically organising the 28

Yavagu Kalpana that target specific conditions of the body.

CONCLUSION

The kind of *Ahara* consumed influences *Sharira*; *Mithya Ahara* is considered a prime *Nidana*, and hence one should be cautious about what they consume. *Acharya Charaka* highlights *Ahara Samskara* as a potent converter of *Ahara* into *Pathya* for a specific condition. Bridging the traditional Ayurvedic dietetics of *Yavagu Kalpana* with contemporary nutrition reveals that *Aushadha Sadhitha Yavagu* are not merely a regular diet but are a prototype of targeted functional foods.

REFERENCES

1. Pandit Hemaraja Sharma, Satyapal Bhishagacharya. *Vridha jivaka, Kashyapa Samhita*, Chaukamba Sanskrit Sansthan; Varanasi, Reprint 2015, Khilasthana 4/6, pg no. 378.
2. Acharya JT, editor, 2015, *Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha, Sutrasthana; Annapana vidhi Adhyaya*: Chapter 27, Verse 349. Varanasi: Chaukamba Orientalia, 2015; pg no 174
3. Acharya JT, editor, 2015, *Commentary Ayurveda Dipika of Chakrapanidatta on Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha, Sutrasthana; Apamargatanduliya*

- Adhyaya: Chapter 2, Verse 17. Varanasi: Chaukamba Orientalia, 2015; pg no 25
4. Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri, *Sushruta Samhita Uttara Tantra*, Varanasi, Chaukamba Sanskrit samsthan, V.S. 2026 Reprint; 2010; pg no 301
5. Shukla Vidyadhar and Tripathi Ravidutt, *Charaka Samhita-2*, Delhi; Chaukamba Sanskrit Prakashan; 2010. pg no 92
6. Acharya JT, editor, 2015, *Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha, Sutrasthana; Apamargatanduliya Adhyaya: Chapter 2, Verse 18-33*. Varanasi: Chaukamba Orientalia, 2015; pg no 26
7. Zheng Feei Ma et al, *Functional Foods in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention: Innovations, Evidence and Challenges*. *Foods* 2026, 15, 764, <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods15040764>
8. Acharya JT, editor, 2015, *Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha, Sutrasthana; Yajjah Purushiya Adhyaya: Chapter 25, Verse 45*. Varanasi: Chaukamba Orientalia, 2015; pg no 133
9. Acharya JT, editor, 2015, *Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha, Sutrasthana; Yajjah Purushiya Adhyaya: Chapter 25, Verse 46-47*. Varanasi: Chaukamba Orientalia, 2015; pg no 133
10. Acharya JT, editor, 2015, *Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha, Vimana sthana; Rasa vimana Adhyaya: Chapter 1, Verse 21(2)*. Varanasi: Chaukamba Orientalia, 2015; pg no 235.

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this article: Dr Pooja N: Charakokta Yavagu Kalpana - A Traditional Approach To Functional Nutrition. *International Ayurvedic Medical Journal* {online} 2026 {cited September 2026}