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Journal homepage: <https://www.jpmmh.org/>**Review Article****To study the different sources of water and its qualities with health perspective**Nileema Raju Shisode<sup>1,\*</sup><sup>1</sup>Dept. of Swasthritta and Yoga, Tilak Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Pune, Maharashtra, India**ARTICLE INFO***Article history:*

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**ABSTRACT**

Water is a life. Drinking water is very important to stay healthy. In Ayurveda different sources of water are described, among them divya jal-rain water is considered as very pure. In India we consider river as a Goddess. Himalaya, Himalayan Rivers are considered as holy. Clean, pure, sweet, light, satisfying, tridosha balancing, strength giving water is considered as pure and holy. Water from late monsoon rain water, autumn rain water, big lakes, upper Himalaya river water, and fountain water is considered as pure. Impure water we can identify with our five sense organs. Sun rays, air, fire, are methods to purify water. Katak is a herb which purifies water by sedimentation of dirt. To flavor water different herbs and spices are used. Properties of water changes according to its origin, land, soil and season.

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For reprints contact: [reprint@ipinnovative.com](mailto:reprint@ipinnovative.com)**1. Introduction**

Life is possible only because of water. Water is vital important for every animal, trees, and living individual. Man tried hard to search water on other planets, to start life there. Earth is the only planet which contains water and that also in abundant quantity, 71% of Earth's surface. Ocean hold maximum out of it that is 96.5%. We can see that man started to live in the form of community, small villages on the bank of rivers. Does all this water available on earth, is safe for drinking or bathing purpose? No it is not. Ayurveda is life science, so Ayurveda think about this in detail. Also narrated qualities of particular water we get from different sources.

With the help of this we can understand, while doing treatments, we should take in consideration all these facts about water, like wise give suggestions to stay healthy. Life style modification has major role in treating patients without

investing much on health. This article will help every health professional, individual who wants to stay healthy, and social workers to understand qualities of water depending upon its source. With modern water purification method can we reduce particular drawbacks of water will be the subject of scholars for further study.

**2. Aims and objectives**

1. To study different sources of water and their significance.
2. To study quality of water according to season, soil
3. Qualities of impure water
4. To study traditional water purification methods

**3. Materials and Methods**

Review of literature done from all major samhitas and some special samhitas dedicated for diet therapy.

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In charak samhita, separate chapter is dedicated for 'annapan vidhi' means diet and drinking water rules. While explaining diseases, he had explained about specifications of water intake. The same pattern is followed by other samhitas.'Mahodadhi' is a samhita dedicated for diet as a therapy concept.

Depending upon the source of water Ayurveda narrates about properties of water. This water is in its purest form when it falls on earth. When this water comes in contact with sunrays, moon rays, air earth and different conditions, it adopts properties like cold, hot, unctuous, dry, etc. in every text these properties are explained.

### 3.1. Divya jal<sup>1,2</sup>

Devine water- antriksh jal-

'Div' means sky; the water falling from sky is called as Divya water.

Water which directly falls from sky, is having properties of immortal nectar. It do not have any taste-rasa, it is cold by nature. It is tridosha balancing, healthy, sweet, digestive, satisfies thirst, gives happiness to mind, and hrudya means everyone likes it. Water obtained from dew drops, and water obtained from melting Himalayan ice, also don't have any taste, and considered as pure like divya jala. This water do not have any dosha provoking factor and also it do not increase any dosha, so it is considered as holy. I comes with sunrays so it is ligh, that's why it is vatakapha balancing. Water is cold, mild, capable to rejuvenate life, capable to reduce vitiated pitta, blood and poison. It do not contain any impurities, it is light for digestion. As this water is directly obtained from natural purification, sterilization method, it is considered as pure. Water itself is life; increases longevity of life.it gives immense satisfaction when consumed. It helps to increase oja factor in body. It reduces tiredness, thirst, fainting, depression, sleepiness, burning, etc.It is advised to consume for healthy as well as ill individual. Today due to industrialization, there may be impurities mixed in rain water.

When this water falls on earth depending upon its location it acquires different properties. If this water is collected in good quality metal, its properties are increased; it becomes tridosha balancing, strength giving, rasayana, increases longevity, and holy. Gold has its own importance in this situation. Water stoared in earthen pot is also having allthe great qualities of divya jala. The source of divya jal are, either it is produced due to evaporation of water from river, or from sea. Among them, divya jal from river water, which usually falls in ashwin month (September end and October start), is considered as pure divya jal, properties of which are described earlier. Divyajal made from sea water evaporation is not recommended for drinking. To confirm, that the rain water in sharad season is pure, one test is described in text. When the rain is there, cook rice in that water, put it in silver pot, for 4-5 hrs, it should not change

its colour or smell, then it is considered as pure divya jala from river source. As river water is always moving, it do not contain impurities. Season wise recommendation to drink water is, water in autumn is always pure, in end of rainy season, particularly in ashwin month water is pure, in bhadrapad (October month) you should drink water only after boiling it, in winter season, and water from lake is advised. In summer, to conquer heat, water from well, or live stream is advised to drink.in rainy season, as all impurities are mixed in rain water, rain water is prohibited, and advised to drink lake or well water. Avoid water of first rain fall as it contains poison of spider like creatures.in late rainy-varsha season, it is pre and healthy.

Different varieties of water are explained in our text.

1. River
2. Ocean
3. Lake
4. Pond
5. Well
6. Pit
7. Water below sand in river
8. Dam water
9. Fountain water

Water which is contaminated due to urine, feces, small worms, soiled, containing leaves, new water from rain is contraindicated for drinking and bathing purpose, as it leads to cause many external and internal diseases. Water which has froth, heavy, containing germs, hotter and colder is not recommended for drinking or bathing purpose.<sup>3</sup> When water is covered because of mud, algae, grass, lotus leaves, water hyacinths, and sunrays, air are unable to reach them, it become impure water. This water has typical smell, taste and colour. By touch we can examine its dry, sticky, hotness. If it is taken in mouth teeth have heaviness. On appearance you can see its muddy, soiled, appearance; it contains soil, algae, and sand. If it is consumed, it increases thirst, heaviness, pain, salivation, gaseous distention, and heaviness in abdomen.<sup>3,4</sup>

Depending upon property of soil, this water acquires different properties, depending upon the percentage of 5 mahabhuta in that particular soil, properties of water falling on that earthchangs.

Earth element prominent water is with sweet, sour and salt taste,

Water element prominent water is sweet,

Fire element prominent water is pungent, bitter and astringent.

Air element prominent water is astringent

Water in ether or sky element prominent is without any rasa, it is pure, and recommended for consumption.

According to different soils water acquires different rasa. Black soil-sweet, Red soil-sweet, Grey-ushar-sour, with

minerals, Whitish (pandur)-salt/ pungent, Blue-pungent, astringent, sweet, Yellow-bitter, White-astringent, quaker colour (kapila) –plenty mineral. mixed soil has mixed taste, water falling on mountain is pungent.<sup>4</sup>

### 3.2. Properties of pure water

Properties of pure water for consumption are, it does not have any smell, taste, it is pure, cold, capable to satisfy thirst, clean, light for digestion and everyone loves it (hrudya).

### 3.3. Water from river<sup>2</sup>

The rivers which drain in *west coast* are good for health. Water is light in these rivers. Western Ghats is 1600m long mountain range that runs from Gujrat to Kanyakumari in south India. Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri are the important rivers in this range. Water from rivers draining in *east coast* are heavy because they go through marshy land. Eastern Ghats is mountain range running in eastern part of Indian Peninsula parallel to Bay of Bengal. Godavari, Mahanadi, Krishna and Kaveri fall into Bay of Bengal through Eastern Ghats. Water draining in south is neither heavy nor light. *Aravalli* translates to 'line of peaks', and spans a total length of 800 km, covering the Indian states of Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujrat. Banas, Luni, and Sabarmati are the rivers of this region. This causes piles. Water of rivers of bangal, malav and north konkan causes piles.<sup>4</sup> Rivers, which origin from *Sahyadri* ranges prone to produce skin diseases. Rivers origin from Vindhya ranges prone to produce anemia and skin diseases. The *Satpura* and *Vindhaya* Range lies in central India and both these ranges run parallel to each other. Narmada and Tapti are rivers of this region. Charak says that its water produces disease of head, heart, skin and also elephantitis. Water from rivers origin from *Malay* ranges, as per charaka, it contains sand and considered as pure but as per Sushruta, it is muddy, produces helminthes, when consumed. Water from river which origin from *Mahendra* ranges, cause ascites and filariasis. Rivers which origin from lower Himalaya ranges causes heart disease, oedema, and diseases of head, goiter and filariasis. *Lower himalaya*-Karakoram Range and Pir Panjal Range lies to the North-west and south of the Himalayan Range. Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum flow through this range Water from rivers origin from *upper part of Himalaya* is very good for health. Ganga, Sindhu, Bramputra are rivers of this region. Water of these rivers is very pure, strength giving, it increases grasping power and intelligence, Water from manas sarovar immersing rivers, and rivers in Zansi area chambala, batva is good for health, balances tridosha, also this water is strength giving<sup>2</sup>. Rivers who moves rapidly with full force, their water is clean, and is light for digestion. The rivers which moves slowly, algae and water hyacinths, muddy, their water is heavy for

digestion. Water from river in dry, sandy region are bitter salty and astringent by taste and not good for drinking. The rivers of sand who has sweet water, then it gives strength and longevity. The temporary rivers, which origin in rainy season, that is varsha season, carries many impurities with them, so they are considered as all three dosha vitiating.

### 3.4. Properties of major rivers<sup>5</sup>

Ganga River is very pure, sweet, strength giving, it increases grasping power and intelligence, it satisfies thirst, decreases weakness, gives strength. It is considered as holy.

Yamuna River's water is heavy than Ganga river, sweet, dry, more pitta balancing, vata balancing, and good appetizer, Narmada River water is very pure, cold, light, pitta kapha balancing, helps to reduce weight cures all diseases. Godavari River water is vata pitta balancing, increases appetite, holy, cures itching and many skin diseases, hemorrhagic disorders (raktipitta). It is considered as holy.it is considered to nil your sin.it is healthy, it satisfies thirst.it balances three dosha, hence helpful to cure chronic diseases.

Krushnaveni-dry, cold, vatarakta vitiating, light, sweet Kaveri-it is healthy, digests aama, it contains fire still it is cold by nature. It cures fungal infection, skin disease, and poison.

Rivers of east region are vata kapha vitiating, west region are pitta increasing, vata kapha balancing. In average river water is considered as vata increasing, dry, light, increases appetite and decreases fat.<sup>5</sup>

Water of the fast moving river is pure, nourishing, strength giving, increases longevity, and water from slow moving river is disease provoking, slowly shortening your life.In short, we can see the characters of water according to its source.

1. Fast moving river-vata increasing, dry, light, weight reducing and helpful to increase appetite.
2. Slow moving river-sweet, sticky, heavy, kapha increasing, with sediments

In 'Yajurveda', there is reference that give me water without amiba, amiba contaminates water; so pay sun to destroy amoeba and give pure water. In Haridwar, Ganga river water becomes purified, without amoeba, because of its flow and water again and again fall on big stones to destroy amoeba.

### 3.5. Water of sea<sup>5</sup>

It is tridosha vitiating, having typical smell (vitsra), contains lots of minerals.it is bad for eyes. It is recommended for alcoholism, splenomegaly, growth (gulum), and in reverse direction of vata (udavart).

### 3.6. *Bhumi jal*<sup>2</sup>

Water extracted from earth-

We should collect water in early morning, when we have to use water from earth. In early morning it is more pure and cold, these the major characters of drinking water. In day time Sun and at night Moon helps this water to purify; this is also named as 'hansodak' it is not dry or sticky, it do not produce any disease, so it is recommended for drinking purpose.

Bhumijal is divided in to 7-8 types<sup>3-6</sup>

1. Big Lake-Saras-thirst pacifying, strength giving, astringent, sweet and light for digestion.
2. Small lake-pond-tadag-vata increasing, sweet, astringent, after digestion effect is pungent.
3. Well with stairs-vapi-vatakapha balancing, pungent, pitta increasing, containing lots of minerals. There is possibility of Guinea worm disease.
4. Small well without stairs-pitta increasing, kapha balancing, increases appetite, light for digestion, containing minerals.
5. Superficial water from small pits-chaundya-dry, sweet, kapha and pitta vitiating, it is good to increase appetite.
6. Superficial water below sand near river-vikir-It is pungent, salty, kapha pacifying, light and increases appetite.
7. Fountain water-prasavan-it is light for digestion, kapha pacifying, satisfying, and increases appetite.

Vagbhat narrates that, properties of water from well, lake, fountain depends upon properties of area in which they found. In dry area, on mountains, hills it is light but in marshy land it is heavy for digestion.

### 3.7. *Types of water*

1. Audbhid-water from earth-sweet, pitta pacifying does not cause any burning.
2. Vaikir-water below sand-pungent, light, kapha balancing, appetite promoting.
3. Kedar-water from farms and pallav-water from small pits-is sweet, heavy, and all dosha vitiating.
4. Sea water-salty, poisonous, vitiating all doshas.

Qualities of water depending upon its habitat, area where it is produced

1. Anup desh- marshy land-Sticky, abhishyandi, increasing all three dosha, and contraindicated for drinking. In marshy land land is colder, heavy nature is prominent. Water for drinking should be purified by boiling it till remains one fourth. for kapha disease  $\frac{1}{4}$  reduced water is recommended.
2. Jangal desh-arid-dry land water-good for drinking. vata and fire element is prominent in this land, so water

is light for digestion, So reduce three fourth, for pitta disease  $\frac{3}{4}$ <sup>th</sup> reduced water recommended.

3. Sadharan desh- Normal land water-do not increase burning, pacify thirst, sweet, increases digestive fire, and love, light for digestion, cold by nature, according to season use water half boiled. For vata disease boiled and  $\frac{1}{2}$  reduced water is recommended.

### 3.8. *Qualities of rain water according to season 1*

At start of rainy season- water is heavy, kapha increasing, sweet by taste.

Rain in Sharad season- autumn-light, non-sticky (not abhishyandi)-useful for delicate people, can be consumed with oily food, for all purpose it is good.

Water in winter-hemant-It is unctuous, aphrodisiac, strength giving, and heavy for digestion.

Water in late winter -it is vata, kapha balancing, light than hemant season.

Water in spring-vasant-astringent, sweet, somewhat dry

Water in summer- is not abhishyandi-sticky

Water raining without its season vitiates dosha.

Although water obtained in sharad season rainfall is very healthy for consumption, if it is not available, one can use water stored on black or white soil, stored in large area, which get purified due to air and sunrays.

### 3.9. *Methods to purify water*<sup>2</sup>

Different methods of purification are given in text

Boiling on fire

In sun rays

Put hot iron balls, or hot soil balls.

Put the water stand still then add herb 'nirmali' which purifies water

To get rid of odor add flavoring herbs like nagkeshar, patla, lotus flower, champak flower

Herbs to purify water are, katak, gomeda, lotus root, algae, pearl, and precious stone.

Water can be filtered with clean cloth for drinking purpose.

The pot in which we put drinking water must be kept at some higher place from floor. For this we can use wood, stone, cloth or metal stand.

Metals used to store water are gold, silver, copper, bronze, glass, chandrakant or other original precious stone.

Diseases due to polluted water are- edema, anemia, skin diseases, asthma, cough, sneezing, pain, abscess, cyst, abnormal growth, three dosha producing diseases.<sup>2</sup>

### 3.10. *Method to drink river water*<sup>5</sup>

Collect this river water in new earthen pot, kept in airy place. It get hot with sun-rays and cold by moon-rays, put patla, blue lotus champak and screnpine (ketki) flowers. It cold by nature, clean, increases your complexion after drinking and

very healthy.

Herb used to flavor water-vetivir-ushir, ,mansi, kachor,kustha, cardamom, clove,kankol, haritaki, sulphur (gandhak), amla, musta, camphor, cinnamon leaves, valla chatushk- pepper, black pepper, spices, saffron, sandalwood, nishottar, nutmeg

Earthen pot to collect water should be prepared with, bees wax, guggulu, musta (cuperus rotundus), kushtha, vetiver, sandalwood and sugar then dried in air and roasted on fire of cutch (khadir) tree.

### 3.11. Drinking water qualities<sup>5</sup>

Clean, light, cold, sweet, flavored by cardamom, vetiver, camphor, clove, sandalwood, blue lotus, nutmeg, patle, ketki flowers, is healthy for drinking.

### 3.12. Influence- prabhav

Water has 4 effects, *chatra*- shadow-for thirsty person, *amrut*-nectar-for water drunk in early morning before sunrise, *vish* -poison-people, who drink only water when he is hungry and *vajr*-iron-if water drunk with food body becomes very healthy like iron.

### 3.13. Observation

Ayurveda stated qualities of water according to its sources in detail. Major source of water is rain water. Rain water is very pure if its origin is from river water. They specify that rain water in sharad season-October is river water, also it is recommended to use rain water in late monsoon. At the start of monsoon rain water contains many unhealthy things which are present in air, atmosphere, they mixed with rain water and contaminates it,so water in early monsoon considered as most polluted water. In late monsoon rain water is most pure and river water is most impure. In sharad season, air is clean; sun is hot, which purifies water most, so it is very pure. Test is given to confirm the purity of water, Take silver pot, put freshly cooked rice in rain water, observe, if it becomes sticky. If rice rotten earlier, water is not pure, and clean. This *divya jala* is tridosha pacifying, increases health, strength, gives satisfaction.

Rain water when comes in contact with air, *desh* (habitat), soil, depending upon *panchamahabuta* characters it acquires different qualities. Pure water does not have any taste or smell. Depending upon *mahabuta* present in air and soil they acquire taste, sweet with prominence of Earth, and water element, black, red and blue soil, and stones. Other soils, whitish-pandur, blue, yellow, white colored soil has fire and air element so fire and or air element is prominent so taste of water is pungent, astringent, bitter. With ether element prominence, so no taste considered as more light and pure.

### 3.14. River water

Sea water-it is tridosha vitiating, and helps to cure cures alcoholism, splenomegaly, growth (gulm), and in reverse direction of *vata* (*udavart*).

In *bhumijal*-water from earth, there are different varieties. Big lake, small lake, wells, pits, fountains, etc. Water on big reservoir like big lake, gets purified with sunrays, moon rays, air, so it is more and more purified, light, satisfying, tridosha balancing. When water is in close contact with earth, deep seated water, fire present inside Earth, is in close contact with it, so water in deep wells, pits, burrows, is *pitta* increasing, good appetizer, but air cannot reach there, so become more heavy, disease producing factors are present in that water. Water in fountains; get purified with stones, air, so more pure and healthy.

According to the area where water present, its properties changes. In marshy land, more stickiness, heaviness is there. To reduce this stickiness boiling water to reduce  $1/4^{th}$  is recommended. In dry, arid land, water is light, so to purify it boil only till it reduce  $3/4^{th}$ . In normal land  $\frac{1}{2}$  reduced water is good.

Water in late rainy season and autumn season are more pure due to its river origin.in other seasons one can use water stored with proper care and purified. In summer water is stickier and in winters it is more healthy.

To purify water different methods are recommended. Keep it in airy place, at height, so that it will gets purified by air, sunrays. Put on a fire, allow it to boil, since 'Veda' ages man know that amoeba can pollute water, so purify it, by these methods of boiling. Fast moving rivers, fountains water is considered as pure because water forcefully thrown on stones, again and again to destroys amoeba and small creatures. Putting hot iron balls, and soil ball is also method of purification for the same reason. Herb named '*Nirmali*'-cleaing nut *Strchnus potatorum*, cleans water, sediments all residue at the bottom of pot.<sup>7-9</sup>

After purification some drugs is explained to flavor water, these are clove, vetivir, some spices, cinnamon leaves. Some herbs are recommended to flavor water, they are vetivir-ushir, ,mansi, kachor,kustha, cardamom, clove,kankol, haritaki, sulphur (gandhak), amla, musta, camphor, cinnamon leaves, valla chatushk- pepper, black pepper, spices, saffron, sandalwood, nishottar, nutmeg. Typical method to prepare earthen pot is recommended. Mix mud with bees wax, guggulu, musta, kushtha, vetiver, sandalwood and sugar, then prepare pot, after that put in fire to strengthen it. Metal pots are also good to store water. Gold is healthier in all of them.

## 4. Conclusion

Water is life. In Ayurveda, detail description of properties of water, different sources of water, qualities of water depending upon its source, method of purification, storage

**Table 1:** Mountains, rivers, properties and its effect on health

Sr. no.	Mountain	Rivers	Properties	Effect on health
1	Western ghat	Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri	light	healthy
2	Eastern ghat	Godavari, Mahanadi, Krishna and Kaveri in late phase	Heavy, vata kapha vitiating	
3	Aaravali hills	Banas, Luni, and Sabarmati	Not heavy or light	piles
4	Sahyadri	Narmada and Tapti	Slow, heavy	head, heart, skin and also elephantitis
5	Malay (odisa)	Bhudhabalaga	muddy	helminthes
6	Mahendra (odisa)	Rushikulya, Bansadhara	heavy	ascites and filariasis.
7	Lower himalaya	Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum	Slightly heavy	heart disease, oedema, and diseases of head, goiter and filariasis.
8	upper part of Himalaya	Ganga, Sindhu, Bramputra	Pure, balance tridosha	Strength, intelligence, increases
9	manas sarovar , immerging rivers, &Zansi	chambala, batva	Pure, balance tridosha	

**Table 2:** Major rivers and their properties

Sr.no.	River	Properties
1	Ganga	Pure, sweet, strength giving, increases grasping power and intelligence
2	Yamuna	Heavy, sweet, dry, more pitta vata balancing, good appetizer
3	Narmada	Very pure, cold, light, pitta kapha balancing, treats obesity, all diseases
4	Godavari	Vata pitta balancing, increases appetite, holy, cures itching and many skin diseases, hemorrhagic disorders (raktipitta).
5	Krushnaveni	Dry, cold, vatarakta vitiating, light, sweet
6	Kaveri	Healthy, digests aama, fungal infection, skin disease, and poison.

methods, are explained. Water borne diseases are explained, edema, anemia, skin diseases, asthma, cough, sneezing, pain, abscess, cyst, abnormal growth, three dosha vitiating, are them. Method to purify water are given, some of them are same in today's era also. Air, fire, sterilization, sedimentation, is method described in our text, which we use today also. Fast moving rivers, big lake water, fountain water, late monsoon water, Autumn rain water is considered as more pure water. Naturally due to air, fire (sun rays), churning with big stones, sterilization and due to vaporization and condensation of sea or river water, disinfects water to make it pure. List of diseases given for particular source of water must be confirmed by chemical analysis, and survey of that particular region. This will be the subject of further study.

## 5. Source of Funding

None.

## 6. Conflict of Interest

None.

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