

**Review o Karshya and PEM in Ayurveda****Dr. Priyanka A. Chabukswar**MD Scholar, Department of Kaumarbhritya, C.S.M.S.S.  
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C.S.M.S.S. AyurvedMahavidyalaya, Kanchanwadi,  
Aurangabad.**Abstract:**

Ayurveda is mainly based on preventive aspect first rather than curative. Aahara (Food) is considered as the first pillar among three Nidra and Brahmacharya being other two. Many common health problems can be prevented through nutritious diet. Nutritional disorders are described in scattered manner in Ayurveda texts. Karshya is disease similar to undernutrition. PEM (protein energy malnutrition) is one of the diseases related to annava hasrotas. It is a type of malnutrition resulting from deficiency of proteins and calories in food over a long period of time. It is very common among young children (usually below 5 years). India ranked 2nd after Bangladesh in world in malnutrition of children. PEM is not only important cause of childhood morbidity and mortality but also leads to permanent impairment of physical and possibly of mental growth of those who survive. Disease such as Parigarbhika, Phakka, Balashosha, and Karshya describe by various author of Ayurveda can also co-related to malnutrition based on the clinical features these diseases are related to each other. This article highlights the Ayurvedic view of nutritional disorder like protein energy malnutrition.

**Keywords:** Karshya, Undernutrition, Protein energy malnutrition.

**Introduction:**

Undernutrition is a condition in which there is inadequate consumption, poor absorption or excessive loss of nutrients. Sometimes malnutrition and protein energy malnutrition (PEM) are used interchangeably with undernutrition.<sup>1</sup> The term protein-energy malnutrition (PEM) applies to a group of related disorders that include marasmus and kwashiorkor. This affects the child at the most crucial period of time of development which can lead to permanent impairment in later life. PEM is measured in terms of underweight (low weight for age), stunting (low height for age) and wasting (low weight for height).

Food (Aahara) is one of the three sub-pillars of life as per Ayurvedic classics.<sup>2</sup> The transforming unit from 'food' into nutrition is termed as 'Agni' or digestive fire, which forms the edifice upon which the Ayurvedic system is built. According to Acharya Charaka over lean (Atikrushya) persons are described under eight despicable persons (Ashtau-ninditiya Purusha).<sup>3</sup>

**Aims And Objectives**

- To study the Karshya.
- To study protein energy malnutrition under Ayurvedic aspect.

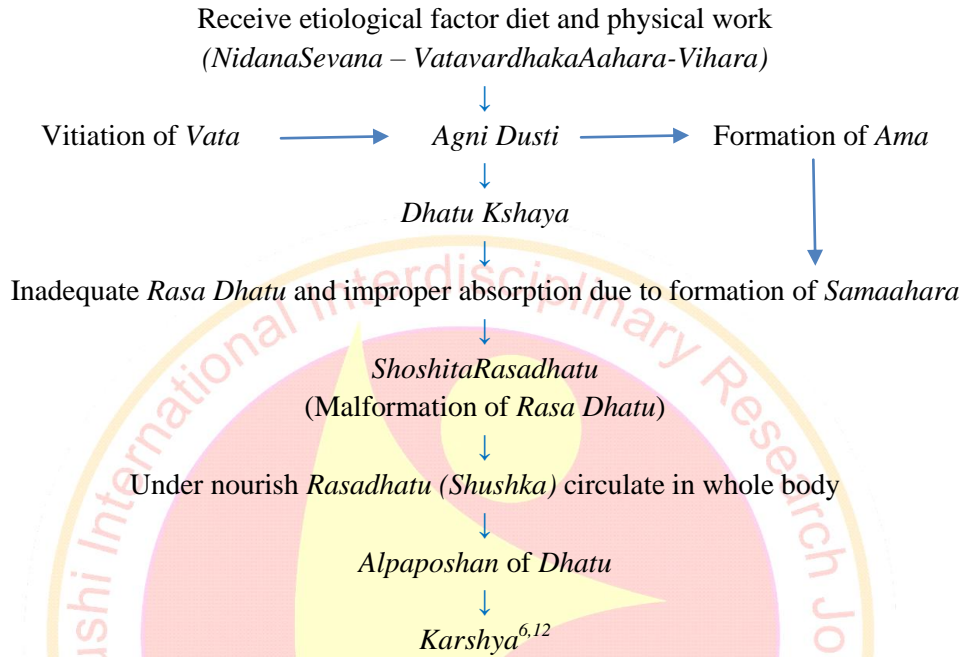
**Etiology of Karshya And Malnutrition In Ayurveda:**

In Ayurveda it is mentioned that Rukshannapanasevana (Indulgence in rough food and drinks), Langhana (Fasting), Pramitashana (Little diet), Kriyatiyoga (Excessive subjection to evacuative therapy), Shoka (Grief), Chinta (Worries), Bhaya (fear), Shrama (excessive physical and mental activity), Vega- Nidra- Trusha -Kshudha - nigraha (Suppression of natural urges, such as - sleep thirst and hunger), Rukshaudvartan (Excess non - unctuous anointing to the persons), Snanaabhyasa (Indulgence in bath), Prakruti (Constitution), Beeja Dosha (heredity), Jara (Old age), Vikar-anushaya (Continued disorder) and Krodha (Anger) make a person lean.<sup>4</sup>

### Signs And Symptoms of *Karshya*:

The lean person has *Shushka-sphic*, *udar*, *greeva*(Dried up buttocks, abdomen, neck), *Dhamanijalasantataha*(Prominent vascular network) *Twagasthishesho*, *Atikrusha*(Remnant of skin and bone), *Sthoolaparva*(Thick joints), *VyayamAtisauhityam*(The over lean does not tolerate physical exercise, over saturation), *Kshutpipasamay- aushadham*(dose not tolerate high in toxicity of hunger, thirst, disease, drugs).<sup>5</sup>

### *Karshya Samprapti* (Pathogenesis of Disease):



### Malnutrition Description In Ayurveda:

There are 4 diseases described in different Samhitas of Ayurveda that are near to malnutrition as mentioned in modern medicine.

1. *Karshya*: *Karshya* is under nutrition condition due to reduced food intake of baby resulting from less intake, if mother use *vatavardhakahara-vihara* and baby take *vataadushitstanya*. Ultimately, baby become malnourished.<sup>7</sup>
2. *Balshosha*: The causes of *Balshosha* are *Shlaishmikaannasevana*(Excessive energy dense food), *Shitambu*(cold liquid items) and *diva swapna*(excessive day sleep). These factors can create impairment of Agni. Signs and Symptoms of *Balshosha* are *Arochaka*(reduced digestive capacity), *Pratishyaya*(Running nose), *Jwara*(fever)and *Kasa*(Cough); and at last baby maylead to *Shosha*(Emaciation).<sup>8</sup>
3. *Parigarbhika*: If any baby is on breast milk of pregnant women then *parigarbhikarogaca*n occur and that milk have poor nutrients.Signs and Symptoms of *Parigarbhikaroga*are cough, impaired digestive capacity, vomiting, fever and anorexia.<sup>10</sup>
4. *Phakkaroga*: In *Phakkaroga*, *Ksheerajphakka*, *Garbhajphakka*and *vyadhiphakka*are described. *Ksheerajphakkais* due to intake of *Shlaishmikadughdha*. *VyadhijaPhakkais* malnutrition condition resultant of any diseases as *Graharoga*etc. *Garbhajphakkais* due to feeding of baby by pregnant lady.

Signs and Symptoms of *Phakkarogaare* wasting of buttocks, upper limbs and thighs, Pot belly abdomen, head appears big due to relatively wasting in body parts and baby is unable to walk.<sup>9</sup>

### Diagnostic Criteria-

**Iap Classification Of Malnutrition:** This classification is based on weight for age values.<sup>11</sup>

Weight for age (%)	Grade
100-80%	- normal nutritional status
79-70%	- grade 1, mild malnutrition
69-60%	- grade 2, moderate malnutrition
59-50%	- grade 3, severe malnutrition
<50%	- grade 4, very severe malnutrition

Weight for age is an indicator of total malnutrition /underweight.

Weight for age (%) =  $\frac{\text{current weight of the child (in kg)} \times 100}{\text{Expected weight of the child for that age}}$

### Discussion

*Karshya* is nutritional disorder described in Ayurveda *samhita* and it is possible related to Malnutrition. According to *Acharya Charaka* *AtiKarshya* persons are described under *Ashtauninditiya* (eight despicable persons). In *Ayurveda* no much description is found regarding *Karshya* especially in Children. *Karshya*, *Balshosha*, *Parigarbhika*, *Phakkarogaare* the disease described in *Ayurveda* texts is related to each other and possibly correlate to protein energy malnutrition (PEM). *Alpashana* and *Vishamashana*; *Vihara Doshalike* *Atishrama* and *Manasika Bhava* like *Shoka*, *Bhaya*, *Krodha* are the main etiological factors for *Karshya*. The *Samprapti* of *Karshya* is like this: *Nidana Sevana* → *Vataprakopa* → *Shoshita Rasadhātu* → All *Dhatu Uttpati Alpa* → *Karshya Uttpati*. Its management is done by *Santarpana* – *Brumhana*.

### Conclusion

Malnutrition is described in modern medical sciences but is similar to nutritional disorder in Ayurveda like *Karshya*, *Phakka*, *Parigarbhika* and *Balshosha*. A systemic study of these conditions provide insight in to hazards of nutritional deficiency and represents different aspects of nutritional deficiency and proper understanding of pathogenesis of condition provide valuable key for the effective management.

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