

**Study And Review Various Kushtha Nidanas from Ayurvedic Texts  
And Observe Their Applicability While Treating Kushtha**

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**Introduction:**

In Ayurveda, for well being of the patients, several diseases have been described along with panchanidana and various remedies. Kushtha vyadhi is troublesome, found in all the stages of life, which disturbs the patient physically, mentally and socially. Since ages Ayurveda is well known for its maulik siddhantas & the miraculous clinical efficacy enriched by specified procedures like Panchakarmas, vyadhinidana has also given equal importance along with that. Abhicharaj, abhishapaj, adhidaivic, aaharaj, viharaj and manasik hetavas have equal importance while treating disease. Chaturdash hetu classification system is famous in Ayurved. The combination of hetavas which are observed by Acharyas and followers, with the ancient traditional healing system of Ayurveda was the golden opportunity for Vaidyas and Acharyas to treat the patients. To serve the purpose, the workdone in this study should be helpful for vaidyas while finding hetavas of kushtha.

**Objectives:**

1. To study kushtha nidana from various Ayurvedic texts
2. To observe the importance of nidana in kushthavyadhi
3. To observe karmaj, adhidaivik, abhishapaj nidana (hetava) of kushtha

**Nidana Of Kushtha:**

In Ayurvedic classics specific etiology for Ekakushtha has been not described. So the etiology of Ekakushtha can be understood on the basis of general etiology of Kushtha. Ayurvedic texts have

described samanya nidana for all types of Kushtha instead of specific nidanas for any particular type of Kushtha.

Thus nidanas can be categorized as follows:-

1. Aharaja – diet and dietetic pattern
2. Viharaja – faulty lifestyle
3. Miscellaneous

Aharaja Nidana can be divided as:-

- Type of food
- Quantity of food
- Quality of food
- Food incompatibility
- Faulty dietary habit

**Aharaja Nidana:**

[1] **ATI SEVANA:** It can be categorized on the basis of following factors: Table (6).

Items	Ayurvedic Nidana	C h. S.	S u. S.	A . H	A . S	M . N	B . P	Modern Implication
Rasa	Amla, lavana katu and kshara	+	+	-	-	+	+	Pickle, jam and sauce, Pujabi food dishes, Chinese food dishes
Guna	Guru and snigdha ahara	+	-	-	-	+	+	Ladoo, ghee, sweets, cake, bread, chocolate
Dairy product	Kshira, dadhi Payasama,	+	-	-	-	+	+	Milk and its derivatives, like

	<i>Takra,</i>							curd, buttermilk, cheese, paneer etc.
<b>Grains</b>	<i>Navdhanya, Nishpava, Hayanaka, Udalaka, etc.</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+	Recent mellowing grains like wheat, polished rice, Bajara, Barley
<b>Pulses</b>	<i>Kulattha, Masha</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+	Black gram, Pigeon, Peas, Lentil
<b>Anupamamsa</b>	<i>Matsya, Gauaya, Varaha etc</i>	-	+	-	-	-	-	Fish, Pig, Dear, Rhinoceros, Bullock
<b>Prasahamamsa</b>	<i>Marjara, Lopaka, Jamdook etc</i>	-	+	-	-	-	-	Chicken, mutton, pigeon, peacock, etc.
<b>Sweet substance</b>	<i>Madhu, Phanita</i>	+	-	-	-	-	-	Honey, Phanita
	<i>Guda</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+	Jaggery
<b>Oil</b>	<i>Tila, sarshapa, Kusumbha</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+	Sesame, castor oil
<b>Vegetables</b>	<i>Mulaka, Lakuch, Kakmacchi</i>	+	-	-	-	+	+	Raddish
<b>Others</b>	<i>Pishtanna, Tila, Kola</i>	+	-	-	-	-	-	Foods like puri, kachoris etc.

	<i>Mithya ahara</i>	<i>Ch.</i>	<i>Su.</i>	<i>M.N.</i>	<i>B.P.</i>	<i>A.H.</i>
<b>Foods</b>	<i>Vidahi, vidagdha, upaklinna, puti anna</i>	+	-	-	-	-
<b>Food pattern</b>	<i>Ajirna bhojana, Asatmya bhojana, atibhojana</i>	+	+	+	+	-
<b>Faulty dietary Sequence</b>	<i>Shitosnaviparyaya Langhana Ahara, Santarpana Aptarpana</i>	+	-	-	+	-
<b>Psychological Disturbance During the meal</b>	<i>Santapa Papodaya</i>	+	+	-	-	-

Understanding the Pathogenesis caused by above *Nidanas*:

**Viruddha Ahara:**

As rightly said by *Acharya Charaka* –  
 “*Viruddhaveeryaashana Nindityadhikaranam*” -  
*Ch. Su. 25/40.*

All types of *Viruddha Ahara* do not produce disease because body elements like *Dushya* and *Deha Bala* (immunity) protect the body from the diseases.

**1. Intake of incompatible diet vitiates Agni:**

The *Agni* mostly gets vitiated by *Viruddha* type of *Ahara*. This vitiated *Jatharagni* does not digest even the lightest of food substance, resulting in indigestion. This indigested food materials turns sour and acts like a poison, which is called *Amavisha*. (*Ch. Chi. 15/42-44*). *Tridosha* gets provoked by this type of ingestion – (*A.H. Ni. 1/19-22*).

**2. Intake of Incompatible Diet vitiates Srotasa:**

In general, food substances and activities (*Vihara*) which are similar in quality to body humors and deleterious to the body elements vitiate the body channels (*Ch. Vi. 5/23*). Such type of food combination which directly produce the disease *Kushtha* are described here as per the classics.

**Mithya Ahara:**

*Mithya Ahara* (Table 7) is related with food articles, faulty food patterns and sequences, excessive intake of alcohol and psychological disturbance during meal.

**3. Fish with Milk:** It is the example of *Samyoga* and *Virya Viruddha*. *Samyoga Viruddha* is the most important or more dangerous than others. *Rakta dushti* causes *Tvak dushti* while *srototsanga* in the *swedavaha srotas* leads to *Aswedanam* which is the chief complaint in *Kushtha*. *Amavisha* due to its *Ushna*, *Tikshna Sukshama guna* renders the *dhatu shithilta*. *Kleda* is produced as a result of *Dhatupaka* and also increases due to *dhatu Ksaya*. The *Dhatushithilatva* favours the settlement of *Doshas* and enhance the pathogenesis. Both Milk and fish are good sources of protein. When taken together they may be forming a substance which upon entering the systemic circulation is acting as foreign body (antigen). Thus antigen antibody reaction starts and complement system for antibody action is activated.

**4. Gramya, Anupa or Audaka Mamsa with Milk:** It makes *Samyoga Viruddha*. Diet consisting mostly of cereals like *Hayanaka*, *Yavaka*, *Chinaka*, *Udalaka*, *Kodrava* with milk, curd, butter milk, *Kola*, *Kulattha*, *Masha*, *Atsi* or *Kusumbha*. *Charaka* said that eating of any of these cereals with milk, curd etc. is *Viruddha*. Endogenous factor, like diet, state of digestion, nutrition metabolism, etc. are most important than exogenous factors like irritant or sensitizer in the manifestation of psoriasis. So many dermatologists advised their patients to take balanced, digestible food. Thus it can be understood that,

**Virrudha Ahara causes:**

- *Agnimandya* leading to *Ama vishauttpati* (Ch. Su. 26/84).
- *Prakopa* of all *Doshas* but do not expel them out of the body (Ch. Su 26/85).
- ‘*Deha Dhatubhi Virodhamapadhyante*’ *Chakrapani*- It causes *Dusti* of *Dosha* and *Dhatu*. *Gangadhara*- It causes *Nasha* (destruction) of *Dhatu*.
- *Srotorodha* in different *Srotas* of the body (Ch. Su.26/82).

**Applicability:**

Lifestyle and habits of man have changed thoroughly as he marches forward in the 21st century. In present era men has less time to cook and eat. Fast food has replaced the staple diet in several areas of the world. These fast foods generally fall under *Viruddha* and *Mithya Ahara* according to *Ayurveda*. Fruit Salad is a sweet dish made with the combination of Milk and fruits and is very common in Gujarat. Fresh fruits like grapes, pomegranate, pineapple, banana; Chikoo, etc. are added to boiled milk and consumed along with other food items. This is clearly *Viruddha Ahara*. Also, one very common *Nidana* found in the present study is to eat milk with *Khichadi* which is another example of *Viruddha*. But all *viruddha Ahara* do not produce *Kushtha*. As it has been pointed out by *Chakrapani* that only the *Nidana* of *Kushtha* can cause *Kushtha*, other *Nidanans* will not cause *Kushtha* but may produce another disease like *Visarpa* (Ch. Ni. 5/3)

**Mithya Ahara:**

Improper food habits are another major causative factor of *Kushtha*. There are certain codes of conducts of eating which when not followed are called *Mithya ahara* (*Vijayaraksjit*). The codes of conduct of eating have been termed as “*Ashtaaharavidhi vishesha Ayatanani*”. *Mithya ahara* deranges the digestive power of *jatharagni* and also cause *Dushti* of *Grahani*. Thus the food doesn’t get digested properly leading to production of *Ama*. As *Grahani* is also *dushita*, *Ama* undergoes putrefication and *Amavisha* is produced (Ch. Chi. 15/42-44). So along with *Kushtha*, other diseases which can be formed due to *Ama*, *Amavisha*, and *Grahani Dushti* etc. may coexist. In Psoriasis, Psoriatic arthritis, Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis, dermatogenic enteropathy, gout, and diabetes have been reported.

**Adhyashana:**

Taking food just after completing a previous meal is called *adhyashana*. Proper time is not given for the previous food to get digested and stomach is still occupied with the previous food. *Adhyasana*, if anatomically considered, is increased stomach volume and *Ajirashana*, is consumption of food before emptying of stomach and preceding digestion is over. This etiological factor does not give enough

time for mixing and propulsion of previous food. The degree of digestion depends upon relative amount of food and stomach secretion. 'Next food' disturbs the basic electric rhythm of mixing pattern and enhances premature evacuation of 'first food'. This increased volume of partially digested chyme; inhibits stomach emptying and improper breakdown product. This causes disturbed digestion of protein, folic acid and other essential substances. Due to decrease in secretion of digestive enzymes, the food is partially digested thus producing *Ama*, as the peristaltic movement is hampered, the food stays in stomach for a longer time and gets decomposed producing toxins (*Amavisha*). These factors are the root cause of several diseases which are produced due to different permutation and combination of *Dosha* and *Dushya* involvements.

**Atyashana:**

Taking excessive amount of heavy diet is called *Atyashana*. It is rightly said by *Acharya Charaka* that *atimatra Ashana* is - "Amapradoshahetu". *Ahita bhojana* when taken in *atimatra* (excess) and at improper time (*Akala*) leads to *dushti* in *Annavaha Srotas* and also disturbs the *pakaprakriya* (Process of food digestion).

**Vishamashana:**

Taking food at irregular time is called *Vishamashana*. *Vishama Ashana* is best known to produce *Vishama Agni* (*Ch. Su. 25/40*). In present day life - Hurry, Worry and Curry are becoming universal. In today's life, no one has time to even eat properly. *Vishama Ashana* is becoming a common factor now days.

**Asatmya Ahara:**

Taking food which is not homogenous and incompatible to the person is called *Asatmyaahara*. Such foods can quickly produce and precipitate the symptoms of *Ekakushtha*. In the present study, many patients had their lesion and itching aggravated by intake of *Asatmya* food items like Brinjal, Groundnut, Fish, etc.

**Ajirne Anne:**

Intake of food in state of indigestion is called *Ajirne Anne*. According to *Acharya Charaka*, taking food in state of indigestion is best known to cause *Grahani dushti* (*Ch. Su. 25/40*). This leads to impairment in normal physiological functions of *Grahani* as well. *Ajirna Adhaysahana* causes *Agnimandya* and *Dushti* in *Malavaha Srotas* (*Ch. Vi.*

*5/21*). Both are cause of *Agnimandya* so ultimately produces disease. Both of them also vitiate *Rakta* (*Ch. Su. 24/5-10*). If this pathology continues for long time, *Kushtha* may be produced.

**Continous And Excessive Use of Madhu, Phanita, Mulaka,**

**Etc. In State of Ajirna:**

Similar as above, *Madhu, Phanita, Mulaka* etc. in state of *Ajirna* cause *dushti* of *Grahani* and produce *Ama*.

**Excessive Guru, Snigdha And Drava:**

Taking excessive *Guru, Snigdha Ahara* produces *dushti* in *Rasavaha Srotas* (*Ch. Vi. 5/13*). *Acharya Charaka* has also described - "Gurubhojana Durvipakakaranam"- *Ch. Su. 25/40*. *Guru Ahara* also causes *Dusti* of *Mamsavaha Srotas*. (*Ch. Vi. 5/15*). Excessive *Drava* causes *dushti* in *Raktavaha Srotas* (*Ch. Vi. 5/14*).

**Vidahi Annapana Without Emesis of Vidagdha Ahara:**

*Vidahi Ahara* causes *dushti* of *Rasavaha Srotas* (*Ch. Vi. 5/14*).

**Applicability:**

One interesting fact to notice here is that while describing the properties of "*kakmachi*" it is said to be -*KUSHTHAGHNA* and it is also stated to be the *nidana* of *kushtha* when taken in excessive amount, in *Ajirna avastha* or with other substances which in turn is *Viruddha* for the body. *Tila* is said to be *Twachya* when taken in normal amount and causes *kushtha* if taken in excess or when it becomes *viruddha* when taken with *guda*, etc. Thus we can understand that even the *dravyas* having *Kushthaghna* properties can lead to *Kushthauttapati* if taken in improper manner. In the present study aggravation of problem particularly to Brinjal, sour food, Groundnut, Choclates and Fermented foods is found in many patients, which is an interesting observation and can be added in the list of *Nidana* (allergens) of *Ekakushtha*.

Today, *mithya ahara* has become a part of life. A few examples of *Mithya ahara* done in daily life are cited below:

- Canned foods.
- Presevatives in foods.
- Beverages.

- Fast foods, packed foods, Streetfoods like panipuri, Bhelpuri, etc.
- Sweets- chewing gum, panmasala, etc.
- Colouring agents, etc.

**Mithya Vihara:**

All kinds of activities done physically, vocally or mentally are considered as *Vihara*. *Mithya Vihara* means improper activities. The activities opposite to ‘*Svasthavrita*’ are the ‘*Mithya Vihara*’. The factors related to *Mithya Vihara* by various *Acharyas* have been tabulated. Table (8).

<i>Mithya Vihara</i>	<i>Ch .S.</i>	<i>Su .S.</i>	<i>A .S.</i>	<i>A. H .S.</i>	<i>Bh .S.</i>	<i>H .S.</i>	<i>M.N .S.</i>	<i>B.P .S.</i>
<i>Shitoshna Vyatyasa Sevana and Anupurvyva Sevana</i>	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+
Use of <i>Santarpana</i> and <i>Apatarpana</i> diet without sequence	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Sudden diving in cold water or drinking cold water after fear, exhaustion & coming from sunlight	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+
Practice of physical exercise & sunbath after heavy meals.	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
<i>Mithya Samsarga</i>	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Sex indulgence in <i>Ajirna</i>	+	-	-	-	+	-	+	+
Suppression of <i>Chhardi, Mutra, Purisha</i> like <i>Vegas</i>	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	+
<i>Kupathya in Panchakar</i>	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-

<i>ma</i>								
<i>Divasvapna after lunch</i>	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-

Activities which are not tolerable to that individual are considered as *Mithya Vihara* and it should always be avoided because it is the chief causative factor of many diseases i.e. *Kushtha* (*M. N. 2/2 - Vidhyotini Teeka*).

- **Sudden change from cold to hot and vice versa without judiciously following the rules of gradual change:** This causes *dushti* in *Swedavaha Srotas* (*Ch. Ni. 5/22*). Sudden diving in cold water or drinking cold water after fear, exhaustion or sunlight causes the same effect. *Swedavaha Srotas* is also vitiated due to *Krodha, Shoka, and Bhaya*. Our body has ability to adjust the different variation in the internal and external environment. This is called Homeostasis but the body needs some time to adjust itself. Abrupt changes from one extreme to another extreme in the internal and external environment cannot bring homeostasis inside the body. Thus the body’s mechanism fails and unwanted substances like histamine, antibodies, toxins and other chemicals are produced. Dipping in cold water suddenly after affliction with fear, exertion and intense heat results in sudden changes in body temperature and may cause sudden vasodilatation and may predispose skin disorders (*Ch. Ni. 5/6; Ch. Chi.7/5; M. N. 49/2*).
- **Suppression of urge of vomiting and other natural urges:** *Acharya Charaka* has clearly mentioned that suppression of urge of vomiting causes *Kushtha*. (*Ch. Su.7/15*). An urge of vomiting is only present when the *Doshas* are dislodged from their seat and are ready to be expelled from the nearest outlet i.e. mouth. But when the urge is suppressed, the outlet is not open and the dislodged *doshas* cannot be expelled out. A similar situation is created when *Virrudha ahara* is taken. The *Doshas* are dislodged but cannot be expelled out of the body. These dislodged *doshas* start the etiopathogenesis.

- **Divaswapna:** It is *Snigdha* (A. H. Su. 7/55, Ch. Su. 21/51) and vitiates *Kapha* and *Pitta* and causes *Kandu*, *Kotha*, *Pidika*. It is also *Kledakara*, *Srotorodhakara* and *Agnimandyakara* which ultimately produce *Kushtha*. It is responsible for *Raktadushti* (Ch. Su. 21/46-48; 24/8; Ch. Chi. 7/8; M. N. 49/4). It is also said that day sleep after *abhishyandi* and guru diet causes *dushti* of *Mamsavaha srotas* (Ch. Vi. 5/15). It also causes *dushti* of *Medovaha srotas* (Ch. Vi. 5/16).
- **Snigdha Bhuktavato Hi Annam Vyayama Kurvatam:** (M. N. 25/1) Creates *Ama* and produces diseases.
- **Snehapitasya Vantasya Va Vyayama Gramya Dharma Sevino. Vyayama Atisantapa Atibhuktva Upasevinama:** All these factors create *Ama* and produces diseases.
- **Panchakarma with improper manner:** Improper administration of *Panchakarma* also may produce *Kushtha* (Ch. Chi. 7/6).
- **Performing Santarpana and Apatarpana in contradictory or during improper time:** It will result either in *Ama* formation or *Tridosha* vitiation, which leads to *Kushtha* (Ch. Ni. 5/6).

search of materialistic pleasures and to satisfy its desires, it is always doing good and bad deeds (*Papakarma*). And as the after effects of such bad deeds he suffers from diseases like *Kushtha*. *Brihatrayi* have mentioned *Chinta*, *Bhaya*, *Krodha* as *Vata Prakopa Nidana* and *Bhaya*, *Krodha* and *Shoka* also cause *Dushti* of *Swedavaha Srotas* (Ch. Vi. 5/22). *Chinta* causes *Dushti* of *Rasavaha Srotas*. Those diseases, in which no clinical improvement is obtained even after the best treatment, are considered as *Papa Karmaja Vyadhi*. Both *Charaka* (Ch. Su. 25/40) and *Sushruta* (Su. Ni. 6/31) have described *Kushtha* as a most chronic disease and other *Acharyas* like *Bhavamishra* and *Madhavakara* have included it to be due to *Papa Karma*. Table (9).

Achara Hetu	Ch. S.	Su. S.	A. S.	A. H.	Bh. S.	H. S.	M. N.	B. P.
<i>Papa Karma</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Vipra Guru Tiraskara</i>	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
<i>Sadhu Ninda</i>	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
<i>Use of money &amp; material acquired by unfair means</i>	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
<i>Killing the virtuous persons</i>	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-

**Applicability:**

Some other examples which are seen in our daily routine are; having hot food with chilled cold drink or ice-cream, gargling with cold water before having hot tea, working in industries where there is large difference between outside and inside temperature etc.

**Achara Hetu:**

This is a very important factor and has been mentioned by all the *Acharyas*. Behavioural misconduct, antisocial activities, sinful activities and other punishable activities are considered under this heading. It has been mentioned that good morals are also necessary for a man to be healthy, a detailed description of which is given in '*Sadvritta*' chapter. Thus above mentioned *Acharajanya* factors bring about psychogenic stress which is of prime importance in the pathogenesis of *Psoriasis*. Due to *Raja* and *Tama Doshas* the *Manas* is always in

**Applicability:**

Those diseases in which no clinical result was obtained even after the best treatment were considered as *Papakarmaja vyadhi* (Su. Charaka (Ch. Su. 25/40) and *Sushruta* (Su. Ni. 6/31) have described *Kushtha* as a most chronic disorder and all *acharyas* including *Bhavaprakasha* and *Madhavakara* have included it to be due to *Papa Karma*. Which means the effective cure for *Kushtha* was still not found up to the time of *Bhavamishra*. Even now days skin diseases run a chronic course and dermatologists ultimately end up in making use of corticosteroids to get symptomatic relief. *Psoriasis* is a very chronic disorder which is very well known to recur. Till date, no complete cure of *Psoriasis* has been claimed in modern science.

**Miscellaneous:**

Some other important *hetus* –

**Acharya Harita :**

Described Vitiated water and *Ratrijagrana* as the cause of *Kushtha*.

**Acharya Bangsena:**

Seven specific etiological factors: *Tila Taila*, *Kulattha*, *Valmik*, *Lingaroga*, *Mahisha Dugdha*, *Mathita Dadhi* and *Vrintak (Chikitsa Sara Sangraha Kushtha 8)*

**Samsargaja Hetu:**

*Sushruta (Su. Ni. 5/32-33)* and *Vagbhata* have described the contagious nature of *Kushtha*. Psoriasis was believed to be contagious previously and was considered to be a type of leprosy.

**Kulaja Nidana:**

*Kushtha* is *Adi Bala Pravritta Vyadhi* and *Kushthayukta Shukra – Shonita* results in the birth of *Kushthi Sishu* (Child) (*Su. Ni. 5/27*). If both Mother and Father are having *Kushtha*, the offspring also becomes a patient of *Kushtha* as the *Shonita* and *shukra* of the patient are vitiated. This is also proved in Psoriasis. Recent studies (Andressen and Henseler, 1982) on detailed pedigrees established in 2035 families with Psoriasis also strongly support that Psoriasis is a polygenic and Multifactorial disease. Multifactorial inheritance implies that the cause of the disease is due to the effect of several genes, each of small effects, with a permissive role being played by one or a few major genes (Vpigel and Motalsky, 1982).

**Krimija Hetu:**

*Sushruta* has the opinion that all types of *Kushtha* are due to *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* and *Krimi (Su. Ni. 5/5)*. According to Norholm & Pedersen (1952), 44% of Psoriatic patients experience a worsening of skin manifestation following infections. Streptococcal infections are very common in guttate Psoriasis (84% according to Williams et. al.1976).

**Chikitsa Vibhramsajanya Hetu:**

*Stambhana* in initial stage of diseases like *Raktarsha (Ch. Chi. 14/179)*, *Raktapitta (Ch. Chi. 4/27)*, and *Amatisara (Ch. Chi 19/16)* cause *Kushtha*.

- *Stambhana* might lead to *Tiryaka Gati* of *Dosha* and hence cause *Kushtha*.
- *Kushtha* has been mentioned as *Rakta Pradoshaja Vyadhi* and *Santarpanajanya Vyadhi*. Thus *Rakta dushti* and *Santarpaka nidanas* may cause *Kushtha*.

- *Dushivisha* is another causative factor of *Kushtha*.
- River water originating from *Vindhya*, *Sahya* and *Paryatra* hills cause *Kushtha*.

**Conclusion:**

From the above references we can easily conclude that *Kushtha* is one of the mahagadas described in texts. Largest hetusangraha of *kushtha* is mentioned. Aaharaj, viharaj hetavas should be concerned while treating *Kushtha* completely. The detail study of hetavas will help actual samprapti, nidanparivarjan, order and frequency of shodhanakarma and treatment. Abhishapaj, Adhidevaik, karmaj hetavas also have equal importance with viruddha aahar, vishamahar adi aaharaj and viharaj hetavas.

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