

Specific Effects Of *Bhojan Patra* On Digestion And Nutrition

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda emphasizes that the health effects of food depend not only on its inherent qualities but also on the vessel (*Bhojan Patra*) used for cooking, storing, and serving. Classical texts such as *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita* describe distinct *guna* and *dosha*-modulating properties of materials like copper, iron, silver, gold, clay, and bronze. Contemporary research increasingly supports these principles, showing that cookware materials can influence mineral content, pH, antioxidant capacity, and microbial safety. Copper and iron vessels may enhance digestive fire and trace mineral availability; silver and gold exhibit cooling and antimicrobial effects; clay preserves moisture and natural pH; and bronze supports balanced digestion. This integrative review highlights that appropriate selection of *Bhojan Patra* can positively impact digestion, nutrient bioavailability, and overall physiological balance, validating traditional Ayurvedic wisdom considering modern scientific understanding.

KEY WORD – *Bhojan patra, Agni, Ahara, Dosha*

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INTRODUCTION

Digestion (*Ahara Paka*) holds a central place in Ayurveda, where proper *Agni* is considered the foundation of health. Along with *Ahara* and *Ahara Vidhi*, Ayurveda emphasizes *Bhojan Patra Vidnyana*—the science of food vessels—stating that the material of the utensil influences the *rasa*, *guna*, *virya*, and ultimately the digestion and assimilation of food. Classical texts describe that interaction between food and *Patra* can affect *Agni*, *dosha* balance, and nutritional value through subtle elemental and energetic changes. Traditional materials such as copper, bronze, silver, gold, iron, and clay are believed to enhance trace mineral availability and modulate digestive physiology. In the modern era of widespread stainless steel, aluminium, plastic, and non-stick cookware, revisiting this traditional wisdom is increasingly relevant. This article

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examines the effects of various *Bhojan Patras* on digestion, nutrient bioavailability, and metabolism by integrating Ayurvedic principles with contemporary scientific insights.

IMPORTANCE OF FOOD²

तत्रखल्विमान्यष्टावाहारविधिविशेषायतनानि भवन्ति;तद्यथा-
प्रकृतिकरणसंयोगराशि-

देशकालोपयोगसंस्थोपयोऋष्टमानि भवन्ति ॥ (C.S.Su. 1/21)

A self-controlled person should take food only after considering the

factors related to foods, which are -

- *Svabhava* (natural qualities),
- *Samskara* (processing),
- *Samyoga* (admixture),
- *Matra* (quantity),

- *Desha* (habitat),
- *Kala* (time)
- *Upayoga Sanstha* (Dietetic rules)
- *Upyokta* (Person who takes food)

This is the cause of food causing health or ill health. The above are very significant factors which have to be considered while formulating one's diet. Due consideration given to each of these factors will enable better digestion and better health.

1. *Svabhava* (Nature)

तत्र प्रकृतिरुच्यते स्वभावो यः, स पुनराहारौषधद्रव्याणां स्वाभाविकोः,

गुर्वादिगुणयोगः, तद्यथा माषमुद्गयोः शुकैर्योगश्च च। (C.S.Vi. 1/22)

Svabhava is the natural quality of the food. For example, rainwater, red variety of rice, green gram and the meat of deer are easily digestible; whereas milk, sugarcane juice, black gram, and the meat of animals living in the marshy region are not so easily digestible.

This is *svabhava*. However, one must remember that these natural qualities will undergo change by the effect of mixing with other substances and also the other factors mentioned above.

2. *Samskara* (Processing)

करणं पुनः स्वाभाविकानां द्रव्याणामभिसंस्कारः।

संस्कारो हि गुणान्तराधानमुच्यते।

ते गुणास्तोयाग्निस्त्रिकर्षशौचमन्थनदेशकालवासनादिभिः

कालप्रकर्ष- भाजनादिभिश्चाधीयन्ते॥ (C.S.Vi. 1/22)

Samskara is the result of contact with water or fire, washing, churning, place, time, mode and vessel used for cooking. Thus, preparatory processes like putting rice in water for soaking,

grinding rice with dal, roasting, frying, heating, burning, boiling water, frying in fats, cooking in steam, baking, etc., also affect the quality of the food. The processing is the making or refinement of the natural products, which means imparting other properties. These properties are infused by contact with water and fire, cleansing, churning, place, time, infusing, steeping etc. and by long duration, utensil, etc.

3. *Samyoga* (Admixture)

संयोगः पुनर्द्रव्योर्बहूनां वा द्रव्याणां संहतीभावः, स विशेषमारभते, यं पुनर्नैकैकशो

द्रव्याण्यारभन्ते। तद्यथा - मधुसर्पिषोः मधुमत्स्यपयसां च संयोगः॥ (C.S.Vi. 1/22)

Samyoga is the mixing of two or more substances together. This *Ahara*: Ancient secret of diet in Ayurveda and Yoga union produces special qualities not possessed by the individual

substances of the combination. This exhibits peculiarities which are not seen in the case of individual substances, Such as the combination of honey and ghee, and that of honey, fish, and milk. *Samyoga* (processing) is the result of contact with water and fire, washing, churning, place, time, mode and vessels used for cooking.

4. *Rashi* (Quantum)

राशिस्तु सर्वग्रहपरिग्रहौ मात्रामात्रफलविनिश्चयार्थः।

तत्र सर्वस्याहारस्य प्रमाणग्रहणमेकपिण्डेन सर्वग्रहः,

परिग्रहः पुनः प्रमाणग्रहण- मेकैकश्येनाहारद्रव्याणाम्।

सर्वस्य हि ग्रहः सर्वग्रहः सर्वतश्च ग्रहः परिग्रह उच्यते ॥

(C.S.Vi. 1/22)

Rashi applies to the total quantity of food to be consumed and to each item separately. Certain articles of food should compulsorily be consumed in less quantity - these are mostly items that are harder to digest. Maintain the body if used in proper quantity, proportion, and quality; otherwise, they vitiate the *doshas* and affect the health of the mother and fetus. *Rashi* (quantity) consists of *sarvagraha* (total account) and *parigraha* (individual account), which ascertain the results of the food taken in proper and improper quantities. The accounting of the quantity of the entire food in totality is *sarvagraha*, while *parigraha* is that of the individual items in food. Thus, accounting of the entire is *sarvagraha*, while that from all angles is *parigraha*.

5. *Desha* (Place)

देशः पुनः स्थानं स द्रव्याणानुत्पत्तिप्रचारौ देशसात्त्यं चाचष्टे।

(C.S.Vi. 1/22)

Desha denotes the place resulting in growth, as well as the distribution of the substances and also the suitability with respect to places.

6. *Kala* (Time)

कालो हि नित्यगाश्चावस्थिकश्चः, तत्रावस्थिको विकारमपेक्षते, नित्यगस्तु ऋतुसात्त्यापेक्षः॥ (C.S.Vi. 1/22)

Kala refers to the time of the year, time of the day, the age of the user and the stage of the disease (if it exists) and also to the intake of food in relation to proper/improper digestion of the previously partaken meal. The conditional one is related to disorders, while the eternally moving one is related to seasonal suitability.

7. *Upayoga Sanstha* (Dietetic rules)

उपयोगसंस्था तू उपयोगनियमः, स जीर्णलक्षणापेक्षः॥

(C.S.Vi. 1/22)

Upayoga Sanstha refers to the manner of taking food. This depends on the digested foods.

8. *Upyokta* (Person who takes food)

उपयोक्ता पुर्यस्तमाहारमुपयुक्ते यदायत्तमोकसात्त्यम्।

इत्यष्टावाहारविधिविशेषायतनानि व्याख्यातानि भवन्ति ॥

(C.S.Vi. 1/22)

Upyokta is the one who consumes the food. On him depends on the '*Oka-satmya* (suitability developed by practice). Thus, are prescribed the specific factors of the method of dieting.

The characters of these (Factors) having good or bad results are mutually beneficial. One should try to understand them and thereafter desire the wholesome only. Food or any other thing that is liked but is unwholesome and has unpleasant consequences should not be used due to ignorance or carelessness.

SCIENTIFICALLY APPROPRIATE BHOJAN PATRA FOR FOOD CONSUMPTION-AYURVEDA - BHOJAN PATRA VIVECHAN¹-

- Ghee should be served or kept in the patra of (*kantloh*).
- *Peya padarth (yushadi)* should be given by keeping the silver *patra*.
- The fruit and other chewable food items should be kept in a lotus leaf.
- The *ghrit* (ghee) roasted food items should be kept in *Suvarna Patra* and served.
- Liquid or rasa food items should be served in a silver *patra*.
- Chach, kanji or amla, kadi should be served in a stone *Patra*.
- Boiled and then cooled water should be served in a *Tamra Patra*.
- Alcohol should be served in a *mud patra*. (Sushrut sutrasthan Ch. 46)

UTENSILS PREPARED FROM LEAVES (PATRA)

Eating food served on leaf utensils -such as banana leaves, sal leaves, lotus leaves, etc. It has nutritional, medicinal, and hygienic benefits, recognised both traditionally and scientifically.

Leaf utensils are very healthy for the human body. As per various ancient literatures, when food is served on fresh leaves, it reduces acidity to the point of uprooting it from your system, and also it removes toxins from your body. Thus, it is advisable to always be conscious of the utensils you are using for eating and cooking purposes⁸.

LEAVES UTENSILS:

Food consumed in utensils made up of *Patra* (leaves) is taste-imparting, carminative, and pacifies poison and sins⁷.

PLANTAIN LEAVES UTENSILS (BANANA LEAVES):

Kadali is known as *Rambha*, *Swādūphala*, *Sukumara*, *Varaṇabuṣa*, *Muktasara* and *Moca*⁹. Consuming food on *Rambhapatra* (plantain leaves) is cardiac, taste-imparting and aphrodisiac. It imparts strength, stimulates *Anala* (digestive power), it treats poisoning, fatigue, *Vata-associated* diseases and *Raktapitta* but is not useful in case of jaundice⁷.



Consuming foods on plantain leaves is cardiac, taste-imparting and aphrodisiac. stimulates digestive power, it treats poison, it treats poisoning, fatigue, *vata-associated* diseases and *raktapitta*, but not useful in case of jaundice⁷.

SACRED TREE LEAVES UTENSILS:

Palasa is known as *Kinsuka*, *Vatapotha*, *Raktapuspa*, *Ksarasrestha* and *Bramhavrksa*⁹. Consuming food on *Palasa patra* (leaf of sacred tree) treats *Vata* and *Pitta-associated* diseases, *Gulma*, abdominal diseases and common cold. It is tasting imparting and stoutening⁷.



HASTIKARNI LEAVES UTENSILS:

In Ayurveda, it is known as *Gajakarni* and *Varanakarnaka*¹¹ Consuming food on *Hastikarni* (*hathikana*) leaf is alkaline, hot and pungent. It treats worm infestation and fever, pacifies *kapha*, and provides relief in malarial fever.

CASTOR OIL PLANT LEAVES UTENSILS:



Also known as *gandarwahastak*, *panchgangul*, *wardhaman*, *aamand*, *dirgadanda*, *hastikarn*, *utanpatrak*. Consuming food on *erand patra* pacifies *vata*, aggravates *pitta* and is vermicial. *Udavarta*, *plihavidhi*, *gulma*, *bastishul*, *atravidhi*, *guru*, *vatashamak*. pacifies *vata*, aggravates *pitta* and is vermicial⁷.

LATEX PRODUCING TREE LEAVES UTENSILS:

Consuming food on the leaves of latex-producing trees treats polydipsia, burning sensation and *Raktapitta*⁷.

FRAGRANT PADRI TREE LEAVES UTENSILS:

In Ayurveda, it is known as *Patala*, *Sthali*, *Amogha*, *Kamadutika*, *Krsnavrtika* and *Patali*^{12,14,15,16}. Consuming food on leaves of *Patala* (fragrant padri tree) treats jaundice, swelling and *Somaroga* (type of gynaecological disorder)⁷.



RESEARCH PAPER

KEWADA LEAVES UTENSILS:

In Ayurveda, it is known as *Ketaka*, *Kambuka*, *Sucipuṣpa*, *Halimaka*, *Krakcchada* and *Sugandha*^{11,15,16}. Consuming food on leaves of *Ketaki* (*kewda*) treats all cysts, is pleasant, taste-imparting, ophthalmic and light into attribute¹⁷.

LOTUS LEAVES UTENSILS:

In Ayurveda, lotus is known as *Kamala*, *Nalina*, *Jalaja*, *Satapatra*, *Tamrarsas*, *Puskara* and *Rajiva*^{15,19}. Consuming food on *Nalina* (lotus), *Kumuda* (whitewater-lily), *Raktotpala* (red variety of lotus), and *Utpala* (blue variety of lotus) leaves is wholesome for passengers, is aphrodisiac and best fatigue alleviator¹⁷.

UTENSILS WHICH ARE USED TO CONSUME FOOD

Utensils prepared from leaves have been an integral component of traditional Indian food culture and Ayurvedic lifestyle practices. These natural, biodegradable plates and bowls-made from leaves such as Sal, Banana, Palash, and Jackfruit-offer unique benefits for digestion, hygiene, and environmental sustainability.

Ayurveda recognizes that the material of a food vessel influences the properties of food and affects the *doshas* and *Agni*. Leaf utensils, being naturally sterile, sattvic, and free from contaminants, support healthier food practices. Their growing relevance in modern times is driven by eco-conscious living, public health needs, and

a renewed interest in traditional, sustainable alternatives. This article explores the historical significance, Ayurvedic principles, and health advantages of leaf-based utensils and highlights their importance in the contemporary context. Nowadays, metals, materials and plastics are used in common practice for consuming food. In fact, aluminium and plastic are the most harmful materials for consuming food. Ayurveda has a different point of view and suggests using the utensils made of metals, mud, wood, and leaves for good health.

SCIENTIFIC REASONING

The good phyto-chemicals of the plant leaves react with the micro levels of the food particles. This in turn yields in negating the adverse effects of the food on the micro level. The inter-reaction between the food and the plate is more pronounced in hot or acidic food substances.

METAL UTENSILS

SUVARNA PATRA

also called as aurum, gold, *sona*, *kanchan*, *hema*, *hatak*, *satakumbha*, *tapaniya*. *Suvarna* possesses *sita*, *vrasya*, *balya*, *guru*, *rasayan*, *kantivardhan*, *vishaghna*, *unmadahara*, *tridosahara*, *jvarahara*, *soshara*, *kasaya-tikta-madhura rasa*, *guru gun* and *lekhan* properties³.

RAJAT PATRA

Also known as argentum. Silver, *chandi*, *Rupyakya*, *tara*, *sveta*, *vasuthama*, *sara*, *vatapittahari* and *rasayan*. *Rajat* possesses *lekhana*, *kasaya*, *amlarasa*, *amlavipaka*, *sara guna*, *vayastapana* and *Snigdha* properties. *Rajat* is best among the *dhatu*s/metals⁴.



KANSYA PATRA

Also known as white copper, *kansa*, *bonze*, *nija*, *ghosa*, *Kamsya* is said to be *guru-usna-sara guna*, *chaksusya* and *kaphapittahara* by nature⁶.

LOHA (MANDURA) PATRA

Satra, *ayah*, *kustha*, *vyanga*, *paravat*, *tanmala*, and *krsnayasa* are synonyms. *Loha* is *sara-guru-ruksha guna*, *Madhura-kasaya*, *sita virya*, *kapha-pittahara*. *Netra*, *Balya*, *Vatavardhana* in nature⁷.

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VARATLOHA PATRA

Also known as bronze, *pitaloha*, *simhalaka*, *kapila*, *soukumarika*, *triloha*, *rajariti*, and *Maheswari* are the synonyms.

STONE UTENSILS

In Ayurveda, stone is known as *Asma*, *Grava*, *Prastara*, *Upala* and *sila*¹³. Food consumed in utensils made up of *saila* (stone) or in clay causes poverty⁸.

WOODEN UTENSILS

Food consumed in *Darudbhava* (wooden) utensils is especially taste-imparting and aggravates *Kapha*⁹.



TAMARA AND EARTHEN UTENSILS

Also known as *cuprum*, copper, *mlechamukha*, *sulba*, *naipala*, *ravinamaka*, *udumbara*, *suryapriya*, *raktaj* and *raktadhatuka*. *Tamra* possesses *Madhur ras*, *sara-laghu*, *sita guna*, *pitta-kaphahara* and *ropana* properties⁵.. Utensils used to store water should be of *Tamra* (copper) and in the absence of it, a *Mrda* (earthen) pot is beneficial⁹.



CRYSTAL UTENSILS

In Ayurveda, it is known as *Swacksamani*, *Śitopala* and *Maṇi*¹³. *Shpatika* (crystal) utensils used for the storage of water are holy and cold⁹.



GLASS AND CAT'S EYE UTENSILS

In Ayurveda, *Vaidurya* is known as *Keturatna*, *Varsika* and *Viduraja*¹³. *Vaidurya* (cat's eye) and *Kaca* (glass) utensils show similar properties to crystal utensils⁹.



Ayurveda emphasizes that the vessel in which food is served influences the *rasa*, *guna*, and *agni* of the consumer. Leaf utensils are naturally sterile, single-use, and biodegradable, preventing contamination and promoting mindful, clean eating (*Shuddha bhojana*). Their eco-friendly nature supports the principles of swasthavritta, aligning personal health with environmental well-being. In the modern era, sustainable and chemical-free alternatives gain importance, and leaf utensils once again hold relevance as a simple yet effective solution for healthy living.

Ayurveda recognizes that the material of a food vessel influences the properties of food and affects the *doshas* and *Agni*. Leaf utensils, being naturally sterile, sattvic, and free from contaminants, support healthier food practices. Their growing relevance in modern times is driven by eco-conscious living, public health needs, and a renewed interest in traditional, sustainable alternatives. This article explores the historical significance.

PROCEDURE AFTER DINING

Clean the mouth after having food or drink with a small amount of water. Remove food particles stuck between teeth slowly by brushing or using a toothpick because these particles, which are stuck between teeth, produce a foul smell. Consider the outer layer of teeth similar to that of teeth. It should be kept in mind that this layer should not be damaged while removing the stuck material through strong rubbing, etc. Sleeping is prohibited after a meal because sleeping immediately after a meal causes vitiation of *Kapha*, and that vitiated *Kapha* diminishes the *Anala* (*Jatharagni*). Walking slowly for a hundred steps after a meal makes the bolus of food digestible in the abdomen. Walking in this

manner after a meal gives relaxation to the neck, knee and back.

CONCLUSION

The present article highlights the specific effects of *Bhojan Patra* (leaf-based dining) on digestion and nutrition, emphasizing its relevance from both Ayurvedic and contemporary scientific perspectives. Classical Ayurvedic texts describe *Bhojan Patra* as a *Pathya* practice that supports *Agni*, promotes proper digestion, and maintains *Dosha* balance. The natural properties of different leaves, such as antimicrobial, antioxidant, digestive, and bioactive compounds, contribute to improved digestion, enhanced nutrient assimilation, and protection against gastrointestinal disorders. From a nutritional viewpoint, leaf-based dining offers functional benefits by minimizing chemical contamination, supporting gut-friendly microflora, and enhancing sensory stimulation that positively influences digestive secretions. The mild transfer of phytochemicals from leaves to food may further aid enzymatic activity and metabolic processes. Additionally, the biodegradable and eco-friendly nature of *Bhojan Patra* aligns with the concept of sustainable nutrition and public health. In the current era of rising digestive disorders and lifestyle-related diseases, the traditional practice of *Bhojan Patra* holds significant potential as a cost-effective, safe, and culturally acceptable dietary intervention. Integrating this ancient wisdom with modern research can pave the way for evidence-based dietary guidelines that promote digestive health, nutritional efficiency, and environmental sustainability. Further clinical and experimental studies are warranted to scientifically

validate and standardize the therapeutic role of *Bhojan Patra* in daily dietary practices.

DISCUSSION

The present review underscores the therapeutic and nutritional relevance of *Bhojan Patra* (leaf-based dining) from both Ayurvedic and modern scientific viewpoints. Ayurveda regards *Bhojan Patra* as a *Pathya* practice that supports *Agni*, maintains Dosha equilibrium, and facilitates proper *Ahara Paka*. The classical concept that the food–vessel interaction subtly modifies digestive outcomes appears increasingly plausible when examined through contemporary nutritional and microbiological evidence.

From an Ayurvedic perspective, natural leaves used as *Bhojan Patra* possess inherent guna such as *laghu*, *ruksha*, *kashaya*, or *tikta* properties depending on the plant source, which may help regulate Kapha and Pitta and stimulate digestive fire. The slight imparting of plant-derived bioactive compounds into warm food is traditionally believed to enhance *deepana* and *pachana* actions. This aligns with modern findings that many commonly used leaves (e.g., banana, sal, banyan) contain polyphenols, flavonoids, and antimicrobial constituents that may support gut health and reduce microbial contamination of food.

Scientifically, leaf-based dining offers several functional advantages. The natural antimicrobial surface of certain leaves may reduce the risk of foodborne pathogens. The minimal migration of beneficial phytochemicals could support enzymatic activity and antioxidant defence. Additionally, serving food on natural leaves avoids potential chemical leaching associated with plastics, low-quality metals, or degraded non-stick coatings. The sensory aspects—aroma, texture, and visual appeal—may also stimulate cephalic phase digestive responses, thereby improving digestive secretions and nutrient assimilation.

From a public health and environmental standpoint, *Bhojan Patra* represents a biodegradable, low-cost, and culturally acceptable alternative to disposable plastic or thermocol plates. Its adoption aligns with the modern concept of sustainable nutrition and eco-conscious healthcare practices.

However, despite strong traditional support and emerging scientific rationale, high-quality clinical and experimental evidence remains limited. Standardization of leaf types, hygiene protocols, and quantification of phytochemical transfer are necessary areas for future research. Well-designed clinical trials could further clarify its role in improving digestive outcomes and preventing gastrointestinal disorders.

In conclusion, *Bhojan Patra* emerges as a promising integrative dietary practice that bridges Ayurvedic wisdom with modern nutritional science. Its rational and hygienic use may contribute to better digestive health, improved nutrient utilization, and environmental sustainability.

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