



A review on the nutritive value of Varma Kanji

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Abstract

Siddha, a traditional system of medicine that originated over millennium year ago in Tamilnadu, it offers extensive insights about food and health based on certain unique conceptual. Siddha principles, such as the *Thiridhosam* (Three *Humors*) theory, provide the relationship between the microcosm and the macrocosm that can be applied in day-to-day practice. Many herbs known for their therapeutics importance also used as dietary food material due to their nutrient properties these herbs contributed as Siddha remedies for many diseases and served as nutrient food for body; as per siddha, therapeutic actions are maximally effective only appropriate dietary measures are taken to support the restoration of physiological balance. Varmam is nothing but manipulation of specific points in which the energy is found concentrated. Varmam not only deals only with external therapy it also possesses internal medication which helps to restore the energy. Varma kanji is one among them. This article reviews the nutrient contents and some actions of the herbs used as a drug in the Varma kanji, which enable researchers to correlate medicinal and nutrient balances of herbs and boost the concept of dietary uses of medicinal herbs.

Keywords: Varma kanji, medicinal herbs, nutrient content, actions, uses

Introduction

Siddha system of medicine is an ancient treatment methodology followed by the peoples of Tamil Nadu. The modalities of this system were unique. They used to treat peoples in many different ways. They have many techniques like external therapy, Varmam, Yogam Etc., Varmam is the finest art that has been followed by the Siddhar. This art was once used for the battle by the warrior's later Siddhars modified this in the way which will be beneficial for the human kind. Varmam treatment is not only about manipulation technique but also possess internal medication. The manipulation of Varmam is all about regulation of Vaasi flow which is the vital energy of our body responsible for the survival. In Varmam literature they explained about both Varmam points and internal medication. Hence from this we can understand that Vaasi flow can also be rectified by the internal medication.

The traditional Varmam practitioners mostly concentrate on both manipulation and internal medication. They believe that, by the manipulation the Vaasi flow can be regulated for the short duration but by giving the addition internal medication the duration can be prolonged.

Siddhars have all the qualities of being a great anatomist, physiologist, pathologist and pharmacologist. They possess all the scientific knowledge in those eras. They have mentioned medications for each and every Varmam in literatures. They commonly use internal medications in the form of *Kiyazham* and *Kanji*. Each kanji described in literature are unique in their action. In this presentation I have chosen "Thinai arisi kanji" which is meant for *Untchi Varmam Noigal*. This article reveals the necessity of using Varmam kanji as part of medication which should be given along with the Varmam therapy.

Aim

To evaluate the effectiveness and nutrition value of Varmam kanji "*Thinai Arisi Kanji*" for *Utchi Varmam Noigal*.

Thinai Arisi Kanji

Ingredients

1. *Thinai arisi*(foxtail rice) - *Setaria italica*
2. *Inji* (Ginger) - *Zingiber officinale*
3. *Elam* (Cardamom) - *Elettaria cardamomum*

Preparation and indication

The skin of the ginger should be peeled off and cut into a small pieces. Cardamom should be smashed into one or two pieces. Then both the ingredients should be boiled along with the millet. The cooked millets should be given for the persons suffering from *Utchi Varmam* disease.

Utchi Varmam Noigal

Seizure
 Insomnia
 Giddiness
 Epistaxis
 Tremor
 Headache
 Memory loss
 Sinusitis
 Migraine
 Decreased function of pituitary and pineal glands

Ingredient***Thinai*****Table 1**

| Nutrients | Nutritive value |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Protein | 11.2 g |
| Total fat | 4 g |
| Carbohydrate | 63.2 g |
| Fibre | 6.7 g |
| Thiamine | 0.6 mg |
| Niacin | 3.2 mg |

Uses

- Thiamine in *Thinai Arisi* slows the development of Alzheimer's disease
- Helps to enhance the concentration and memory power
- Assists in the brain development
- Protein helps in the functions of nervous system smoothly. The activation of nervous system triggers the response of relevant reactions.

Ginger**Table 2**

| Nutrients | Percentage |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Carbohydrates | 50% |
| Protein | 9% |
| fatty acids | 6-8 % |
| potassium | 11% |
| Calcium | 1% |
| Iron | 3% |
| magnesium | 10% |
| Vitamin C | 8% |
| Dietary fibre | 8% |

Uses

- Immuno protective activities
- Helps to build resistance to disease
- Antioxidants and bioactive compounds in ginger can inhibit inflammatory responses that occur in the brain
- Effective against the RSV virus, a common cause of respiratory infections

Cardamom**Table 3**

| Nutrient | Amount |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Niacin | 1.102 mg |
| Riboflavin | 0.182 mg |
| Thiamine | 0.198 mg |
| Vitamin B6 | 0.230 mg |
| Vitamin C | 21.0 mg |
| Calcium, Ca | 383.00 mg |

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| Copper, Cu | 0.383 mg |
| Iron, Fe | 13.97 mg |
| Magnesium, Mg | 229.00 mg |
| Manganese, Mn | 28.000 mg |
| Phosphorus, P | 178.00 mg |
| Potassium, K | 1119.00 mg |
| Sodium, Na | 18.00 mg |
| Zinc, Zn | 7.47 mg |

Uses

- Cardamom is believed to possess anti-depressant properties.
- Improves blood circulation to the lungs and was therefore used for symptoms of asthma, bronchitis and sinusitis.

Conclusion

Uniqueness of Varmam resides not only by its manipulation but also by its internal medication. Varmam medications are practiced by the traditional practitioners but they are not explored yet by our siddha physicians. The above kanji may seem to be a simple preparation but it possesses many medicinal and nutrient values. Each ingredient of this kanji has the activities that have been described by our Siddhars which was proved by the scientific community. Each Varmam has specific indications and medications. Therefore, every medication of Varmam should be explored and should be used in our regular clinical practice along with Varmam therapy.

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