



HONEY: A SHORT COMMUNICATION

Ayurveda

Dr. Syed Mujahid Ali

M.D (Scholar) (Chikitsa), R.A. Podar Medical College (Govt.), Worli, Mumbai-18.

Dr. Geeta Parulkar

M.D (Chikitsa)(Mum), PhD (Mum), (HOD & Prof) Kayachikitsa Department R.A. Podar Medical College (Govt.), Worli, Mumbai-18.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION:

For many centuries, "Honey has been used in vital alternative medicine of Ayurveda and is one among the foods having religious significance". Hindus consider honey as one of the five elixirs of immortality (Panchamrita). The Vedas and other ancient literature describe Honey as a great medicinal and healthy food. In Buddhism, Honey plays an important role in the festival of Madhu Purnima, celebrated in India & Bangladesh. On Madhu Purnima, Buddhists remember this act by giving honey to monks. Prophet Mohammad strongly recommended Honey for healing purpose and Quran promotes it as a **nutritious and healthy food**. [1] It is said that, Goliath and Hercules of ancient times and Ramamurthi the great Indian Sandow, were in the habit of taking daily honey in their diet. Hence their, strength and capacity for work was good.



MATERIALS AND METHOD:

Sources of data collection: Details of this short communications were collected from different Ayurvedic and Bio-medical Lexicon, Ayurvedic physician's articles published in various open journals (National/ International).

NIRUKTI (ETYMOLOGY) OF MADHU (Honey) As per Ayurvedic classical text:

[2] "The word Madhu is said to be derived from "Manyat iti madhu" meaning sweet, delicious and pleasant.

PROPERTIES ACCORDING TO MODERN SCIENCE:

Honey is thick, syrupy, translucent liquid when fresh. The colour is Pale yellow or Reddish –brown and it possesses pleasant odour and sweet taste, which is dependent upon the floral source of the product. The Honey obtained from Eucalyptus and Banksia species has somewhat unpleasant odour and taste and the honey collected from Dhatura stramonium may be poisonous. On storage, it becomes opaque and granular due to the crystallization of dextrose.[3] **The average pH of honey is 3.9, but ranges from 3.4 to 6.1.**[1][3] Various experiments and studies on Honey have shown that it possess **Antiseptic, Antimicrobial, Anti-inflammatory, Sedative, Mild laxative, Healing and Cleansing properties.**

CHEMICAL CONSTITUENTS:

[3] It consists chiefly of **Fructose (40-50%), Glucose (30-40%)**, and small amounts of **Sucrose (0.1-10%)**, Dextrin, Formic acid, Volatile oil and Pollen grains. In addition to these, traces of Enzymes, Vitamins, Proteins, Maltose, Melezitose, Pentosans, Gums, trace elements, Amino acids, and colouring matter are also present.

Properties Of Madhu (HONEY) In Ayurveda:

This is one of the best "Yogavahi" food article i.e. without changing its own properties, honey carries the effects of the drugs added to it. It means it enhances the properties and actions of the food articles with which it combines.[4]

Properties Of Madhu (HONEY) By Different Samhitas: [14] [15] [16] [17]

	According to Charak Samhita Sutrasthana 27/245	According to Sushruta Samhita Sutrasthana 45/132	According to Ashtanga Sangraha Sutrasthana 6/92, 95	According to Ashtanga Hridaya Sutrasthana 5/52
Rasa	Madhura, Kshaya	Madhura	Madhura, Kshaya	Madhura, Kshaya
Anurasa	-	Kashaya	-	-
Gunas	Guru, Ruksha	Laghu, Ruksha, Picchil	Guru, Ruksha	Ruksha
Virya	Sheeta	Sheeta	Sheeta	-
Vipaka	-	-	Katu	-
Doshagnata	Vatakarak, Kapha Pitta nashak	Tridoshanasha ka	Vatakarak, Kapha Pitta nashak	Vatakarak, Kapha Pitta nashak

Properties Of Fresh (NUTAN) And Old (JEERNA) Honey In Ayurveda:

Fresh Honey has Bringhana guna (nourishing the body), does not mitigate Sleshma (Kapha) very much and is a Laxative. Old Honey (stored for at least 1 year) reduces fat and obesity, is constipating and highly scarificant. [9]

Varieties Of Madhu (HONEY) As Per Ayurveda:

Eight types of Honey are described in Ayurveda with **Makshika being the best one and Bhramara being the heaviest.** [10]

Properties and therapeutic uses of different types of honey as follows

(1) **Pauttika Honey** Pauttika has Ghee like colour.[11] Also, it is Ruksha (Dry) & Ushna in potency. [12] It aggravates Vata, Pitta & Rakta.[12]

(2) **Bhramara Honey** It is White in color.[13] Also, Guru (not easily digested) because of its Picchhila and Atiswadu properties.[14] It is Rakta-Pitta Shamaka. [13]

(3) **Kshaudra Honey** It is Brownish in colour.[15] Also is Sheeta, Laghu (easy to digest) and Lekhana. [14]

(4) **Makshika Honey** Makshika has colour like Oil .[15] Also, it is Laghu (lighter than Kshaudra) & Ruksha (dry) [10]

(5) **Chhatra Honey** Chhatra Honey is Brown-yellow in color.[16] It is having Madhura Vipaka, & Guru, Sheeta as well as Picchhila. [16]

(6) **Aardhya Honey** This is White in color.[17] It is having Kashaya Rasa (Astringent in taste) & Katu Vipaka (Pungent after digestion), as well as it eliminates vitiated Kapha-Pitta Doshas. [17]

(7) **Auddalaka Honey** The color of Auddalaka is Yellowish-brown.

[18] It is having Kashaya (Astringent) and Amla (Sour) Rasas, Katu Vipaka (Pungent after digestion). Also, it aggravates Pitta. [18]

(8) Dala Honey The color of Dala is Pink.[20] , Dala is Ruksha (dry), Madhura (Sweet), Amla (Sour) and Kshaya (Astringent) in taste.[19]

Therapeutic Uses Of Honey (MADHU) As Per Ayurveda:

It is used in Cold, Cough, Fever, Sore eye and throat, Tongue and Duodenal Ulcers, Liver disorders, Constipation, Diarrhea, Kidney and other Urinary disorders, Pulmonary Tuberculosis, Marasmus, Rickets, Scurvy and Insomnia.[3]

It is applied as a remedy on open wounds after surgery.[3]

It prevents Infection and promotes Healing.[3] It has been proved that **Honey promotes rapid healing** as it stimulates tissue Regeneration, Angiogenesis, and Fibroblast growth. Antiinflammatory action of **Honey soothes and promotes healing by reducing Pain and Swelling.**[21]

Recent researches have shown that, Pratisarana of Laksha Churna with Madhu on scaling wound can have better line of treatment in the successful management of tartar without any systemic use of drugs.[22]

It is also useful in healing of Carbuncles, Chaps, Scalds, Whitlows and skin inflammation; as "vermicide"; locally as an excipient, in the treatment of infection of the oral mucous membrane.[3]

Honey, mixed with onion juice, is a good remedy for Arteriosclerosis.[3]

As a demulcent, Honey and warm barley-water are given internally in Constipation and indigestion, in Bronchial affections, Asthma, Chronic colds, Troublesome Coughs and Sore-throat. [23]

The use of honey internally and of sunlight externally to the body direct, has been eulogized as an ideal remedy to regulate the secretion of the internal glands and calcium metabolism.[23]

CONCLUSION:

It can be concluded that honey is an invaluable natural food article which strengthens the immunity and helps to maintain the health by preventing various types of diseases provided it must be Pure and Genuine.

REFERENCES:

1. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. Honey, 2015. Available From: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honey> (Last accessed on 12 Jan 2015, 5:35 pm)
2. Aapte Vaman Shivarama, Shanskrita Hindi Kosha, Rachna Prakashan Jaipur, Edition 2006, Pg. 767
3. Ali Mohammad, Pharmacognosy, vol-1, CBS Publishers & Distributors Pvt. Ltd. I.S.B.N: 81-239-1438-5, Edition 2008, Pg. 278-280
4. Tripathi Brahmanand, Editor, Charak Chandrika (Hindi Commentary) on Charak Samhita, Chaukhambha surbharti prakashan, Sutrasthana, chapter 27, Ikshu varga, Verse No.249 Pg.531
5. Tripathi Brahmanand, Editor, Charak Chandrika (Hindi Commentary) on Charak Samhita, Chaukhambha surbharti prakashan Sutrasthana, chapter 27, Ikshu varga, Verse No.245 Pg.530
6. Shastri Ambikadatta, Editor, Ayurveda-TattvaSandipika (Hindi Commentary) on Sushruta samhita, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi, edition 2005, Sutrasthan Chapter 45, Madhu varga, Verse. No.132, Pg.180
7. Gupta Kaviraj Atridev, Editor, Hindi Commentary, on Ashtang Samgraha, Krishnadas Academy Varanasi Reprint 1993, Sutrasthan Chapter 5, Madhu varga, Verse No. 92, 95 Pg. 56
8. Gupta Kaviraj Atridev, Editor, Vidyotini Hindi Commentary, on Ashtang Hridaya, Chaukhambha Prakashan Varanasi 2007, Sutrasthan Chapter 5, Madhu varga, Verse No.52, Pg.46
9. Shastri Ambikadatta, Editor, Ayurveda-TattvaSandipika (Hindi Commentary) on Sushruta Samhita, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi, edition 2005, Sutrasthan Chapter 45, Madhu varga, Verse No.140, Pg.181
10. Shastri Ambikadatta, Editor, Ayurveda-TattvaSandipika (Hindi Commentary) on Sushruta Samhita, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi, edition 2005, Sutrasthan Chapter 45, Madhu varga, Verse. No.135,136, Pg.181
11. Misra Brahmasankara and Vaisya Rupalalji, Editor, Vidyotini Hindi Commentary, on Bhavprakash, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Santhan Varanasi, Edition 2004, Bhavprakash nighantu, Madhu varga, Verse No.12,13, Pg.789
12. Shastri Ambikadatta, Editor, Ayurveda-TattvaSandipika (Hindi Commentary) on Sushruta Samhita, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi, Edition 2005, Sutrasthan Chapter 45, Madhu varga, Verse. No.134, Pg.181
13. Misra Brahmasankara and Vaisya Rupalalji, Editor, Vidyotini Hindi Commentary, on Bhavprakash, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Santhan Varanasi, Edition 2004, Bhavprakash nighantu, Madhu varga, Verse No.9-10, Pg.789
14. Shastri Ambikadatta, Editor, Ayurveda-TattvaSandipika (Hindi Commentary) on Sushruta Samhita, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi, Edition 2005, Sutrasthan Chapter 45, Madhu varga, Verse. No.135, Pg.181
15. Tripathi Brahmanand, Editor, Charak Chandrika (Hindi Commentary) on Charak Samhita, Chaukhambha Surbharti Prakashan, Sutrasthana, Chapter 27, Ikshu varga, Verse No.244 Pg.529

16. Misra Brahmasankara and Vaisya Rupalalji, Editor, Vidyotini Hindi Commentary, on Bhavprakash, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Santhan Varanasi, Edition 2004, Bhavprakash nighantu, Madhu varga, Verse No.14-16, Pg.789
17. Misra Brahmasankara and Vaisya Rupalalji, Editor, Vidyotini Hindi Commentary, on Bhavprakash, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Santhan Varanasi, Edition 2004, Bhavprakash nighantu, Madhu varga, Verse No.17-19, Pg.790
18. Misra Brahmasankara and Vaisya Rupalalji, Editor, Vidyotini Hindi Commentary, on Bhavprakash, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Santhan Varanasi, Edition 2004, Bhavprakash nighantu, Madhu varga, Verse No.20-21, Pg.790
19. Misra Brahmasankara and Vaisya Rupalalji, Editor, Vidyotini Hindi Commentary, on Bhavprakash, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Santhan Varanasi, Edition 2004, Bhavprakash nighantu, Madhu varga, Verse No.22-24, Pg.790
20. Sharma Priyavrat, Dhanvantari Nighantu, Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi, Edition 2005, Suvarnadi varga 6, Verse No. 216, Pg.217
21. Vijaya Kumari K, K. Nishteswar, Wound healing activity of honey: A pilot study. AYU/2012/33/3, [cited 2015 August 18], Available from: <http://www.ayujournal.org>
22. Maurya Mridulata, Maurya K Dinesh, Vranaropaka effect of Laksha Churna with Madhu on wound after removal of Danta Sharkara. AYU/2012/33/1, [cited 2015 August 18], Available from: <http://www.ayujournal.org>
23. Nadkarni A.K., Indian Materia Medica Vol. II, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 2007; Pg. 191-195.