

# Demographical & Geographical Prevalence of Balaroga and Their Preventive Approaches as per Ayurveda

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## REVIEW ARTICLE

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### ABSTRACT

Children are the assets who play an important role in the development of a country. Starting phase of their life is the most crucial period as it is the base of their physical, mental and behavioral development. According to Indian demographic profile 26.98% of the population is of children between 0-14 years. India is having high mortality rate of children less than 5 years of age. Most of the death in the *Balyavastha* occurs due to the *Aptarpanjanya Vyadhi* (malnutrition). According to the WHO, worldwide the leading causes of death among children under five years of age are acute respiratory infections, diarrhea, congenital anomalies, infectious diseases etc. *Ayurveda* has described many *Balaroga* and their *Chikitsa* under the *Kaumarbhritya* branch.

**Keywords:** Ayurveda, Balaroga, Aahara, Malnutrition

## 1. Introduction

*Ayurveda* considers each and every aspect of life as the important one. Thus *Balyavastha* and *Bala Roga* have given an important place in the *Ayurveda* in its branch called as *Kaumarbhritya*. Many *Ayurvedic* scholars have mentioned in detail about the neonatal care and *Balyavastha* in literatures like *Aroyakalpadrumam*. In these literatures they have mentioned in details about the *Bala Chikitsa* by keeping *Ahara*, *Vihara*, *Yoga* & *Pranayam* as the centre of focus. Diseases occurring in childhood are mostly congenital or due to change in way of living such as *Viruddh Ahara*, lack of sleep & lack of exercise, etc.

In 2011 census, three percent drop is seen in children (below six years of age) population as compared to census 2001. In Global Hunger Index 2019, India is at 102<sup>nd</sup> place in the list. It is placed below other south Asian countries like Nepal, Srilanka and Pakistan. According to this report India is facing a hunger crisis and only 9.6% of all children between 6-23 months of age are able to receive minimum acceptable diet. The malnutrition & poor hygienic, etc. are

some factors which make children susceptible towards the various diseases; Figure 1 represents prevalence of such diseases and their mortality percentage in children below 5 years of age. (1,2)

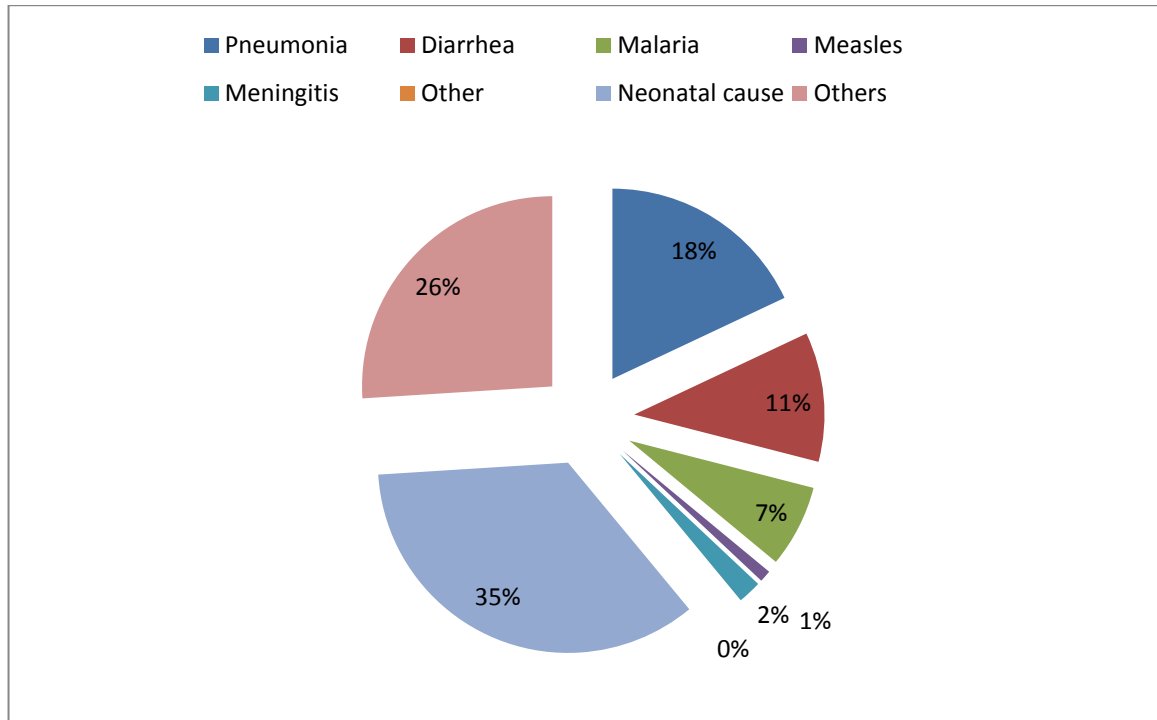
## 2. Some common diseases in children

According to the Global Burden of Disease Study (1990-2017), out of 1.04 million deaths in 2017 in India, over 7 lacks can be attributed to *Aptarpanjanya Vyadhi* (malnutrition). It is the reason for around 68% of death of children under five years of age. Disease burden is higher for the states like Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh & Bihar, etc.

### *Phakka Roga*

It is a *Kuposhanjanya Vyadhi* which is occurring due to improper formation of *Meda*, *Rasa*, *Astidhatu* and *Mamsa*. It can be related to Rickets disease. Different *Nidana* factors like *Agni Dosha*, vitamin deficiency, *Garbhini Dosha* etc; affect the digestion and absorption processes which results in deficiency of nutrients in body. Different symptoms of *Phakka roga* are *Peetakshi*; loss of *Uru*, *Bahu*, *Manda Chestha*, dullness, weakness, excessive

growth of abdomen and *Asthikshaya Lakshana*.



**Figure 1.** Disease prevalence and mortality in children (below 5 years of age)

Management of *Phakka roga* is done by balancing the vitiated *Kapha* and *Vata Doshas* along with proper *Ahara*. Improvement in *Agni* is done by various therapies like *Shodhana*, *Deepana* and *Pachana*. If the disease is at *Balaka* stage, it is advised to take *Amruta ghruta*, *Shatapala Ghruta*, *Raja Taila* orally followed by *Virechana*. Numbers of cases reported for *Phakka roga* are increasing in India due to less exposure of sunlight & malnutrition. If the disease is not treated with time, it can lead to *Asthi Vakraata* in children and *Asthi Vakraata* in Adults.

### Diarrhea

Diarrhea is the leading cause of death among children under the age of five years. It account for 1 in 9 child deaths worldwide. Approximately, two million deaths each year occurs due to diarrheal diseases. In *Ayurveda*, it is mentioned as *Atisara* which indicates passing of watery stool through anus. Most of the time, it occurs due to the invasion of *Krimi* (microbe) into the body. It is reported mostly in the countries like India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, African countries. Unavailability of clean water, unhygienic conditions, poor sanitation, and malnutrition are the main causes of the diarrhea.

*Ayurveda* suggested various approaches for treating *Atisara* such as; *Sama* and *Nirama Avastha* of the *Doshas* are looked first. Drugs having property like *Pachana*, *Langhana*, *Deepana*, etc. are used. Some compound formulations like *Balchaturbhadra Churna* (combination of *Mustha*, *Pippali*, *Ativisha* and *Karksatsringi*), *Dhanya Pachak Kwatha* (combination of *Netrabala*, *Bilva*, *Mustaka*, *Dhanyaka*, *Shunthi*), *Samangadi Kwatha* can be used. There are many single drugs available in the *Ayurveda* for the treatment of such as *Atisara* like; *Bhanga*, *Jatiphala*, *Bilva*, *Patha*, *Pippali* etc.

### Measles

It is a *Sankramak Roga* caused by the virus of *Paramyxovirus* family. According to WHO, around 140,000 people died due to Measles and mostly are the children below five years of age. It has resulted into *Janapadodhwamsa* in the past century. It spreads through various means such as *Nihsvasat* (expired air), *Sahabhajnata* (sharing food), *Gatrasansparsat* (through physical contact) etc.

In *Ayurveda*, measles is mentioned with the mane of *Romantika*, i.e. disease of the pores of skin. It is an *Agantuja Vyadhi* caused by vitiated *Pitta* and *Kapha Dosha*. It is a disease

which occurs due to *Dosha prakopa*, *Strotavaigunya* and *Dosha vriddhi*. All this leads to *Dhatu avarana* and *Dhatu Kshaya*. Its incubation period varies from 7-14 days. Symptoms of measles are *Jwara*, cold, cough, headache, pinkish or reddish rashes on the body, weakness and irritation.

Some herbs are mentioned in *Ayurveda* for treating Measles such as Ginger, Sandal, *Neem*, Lemon, Saffron, Clove etc. *Neem* is considered to have anti-viral properties and can prevent the spread from one person to another. Clove oil can work as an analgesic. *Ayurveda* also mentioned emesis & purgation therapies for treatment.

### Malaria

It is a leading cause of death among young children globally. Nearly forty percent of world's countries are exposed to the Malaria. More than eighty percent of death occurs in the African regions from malaria only. Children below five years of age and pregnant women are the most susceptible group for the infection. *Plasmodium falciparum* is considered as the leading cause behind the spread of Malaria in the African countries. It is responsible for around twenty-four percent of death in African region.

*Ayurveda* considered Malaria as a *Vishama Jawara*. This has sudden, irregular onset and action. It involves various *Dhatu*s such as *Mamsa* (muscles), *Meda* (fat), *Rasa* (nutrient rich fluid), *Rakta* (blood), *Asthi* (bone), *Majja* (bone marrow) and *Shukra* (reproductive cells). It can be considered similar as *Santata* (fever for seven days or more), *Anyedyu Jwara* (remission period within 24 hours) and *Tritiyaka Jwara*. Alongwith *Jwara* various symptoms such as nausea, loss of appetite, rashes, vomiting, body ache, high temperature, profuse sweating, thirst, fainting and confusion etc. are also reported. (3)

In *Ayurveda*, drugs like *Indrayava* seeds, *Patola* leaves, *Katurohini*, *Nimba*, *Triphala*, *Guduci* & *Amalaki* etc. are prescribed for the treatment of *Ayurveda* in various combinations. All these plants are used according to their properties such as *Kshaya* (astringent taste), *Tikta rasa* (bitter taste) & *Pitta shamaka* (balances *Pitta*) etc. *Ayurvedic*

texts have mentioned various preventive measures also such as fumigation of *Nimba*, *Haritaki*, *Kustha*; formulations like *Ashtang Dhupa* & *Guggalvadi Dhupa* etc.

### Respiratory diseases

Around nine million children (under five years of age) die annually worldwide due to respiratory diseases, *Pneumonia* being the leading killer. Some other diseases like asthma, acute lower respiratory infections are also affecting children badly. *Pneumonia* results in death of nearly 1.4 million children under the age of five. It is most prevalent in Africa and south Asian countries. In *Ayurveda*, respiratory diseases are considered as *Swasa Roga* affecting the *Pranavaha Srotas*. They are caused by the vitiated *Kapha-Vata* and their accumulation in the respiratory tract. Etiological factors can be *Aharaja hetu* (*Viruddh Ahara*), *Viharaja Hetu* (regimen) etc. Herbs used for the treatment are *Brahmi*, *Haridra*, *Dugdika*, *Vasa*, *Tulsi*, *Pippali*, and *Shatavari*.

*Tamaka-Shwas* (Asthma) is a common chronic disease affecting young children. It causes difficulty in breathing, tightness in chest, wheeze, cough and abnormal breathing. Various treatment modalities are mentioned in *Ayurveda* for treatment of Asthma in children such as *Mridu Shodhana* therapy can be done in children below ten years of age and above it *Virechana* therapy can be done. Some medicines used for treating Asthma are *Sitopaladi Churna*, *Balchaturbhadra churna*, *Swaskuthar Rasa*, *Khadiradi Vati*, *Dashmula Kwath*, *Nayopayam Kwath* & *Agastya Rasayan* etc. One should avoid fast food, fish, cold food, preservatives, and exposure to chemicals, allergens, dust and smoke. (4-7)

### 3. Conclusion

Socio-economic status, lack of antenatal, postnatal care, lack of nutritious food, lack of financial support, medical facilities; unhygienic conditions results in the increased prevalence and incidence of diseases. Malnourished, obese children; are at higher risk of dying from infectious diseases, and their complications. In *Ayurveda*, to treat malnutrition *Brihanachikitsa* is prescribed. *Ayurvedic* therapies improve the appetite,

balance the vitiated *Doshas*, and improve digestion, *Agni*, increases immunity. *Ayurveda* tries to improve overall health of not only children but also of mother. In every country governments are trying to bring down the mortality and morbidity rates of children and pregnant mothers.

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### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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