

### Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

In Ayurveda food is considered medicine. Foods are categorized according to their taste, their effect on the doshas, as well as their effect on the tissues. This is why when choosing foods it is important to understand nutritional and Ayurvedic properties of food. Since centuries rice forms an essential component of the Indian diet. It is in fact a staple food of India, with most Indian homes serving the same every day. According to Ayurveda, old rice has proved to be a great healing food and hence it is recommended to every human being. There are many varieties of rice available and several ways of cooking it. Out of the several varieties of rice, the most common are polished rice, unpolished rice, par boiled rice, boiled rice and basmati rice. The ancient texts of Ayurveda provide a detailed analysis of the effects of both the variety and the processing of rice on our individual mind/body constitutions. In this newsletter we shall see the properties of Rice according to Ayurveda.

We welcome your suggestion and submissions

Enjoy reading and get benefited by Ayurveda.

Vaidya Lakshmi Anoop

### Ayurvedic view on Rice

Different forms of preparations of rice are used in Indian custom - Rice roasted directly in fire (Dana / Bhujia) is consumed with salt or spices; Rice flour (Pisht) is used for making chapatti, soups and chilla; Rice pop (Murmure / Lava / Khil) is used to make namkin or used directly for consumption and it helps in vomiting; Pressed / Flattened rice (Poha) is used for making Indian breakfast. Among all varieties of rice, brown rice or red rice provides the most benefits for your health and nutrition. Brown rice is considered healthier as it is unprocessed (unpolished) and thus contains more nutrition and vitamins than other forms of polished rice. It also has a "medium" glycemic index, which is lower than other varieties of rice, and thus better suited for those who suffer from diabetes.

Ayurveda recommends avoiding excess consumption of rice that is parboiled, instant or pre-cooked because it has less nutrition and less prana, or life energy, in it. Rice contributes the sweet taste, according to Ayurveda. It is a light, soft, smooth and nourishing food. It is cooling in nature. Rice is generally good for balancing Vata and Pitta. However old rice does not increase Kapha. The Ayurvedic treatise Charaka Samhita (c. 700 B.C.) praised the medicinal value of certain varieties of rice – to balance or pacify all the mind/body constitutions (vata, pitta and kapha), to strengthen, revitalize and energize the body, regulate blood pressure, and to prevent skin diseases and premature aging. But not all rice is the same. Indeed, Ayurvedic treatises document the properties of different varieties of rice, grown in different seasons, in different growing areas, soil types (marshy or dry soils), land preparation (plowed or unplowed land), planting method (broadcast or transplanted), post harvest processing, and aging of rice (new or one/two-year old rice).



### Ayurvedic Properties of Rice

Rasa (Taste): Sweet  
Virya (Potency): Cooling  
Vipaka (Post digestive effect): Sweet  
Guna (Qualities): Unctuous, nourishing and Strength promoting.  
Brown rice is light to digest and white polished rice is slightly heavy to digest  
Actions on the doshas: Balances Vata and Pitta and increases Kapha. But old rice does not increase Kapha.

"Old rice" (one year maturity after harvest) versus new rice (Freshly harvested rice)

Freshly harvested rice is hard to digest, whereas 1-year-old rice is "lighter" and two-year old rice is even more "excellent in quality". Also Ayurveda texts explain that old rice is wholesome in diabetes and obesity. Ayurveda recommends storage of rice in moist free airtight containers.

Now – a – days we are eating newer and newer rice which is becoming harder and harder for us to digest. With respect to the preparation of rice, the Ayurvedic texts explain that dry roasting (i.e. drying over heat) certain varieties of rice can make them "light" to digest and hence beneficial when the digestive fire is low. In addition, there are references to the digestive benefits of soaking rice prior to cooking it. Soaking the rice for at least 1 hour prior to cooking them will make it lighter for digestion.

### Some benefits of rice mentioned in Ayurveda texts –

From Ayurvedic point of view, rice provides the basis of wide range of healing gruels. Rice was prepared as a thin stew with specific spices to treat different illnesses.

- Khichadi made of old rice and mung is beneficial to a person suffering from fever or stomach disorder.
- Rice gruel mixed with ghee or butter is advised throughout pregnancy. As rice, ghee and butter are cooling and anabolic, they nourish the mother – to be as well as help in proper growth of the fetus.
- Old rice is beneficial in diabetes and obesity.

- Indications of rice wash water (Tandulodaka) are also mentioned in many disorders like bleeding disorders, leucorrhoea, etc.

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### Khichari for Tridosha - A wholesome meal for one and all

Benefits - Khichari for Tridosha balances Vata, Pitta and Kapha by providing complete tissue nourishment. It helps in elimination of Ama (metabolic toxins) and improved Agni (metabolic fire). It serves as meal in fever, nausea, loss of appetite.

Ingredients –Dhanya (Oryza sativa), Mudga (Vigna radiata), Jiraka (Cuminum cyminum), Rajika (Brassica juncea), Haridra (Curcuma longa), Dhanyak (Coriandrum sativum), Twak (Cinnamomum zeylanicum), Curry leaf, Lavana (Rock salt), Ghrita (Ghee)



How to prepare Khichadi?–Take one cup (100 gm) and add 3 times water and cook on slow heat. If required more water can be added while cooking. This serves one person.

For more details on Khichari please [click here](#)

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