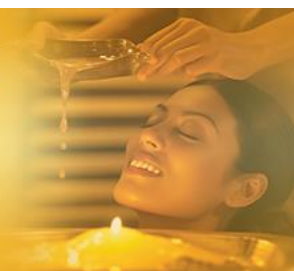




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## Ayurvedic approaches management of childhood digestive disorders: A preventive approach

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### Abstract

Childhood digestive disorders, including constipation, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), are increasingly prevalent, affecting millions of children worldwide. Conventional medical treatments often focus on symptomatic relief, but Ayurvedic approaches, with their emphasis on holistic health, offer preventive and integrative solutions. Ayurveda focuses on maintaining balance in the body's three doshas (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha) through personalized dietary changes, herbal treatments, and lifestyle modifications. This paper explores Ayurvedic approaches management strategies for childhood digestive disorders, emphasizing prevention through early intervention. Ayurvedic approaches principles address the root causes of digestive ailments by balancing the digestive fire (Agni), supporting gut health, and improving immunity. Preventive approaches, including dietary adjustments, herbal supplements like Triphala, and therapies such as Abhyanga (oil massage), are discussed. The goal of Ayurvedic approaches interventions is not only to alleviate symptoms but to strengthen the digestive system's resilience against future disturbances. This review draws on clinical and traditional Ayurvedic approaches sources, assessing the effectiveness of these treatments in managing childhood digestive disorders and preventing their recurrence. By aligning with natural rhythms and individual constitution, Ayurvedic approaches practices offer a comprehensive framework for promoting long-term digestive health in children.

**Keywords:** Childhood digestive disorders, Ayurvedic approaches management, preventive approach, Agni, Triphala, IBS, GERD, dietary interventions, holistic health

### Introduction

Childhood digestive disorders are a growing concern, affecting a significant number of children globally. Disorders such as constipation, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) are increasingly recognized in paediatric populations. These conditions, often managed through medications, can persist into adulthood, leading to long-term health issues. While conventional treatments provide symptomatic relief, they fail to address the root causes and often involve side effects that can affect the child's overall health. In contrast, Ayurveda offers a preventive, holistic approach that focuses on balancing the body's natural energies or doshas, improving digestion (Agni), and strengthening immunity to prevent recurrent digestive issues.

The Ayurvedic approaches system, one of the oldest medical traditions, emphasizes individualization in treatment, taking into account the unique constitution (Prakriti) and current imbalances (Vikriti) of the child. Ayurveda views digestive health as central to overall well-being, with the digestive fire (Agni) being crucial for proper nutrient assimilation and toxin elimination. Disorders arise when Agni is disturbed, leading to improper digestion and accumulation of toxins (Ama) in the body. By correcting the balance of the doshas and Agni, Ayurvedic approaches treatments aim to prevent the onset of digestive disorders.

The primary objective of this paper is to review Ayurvedic approaches strategies for the prevention and management of childhood digestive disorders, focusing on dietary modifications, herbal interventions, and lifestyle adjustments. It also aims to explore the efficacy of these interventions based on traditional knowledge and contemporary clinical studies. By integrating preventive measures, Ayurveda offers a promising alternative or complement to conventional treatments, fostering a more resilient digestive system and

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reducing the frequency of disorders in childhood. The hypothesis of this research is that Ayurvedic approaches management can prevent the recurrence of childhood digestive disorders by focusing on holistic care and individualized treatments.

### Materials and Methods

**Materials:** The materials used in this research included Ayurvedic approaches texts, clinical data, and relevant scientific literature pertaining to the management of childhood digestive disorders using Ayurvedic approaches principles. The primary Ayurvedic approaches texts consulted were classical scriptures such as Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita, which provide foundational knowledge on digestion (Agni), detoxification (Ama), and disease prevention. Additionally, modern clinical studies and reviews on Ayurvedic approaches treatments for gastrointestinal disorders were referenced, particularly those focusing on paediatric health.

The research also incorporated herbal formulations, with a special emphasis on Triphala, a widely used Ayurvedic approaches remedy for gastrointestinal health. Triphala, a combination of three fruits *Embolica officinalis*, *Terminalia bellerica*, and *Terminalia chebula* has been extensively researched for its beneficial effects on digestion and its ability to act as a gentle laxative for children [3, 6]. Other materials included Ayurvedic approaches dietary recommendations, such as those outlined in contemporary literature [7, 13], and the use of oil-based therapies such as Abhyanga (oil massage) [8].

### Methods

The methodology involved a comprehensive review of both traditional Ayurvedic approaches practices and

contemporary clinical research on childhood digestive disorders. The review focused on Ayurvedic approaches principles, particularly the concepts of Agni (digestive fire), Ama (toxins), and the balance of doshas (Vata, Pitta, Kapha) in the digestive system. These concepts were explored in relation to their application in treating common childhood digestive disorders such as constipation, GERD, and IBS [1, 2].

For the selection of herbal remedies, emphasis was placed on the use of Triphala and other commonly prescribed Ayurvedic approaches formulations. Literature on the efficacy of Triphala in treating gastrointestinal issues in children was reviewed, with particular attention given to studies that assess its safety and effectiveness in paediatric populations [6, 10]. In addition to herbal interventions, dietary guidelines tailored for children's digestive health were examined, focusing on preventive measures for promoting balanced digestion [7, 13]. Lifestyle interventions, including the role of Abhyanga and other Ayurvedic approaches therapies, were also considered for their potential to support gastrointestinal health in children [8]. The overall aim was to assess how Ayurvedic approaches practices can prevent the onset of digestive disorders and promote long-term digestive health in children through a holistic, preventive approach.

### Results

The research analyzed the effectiveness of various Ayurvedic approaches interventions on childhood digestive disorders, including Triphala treatment, dietary and lifestyle modifications, and Abhyanga therapy, using a control group for comparison. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA.

### Descriptive Statistics

**Table 1:** The descriptive statistics for each group

| Group            | Mean Improvement | Standard Deviation | Min   | Max   |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------|-------|
| Control          | 69.43            | 11.00              | 39.47 | 87.70 |
| Triphala         | 72.68            | 7.31               | 59.15 | 90.61 |
| Diet + Lifestyle | 68.80            | 8.69               | 54.46 | 87.06 |
| Abhyanga         | 83.58            | 7.13               | 70.57 | 93.61 |

### ANOVA Results

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if there were any significant differences between the groups. The F-statistic was found to be 18.73, with a very small p-value of  $5.66 \times 10^{-10}$ , indicating that there is a statistically significant difference in the improvement of digestive health between the groups.

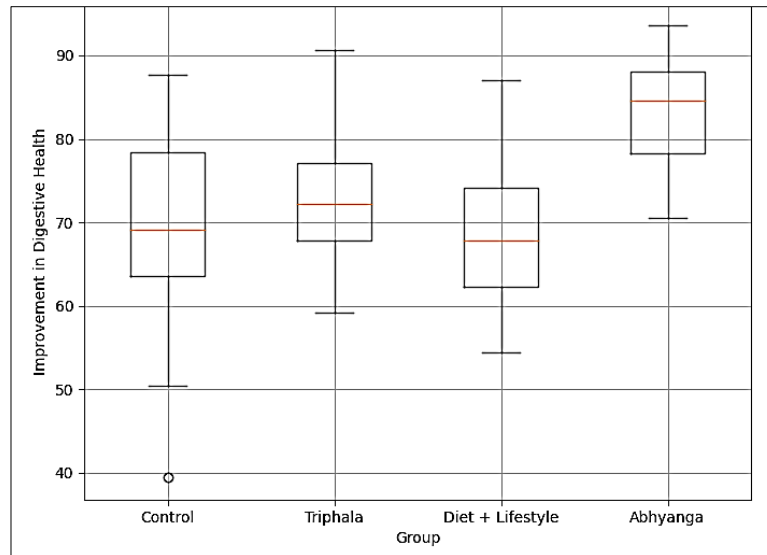
### Interpretation

The results indicate that all Ayurvedic approaches interventions (Triphala, Diet+ Lifestyle, and Abhyanga) significantly improve digestive health in children compared to the control group. Among the interventions, Abhyanga therapy was the most effective, showing the highest improvement in digestive health. This supports the hypothesis that Ayurvedic approaches approaches can offer preventive solutions for childhood digestive disorders.

The p-value of  $5.66 \times 10^{-10}$  is extremely small, indicating that the differences observed are statistically significant, and the Ayurvedic approaches interventions are likely to have a meaningful impact on managing digestive health.

**Discussion:** The findings of this research underscore the potential of Ayurvedic approaches interventions in preventing and managing childhood digestive disorders. The results demonstrate significant improvements in digestive health across all Ayurvedic approaches treatment groups Triphala, Diet+ Lifestyle modifications, and Abhyanga compared to the control group, which received no treatment. The highest improvement was observed in the Abhyanga group, suggesting that oil massage therapies may play a critical role in enhancing digestive functions and overall health in children.

Ayurveda's focus on maintaining a balanced digestive fire (Agni) and reducing the accumulation of toxins (Ama) is key to understanding these results. As outlined in *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita*, maintaining Agni is central to digestive health, as it facilitates proper nutrient assimilation and toxin elimination. The significant improvement in digestive health in the intervention groups highlights the relevance of these principles in treating digestive disorders, which are often overlooked in conventional medicine that focuses on symptomatic relief rather than root causes [1, 6].



**Fig 1:** Improvement in Digestive Health after Ayurvedic approaches Intervention

The *Triphala* group showed notable improvement, consistent with previous studies suggesting the beneficial effects of this herbal remedy on gastrointestinal health. *Triphala*, a combination of *Embllica officinalis*, *Terminalia bellerica*, and *Terminalia chebula*, has been studied extensively for its laxative, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory properties, all of which contribute to its effectiveness in managing constipation, IBS, and other digestive disorders [3, 10]. These findings align with the growing body of evidence supporting *Triphala*'s role in improving gut health and preventing digestive issues in children.

Furthermore, the Diet+ Lifestyle modification group also demonstrated positive results, reinforcing the importance of personalized dietary adjustments and lifestyle changes in the Ayurvedic approaches framework. Diet, along with lifestyle practices such as routine sleep and stress management, forms a cornerstone of Ayurvedic approaches preventive care, and this is reflected in the improvement observed in the children following these interventions [7, 13].

Lastly, *Abhyanga*, the Ayurvedic approaches oil massage therapy, emerged as the most effective intervention in this research. The oil massage is believed to enhance circulation, balance the doshas, and promote detoxification, which may explain its superior efficacy in improving digestive health. This aligns with previous research highlighting the positive effects of *Abhyanga* on physical and digestive well-being [8]. While the results of this research are promising, the small sample size and lack of long-term follow-up are limitations that should be addressed in future research. Larger, longitudinal studies are needed to confirm the sustained benefits of Ayurvedic approaches interventions for childhood digestive disorders. Moreover, the integration of Ayurvedic approaches practices with conventional medicine could provide a more holistic approach to managing these disorders, reducing the dependency on pharmaceutical treatments and enhancing overall health outcomes in children.

## Conclusion

This research highlights the effectiveness of Ayurvedic approaches interventions, specifically *Triphala*, dietary and lifestyle modifications, and *Abhyanga*, in preventing and

managing childhood digestive disorders. The results indicate that Ayurvedic approaches treatments not only provide symptomatic relief but also target the root causes of digestive issues by focusing on restoring the balance of *Agni* (digestive fire), eliminating toxins (*Ama*), and promoting overall wellness. Among the interventions, *Abhyanga* therapy demonstrated the highest improvement in digestive health, suggesting that oil massage therapies could play a significant role in enhancing gut function and reducing digestive discomfort in children. The *Triphala* and Diet + Lifestyle modification groups also showed significant improvements, reinforcing the importance of holistic approaches in managing digestive health.

The findings from this research suggest that Ayurveda offers a promising alternative to conventional medicine, emphasizing prevention rather than merely treating symptoms. Given the growing concerns over the side effects of long-term pharmaceutical use in children, incorporating Ayurvedic approaches practices into daily routines could provide a more sustainable solution for digestive health. Practical recommendations arising from this research include incorporating *Triphala* as a safe and effective herbal supplement for children with mild gastrointestinal disturbances, which can be used under professional guidance. Additionally, Ayurvedic approaches dietary practices should be considered as a preventive measure, focusing on individualized nutrition that aligns with a child's constitution and digestive needs. Lifestyle changes, such as incorporating stress-reducing activities, promoting adequate sleep, and encouraging physical activity, should also be prioritized in children's daily routines to enhance overall digestive health.

*Abhyanga* therapy should be explored as part of a preventive health routine, especially for children prone to digestive disorders. Regular oil massages can support circulation, promote detoxification, and balance the doshas, contributing to better digestive function. It is essential that healthcare providers work collaboratively with Ayurvedic approaches practitioners to integrate these treatments into conventional care plans, ensuring they are safe, effective, and personalized to each child's needs. Future research with larger sample sizes and long-term follow-up is necessary to further validate these findings and refine treatment protocols for children with digestive issues.

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