



# Stanyaposhaka Modaka And Matrushakti Ksheerapaka: A Comprehensive Review Of Traditional Galactagogue Recipes In Integration With Ayurveda.

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## ABSTRACT

### INTRODUCTION:

A newborn receives essential nutrition and nourishment from the mother through Breastmilk. Breastfeeding is a natural and nurturing way of providing immunity to the baby. It helps in the strengthening of the bond between mother and baby while promoting adequate growth and development. Breastmilk contains macronutrients such as carbohydrates, fats and proteins and micronutrients such as Vitamins and minerals. Maternal dietary habits have been reported to influence human milk fatty acids composition. According to *Ayurveda*, the quantity and quality of *Stanya* (Breast milk) depends on the *Ahara* of the mother, as nourishing food leads to healthy *Rasa Dhatu*, of which *Stanya* is a *Upadhatu*. *Shigru* (*Moringa oleifera*) is *katu-tikta rasa* and *laghu-ruksha guna* which by its virtue does *stanyashodhana karma*, thus promoting *Shuddha* and *Pravriddha stanya*. *Lashuna* (*Allium sativum*) is *katu-tikta rasa* and *snigdha-tikshna guna* which is *Vata-kaphahara* and *stanyajanana* (Galactagogue) in action. Traditionally, a lot of recipes have been in vogue which help in better post-partum care of the mother and the child. Here, two recipes are described here with main ingredients as *Shigru* (*Moringa oleifera*) and *Lashuna* (*Allium sativum*).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The recipes are indigenous recipes which have been traditionally used in postpartum period, passed down orally by elderly women, and prepared using authentic methods. Details of *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* and *Karma* of *Stanyajanana* drugs were procured from classical texts.

## RESULTS:

The review highlights that the traditional practices of including *Shigru* (*Moringa oleifera*) and *Lashuna* (*Allium sativum*) in the diet is found to have benefits in enhancing lactation, digestion and maternal recovery in the postpartum phase. The classical texts also consider them as *Stanyajanana*.

## DISCUSSION:

The integration of Classical *Ayurveda* concepts with traditional practices highlights the relevance of time-tested dietary formulations in postpartum care. Recipes like *Modakas* and *Ksheerapaka* illustrate how food can serve as both medicine and nourishment to enhance maternal health and lactation.

## KEYWORDS:

*Ksheerapaka*, *Lashuna*, *Modaka*, *Shigru*, *Stanyajanana*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Breastfeeding, also known as nursing is the process of feeding a baby human milk, either directly from the breast or by expressing the milk and feeding it to the baby.<sup>[1]</sup> World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends Exclusive breast feeding for the first six months of baby's life. A newborn receives essential nutrition and nourishment from the mother through Breastmilk. Breastfeeding is a natural and nurturing way of providing immunity to the baby. It helps in the strengthening of the bond between mother and baby while promoting adequate growth and development. Breastmilk contains macronutrients such as carbohydrates, fats and proteins and micronutrients such as Vitamins and minerals. Vitamins, like D, K, and B12, can depend on the mother's dietary intake and stores. Minerals such as iron, copper, and zinc are also present, often with high bioavailability, meaning they are easily absorbed by the infant.<sup>[2]</sup>

Milk production occurs in stages, the first of which usually begins before the birth of the infant. The first milk is colostrum and is available after labour. Colostrum is high in protein, sodium, and immunoglobulins and is low in lactose. After 30 to 40 hours of postpartum, the milk composition is characterized by an increase in lactose content; dilution of other constituents occurs due to increased milk volume.<sup>[3]</sup> Milk contains microbiota like *Bifidobacterium* and *Lactobacillus*, which confer antibacterial activity to the gut along with the delivered oligosaccharides. Lactoferrin is also transmitted via breastmilk; it confers immunoprotecting against bacterial, viral, fungal, and parasitic infections by prohibiting the sequestration and degradation of iron by microbes.<sup>[4]</sup> Mother's diet plays an important factor for adequate lactation and stable maternal health.

According to *Ayurveda*, “*Rasat stanyam*” which means *Stanya* is formed from *Rasa Dhatu*.<sup>[5]</sup> *Rasa Dhatu* is the first *Dhatu* formed from the *Ahara Rasa*. According to *Acharya Charaka* and *Kashyapa*, when the pregnant lady eats the *Shad Rasyukta Aahara*, it is then divided into 3 parts. The 1st part is utilized for nourishment of her own body; 2nd part is used for formation of breast milk and 3rd part is for the development and nourishment of the foetus. Due to *pakwa ahara*, the *Madhura, Prasada* part of *rasa* flows into whole body by *Vyana vayu*. Through the *Dhamanis* the *Prasada* part of *rasa* reaches into breast and secretion of Breastmilk takes place. Proper nourishment of the mother is the need of the hour during the post-partum phase. A healthy diet of the mother results in the right nourishment of the *Rasa Dhatu* and *Stanya* formation which is essential for the proper growth and development of the baby.<sup>[6]</sup>

*Ayurveda* comprehensively addresses the qualities of *Stanya*, the attributes of the lactating mother and the numerous benefits of breastfeeding. *Soumanasya* (Happiness) has been considered as a major factor of *Stanya Pravriti*. *Stanyakshaya* is primarily caused by Mother’s psychosomatic issues and her diet. Psychological factors such as *Krodha* (anger), *Shoka* (grief), *Bhaya* (fear), *Irshya* (jealousy) and decreased affection (*Avatsalyatwa*) are identified as contributors of *Stanyakshaya*. Thus, Mother’s diet and psychological state plays a vital role in the quality of *Stanya*.<sup>[7]</sup>

*Stanyajanana* drugs are mentioned in Classical texts like *Charaka Samhita, Ashtanga Hrudaya* and *Bhavaprakasha* which promote the breastmilk production and also relieve *stanyavaha srotos dushti*. These drugs are generally *Vata-kaphahara, Snigdha, Madhura* and *Balya* in nature which supports both milk secretion and maternal recovery. Commonly mentioned *Stanyajanana* drugs are *Shatavri (Asperagus racemosa), Vidari (Pureris tuberosa), Yashtimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra), Shigru (Moringa oleifera)* and *Lashuna (Allium sativum)*.<sup>[8]</sup> Some of the *Stanyajanana* drugs have been traditionally used since ancient times in post-partum care. They are made into palatable forms like *Modakas* and *Ksheerapakas* integrating medical benefits and daily postpartum nourishment. Here we shall look into two traditional recipes with *Shigru (Moringa oleifera)* and *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* which are in vogue since yesteryears.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The formulation of the recipes was based on the combination of Classical *Ayurveda* formulations and traditional knowledge preserved through generations by elderly women in the community.

**2.1. Classical text Sources:** Classical texts like *Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hrudaya* and *Kashyapa Samhita* were consulted along with *Bhavaprakasha Nighantu* and *Raja Nighantu*. Details of *Rasa, Guna, Virya, Vipaka* and *Karma* of *Stanyajanana* herbs were procured from these texts.

**2.2. Traditional Knowledge:** Oral traditions from South India were consulted to gather data regarding regional post-partum practices and food recipes. Special emphasis was laid on collecting recipes exclusively made for increasing breast milk. Recipes were documented through informal interactions

with elderly women and Ayurveda practitioners. Common ingredients were assessed for their benefits with classical descriptions.

### 3. TRADITIONAL RECIPES FOR LACTATION SUPPORT

A large number of traditional recipes which have passed through generations are available for adequate lactation which are practised during the post-partum period. Two recipes involving *Shigru* (*Moringa oleifera*) and *Lashuna* (*Allium sativum*) as the main ingredients are described below.

#### 3.1. STANYA- POSHAKA MODAKA

##### Ingredients

1. *Shigru* (*Moringa oleifera*) Churna- 15 grams
2. *Haridra* (*Curcuma longa*) Churna- 2.5 grams
3. *Shushka Narikela* (*Cocos nucifera*)- 125 grams
4. *Vatada* (*Prunus amygdalus*) churna- 125 grams
5. Guda- 180 grams
6. Cow ghee- 45 mL
7. *Ela* (*Ellettaria cardamomum*) churna- 2.5 grams
8. *Tila* (*Sesamum indicum*)- 5 grams

##### Preparation of *Shigru* (*Moringa oleifera*) Churna

- Fresh Moringa leaves are taken and dried in shade until they are crisp.
- Then the leaves are dry fried to remove any excess moisture.
- After thorough drying, the leaves are made into powder.
- Store in a air tight container.

##### Preparation of *Haridra* (*Curcuma longa*) Churna

- Choose fully matured rhizomes and wash them thoroughly.
- Remove soil, impurities, rootlets and any damaged parts.
- Dry the rhizomes under sunlight for 7-15 days.
- Break the dried rhizomes into smaller pieces.
- Grind them in a clean, dry grinder and pulverize.
- Store in a air tight container.

##### Preparation of *Vatada* (*Prunus amygdalus*) Churna

- Soak almonds in clean water overnight (6-8 hours) to soften and loosen the skin.

- Drain the water and peel off the skin.
- Spread the peeled Almonds on a clean cloth and sundry for 2-3 days.
- Break the almonds into smaller pieces, grind then and sieve them to get smooth churna.
- Store in an airtight container.

### Procedure to make *Modakas*.

1. In a Kadai, heat 45 mL of Cow's ghee. Add 2.5 grams of *Haridra (Curcuma longa) churna* to it.
2. Add Grated *Shushka narikela (Cocos nucifera)* and fry until golden brown.
3. Next add *Vatada (Prunus amygdalus) churna*, *Guda*, *Shigru (Moringa oleifera) churna* and fry it well.
4. Turn off the stove and add *Ela (Ellettaria cardamomum) churna*.
5. Make small *Modakas* when hot.
6. Dry roast the *Tila (Sesamum indicum)* and spread them over a plate.
7. Roll the *Modakas* over the plate of *Tila (Sesamum indicum)*.
7. *Modakas* should ideally be of 15g size.
8. Store it in an air tight container and use it conveniently for 1 week to 15 days.



Fig: 1

### 3.2. MATRUSHAKTI KSHEERAPAKA

#### Ingredients:

1. *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* cloves- 10 grams (4-5 cloves)
2. Cow ghee- 10 mL
3. *Ksheera*- 80 mL
4. *Guda (Saccharum officinarum)*- 10 grams
5. *Ela (Ellettaria cardamomum) Churna*- 2.5 grams
6. Water- 320 mL

### Procedure to make *ksheerapaka* [9]

1. Initially chop the *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* cloves and fry them in ghee.
2. Take 20mL of milk and 20mL of water the boil the *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* cloves until water evaporates.
3. In a separate vessel, heat 80 mL of milk and 320 mL of water, add the *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* cloves, *Guda* and *Ela (Ellettaria cardamomum)* *churna*.
4. Boil until the water evaporates.
5. Serve it warm, once a day preferably early in the morning



**Fig:2**

INGREDIENT	LATIN NAME	RASA	GUNA	VIRYA	VIPAKA	DOSHAGNATA
<b>Shigru</b>	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Tikshna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha-vatahara</i>
<b>Haridra</b>	<i>Curcuma longa</i>	<i>Tikta, Katu</i>	<i>Ruksha, Laghu</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha-pittahara</i>
<b>Guda</b>	<i>Saccharum officinarum</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Snigdha, Guru</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Vata-pittahara</i>
<b>Narikela</b>	<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Guru, snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Vata-pittahara</i>
<b>Vatada</b>	<i>Prunus amygdalus</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Snigdha, Guru</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Vata-pittahara</i>
<b>Ela</b>	<i>Ellettaria cardamomum</i>	<i>Katu, Madhura</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha-vatahara</i>
<b>Tila</b>	<i>Sesamum indicum</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Sukshma, Ushna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Vatahara</i>
<b>Lashuna</b>	<i>Allium sativum</i>	<i>Amla varjita pancharasa</i>	<i>Snigdha, Guru, Sara</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha-vata hara</i>
<b>Go Ghrita</b>	-	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Snigdha, Sheeta, Mridu</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Vata-pittahara</i>

<i>Go ksheera</i>		<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Snigdha, Guru, Mridu</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Madhra</i>	<i>Vata-pittahara</i>
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**Table 1: RASA PANCHAKA OF THE INGREDIENTS USED [10]**

#### 4. RESULTS:

These two recipes are passed on from generations and have been used in post-partum care of women. It can be given to Lactating mothers from 21<sup>st</sup> day of Post partum up to 6 months on alternate days. Most of the drugs used are of *Madhura rasa* and *Madhura Vipaka* which help in *Rasa Dhatu Utpatti* and promote *Stanya* formation. *Shigru (Moringa oleifera)* and *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* have been used as main drugs for the preparation of *Modaka* and *Ksheerapaka* respectively which have the property of *Stanyajanana*.

#### 5. DISCUSSION:

*Sutika Paricharya* is mentioned extensively in classics which includes *Ahara* (diet), *Aushadha* (medicines) and *Vihara* (regimens). These are mentioned for a period of at least one and half month up to 6-month duration which aims at restoration of health of the postnatal woman in all aspects. *Sutika Paricharya* includes *Deepana*, *Pachana*, *Vata Anulomana*, *Bala Vruddhi*, *Stanya janana* and *Brimhana*.<sup>[11]</sup>

*Shigru (Moringa oleifera)* is *Tikta rasa pradhana* which detoxifies the system and prevents milk stagnation. Due to its *Ushna virya*, it does *srotoshodhana*.<sup>[12]</sup> Due to its *Amapachana* and *Agnideepana* property, it helps in the *Utpatti* of *Stanya*. Moringa leaves are rich in Vitamins (A, B and C), minerals (Calcium, iron, potassium), protein, essential amino acids, and phytosterols like stigmaterol, sitosterol and kampesterol. These phytosterols stimulate milk production by increasing estrogen levels and promoting mammary gland development. The *Shigru (Moringa oleifera) patra* has been used since ancient times as a Galactagogue.<sup>[13]</sup>

- Although *Haridra (Curcuma longa)* is not primarily a *stanyajanana* drug, it plays an indirect role in supporting lactation due to its *Deepana*, *shodhana* and *Krimighna* action. *Haridra (Curcuma longa)* can be used in *Rasa* and *Raktavaha srotodushti*. Due to its anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial properties, it can be used in the management of *stanyadushti* and *stanyakshyaya*. In traditional post-partum recipes, it has been commonly used as an additive.
- *Guda* due to its *Madhura rasa* and *Madhura vipaka*, it nourishes the *Rasa dhatu* which in turn nourishes the *stanya*. *Snigdha* and *Guru guna* of *Guda* helps in *Dhatu poshana*. As *Guda* is *Rasayana* and *Balya*, it helps in the promoting the health of both the mother and the child. *Guda* is *Madhura rasa* and *Manah-prahladaka* in action, thus it helps in promoting a positive mind. It also acts as an effective binding agent for the *Modakas*. Traditional post-partum recipes across South India often include Jaggery as it helps new mother regain strength, supports lactation and enhances haemoglobin.
- *Narikela (Cocos nucifera)* has been traditionally used in most of the post-partum recipes as it is believed to enhance lactation. Due to its *Madhura rasa* and *Madhura vipaka*, it nourishes the *rasa* and *rakta*

*dhatu* which supports *Stanya Utpatti*. When added as an adjuvant in recipes, due to its *Sheeta virya*, it helps in balancing pitta.

- *Vatada (Prunus amygdalus)* does *Brimhana* and *Rasayana* which nourishes the *Rasa dhatu*. Almonds are rich in Vitamin E, magnesium, iron, proteins and B-vitamins which help in breastmilk secretion and improving milk quality in lactating mothers.<sup>[14]</sup>
- *Ela (Ellettaria cardamomum)* is primarily *Deepana* and *Pachana* in action which help in maintaining the *Agni* of an individual. *Sheeta veerya* and *Hrudya karma* of *Ela (Ellettaria cardamomum)* support the emotional wellbeing of the mother which is crucial for effective milk production.
- *Tila (Sesamum indicum)* is a well-known *Stanyajanana Dravya* as mentioned in *Bhavaprakasha Nighantu*.<sup>[15]</sup> *Tila (Sesamum indicum)* is rich in Calcium, Iron, Zinc, healthy fats and phytoestrogens which support lactation according to modern science.<sup>[16]</sup>
- *Kashyapa Samhita* mentions *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* as *Rasayana*.<sup>[17]</sup> *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* is mentioned as *stanyashodhaka* in *Charaka Samhita*.<sup>[18]</sup> The *Ushna virya* and *Tikshna guna* of *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* stimulate *Agni* which promotes *rasa dhatu* and thereby nourishes the *stanya*. A study was conducted on the benefits of *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* in post-partum women. It was found that *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* supplementation altered the odour of breastmilk and increased nursing in infants, suggesting enhanced palatability.<sup>[19]</sup> Even in naturopathy, Garlic is listed as a natural Galactagogue.
- *Ghrita* is known for its property of *Brimhana*, *Balya* and *Rasayana*. Acharya Charaka mentions that *Ghrita* is *Ayushya*, *Medhya* and *Balya*.<sup>[20]</sup> It is also *yogavahi* in nature. *Ghrita* is extensively used as a base for many *Kalpana yogas* used in post-partum women. Ghee is considered to be rich in essential fatty acids and fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E and K) which help in post-partum recovery and enhance breast milk production.
- *Ksheera* is considered as *Jeevaniya* and *Rasayana* according to *Charaka Samhita*. Cow milk is considered as the best elixir and has properties similar to that of *Ojas*.<sup>[21]</sup> *Ksheera* is also *Brimhana*, *Balya*, *Rasyana* and *Jeevaniya* in action. Due to these properties, it helps in effective recovery of the post-partum woman. *Kashyapa Samhita* emphasizes on the importance of Cow's ghee for lactating mothers. Milk provides protein, calcium, fats and vitamins A, B2, B12 and D which are essential for lactating mothers.

## 6. CONCLUSION:

*Rasa Dhatu* and *Vata dosha* play an important role in the process of *Stanyajanana*. The formulations discussed here are time- tested formulations which have been in vogue since ancient time. They are a rational combination of *Stanyajanana* drugs along with household ingredients. *Shigru (Moringa oleifera)* is *tikta-katu rasa* and *laghu-ruksha guna* and does *Agnideepana* and *srotoshodhana*, which supports the flow of *stanya*. *Lashuna (Allium sativum)* has *Tikshna* and *ushna* properties and is a *srotoshodhaka*. It is also a *Stanyajanana Dravya* and is used extensively in *Sutika parichrya*.

Modern studies also support the nutritional benefits of Moringa- rich in iron, calcium and Vitamin A, sesame seeds- essential fatty acids and Almonds- rich in protein and Vitamin A which validate their properties as Galactagogues.

The use of traditional cooking methods such as *Ksheerapaka* and *Modaka* along with Ghee and Jaggery increases palatability and digestion. The combination used in these recipes serves dual roles as *Aahara* (Food) and *Aushadha* (Medicine), aligning with Ayurvedic concept of *Pathya* in *Sutika Paricharya*.

More research and randomised controlled trials are required to establish the efficacy of these traditional preparations.

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