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THERAPEUTIC AND NUTRITIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF *KUDHANYA VARGA* WITH REFERENCE TO MILLETS AND THEIR ROLE IN LIFESTYLE DISORDERS

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ABSTRACT

Lifestyle disorders stem from faulty daily habits in eating and living. Chief contributors include unhealthy food choices such as bakery items and junk food, as well as physical inactivity resulting from westernized lifestyles, collectively leading to obesity, diabetes mellitus, and metabolic syndrome. Ayurveda addresses disease management through medicinal herbs and minerals while simultaneously preventing lifestyle disorders via appropriate dietary practices. Classical Ayurvedic texts categorize food substances (*Ahara Dravya*) into various subgroups, among which *Kudhanya* (*Trin Dhanya*) represents a cluster of small-seeded cereals consumed as human food since antiquity. *Kudhanya Varga* is equated with nutri-cereals or millets in contemporary nomenclature. **Method:** Data on *Kudhanya* were gathered from *Samhita* and *Nighantu* texts, including synonyms, properties, and therapeutic actions across various lifestyle conditions. **Result:** *Kudhanya Varga* exhibits *Madhura-Kashaya Rasa, Katu Vipaka, Ushna Virya* and functions as *Kapha Shamaka* and *Vata-Pitta Prakopaka*. Its *Bruhaniya* property renders it beneficial in malnutrition, while conversely its *Laghu, Ruksha Guna*, and *Vilekhana Karma* make it applicable in obesity. **Conclusion:** There is an urgent need to leverage the nutritional potential of *Kudhanya* (millets) as dietary supplements and therapeutic agents in combating nutritional deficiencies.

KEYWORDS: *Kudhanya Varga, Millet, Nutri-cereals, Lifestyle Disorder.*

INTRODUCTION

Millets are small-seeded cereal crops that have served as a nutritional cornerstone for human civilizations since 8000 B.C.[6] Commonly described as 'nutri-cereals' or 'poor man's cereals,'

these grains once constituted the dietary backbone of early Indian populations, particularly those inhabiting arid and semi-arid regions. Abundant in dietary fiber, B-complex vitamins, essential minerals, and distinctive phytochemicals such as lignans and polyphenols, millets have re-emerged in contemporary times as advocates of health and ecological sustainability. Being non-glutinous, easily digestible, and non-acid-forming in nature, they are well suited for individuals with gluten intolerance or celiac disease. Their concentrated nutrient profile contributes to reducing the risk of heart disease, regulating blood glucose, facilitating digestion, and offering neuroprotective benefits against conditions such as Parkinson's disease.

The fundamental objective of Ayurveda is articulated as *"Swasthasya Swastha Rakshyanam Aturasya Vikar Prasamanm Cha"*[1], which underscores the dual mandate of preserving health in the well and restoring equilibrium in the diseased. In Ayurvedic philosophy, food (*Aahara*)[2] is accorded primacy as a therapeutic tool, a principle deeply embedded in classical compilations such as *Brihat Trayi* and *Laghu Trayi*. Within the grain taxonomy of Ayurveda, *Dhanya Varga* is organized according to nutritional characteristics, digestibility, and health effects. Among these subdivisions, *Kudhanya Varga* or *Kshudradhanya Varga*[3] is regarded as the Ayurvedic analogue of modern nutri-cereals, i.e., millets. In *Charak Samhita*, *Kudhanya Varga* is subsumed under *Sukadhanya Varga*[4], whereas *Astanga Hridaya* refers to it as *Trina Dhanya Varga*.[5]

Kudhanya denotes small-seeded, resilient grains capable of thriving under diverse climatic conditions with limited soil and water resources. They are fundamentally *Laghu* (light) and *Ruksha* (dry) in disposition, contributing to the alleviation of *Kapha* and *Pitta Doshas*. This renders them therapeutically valuable in lifestyle conditions like obesity, diabetes mellitus, and cardiovascular disorders. Their *Kashaya* (astringent) and *Madhura* (sweet) *Rasa* lend these grains purifying and rejuvenating qualities, reinforcing *Dosha* equilibrium and holistic well-being. Historically integral to traditional diets, these grains are currently witnessing renewed global interest due to their superior nutritional density, gluten-free composition, and therapeutic efficacy against contemporary lifestyle disorders including diabetes, obesity, hypertension, dyslipidaemia, cardiovascular disease, and metabolic syndrome.

In recognition of millets' exceptional potential, the United Nations—at India's initiative—designated 2023 as the "International Year of Millets." This landmark initiative sought to elevate global awareness about the unmatched advantages of millets and to catalyze their cultivation and consumption worldwide. By reintroducing these heritage grains into modern

diets, humanity can simultaneously address health crises, support environmental conservation, and honor a rich agro-cultural legacy.

Why Choose Millets?

1. **Nutritional Powerhouse:** Millets supply resistant starch, oligosaccharides, and health-promoting lipids.
2. **Health Protector:** They combat non-communicable diseases, facilitate bodily detoxification, and strengthen immune responses.
3. **Sustainable Farming:** They flourish under challenging environmental conditions, bolstering food security.
4. **Eco-Friendly Crop:** Millets demand minimal water, fewer pesticides, and reduced agricultural inputs.

Global Distribution and Production of Millets

Millets are drought-resistant cereals cultivated across semi-arid and tropical regions worldwide. India leads global millet production, followed by Nigeria, China, and several African nations. Their capacity to endure poor soils with minimal water inputs makes them a pivotal crop for global food security and sustainable agriculture.[6]

Table 1: Major Millet-Producing Countries – Global Overview.[6]

Rank	Country	Major Millets Grown	Production Contribution
1	India	Pearl Millet, Finger Millet, Sorghum, Foxtail Millet, Kodo Millet	40% of global production
2	Nigeria	Pearl Millet, Sorghum	20%
3	China	Foxtail Millet, Proso Millet	15%
4	Niger	Pearl Millet, Sorghum	10%
5	Mali	Pearl Millet, Sorghum	5%
6	Sudan	Pearl Millet, Sorghum	5%
7	Ethiopia	Finger Millet, Pearl Millet	3%
8	United States	Proso Millet, Foxtail Millet	2%
9	Russia	Proso Millet, Foxtail Millet	2%
10	Other Countries	Various Millets	3%

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1. To evaluate the role of *Kudhanya Varga* (millets) in the prevention and management of lifestyle disorders.
2. To examine the nutritional composition and therapeutic potential of *Kudhanya Varga*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

- Major Ayurvedic classical texts (*Brihatrayee* and allied references)
- Online reference journals and digital repositories
- Peer-reviewed scientific research publications

KUDHANYA VARGA

In Ayurvedic classification, *Kudhanya Varga* represents a distinct category of minor grains and cereals grouped under the broader *Dhanya Varga* (cereal classification). The term *Kudhanya* conventionally refers to smaller grains such as millets, valued historically for their nutritional and medicinal properties. These grains are recognized for their capacity to harmonize the three *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*). *Kudhanya* is also designated *Kshudradhanya*. Acharya Sushruta elaborated on *Kudhanya Varga* in *Annapanavidhi Adhyaya*. Acharya Charak identified *Kudhanya* as *Trupta Dhanya*[7] within *Sukadhanya Varga*, while *Astanga Hridaya* and *Bhavaprakasha* categorized it as *Trunadhanya Varga*.[8]

Etymology and Meaning

The term *"Kudhanya"* derives from the Sanskrit root *"Kud"*, meaning to boil or cook—underscoring that these grains necessitate processing prior to consumption. *"Varga"* denotes a category or classification, signifying a group of grains sharing comparable attributes.

Characteristics of Kudhanya

Kudhanya displays *Kashaya* and *Madhura Rasa*; *Laghu, Ruksha Guna*; *Ushna Virya*; *Katu Vipaka*; and exhibits *Lekhan, Grahi, Vata-Pitta Prakopaka,* and *Kaphahara* properties.[9]

1. **Smaller Grain Size:** Compared to staple cereals like rice and wheat, *Kudhanya* grains are notably smaller and typically harder in shell texture.
2. **Ease of Digestion:** Many of these grains are *Laghu* (light) in nature, making them well-tolerated even by individuals with compromised digestive capacity.
3. **Climatic Adaptability:** These grains are drought-tolerant and can thrive in nutrient-deficient soils, reinforcing their environmental and agricultural sustainability.

4. **Therapeutic Value:** Their distinctive nutrient profiles endow *Kudhanya* grains with significant utility in the management of diverse health conditions.

TYPES OF MILLETS AND THEIR AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

Millets are broadly categorized as major and minor based on cultivation scale, production volume, and consumption patterns. Major millets include Pearl Millet (*Bajra*), Finger Millet (*Ragi*), and Sorghum (*Jowar*), while minor millets comprise Foxtail Millet (*Kangni*), Proso Millet (*Chena*), Little Millet (*Kutki*), Kodo Millet (*Kodra*), and Barnyard Millet (*Sanwa*). In Ayurveda, the varieties classified under *Kudhanya Varga* include *Kangu/Priyangu, Cheenak/Cheena, Shyamak/Sawa, Kodrava/Koradusha, Gavedhuka, Yavanala,* and *Nartiki*.[10,11,12]

(a) Major Millets

1. Pearl Millet (Bajra)

Pearl Millet, or *Bajra*, has been a dietary staple in Indian cuisine for centuries, traditionally featured in *khichdi* and *rotis*. Predominantly cultivated in Rajasthan, it thrives in elevated temperatures and demonstrates exceptional resilience against drought, poor soil fertility, and salinity. Its substantial magnesium content is beneficial for asthma relief and migraine management, while its high fiber content prevents gallstone formation and supports gastrointestinal health.

Table 2: Ayurvedic Properties of Pearl Millet as Described in Classical Texts.

Text	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Dosha Action	Prabhava
Charaka Samhita	Madhura, Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Katu	↓Kapha, ↑Pitta	Aids digestion, supports energy, manages water retention
Sushruta Samhita	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Katu	↓Kapha, ↑Pitta	Weight management, digestive health, enhances stamina
Bhavaprakasha	Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Katu	↓Kapha, ↑Pitta	Supports metabolism, blood sugar management, physical endurance
Raj Nighantu	Kashaya, Tikta	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Katu	↓Kapha, ↑Pitta	Enhances strength, manages constipation, improves appetite

2. Finger Millet (Ragi / Nartiki)

Finger Millet, widely recognized as *Ragi*, is grown primarily in India, Sri Lanka, and Ethiopia. It supports digestion, delays the aging process, and mitigates the risk of heart disease. Its exceptional calcium content reinforces skeletal integrity, making it especially beneficial for children, elderly individuals, and pregnant women. Its iron content combats anemia, and it additionally enhances lactation in nursing mothers.

Table 3: Ayurvedic Properties of Finger Millet as Described in Classical Texts.

Text	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Dosha Action	Prabhava
Charaka Samhita	Madhura, Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha	Strengthens bones, supports digestion, manages excessive thirst
Sushruta Samhita	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Kapha, ↓Pitta	Manages diabetes, supports liver health, promotes detoxification
Bhavaprakasha	Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha	Bone health, reduces inflammation, supports weight management
Raj Nighantu	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Kapha, ↓Pitta	Strengthens Dhatus, aids digestion, supports metabolism

3. Sorghum Millet (Jowar / Yavanala)

Sorghum, commonly known as *Jowar*, is widely cultivated across India, Africa, and the USA. It is a highly nutritious gluten-free grain containing protein, fiber, iron, calcium, and antioxidants. Its low glycaemic index renders it suitable for diabetes management and weight regulation. It is prepared as *rotis*, porridge, baked goods, and fermented beverages. Being drought-resistant, Sorghum is pivotal to sustainable agriculture.

Table 4: Ayurvedic Properties of Sorghum Millet as Described in Classical Texts.

Text	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Dosha Action	Prabhava
Charaka Samhita	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Katu	↓Kapha, ↑Pitta	Supports digestion, detoxification, sustained energy

Sushruta Samhita	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Katu	↓Kapha, ↑Pitta	Manages obesity, enhances stamina, supports liver function
Bhavaprakasha	Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Katu	↓Kapha, ↑Pitta	Aids blood sugar management, gut health, metabolic improvement
Raj Nighantu	Kashaya, Tikta	Laghu, Ruksha	Ushna	Katu	↓Kapha, ↑Pitta	Promotes strength, aids digestion, manages water retention

(b) Minor Millets

1. Foxtail Millet (Kangu / Priyangu)

Foxtail Millet, known as *Kangu*, originated in India and northern China. Its name derives from its characteristic tapering floral cluster resemblance. This drought-tolerant crop reaches maturity in approximately 70 days when sown in late May. It enables a steady release of glucose without disrupting metabolic equilibrium, and its magnesium content positions it as a heart-healthy grain with a role in reducing diabetes incidence.

Table 5: Ayurvedic Properties of Foxtail Millet as Described in Classical Texts.

Text	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Dosha Action	Prabhava
Charaka Samhita	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Sheeta	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha	Detoxification, blood sugar control, enhances kidney function
Sushruta Samhita	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Kapha, ↓Pitta	Manages obesity, reduces inflammation, aids weight management
Bhavaprakasha	Kashaya	Laghu, Sheeta	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha	Detoxification, digestive health, controls excessive thirst
Raj Nighantu	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Kapha, ↓Pitta	Manages diabetes, kidney health, reduces water retention

2. Proso Millet (Cheenak / Cheena)

Proso Millet, referred to as *Cheenak* or *Cheena*, is extensively grown across India, China, and Eastern Europe. Its rapid maturation and drought-resistant nature make it ideal for arid conditions. Rich in protein, fiber, and antioxidants, it promotes cardiovascular health, efficient digestion, and weight management. Its low glycaemic index supports diabetes regulation, and it is traditionally recommended as a restorative food following childbirth or illness.

Table 6: Ayurvedic Properties of Proso Millet as Described in Classical Texts.

Text	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Dosha Action	Prabhava
Charaka Samhita	Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha	Supports digestion, enhances energy, improves mental clarity
Sushruta Samhita	Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha	Detoxification, manages thirst, alleviates burning sensations
Bhavaprakasha	Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha, ↑Vata	Diabetes management, enhances digestion, removes body toxins
Raj Nighantu	Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Kapha, ↓Pitta	Strengthens Dhatus, aids weight management, improves metabolism

3. Little Millet (Kutki / Sama)

Little Millet, known as *Sama*, *Shavan*, or *Kutki*, is well-endowed with minerals including zinc, iron, potassium, and calcium. It is an excellent source of Vitamin B3 (niacin), which lowers cholesterol, boosts metabolic activity, supports tissue repair, and enhances energy production. Its appreciable fiber content and mineral richness further cement its role as a health-promoting grain.

Table 7: Ayurvedic Properties of Little Millet as Described in Classical Texts.

Text	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Dosha Action	Prabhava
Charaka	Madhura,	Laghu,	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta,	Strengthens bones,

Samhita	Kashaya	Ruksha			↓Kapha	supports digestion, manages excessive thirst
Sushruta Samhita	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Kapha, ↓Pitta	Manages diabetes, supports liver health, promotes detoxification
Bhavaprakasha	Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha	Bone health, reduces inflammation, supports weight management
Raj Nighantu	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Kapha, ↓Pitta	Strengthens Dhatus, aids digestion, supports metabolism

4. Kodo Millet (Kodrava / Koradusha)

Kodo Millet, or *Kodrava*, is a traditional food that supports weight reduction and possesses a rice-like flavor profile. It is easily digestible and laden with phytochemicals and antioxidants that prevent sedentary lifestyle-related diseases. Empirical models have demonstrated its anti-cancer, weight-reducing, anti-arthritic, and strong antioxidant properties. It additionally helps alleviate hip and knee discomfort, supports regular menstruation in women, and exhibits immunostimulatory and immunomodulatory potential.

Table 8: Ayurvedic Properties of Kodo Millet as Described in Classical Texts.

Text	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Dosha Action	Prabhava
Charaka Samhita	Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Katu	↓Kapha, ↓Pitta	Supports digestion, detoxifies body, manages excessive thirst
Sushruta Samhita	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha	Manages obesity, diabetes control, enhances urinary function
Bhavaprakasha	Kashaya	Laghu, Sheeta	Sheeta	Katu	↓Kapha, ↓Pitta	Detoxification, reduces inflammation, manages joint pain
Raj Nighantu	Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Katu	↓Kapha, ↓Pitta	Manages obesity, supports liver function, reduces water retention

5. Barnyard Millet (Shyamaka / Sawa)

Barnyard Millet, known as *Shyamaka*, is a diminutive white-seeded grain regarded as nutritionally superior to several other cereal crops. Its abundance in fiber, carbohydrates, and protein supports weight loss, while its calcium and phosphorus content is essential for healthy bone development.

Table 9: Ayurvedic Properties of Barnyard Millet as Described in Classical Texts.

Text	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Dosha Action	Prabhava
Charaka Samhita	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha	Promotes detoxification, manages thirst, supports metabolism
Sushruta Samhita	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha	Manages water retention, kidney health, reduces body heat
Bhavaprakasha	Kashaya	Laghu, Sheeta	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Pitta, ↓Kapha	Weight management, controls diabetes, enhances digestion
Raj Nighantu	Kashaya, Madhura	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	↓Kapha, ↓Pitta	Strengthens Dhatus, manages hypertension, promotes urinary health

MILLETS IN AYURVEDA: INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

Beyond their collective attributes, each millet within *Kshudradhanya* possesses distinct pharmacological characteristics as detailed in classical Ayurvedic literature.[13,14]

1. Kangu / Priyangu (*Setaria italica* – Foxtail Millet):

Kangu exhibits *Guru* (heavy for digestion), *Sangrahi* (fluid-absorbing, stool-forming), *Brumhana* (tissue-nourishing), *Shoshana* (moisture-reducing), *Bhagnasandhanakrit* (fracture-healing), *Durjara* (difficult to digest), *Vrishya* (aphrodisiac), *Laghu* (lighter than other heavy grains), *Rochana* (appetite-stimulating), *Balya* (strength-providing), and *Kaphapittahara* (balancing *Kapha* and *Pitta Doshas*) properties. It serves as a rice substitute, alleviates labor pain, and is beneficial in *Amavata* (rheumatoid arthritis), *Prameha* (diabetes), *Medoroga* (obesity), *Grahani* (IBS), *Asthi-bhagna* (bone fractures), and *Atisara* (diarrhea).

2. Cheenak / Cheena (*Panicum miliaceum* – Proso Millet):

Cheenak manifests *Guru, Durjara, Brumhana,* and *Bhagnasandhanakara* properties, along with *Madhura Rasa, Sheeta Virya, Rochana, Sangrahi,* and *Balya* qualities. It is indicated in *Asthi-bhagna, Daurbalya* (weakness and fatigue), *Pittaj Vikara,* and *Vata Roga*. Despite its nourishing attributes, moderation is advised due to its heavy digestibility profile.

3. Shyamak / Sawa (*Echinochloa frumentacea* – Barnyard Millet):

Shyamak, often described as the 'cereal of the poor', is particularly effective in *Pittaj Vikara* and *Vibandha* (constipation). It possesses *Guru, Laghu, Sangrahi, Dhatu Shoshak, Ruksha, Sheeta Virya, Balya,* and *Deepana* properties. Its low glycaemic index is beneficial in *Prameha,* it supports fat metabolism in *Medoroga,* and aids in digestive disorders and malabsorption.

4. Kodrava / Koradusha (*Paspalum scrobiculatum* – Kodo Millet):

Kodrava has *Madhura-Tikta Rasa,* is *Guru,* and is described as *Param Graahi*. It is *Vishahara* (anti-poisonous) and *Avrishya* (anaphrodisiac). It is considered *Pathya* in *Vrana* (wounds and ulcers). Additionally, it is *Sheeta Virya, Ruksha, Balya,* and *Kaphapittahara*. As a low-GI grain, it serves as a diabetic-friendly rice substitute and also supports weight regulation, detoxification, and digestive wellness.

5. Gavedhuka (*Coix lacryma* – Adlay / Job's Tears):

Gavedhuka has *Katu-Madhura Rasa* and shares several properties with *Shyamaka*. It is *Karshyakaari* (emaciating), facilitating weight reduction and metabolic regulation. Additionally, it is *Kapha Hara* and possesses *Mutral* (diuretic) activity, proving beneficial in *Mutra Krichra* (dysuria). Its roots are traditionally employed to relieve *Pidita Artava* (dysmenorrhea).

6. Yavanala (*Sorghum vulgare* – Jowar / Sorghum):

Yavanala is *Ruchya* (flavor-enhancing), *Trishnaghna* (thirst-reducing), and *Kledaghna* (moisture-absorbing), making it beneficial for excessive sweating or water retention. Its *Mutrajanan* (diuresis-promoting) properties support renal function, and it is mildly *Vrishya*. It also exhibits *Guru, Laghu, Ruksha, Balya,* and *Deepana* properties. Being gluten-free, it is an excellent option for individuals with gluten intolerance.

7. Nartiki (*Eleusine coracana* – Ragi / Finger Millet):

Nartiki possesses *Tikta-Kashaya-Madhura Rasa* and *Sheeta Virya*, rendering it effective in *Pittaj Vikara* and conditions requiring a cooling influence. It is *Snigdha* (unctuous), supporting bodily moisture balance and joint integrity, and *Balya* and *Vrishya* in effect. Being *Guru*, *Ruksha*, and *Dhatuposhak* (tissue-nourishing), it is ideal for individuals requiring strength and nourishment. Its high calcium and iron content support bone density management and anemia prevention, while its fiber content aids in diabetes management, digestion, and weight control.

NUTRITIONAL VALUES OF KUDHANYA VARGA

Table 10: Nutritional Composition (per 100g) and Key Chemical Constituents of Kudhanya Varga.

Kudhanya Varga	Energy (kcal)	Protein (g)	Carbs (g)	Fiber (g)	Fat (g)	Ca (mg)	Fe (mg)	Key Constituents
Kangu (Foxtail)	351	12.3	60.2	8.0	4.3	31	2.8	Phenolics, Flavonoids, Mg, Zn
Cheenak (Proso)	356	12.5	70.4	2.2	1.1	8	2.9	Lecithin, Niacin, P, K
Shyamak (Barnyard)	342	6.2	65.5	9.8	2.6	20	5.0	Antioxidants, Phytic Acid, Polyphenols
Kodrava (Kodo)	309	8.3	66.2	5.2	1.4	27	0.5	Tannins, Phospholipids, Phytates
Gavedhuka (Job's Tears)	378	15.0	73.5	6.0	1.5	20	1.7	Coixenolide, Amino Acids, B Vitamins
Yavanala (Jowar)	329	10.4	72.6	6.7	3.0	13	4.1	Anthocyanins, Tannins, Policosanols
Nartiki (Ragi)	336	7.3	72.0	11.5	1.9	344	3.9	Ca, Tryptophan, Methionine, Polyphenols

NUTRITIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MILLETS

Millets are nutrient-dense grains providing a balanced composition of macronutrients and micronutrients:

- **Complex Carbohydrates:** Their slow digestion prevents postprandial blood glucose spikes, making them apt for diabetic management.
- **Dietary Fiber:** Promotes gastrointestinal health, weight control, and cholesterol regulation.
- **Essential Minerals:** Rich in iron, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, and zinc, crucial for skeletal strength, immune function, and metabolic equilibrium.
- **B-Complex Vitamins:** Vital for energy metabolism and nervous system support.
- **Gluten-Free Nature:** Safe for individuals with celiac disease or gluten intolerance.
- **Antioxidants & Polyphenols:** Confer anti-inflammatory, anti-aging, and detoxifying properties.

THERAPEUTIC VALUE OF KUDHANYA VARGA IN LIFESTYLE DISORDERS

Table 11: Therapeutic Role of Millets in Various Lifestyle Disorders.

Lifestyle Disorder	Therapeutic Role of Millets	Specific Kudhanya (Ayurveda)
Diabetes Mellitus	Low GI prevents blood sugar spikes; high fiber enhances insulin sensitivity; Mg content augments insulin secretion.	Kangu, Kodrava, Shyamaka, Nartiki (Ragi)
Obesity & Weight Management	High fiber induces satiety; low-calorie content aids weight control; complex carbs ensure sustained energy.	Jowar, Bajra, Shyamaka, Kodrava
Hypertension	High K and low Na regulate BP; antioxidants reduce vascular inflammation; Mg relaxes blood vessels.	Kangu, Bajra, Jowar
Cardiovascular Diseases	Fiber reduces LDL; antioxidants protect the heart; healthy fats and amino acids improve lipid metabolism.	Nartiki, Jowar, Kangu, Bajra
Osteoporosis & Bone Health	Ca, P, and Mg strengthen bones; prevents Ca-deficiency disorders; supports bone mineralization.	Nartiki, Bajra, Shyamaka
Thyroid Disorders	Se and Zn support thyroid hormone production; iodine aids thyroid function; regulates metabolism.	Kangu, Kutki, Jowar
Anemia & Iron Deficiency	High Fe (especially Nartiki) prevents anemia; vitamin C synergy enhances Fe absorption;	Nartiki, Bajra, Kodrava

	supports Hb production.	
Liver Health & Fatty Liver	Promotes detoxification; reduces hepatic fat accumulation; supports enzyme function and bile production.	Kodrava, Shyamaka, Kangu
PCOS	Low GI regulates insulin; fiber aids hormonal balance; anti-inflammatory properties support reproductive health.	Kangu, Kodrava, Shyamaka
Skin & Hair Health	Antioxidants prevent premature aging; amino acids support collagen synthesis; strengthens hair follicles.	Nartiki, Jowar, Kutki
Detoxification & Immunity	Polyphenols and flavonoids remove toxins; anti-inflammatory action reduces oxidative stress; boosts immunity.	Kodrava, Shyamaka, Kangu, Jowar

DISCUSSION

Kudhanya Varga, encompassing diverse millet varieties, holds exceptional promise in contemporary dietary practice given its outstanding nutritional and therapeutic profile. Lifestyle disorders including diabetes, obesity, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and metabolic syndrome are principally driven by poor dietary patterns, sedentary behavior, chronic stress, and environmental exposures. Millets, enriched with fiber, protein, essential minerals (calcium, iron, magnesium), and antioxidants, present a comprehensive dietary approach to managing these conditions. Their low glycaemic index stabilizes blood glucose, making them ideal for diabetics, while their high fiber content aids weight regulation and bowel health by promoting satiety and preventing constipation.

Furthermore, their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties are protective against cardiovascular disease and chronic inflammation-related conditions. Ayurveda recognizes millets for their *Sangrahi* (absorbent), *Deepana* (digestive stimulant), and *Balya* (strength-promoting) actions, endorsing them as therapeutic foods in *Prameha*, *Medoroga*, and metabolic syndromes. Their gluten-free nature additionally positions them as a superior alternative for gluten-sensitive populations. With the global burden of lifestyle diseases escalating, the reintegration of wholesome traditional grains such as millets into daily dietary regimens is essential for long-term disease prevention, health promotion, and overall well-being.

CONCLUSION

Millets, categorized under *Kudhanya Varga* in Ayurveda, converge seamlessly with modern nutritional science as a holistic response to lifestyle disorders. Their low glycaemic index,

high fiber content, rich micronutrient profile, and disease-preventive capacity make them paradigmatic dietary choices for contemporary populations. As global health paradigms shift towards functional foods and preventive nutrition, Ayurvedic wisdom unequivocally affirms the centrality of millets in disease prevention and health sustainment. Reintroducing these ancient grains into routine diets bridges traditional knowledge and modern nutritional science, promising improved health outcomes and ecological sustainability.

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