

The Nature and Role of Real Ayurvedic Ghee

By Vaidya Rama K. Mishra

The use of ghee has been a hotly debated issue for over forty years. In the early nineties, when Dr. Hari Sharma advocated the consumption of ghee at the National Conference on Cardiology in New Delhi, almost all of the attending physicians launched a protest. I was shocked by such a violent reaction to ghee given that all of the Ayurvedic texts, starting with the Carak Samhita and including the Shushruta Samhita, Bhagavat, and Bhavaprakash, classify ghee as the best kind of fat. Carak (Sutrasthanam 27; 232) says that “ghee is the best fat to eat”.

सर्वस्नेहोत्तमं शीतं मधुरं रसपाकयोः ।
सहस्रवीर्यं विधिभिर्घृतं कर्मसहस्रकृत् ॥२३२॥
चरक संहिता सूत्रस्थानम्-२७

sarvasnehottamaṁ śītaṁ madhuraṁ rasapākayoḥ |
sahasravīryaṁ vidhibhirghṛtaṁ karmasahasrakṛt | |232| |

CARAKA SAĀHITĀ SŪTRASTHĀNAM-27

Shushruta Samhita (Kalpasthanam) says that ghee is “good for coronary arteries”.

हृद्यावरणं नित्यं कुर्याच्च मित्रमध्यगः ॥७९॥
पिबेद् घृतमजेयाख्यममृताख्यं च बुद्धिमान् ।
सर्पिर्दधि पयः क्षौद्रं पिबेद्वा शीतलं जलम् ॥
मयूरान्नकुलान् गोधाः पृषतान् हरिणानपि ।
सततं भक्षयेच्चापि रसांस्तेषां पिबेदपि ॥८१॥
सुश्रुत् संहिता कल्पस्थानम्

hr̥dayāvaraṇaṁ nityaṁ kuryācca mitramadhyagaḥ | |79| |
pibed ghṛtamajeyākhyamamṛtākhyam ca buddhimān |
sarpirdadhi payaḥ kṣaudraṁ pibedvā śītalaṁ jalam | |
mayūrānnakulān godhāḥ pṛṣatān hariṇānapi |
satataṁ bhakṣayeccāpi rasāṁsteṣāṁ pibedapi | |81| |

suśrut saṁhitā kalpasthānam

CHAPTER 1, PROTECTION OF FOODS AND DRINKS.

Bhava Mishra (Bhavaprakash) says that ghee is:

- a great rasayana (rejuvenator) for the eyes
- enhances the digestive fire while cooling and alkalizing
- binds toxins and pacifies pitta and vata
- with proper combining and processing, it is not clogging or kapha aggravating
- enhances complexion and glow of the face and body
- increases physical and mental stamina
- supports learning, retention, and recall
- increases longevity
- cools and lubricates the stomach wall
- nurtures and cleanses blood tissue

घृतमाज्य हविः सर्पिः कथ्यते तद्गुणा अथ ।

घृतं रसायनं स्वादु चक्षुष्यं वह्निदीपनम् ॥ १ ॥

शीतवीर्यं विषालक्ष्मीपापपित्तनिलापहा ।

अल्पाभिष्यन्दि कान्त्योजस्तेजोलावण्यवृद्धिकृत् ॥२॥

स्वरस्मृतिकरं मेध्यमायुष्यं बलकृद्गुरु ।

उदावत्तज्वरोन्मादशूलानाहव्रणान् हरेत् ।

स्निग्धं कफकरं रक्षःक्षयवीसर्परक्तनुत् ॥३॥

भावप्रकाश घृतवर्ग

ghṛtamājya haviḥ sarpīḥ kathyate tadguṇā atha |
ghṛtaṁ rasāyanaṁ svādu cakṣuṣyaṁ vahnidīpanam | | 1 | |
śītavīryaṁ viṣālakṣmīpāpapittanilāpahā |
alpābhiṣyandi kāntyojastejolaṅṅavyavṛddhikṛt | |2| |
svarasmṛtikaraṁ medhyamāyusyaṁ balakṛdgurul |
udāvarttajvaronmādaśūlānāhavraṇān haret |
snigdhaṁ kaphakaraṁ rakṣaḥkṣayavīsarpaṛaktanut | |3| |
bhāvaprakāśa ghṛtavarga

The conference in New Delhi presented me with a dilemma. Either the scientific research is going in the wrong direction or the ayurvedic texts are mistaken. It is written in the Carak Samhita that the knowledge of Ayurveda has been in existence since before time! The ancient sages gathered the wisdom through the process of cognition called "aptodesh". Although I have not stopped eating and recommending ghee to my clients, different factors have played a role in the production of ghee centuries ago and today, thereby resulting in contradictory research and opinions.



1) The ghee described in the Carak Samhita and all the texts came from the milk of forest-roaming cows. The cows lived and fed in a clean environment and were treated with great care and respect.

2) Cows were never given hormones or

antibiotics.

3) Ghee was made by a traditional method in which cream is used to create cultured yoghurt. Butter churned from the yoghurt was then processed into ghee.



As we know, the way of producing milk today is quite different. Cows are kept in overcrowded, unsanitary enclosures. They are fed genetically-modified grain and given hormones and antibiotics. In addition, the stressful life of the cows creates cortisol, which ends up in the milk and ghee.

Another important factor is the condition of the modern day liver. Due to improper food, routine, stress, chemicals in the food and body, most people's livers are toxic and overwhelmed. This reduces the liver's ability to digest and metabolize fat. All these factors of modern life and food production yield a different ghee product and this product has led scientists to conclude that ghee causes increased cholesterol and inflammation. Back in the 50s, when all saturated fats were considered unhealthy, ghee was listed among them, and one can see why. For

every 10 grams, ghee contains 6.5 grams of saturated fat, which is a considerable amount. Today, scientists are saying that saturated fat is stable in nature and does not easily turn rancid, neither outside of the body nor inside of the body during transition. Saturated fat molecules are straight, and they stack together tightly to form a solid or semi-solid fat at room temperature.



I remember from childhood that when my mom made ghee, even though we did not have refrigeration, ghee stayed fresh for months without spoiling.

While the scientific debate about saturated fats continues, more and more findings confirm the ancient wisdom found in Carak, Shushruta, and Bhava Mishra.

Ghee in Modern Research

1. Supports the eyes.
2. Gives satiation.
3. Supports healthy hormone production.
4. Supports mineral absorption.
5. Provides sustaining energy.
6. Promotes healthy bile by supporting the liver.

7. Supports the health of cell-membranes.
8. Maintains anti-inflammatory process and supports the healing power of the body.
9. Helps delivery and absorption of fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K.

Types of Ghee

Shaka Vanshiya Ayurveda defines three kinds of ghee. All three are made from the same butter but are processed in different ways depending on their ultimate use.

Mridhu Paka

Mridhu Paka means "soft-cooked". This ghee still contains some water content so that it can cook longer without burning. It is well-filtered and commonly used in festivals and celebrations for frying foods in bulk quantities. It is also used in the making of ayurvedic medicated ghee. Because the water content shortens the shelf-life of "soft-cooked" ghee, it should be used within 15 days.

Madhya Paka

This ghee is intended for day-to-day cooking. It has no water content, but it should not be eaten raw. It can be kept at room temperature for at least 3-6 months.

Khar Paka

This ghee is slightly toasty but not burned. It can be eaten raw by spreading on bread or adding directly to food, which makes it great for traveling.

Traditional Ghee-Making Secrets

We know from Ayurveda that, in addition to nutritional facts, vibrational intelligence in the food is paramount. This applies to all foods, but it is especially important in the process of making and using ghee.

General instructions for making ghee are described on chandika.com, but here are a few more points to follow:

- 1) Use "grass-fed" organic heavy cream to make yoghurt. Churn yoghurt into butter.
- 2) To avoid burning the fat molecules, heat butter on low-temperature in a special stainless steel pot that heats evenly from all sides. This process slowly evaporates the water content of the butter, separates milk protein molecules like casein, and removes unwanted molecules.
- 3) Ghee must be filtered in a way that removes all micro-molecules of milk solids.
- 4) Pour into glass jar and let all the steam evaporate before sealing.



Introducing Mum's Ghee

Because it is difficult for most people to uphold the standards for making real ayurvedic ghee, I have decided to start making Mum's Ghee. Our production ensures consistent availability of high-quality organic heavy cream as well as quality control of the entire process, including the use of micro filters that separate out even the smallest free-radical particles. Mum's Ghee is available in three varieties:



- 1) Mum's Ghee is the generic madhya paka ghee of Carak Samhita suitable for everyday cooking.
- 2) Bal Saraswati Ghee is an herbalized ghee for kids. It contains brahmi and jyotishmati as key ingredients for promoting the childrens' ability of learning, retention, and recall.
- 3) Maha Saraswati Ghee is an herbalized ghee for adults designed for purification of brain tissue and enhancement of mental acuity and memory.

Note: Both herbalized ghees use mridhu paka ghee as a starter but become khar paka ghee by the end of the process. They are safe to use without cooking.

Precautions For Using Ghee

1. For day-to-day cooking, use madhya paka, but always cook on low heat. Melt first then add spices and toast on low heat without burning. When ghee begins to burn, it smells and changes color. This ghee is very unhealthy and should be discarded.
2. For frying flat bread, omelets, or other foods, melt ghee on medium heat, but pay close attention. If the ghee begins to smell or changes color, throw it away and start over.
3. Never reuse ghee left after the cooking process.
4. Ayurveda lists some contra-indications for using ghee. Only real ayurvedic ghee made according to the process described above should be used. Anyone with liver or kidney imbalance should consult an expert before using ghee. People with any medical conditions should check with their doctor before using ghee.

This products and statements have not been evaluated by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) and are not intended to be used to diagnose, treat or cure any disease. All of the information above is intended for educational purposes only and may not be used to replace or compliment medical advice.

Lab nutritional analysis of Mum's Ghee:

In 10 grams or 0.36 oz:

Energy (kJ)	370.1 kJ
Energy (cal)	88.5 cal
Protein	0.0 g
Fat	10.0 g
Saturated Fat	6.5 g
Mono-Unsaturated Fat	2.7 g
Poly-Unsaturated Fat	0.2 g
Omega-3 Fat	0.0 mg
Carbohydrate	0.0 g
Complex Carbs	0.0 g
Sugar	0.0 g
Fiber	0.0 g
Water Content	0.0 mL
Alcohol	0.0 g
Cholesterol	29.0 mg
Caffeine	0.0 mg

Vitamins and Minerals:

Sodium	0.2 mg
Potassium	0.5 mg
Calcium	0.4 mg
Phosphorus	0.3 mg
Retinol Eq	94.0 ug
Retinol	86.0 ug
Beta-Carotene Eq	48.0 ug
Vitamin D	0.1 ug