

A review on traditional gruels used in Sri Lanka and their medicinal values

Pathirana PTN¹, Perera BPR¹, Rasingolla SK¹

¹Department of Cikitsa, Gampaha Wickramarachchi Ayurveda Institute, University of Kelaniya, Yakkala, Sri Lanka

Abstract

Gruels are a special food item in Sri Lanka which is sometimes used as a medicine in the traditional medical system. Gruels (*Kanda*) are liquids made out mainly of cereals, coconut milk and plant extracts. They play an important role both as a medicine and a food. The study was carried out to identify the recipes of traditional gruels used in Sri Lanka and their medicinal values. The present study was carried out as a literary study using literatures written on gruels. At the end of the study, 67 recipes were identified by referring *caraka samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Deshiya Chikitsa Samgrahaya*, *Obe Ledata Hela Osu* etc. The study revealed that although gruels are popular among Sri Lankans the concept of gruel is not confined to Sri Lanka. Gruels can mainly be categorized into three types as gruels made using cereals, yams and herbal extracts (*Kola Kanda*). Historically gruels had been prepared using native varieties of rice which were found to be rich sources of nutrients. The basic preparation method is similar in most of the gruels but can be altered depending on the condition it is being used for. Despite the large number of gruels mentioned in texts only few types of gruels are commonly in use today. Gruels are nutritious food preparation which can be used specially for ailed as a medicine and for healthy to promote health. The study revealed that a large number of gruels are there which can be used as a source of additional nutritional supplement for various deficiencies.

Keywords: Traditional gruels, *Kanda*, Nutritional deficiencies, *Kola kanda*, Medicinal values

e-mail: nisansalapathirana@gmail.com