



### **Review Article**

## **UDAVARTA AND DIET: AYURVEDA'S PATH TO WELLNESS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Udavarta*, an Ayurvedic condition caused by the reversal of *Apana Vata*, results from factors like Vegadharana (suppression of natural urges), excessive intake of Ruksha (drvness), Kashaya (astringent), Tikta (bitter), Katu (pungent) foods, Upavasa (fasting), and Ativyavaya (indulging in excessive sexual acts). This leads to disturbances in the downward movement of stool, urine, and Vata, causing symptoms such as Vibandh (constipation), Adhmana (abdominal distension), Hrillasa (nausea), Shoola (pain), and Avipaka (indigestion). If left untreated, *Udavarta* can contribute to systemic complications affecting the respiratory, digestive, cardiac, urinary, and nervous systems, even bleeding disorders. Modern diseases such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and chronic constipation show similarities with Udavarta. A meta-analysis by Barberio et al. reported a prevalence of functional constipation ranging from 10.1% to 15.3%, highlighting the need for effective dietary interventions. Although current guidelines lack specificity regarding food choices. So, this review article was done to prepare an Ayurvedic dietary chart form Ayurvedic classics that can play an important role in prevention as well as management of *Udavarta*. Ahara Draya having Snigdha (unctuousness), Mridu (softness), Saraka (purgative), Vatanulomaka elimination of flatus), Varchobhedi (causing diarrhea/loose motions), Srushtamutrapurisha (easy elimination of stool, urine), Vibandhahna (anti-constipative), Udavartahara properties. These Dravya treat Udavarta by softening the stool, clearing Purishavaha Srtotas, easy passage of stool, elimination of flatus, and pacify Vata. Pathya Ahara should be included in diet along with medication for the better management of Udavarta after proper assessment of Agni Bala (digestive power), Koshta (alimentary canal), Prakriti (somatic constitution).

### INTRODUCTION

Traditional Indian system of medicine, refers "*Udavarta*" as a chronic digestive issue characterized by the upward movement or reversal of *Apana Vata* (one of the five subtypes of *Vata* situated in the pelvic region) against its normal downward flow [1]. Vitiation of *Apana Vata* occurs because of *Dharana* of the *Adharniya Vega* (suppression of non- suppressible urges), excess intake *Kashaya* (astringent), *Katu* (pungent), and *Tikta* (bitter), *Rasa* (taste) dominant *Ahara* (diet), excessive intake of *Ruksha Ahara* (dry diet), excess *Upavasa* (fasting), and *Ati Vyavaya* 

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(indulging in excessive sexual acts), this leads to hampered movement of *Purisha* (stool), *Mutra* (urine), and Apana Vata [2]. Obstructed Apana Vata due to above mentioned causes, reverses its direction and upward. Upward-moving Vata accumulation of waste products (e.g., feces, gas) in the colon. Most common symptoms of Udavarta are Vibandha (constipation), Adhmana **fabdominal** distension), Hrillas (nausea), Udara Shoola (abdominal pain), Avipaka (indigestion).[3] If it is untreated or undiagnosed early it can lead to complications related to various body systems like respiratory system (Kasa (cough), Shwasa (breathlessness) etc. digestive system (Jwara (fever), Aruchi (tastelessness) etc. cardiac system, Hrdroga (diseases of heart), urinary system (Mutrakrchhra (dysuria), Ashtila (hypertrophy of prostate gland), nervous system (Aandhya (blindness), Badhirya (deafness/hearing impairment) etc. bleeding disorder like, Asrapitta (bleeding disorders) etc[4].

Modern diseases like irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), and constipation can be correlated to *Udavarta*, as both involve disturbances in digestion and elimination. A systemic review and meta-analysis by Barberio at al. concluded that the pooled prevalence of functional constipation in studies using the Rome I, II, III, and IV criteria were 15.3%, 11.2%, 10.4%, and 10.1%, respectively<sup>[5]</sup>. Given the limitations and side effects of pharmacological laxatives. dietary intervention represents a safe, cost-effective, and sustainable alternative for managing constipation<sup>[6]</sup>. The absence of standardized dietary protocols leads to inconsistencies in clinical advice. potentially reducing treatment efficacy [7]. This shows an urgent need to update guidelines for the management of chronic constipation to reflect current evidence to increase the effectiveness of clinical advice and improve patient care. A disease can be cured even without medicine only through conducive diet and lifestyle, but without proper Pathya even hundreds of medicines cannot cure a disease[8]. Pathva (wholesome) and Apathya (unwholesome) are defined as the Ahara Dravya and activities that do not adversely affect the body systems and are liked by the mind are regarded as Pathya. Likewise, Ahara Dravya and activities that adversely affect the body system and are disliked by the mind are regarded as Apathya<sup>[9]</sup>. Current dietary guidelines often fail to provide clear, actionable recommendations regarding specific food sources, fluid requirements, and the role of particular nutrients (e.g., sorbitol, prebiotics) in bowel regulation [10]. Globally, various dietary patterns such as high-fibre diets are commonly recommended, but there is no specific diet formulated for *Udavarta* 

(constipation). However, Ayurvedic literature provides detailed guidance under Ahara Varga, listing both Pathya (wholesome) and Apathya (unwholesome) foods. These dietary guidelines can be effectively used not only to manage *Udavarta* but also to prevent its complications. This review aims to compile and present the dietary recommendations mentioned in Avurvedic Samhitas for both the prevention and management of *Udavarta* through appropriate and health-supportive eating practices.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS:**

Ahara Draya having 'Mridu', 'Brimhana'. 'Tarpana'. 'Saraka', 'Bahuvarcha', 'Vatanulomaka'. 'Varchobhedi', 'Srushtamutrapurisha', 'Vatanashaka'. 'Anabhishyandi', 'Vibandhahna', 'Udavartahara' 'Baddhavidamutra', 'Vatala', 'Vibandhkara', 'Adhmanakara', 'Samgrahi', 'Vishtambi' properties were collected from classical Ayurveda texts viz., Charaka Samhita with available Chakrapani commentary, Sushruta Samhita with available Dalhana commentary, Ashtangahridya with available Arundatt and Hemadri commentary and categorized into Pathya and Apathya for *Udavarta*. Research articles were searched using key words "Udavarta", "chronic constipation", "diet and chronic constipation, "role of diet in the management of diseases", "diet pattern" using online data bases viz., PubMed, Google Scholar, Dhara and Avush Research Portal.

## RESULTS

Thorough review of Ayurvedic classical literature suggest that Ahara Drayas presented below in tabular form can found to be effective in prevention and management of Udavarta.

Table 1: Pathya Shuka Dhanya (group of grains) for Udavarta

S.No.	Ahara Dravya	Common Name	Properties	Reference
1.	Godhuma (Triticum aestivum L.)	Wheat	Madhura (sweet taste), Sheeta (coldness), Guru (heaviness), Snigdha (unctuousness), Vrishya (promotor of spermatogenesis and aphrodisiac), Brimhana (nourishment), Jeevana (to give life), Samdhana (helps in tissue aggregation and healing of wounds or fractures), Vatahara (relives Vata).	Ch. Su. 27/21

Godhuma [table 1] has Madhura, Snigdha, Brimhana properties that can help in Udavarta.

Table 2: Pathya Simbhi Dhanya (group of pulses/legumes) for Udavarta

S.No.	Ahara Dravya	Common Name	Properties	Reference
1.	Masha (Vigna mungo (L.))	Black gram	Vrishya, Snigdha, Guru, Ushna (hotness), Madhura, Balya (strength, stamina and immunity promoter), Saraka (purgative), Vatahara	

Masha [table 2] has Madhura, Snigdha, Saraka properties that can help in Udavarta.

Table 3: Pathya Shaka (group of vegetables) for Udavarta

S.No.	Ahara Dravya	<b>Common Name</b>	Properties	Reference
1.	Mulaka (Raphanus sativus L.)	Radish	Tikta (bitter taste), Kshara (alkaline), Ushna, Laghu (lightness)	A.H. Su. 6/102-103
2.	Alabu (Lagenaria siceraria (Molina) Standl.)	Bottle gourd	Ruksha, Sheeta, Guru, Varchabhedi (diarrhea/loose motions)	Ch. Su. 27/112
3.	Vastuka (Chenopodium album L.)	Goosefoot	Snigdha, Agnideepana (enhancing	S. Chi. 6/8
4.	Tanduleeyaka (Amaranthus Spiny pigwaspinosus L.)		metabolic fire), <i>Srushtamutrapurisha</i> (easy elimination of stool, urine)	
5.	Jivanti (Leptadenia reticulata)	Meethi dodi		
6.	Upodika (Basella alba L.)	Indian spinach		
7.	Palaka (Spinacea oleracea L.)	Spinach		
8.	Cangeri (Oxalis corniculata L.)	Indian sorrel		
9.	Kushmanda (Benincasa hispida)	White guard	Madhura, Amla (sour), Laghu, Kshara	Ch. Su. 27/113

Shaka [table 3] having Vatanulomaka, Varchobhedi, Srushtamutrapurisha properties that can help in Udavarta.

Table 4: Pathya Phala (group of fruits) for Udavarta

S.No.	Ahara Dravya	Common Name	Properties	Reference
1.	Mrudvika (Vitis vinifera L.)	Raisin	Madhura, Snigdha, Sheeta, Vrishya, Brimhani	Ch. Su. 27/125-126
2.	Priyala (Buchanania lanzan)	Charoli nut	Snigdha, Vatahara, Anushna	A.H. Su. 7/161

Phala [table 4] having Madhura, Snigdha, Brimhana, Vatanashaka properties that can help in Udavarta.

Table 5: Pathya Gorasa (group of milk and milk products) for Udavarta

S.No.	Ahara Dravya	Common Name	Properties	Reference
1.	Ghrita	Ghee	Snigdha, Madhura, Sheeta, Mridu (softness), Deepana, Anabhishyandi (doesn't obstruct channels)	S. Su. 45/96
2.	Ksheera	Milk	Jivanam (vitalization/vitalizers), Balya, Vrishya, Brimhana, Vajiirara (aphrodisiac), Rasayana (rejuvenation), Medhya (intellect enhancer), Ayushya (life span enhancer), Vayasthapana (regulate ageing process), Udavartahara	S. Su. 45/49
3.	Takra	Buttermilk	Blockage of channels, vitiated <i>Vata</i>	S. Su. 45/87

Gorasa Varga [table 5] having Madhura, Snigdha, Mridu, Deepana, Brimhana, Balya properties that can help in Udavarta.

Table 6: Pathya Madya (group of fermented liquors) for Udavarta

S.No.	Ahara Dravya	Properties	Reference
1.	Madira	Hikka, Swasa, Pratishyaya, Kasa, Aruchi, Varchgraha, Vami, Anaha, Vibandha, Vataghna	Ch. Su. 27/180
2.	Amlakanji	Deepana, Vata-Kaphanashaka, Vibandhghna, Avasranshi (laxative)	Ch. Su. 27/192

Madya Varga Dravya [table 6] having Deepana, Avasranshi, Vibandhghna properties that can help in Udavarta.

## Table 7: Pathya Harita (group of salads) for Udavarta

S.No.	Ahara Dravya	Common Name	Properties	Reference
1.	Shunti		Rochana, Deepana, Vrushya, Vatakaphashamaka, Vibandhnashaka	Ch. Su. 27/166

Harita Varga Dravya [table 7] has Deepana, Vibandhnashaka properties that can help in Udavarta.

Table 8: Pathya Ikshu (group of sugars) for Udavarta

S.No	Ahara Dravya	Common Name	Properties	Reference
1.	Gauda	Jaggery	Srishtashakrita, Srishtavata (easy passage of flatus), Deepana, Tarpana (satiating)	Ch. Su. 27/186

*Ikshu Varga Dravya* [table 8] has *Srishtashakrita, Srishtavata, Deepana, Tarpana* properties that can help in *Udavarta.* 

Table 9: Pathya Jala Varga (group of various types of water) for Udavarta

S.No.	Ahara Dravya	Common Name	Properties	Reference
1.	Ushnodaka	Luke	Vatanulomana	Ch. Su. 13/44
		warm water	Deepana, Pacana, Laghu, Adhmana, Vata- Kapha Nashaka	A.S. Su. 6/11

*Ushnodaka* [table 9] has *Deepana, Pacana, Vatanulomana Tarpana* properties that can help in *Udavarta*.

Table 10: Pathya Mamsa (group of meat) for Udavarta

S.No.	Ahara Dravya	Common Name	Properties	Reference
1.	Caranayudha	Chicken	Balya, Vatahara	Ch. Su. 27/67
2.	Rohit Matsaya	meat of Rohit fish	Laghu, Deepana, Vatahara, Chakshushya (good for eye and eye sight), Vrishya	Ch. Su. 27/83

Mamsa Varga Dravyas [table 10] have Brimhana, Vatahara properties that can help in Udavarta.

Table 11: Pathya Krittanna (group of processed food items) for Udavarta

S.No.	Ahara Dravya	<b>P</b> rope <mark>rties</mark>	Reference
1.	Yava Apupa (type of food preparation made from flour of barley)	Udavarta (obstipation), Pratishyaya (chronic rhinitis), Kasa	Ch. Su. 27/265
2.	Yava Vatya (porridge prepared with fried barley)	(cough), Meha (frequent and excessive micturition), Galagraha (choking sensation in throat)	
3.	Saktu (roasted grain flour)	Ruksha, Vatala, Bahuvarcha, Anulomani (mild purgative action)	Ch. Su. 27/263
4.	Peya (thin gruel of rice)	Svedajanana (excessive sweating), Agnijanana, Vatanulomana (proper elimination of flatus)	Ch. Su. 27/250
5.	Manda (liquid portion of rice prepared by adding 1 part rice and 14-part water)	Agnideepana, Vatanulomana	
6.	Shukta (a kind of sour liquid prepared from roots and fruits by first steeping them in oil and salt, then drying them, and afterwards leaving them in water to undergo acetous fermentation)	Vatanulomana	Ch. Su. 27/284
7.	Kulattha Yusha (soup of vegetables and/or pulses)	Vatanulomana	S. Su. 46/33
8.	Kanji	Deepana, Vibandhghna (anticonstipative), Avasransi (laxative)	Ch. Su. 27/299

Krittanna Varga Dravya [table 11] has Vatanulomana, Bahuvarcha, Anulomana, Udavartahara properties that can help in Udavarta.

Table 12: Pathya Aharayogi (group of adjuvants of food) for Udavarta

S.No.	Ahara Dravya	Properties	Reference
1.	Vida Lavana	Tikshna (sharpness), Ushna, Vyavayi (substances with quick spread even without digestion), Deepana, Shoolanashaka (relives pain), Vatanulomana	Ch. Su. 27/302
2.	Hingu	Katu, Ushna, Laghu, Deepana, Pachana (enhancing digestion), Rochana (taste enhancer), Vibandhghna	Ch. Su. 27/299
3.	Sauvarcala	Vibandhghna, Hridya (palatable and pleasing to mind), Udgarashodhi (purification of eructation)	Ch. Su. 27/301

Aharayogi Dravya [table 12] has Deepana, Pacana and Vibandhghna properties that can help in Udavarta.

## Table 13: Apathya Diet for Udavarta

S.No.	Varga (classification)	Ahara Dravya	Properties
1.	Shuka Dhanya (group of cereals)	Kangu (Foxtail millet) Kodrava (Kodo millet), Jurnaha (Sorghum), Nivara (Jungali-dal), Madhulika (Finger millet), Gaveduka (Adlay millet)	Ruksha, Baddhavidamutra (retention of Mutra and Purisha)
		Yava (Barley)	Ruksha, Sheeta, Laghu, Vatala
2.	Simbhi Dhanya (group of pulses)	Mudga (Green gram), Adhaki (Pigeon pea) Masura (Lentil), Kalaya (Mutter pea), Makushta (Tepary bean), Chanaka (Chick pea), Sateena (Sann hemp), Triputa (Indian pea),	Ruksha, Vibandhkara (causes constipation), Adhmanakara (causes distension/ tympanites/ meteorism), Baddhavidamutra
		Kulattha (Horse gram)	Samgrahi (proper absorption), Katu Vipaka
3.	Shaka Varga (group of Vegetables)	Rajakshavaka (Safed sarson), Shati Shaka (Spiked ginger lily), Patha (Velvet leaf), Changeri (Indian sorrel), Patola (Pointed gourd), Mandukaparni (Gotu kola), Karkotaki (Spiny gourd), Karavellaka (Bitter gourd), Parpata (Fumitory), Vartaka (brinjal), Karira (Kair), Kulaka (Snake gourd), Shakuladini (Buffalo spinach), Kembuka (cauliflower), Koshataka (Turai)	Grahi, Sheeta
		Tumba (Bottle gourd), Shrigataka (Water chestnut) Shigru (Drumsticks)	Ruksha, Grahi
		Trapusa (Cucumber), Ervarauka (Rock melon), Surana (Elephant-foot yam)	Ruksha, Vishtambi
		Kalaya (Indian pea)	Vatala
		Sarsapa (Mustard)	Grahi, Baddhavidamutra
4.	Phala Varga (group of fruits)	Sinchitaka (Apple), Aam Tinduka (Indian persimmon), Dadima (Pomegranate), Vrikshamla (Kokum), Bal Bilva (Apple wood)	Grahi
		Kapittha (Wood apple), Jambava (Malabar plum), Tanka (Pear)	Vatala, Grahi
		Bhavya (Elephant apple), Fhalgu (Common fig), Akshoda (Walnut), Mocha (Banana), Kharjura (Date palm), Panasa (Jack nut), Narikela (Coconut) Parushaka (Phalsa), Tala (Wine palm), Abhishuka (Pista)	Guru, Vishtambi

5.	Gorasa Varga	Navaneeta (Butter)	Samgrahi
	(Milk product)	Dadhi (Curd)	Vishtambi, Guru
		Kilata (inspissated milk), Kurchika (solid part of milk boiled with butter milk or curd), Morana (late beestings), Piyush (colostrum)	
6.	Madya	Yavasura (supernatant alcohol made up of barley)	Guru, Ruksha, Vishtambi
7.	Ikshu	Madhu (Honey)	Guru, Sheeta, Ruksha
8.	Jala	Sheetal Jala (Cold water)	Stambhana (promotes stiffness)
9.	Mamsa	Ajamamsa (Mutton)	Samgrahi
10.	Krittanna	Vilepi (thick gruel of rice), Shali Saktu	Grahi
		Dhana, Virudha, Vataka, Mamsarasa, Panaka, Vaidal, Yavasura	Vishtambi
11.	Aharayogi	Taila (oil)	Baddavidamutra

Ahara Dravya [table 13] having properties like Ruksha, Baddhavidamutra, Vatala, Vibandhkara, Adhmanakara, Samgrahi, Katu Vipaka, Vishtambi are Apathya for Udavarta.

### DISCUSSION

## Discussion on Pathya diet for Udavarta

Madhura Rasa: It promotes Rasa Dhatu (primary product of digested food), Rakta Dhatu (blood), Mamsa Dtatu (muscle tissue), Meda Dhatu (fat tissue), Asthi Dhatu (bone tissue), Majja Dhatu (bone marrow), Ojas (essence of all seven Dhatu) and Shukra Dhatu (semen) and alleviates Pitta and Vayu [11].

*Madhura Vipaka*: It has *Srushtamutrapurisha* (easily excretion of urine and faeces from the body) [12].

**Snigdha Guna**: It is responsible for *Kledana*, imparting smoothness, moisture and oily nature to the body channels thus relieve *Udavarta* caused by *Vata Prakopa* due to *Ruskha Guna* dominant *Ahara*.

*Mridu Guna*: It is responsible for *Slathane*, bringing about softness of stool and *Srotas* thus, these properties help in easy evacuation of stool and relives *Udavarta*<sup>[13]</sup>.

**Deepana** and **Pacana**: Aam (undigested food) formed due to *Mandagni* (weak state of digestive fire) block the channels which results in disturbed movement of *Purisha*, *Mootra* and excessive collection of vitiated *Apana Vata. Ahara Dravya* having *Deepana* and *Pacana* property clears obstructed *Srotas* by digesting *Aam*.

**Brimhana**: It has ability to *Pushtijanana* [14], promotes tissue growth and *Tarpana* property produces *Truptijanana* [15] (satiating) effect to the body tissue thus alleviates *Dhatukshayajanya Vata* and can relive *Udayarta*.

**Bahuvarcha** (excessively formed stool): property helps in *Udavarta* caused by Vitiated *Vata* due to *Purishakshaya*. *Bahuvarcha Guna* increases the amount of *Purisha* and normalize the *Vata* thus relives *Udavarta*.

Saraka and Varchobhedi: Dravyas having Saraka and Varchobhedi pierces or promotes passage, especially in digestion or excretion improve constipation by their purgative action thus treat Udavarta. Varchobhedi Dravyas are seen as alleviating constipation, gas, griping, or stool stagnation by supporting proper passage through the digestive tract.

Vatanulomaka: Vatanulomaka property Dravya promotes the downward movement of Vata dosha, especially within the gastrointestinal tract. It supports or restores the natural downward movement of Vata and improves the symptoms like Shira Shoola, Udgara Bahulya, Shoola, Avipaka, Hrillas etc. caused due to upward movement of Vata, thus it relives Udavarta. Ahara Dravya with Vibandhghna properties is effective in the treatment of Udavarta because of their Prabhava (exceptional activity).

### Discussion on Apathya diet for Udavarta

**Ruksha guna:** Ruksha guna is responsible for *Shoshana* [15], which results in absorption of moisture from stool, it solidifies the stool thus causes *Udavarta*. *Baddhavidamutra* is the condition where elimination of stool and/or urine is impaired- often due to *Vata* aggravation, dryness, or obstruction of the respective *Srotas* (channels).[14]

*Katu Vipaka*: *Katu Vipaka* has property to cause *Baddhavidamutra* so, it hampers the normal movement of stool thus causes *Udavrta*.

**Samgrahi**: Samgrahi Dravya has ability to digest the undigested stool and stop the repeated episode of defecation [16]. if it is used by digestive issue patient, can increase retention of obstruct *Apana Vata*, that can worsen *Udavarta*.

*Vishtambi*: *Vishtambi Drvayas* are *Adhovatarodhi* in nature so, they block the downward movement of *Apana Vata* resulting excessive collection of vitiated *Vata*, thus it increases the severity of *Udavrta*. *Vibandhkara*, *Adhmanakara*, *Vatala Dravya* because of

their direct relationship with symptoms of *Udavarta*, they worsen disease condition.

Agni Bala (digestive power), Prakriti (nature of the patient), nature of the Koshta (alimentary canal), Udavarta condition, and Samskara (processing) should be considered before taking Pathya- Apathya as a diet for *Udavarta*. [17] *Udavarta* patient with poor digestive capacity Ahara Dravya having Laghu Guna are beneficial, with history of Pitta Prakriti Ahara Dravva having Sheeta Guna are beneficial, with history of Krura Koshtha Ahara Dravya having Snigdha Guna are beneficial. Those Ahara Dravya not suitable according to Agni Bala, Prakriti (nature of the patient and Dravva), nature of the Koshta (alimentary canal) by applying suitable Samskara, we transform them and can make suitable according to disease condition. Some of the cereals, vegetables and pulses we commonly used are Apathya for Udavarta but we can use them in *Udavarta* if we process them in *Ghrita* (ghee) on the place of oil, roasted cereals can be used. By Applying suitable Smaskara Apathya for Udavarta can be transform into Pathya for Udavarta.

### CONCLUSION

Ahara Draya having properties like Madhura Rasa, Madhura Vipaka, Snigdha, Mridu, Deepana, Pacana, Brimhana, Tarpana, Saraka, Bahuvarcha, Vatanulomaka. Varchobhedi. Srushtamutrap<mark>u</mark>risha, Vatanashaka. Anabhishvandi. Vibandhahna. Udavartahara should be included in diet after considering Agni Bala (digestive power), Prakriti (nature of Dravya and patient), nature of the Koshta (alimentary canal) to prevent further complication occurs due to Udavarta. Diet recommended as an Apathya (unwholesome) for Udavarta can be used as a wholesome diet by applying suitable Samskara. Additional randomized controlled trials are needed to assess the impact of these dietary guidelines when used alongside medication. This food chart could be safe, cost-effective, and sustainable alternative for managing *Udavarta* in daily practice as well as a preventive measure. These dietary guidelines alone are insufficient to achieve the desired results; they should be complemented bv appropriate lifestyle modifications.

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### List of Abbreviations

Ch. Charaka S. Sushruta A.H. Ashtanga Hridya Chi. Chikitsa A.S. Ashtanga Samgraha

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