

An Ayurvedic Perspective on *Jwara* Prevention: Critical Insights from *Shadkriyakala* Theory

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Abstract—*Jwara* is regarded as one of the most significant disease entities in Ayurveda due to its widespread occurrence and profound impact on physiological and psychological functions. While conventional approaches often emphasize treatment after disease manifestation, Ayurveda advocates a preventive paradigm through the theory of *Shadkriyakala*, which describes six sequential stages of disease development. This review critically examines the preventive implications of *Shadkriyakala* in the context of *Jwara* and highlights its relevance for contemporary healthcare. The concept of *Shadkriyakala* encompasses *Sanchaya*, *Prakopa*, *Prasara*, *Sthanasamshraya*, *Vyakti*, and *Bheda*, representing a continuum from subtle pathological alterations to fully manifested disease and its complications. Recognition of these stages enables timely intervention before the clinical expression of *Jwara*. Preventive measures advocated in Ayurveda, including *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Sadvritta*, appropriate dietary practices, and *Rasayana* therapy, can be strategically implemented at different stages to arrest disease progression. Such an approach aligns closely with the principles of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention described in modern public health. The review further explores the potential correlation between *Shadkriyakala* and contemporary concepts of predictive and personalized medicine. By facilitating early identification of pathological changes and individualized preventive strategies, the Ayurvedic model offers a comprehensive framework for disease prevention. Despite its theoretical strength, systematic clinical validation remains limited, necessitating further interdisciplinary research. The insights derived from *Shadkriyakala* underscore the preventive wisdom of Ayurveda and support its integration into modern healthcare systems for reducing the burden of *Jwara* and related disorders.

Index Terms—*Jwara*; *Shadkriyakala*; *Swasthivritta*; *Dinacharya*; *Ritucharya*; *Rasayana*.

I. INTRODUCTION

Jwara is regarded as one of the most important disease entities in Ayurveda and is described as the foremost among all disorders because of its ability to affect both the body and mind simultaneously. Classical Ayurvedic texts consider *Jwara* not merely as an elevation of body temperature but as a systemic pathological condition arising from the vitiation of *Dosha*, impairment of *Agni*, and disturbance of normal physiological functions. Owing to its universal occurrence and significant morbidity, *Jwara* has received extensive attention in the *Brihatrayi* and subsequent Ayurvedic literature. The comprehensive understanding of its causation, pathogenesis, prevention, and management demonstrates the advanced preventive orientation of Ayurvedic medicine. ¹

The contemporary healthcare system is increasingly shifting from disease-centered treatment toward preventive and predictive approaches. The growing burden of infectious diseases, recurrent febrile illnesses, antimicrobial resistance, and lifestyle-related disorders has emphasized the necessity of early identification of pathological changes before clinical manifestation. In this context, Ayurveda offers a unique framework through the theory of *Shadkriyakala*, which explains the sequential progression of disease from its earliest stage to fully

manifested pathology. This doctrine provides opportunities for intervention at multiple stages, thereby facilitating disease prevention and health promotion.²

The concept of *Shadkriyakala*, elaborated primarily by Acharya Sushruta, represents six successive stages of disease development namely *Sanchaya*, *Prakopa*, *Prasara*, *Sthanasamshraya*, *Vyakti*, and *Bheda*. These stages illustrate the dynamic interaction between etiological factors, *Dosha*, susceptible tissues, and host factors. Unlike modern medicine, where disease is often recognized after symptom appearance, *Shadkriyakala* enables the identification of subtle preclinical alterations and provides a scientific basis for preventive interventions before irreversible tissue damage occurs.³

The preventive significance of *Shadkriyakala* becomes particularly relevant in the context of *Jwara*, as the pathological process begins long before the appearance of classical symptoms. Recognition of early disturbances in *Agni*, accumulation of pathogenic factors, and subtle systemic changes can facilitate timely implementation of preventive measures. Such interventions may include dietary regulation, lifestyle modification, seasonal regimens, behavioral discipline, and immune-enhancing strategies described under *Swasthavritta*. These measures aim to restore physiological equilibrium and prevent progression toward overt disease.⁴

The principles of *Swasthavritta* emphasize maintenance of health through *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Sadvritta*, personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, and strengthening of host resistance. These preventive measures align closely with the stages of *Shadkriyakala* and can be strategically applied to interrupt disease progression. Furthermore, the Ayurvedic emphasis on individualized assessment and timely intervention resonates with contemporary concepts of predictive, preventive, and personalized medicine. Consequently, the integration of *Shadkriyakala* with *Jwara* prevention offers a valuable framework for both clinical practice and public health applications.⁵

Despite its profound theoretical importance, the preventive application of *Shadkriyakala* in *Jwara* remains insufficiently explored in contemporary

scientific literature. Most available studies focus primarily on therapeutic interventions rather than early-stage disease prevention. Therefore, a critical analysis of *Shadkriyakala* from the perspective of *Jwara* prevention is warranted. Such an exploration may provide evidence-based insights into the preventive potential of Ayurveda and contribute to the development of integrative healthcare strategies aimed at reducing disease burden and promoting long-term health.⁶

II. CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF *JWARA*

Definition of *Jwara*

Jwara is considered one of the most important disease entities in Ayurveda and is described as the foremost among all diseases due to its ability to affect both the body and mind. According to Ayurvedic classics, *Jwara* results from the vitiation of *Dosha* and impairment of *Agni*, leading to disturbances in physiological and psychological functions. Unlike the modern concept of fever, Ayurveda views *Jwara* as a systemic disorder involving the entire body rather than merely an elevation of temperature.⁷

Classification of *Jwara*

Table 1. Major Classifications of *Jwara*

Basis	Types
Etiology	<i>Nija</i> , <i>Agantuja</i>
<i>Dosha</i>	<i>Vataja</i> , <i>Pittaja</i> , <i>Kaphaja</i>
Combined	<i>Vata-Pittaja</i> , <i>Pitta-Kaphaja</i> , <i>Vata-Kaphaja</i>
Tridoshic	<i>Sannipataja Jwara</i>
Periodicity	<i>Satata</i> , <i>Anyedyushka</i> , <i>Tritiyaka</i> , <i>Chaturthaka</i>

This classification reflects the individualized Ayurvedic approach to understanding and managing febrile disorders.⁸

Nija and *Agantuja Jwara*

The primary classification of *Jwara* includes *Nija* and *Agantuja* types. *Nija Jwara* develops due to internal vitiation of *Dosha* caused by improper diet and lifestyle, whereas *Agantuja Jwara* originates from external factors such as trauma, infections, or environmental influences. However, both ultimately

involve *Dosha* derangement for disease manifestation.⁹

Etiopathogenesis (*Samprapti*) of *Jwara*

The pathogenesis of *Jwara* begins with exposure to etiological factors (*Nidana*), leading to *Dosha* aggravation and impairment of *Agni*. Disturbed *Agni* results in metabolic dysfunction and systemic imbalance, which subsequently manifests as *Jwara*. Therefore, maintenance of normal *Agni* is considered essential for both prevention and management of the disease.¹⁰

Preventive Relevance

The Ayurvedic understanding of *Jwara* emphasizes that pathological changes occur before the appearance of clinical symptoms. Early recognition of *Dosha* imbalance and *Agni* impairment provides an opportunity for timely intervention. This preventive perspective forms the basis for applying the theory of *Shadkriyakala* in the prevention of *Jwara* and highlights the importance of *Swasthavritta* measures in maintaining health.¹¹

III. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF *SHADKRIYAKALA*

The concept of *Shadkriyakala* is one of the most distinctive contributions of Ayurveda to preventive medicine. The term consists of two words: *Shat* (six), *Kriya* (therapeutic intervention), and *Kala* (time or stage). It denotes the six successive stages of disease development during which appropriate interventions can prevent, arrest, or reverse the pathological process. Acharya Sushruta described *Shadkriyakala* as a framework for understanding disease progression and identifying opportunities for early intervention before the appearance of overt clinical symptoms.¹²

Unlike modern medicine, which often recognizes disease after symptom manifestation, *Shadkriyakala* emphasizes the detection of subtle pathological changes at preclinical stages. This concept highlights the dynamic nature of disease evolution and provides a scientific basis for preventive healthcare. In the context of *Jwara*, understanding these stages enables timely implementation of *Swasthavritta* measures to prevent disease progression.¹³

During *Sanchaya*, mild accumulation of *Dosha* occurs due to improper diet, lifestyle, or seasonal influences. At this stage, symptoms are subtle and reversible, making it the most suitable period for preventive intervention.¹⁴

Table 2. Stages of *Shadkriyakala* and Their Preventive Significance in *Jwara*

Stage	Description	Preventive Opportunity
<i>Sanchaya</i>	Initial accumulation of vitiated <i>Dosha</i>	Dietary regulation and lifestyle correction
<i>Prakopa</i>	Aggravation of accumulated <i>Dosha</i>	Elimination of causative factors and <i>Pathya</i>
<i>Prasara</i>	Spread of aggravated <i>Dosha</i> throughout the body	Early intervention to prevent tissue involvement
<i>Sthanasamshraya</i>	Localization of <i>Dosha</i> in susceptible tissues	Identification of prodromal signs
<i>Vyakti</i>	Manifestation of disease symptoms	Timely diagnosis and treatment
<i>Bheda</i>	Complications and differentiation of disease	Prevention of chronicity and complications

In *Prakopa*, the accumulated *Dosha* become aggravated and begin to disturb physiological balance. If corrective measures are not adopted, the disease process advances further. The stages of *Sanchaya* and *Prakopa* collectively represent the primary prevention phase in Ayurveda.¹⁵

The *Prasara* stage is characterized by the dissemination of aggravated *Dosha* from their original sites throughout the body. Subsequently, in *Sthanasamshraya*, the migrating *Dosha* localize in susceptible tissues, producing subtle premonitory manifestations (*Purvarupa*). These stages provide an

opportunity for early detection and secondary prevention.¹⁶

The appearance of characteristic clinical symptoms marks the *Vyakti* stage, while *Bheda* represents disease differentiation, chronicity, or complications. Once these stages are reached, management becomes more complex and resource intensive. Therefore, Ayurvedic preventive strategies emphasize intervention during the earlier stages of *Shadkriyakala* whenever possible.¹⁷

Thus, *Shadkriyakala* serves as a predictive and preventive model of disease progression. Its application to *Jwara* highlights the importance of identifying pathological changes before symptom manifestation and supports the Ayurvedic principle that prevention is superior to cure.¹⁸

IV. PREVENTIVE DIMENSIONS OF SHADKRIYAKALA IN JWARA

The concept of *Shadkriyakala* provides a scientific framework for understanding disease progression and implementing preventive measures at different stages. In the context of *Jwara*, it emphasizes that pathological changes begin much before the appearance of clinical symptoms. Therefore, timely recognition of these stages allows appropriate interventions to arrest disease progression and maintain health.¹⁹

Primary Prevention

The stages of *Sanchaya* and *Prakopa* represent the initial phases of disease development. During *Sanchaya*, gradual accumulation of *Dosha* occurs due to improper diet, unhealthy lifestyle practices, suppression of natural urges, and seasonal incompatibility. If these factors continue, the accumulated *Dosha* become aggravated, leading to the *Prakopa* stage. At this level, disease has not yet manifested clinically, making it the most suitable period for preventive intervention.²⁰

Preventive measures during these stages include adherence to *Pathya Ahara*, observance of *Dinacharya* and *Ritucharya*, maintenance of proper hygiene, adequate sleep, regular physical activity, and avoidance of etiological factors. Such measures help restore *Dosha* equilibrium and prevent progression toward *Jwara*.²¹

Secondary Prevention

The stages of *Prasara* and *Sthanasamshraya* correspond to the preclinical phase of disease. In *Prasara*, aggravated *Dosha* spread from their original sites throughout the body, while in *Sthanasamshraya* they localize in susceptible tissues or organs. At this stage, subtle warning signs (*Purvarupa*) may appear, although the disease is not fully manifested.²²

Recognition of these early manifestations provides an opportunity for secondary prevention. Timely dietary correction, lifestyle modification, and appropriate Ayurvedic interventions can prevent the development of overt *Jwara*. Early detection at these stages significantly reduces disease severity and improves overall prognosis.²³

Tertiary Prevention

The stages of *Vyakti* and *Bheda* represent clinical manifestation and disease differentiation. In *Vyakti*, characteristic signs and symptoms of *Jwara* become evident, whereas *Bheda* denotes complications, chronicity, or advanced disease states. The objective of tertiary prevention is to minimize disease burden, prevent recurrence, and avoid complications.²⁴

Appropriate treatment, supportive dietary measures, restoration of *Agni*, and follow-up care are important at these stages. Effective management not only alleviates symptoms but also prevents progression to more severe forms of *Jwara* and associated systemic disturbances.²⁵

Table 3. Preventive Role of *Shadkriyakala* in *Jwara*

Stage	Prevention Level	Objective	Major Measures
<i>Sanchaya</i>	Primary	Prevent <i>Dosha</i> accumulation	<i>Pathya Ahara</i> , healthy lifestyle
<i>Prakopa</i>	Primary	Prevent aggravation of <i>Dosha</i>	Removal of causative factors
<i>Prasara</i>	Secondary	Prevent systemic spread	Early intervention
<i>Sthanasamshraya</i>	Secondary	Prevent disease localization	Management of <i>Purvarupa</i>
<i>Vyakti</i>	Tertiary	Reduce disease severity	Appropriate treatment
<i>Bheda</i>	Tertiary	Prevent complications	Long-term management

Thus, *Shadkriyakala* demonstrates the preventive wisdom of Ayurveda by providing opportunities for intervention at every stage of disease evolution. In *Jwara*, this approach shifts the focus from treatment alone to prediction, prevention, and preservation of health, making it highly relevant to modern preventive medicine and public health.²⁶

Swasthavritta Strategies for Prevention of *Jwara*

The preventive approach of Ayurveda is primarily rooted in *Swasthavritta*, which aims to preserve health and prevent disease before its clinical manifestation. Since *Jwara* develops through progressive disturbances in *Dosha* and *Agni*, the principles of *Swasthavritta* provide practical measures to interrupt disease progression during the early stages of *Shadkriyakala*. These measures not only reduce susceptibility to disease but also enhance the body's adaptive and defensive capacities.²⁷

Dinacharya and Prevention of *Jwara*

Dinacharya comprises daily health-promoting practices designed to maintain physiological equilibrium. Activities such as waking up at an appropriate time, oral hygiene, regular physical activity, proper bathing, and consumption of wholesome food contribute to the maintenance of normal *Agni* and balanced *Dosha*. Regular adherence to *Dinacharya* prevents the accumulation of pathogenic factors and thereby reduces the risk of developing *Jwara*.²⁸

Ritucharya and Seasonal Prevention

Seasonal changes significantly influence the state of *Dosha* and host susceptibility to diseases. Ayurveda recommends specific dietary and lifestyle modifications according to seasonal variations through *Ritucharya*. By adapting food habits, physical activities, and daily routines to changing environmental conditions, individuals can prevent seasonal aggravation of *Dosha*, which is often implicated in the pathogenesis of *Jwara*.²⁹

Sadvritta and Mental Well-being

Ayurveda recognizes the role of psychological factors in disease causation. *Sadvritta*, which encompasses ethical conduct, emotional regulation, and healthy social behavior, promotes mental harmony and reduces stress-related physiological disturbances.

Maintenance of mental health contributes to stronger resistance against diseases and supports overall well-being.³⁰ In addition, the recitation of *Vishnu Sahasranama* is considered a supportive measure within the principles of *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* and *Sadvritta*. As a form of spiritual and psychological intervention, it may help enhance mental calmness, emotional stability, and spiritual well-being in individuals suffering from fever, thereby contributing to holistic recovery and improved quality of life.

V. PERSONAL HYGIENE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Classical Ayurvedic texts emphasize cleanliness of the body, clothing, food, water, and surroundings. Proper sanitation and hygienic practices minimize exposure to harmful environmental factors and infectious agents. These measures are particularly important in preventing febrile illnesses and maintaining community health.³¹

Rasayana as a Preventive Strategy

Rasayana therapy occupies a special place in preventive Ayurveda due to its role in enhancing vitality, immunity, and longevity. Regular use of appropriate *Rasayana* measures improves resistance against disease-causing factors and supports the maintenance of physiological homeostasis. In the context of *Jwara*, *Rasayana* may help strengthen host defenses and reduce the likelihood of disease occurrence.³²

Table 4. Role of *Swasthavritta* Components in Prevention of *Jwara*

Component	Preventive Contribution
<i>Dinacharya</i>	Maintains healthy <i>Agni</i> and balanced <i>Dosha</i>
<i>Ritucharya</i>	Prevents seasonal <i>Dosha</i> aggravation
<i>Sadvritta</i>	Promotes psychological well-being
Hygiene Practices	Reduces exposure to disease-causing factors
<i>Rasayana</i>	Enhances immunity and disease resistance

The preventive measures described under *Swasthavritta* complement the principles of *Shadkriyakala* by providing practical interventions at

different stages of disease progression. Their systematic implementation can significantly reduce the incidence of *Jwara* and contribute to the promotion of holistic health.³³

VI. CORRELATION OF *SHADKRIYAKALA* WITH MODERN PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

The theory of *Shadkriyakala* represents one of the earliest systematic models of disease prevention described in medical literature. While modern preventive medicine focuses on reducing disease burden through timely interventions at different stages of disease development, Ayurveda explains a similar concept through the six stages of *Shadkriyakala*. Both approaches emphasize early recognition of pathological changes and prevention of disease progression.³⁴

Modern healthcare categorizes prevention into primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Primary prevention aims to prevent disease occurrence, secondary prevention focuses on early detection and intervention, and tertiary prevention seeks to reduce complications and disability. Interestingly, these levels closely correspond to the various stages of *Shadkriyakala*, demonstrating the preventive orientation of Ayurvedic medicine.³⁵

Table 5. Correlation between *Shadkriyakala* and Modern Preventive Medicine

<i>Shadkriyakala</i> Stage	Modern Concept	Preventive Goal
<i>Sanchaya</i>	Risk factor identification	Prevention of disease initiation
<i>Prakopa</i>	Primary prevention	Control of modifiable risk factors
<i>Prasara</i>	Early disease surveillance	Prevention of disease spread
<i>Sthanasamshraya</i>	Secondary prevention	Early detection and intervention
<i>Vyakti</i>	Clinical diagnosis and treatment	Disease management
<i>Bheda</i>	Tertiary prevention	Prevention of complications

The stages of *Sanchaya* and *Prakopa* correspond closely to primary prevention because interventions

during these phases focus on correcting dietary, lifestyle, and environmental factors before disease manifestation. Similarly, *Prasara* and *Sthanasamshraya* resemble secondary prevention, where subtle pathological changes can be identified and managed before the appearance of overt symptoms.³⁶

The stages of *Vyakti* and *Bheda* align with tertiary prevention, where the emphasis shifts toward treatment, prevention of complications, and restoration of health. This comparison highlights the remarkable similarity between Ayurvedic concepts and contemporary preventive medicine despite their development in different historical contexts.³⁷

Another important contemporary concept is Predictive, Preventive, Personalized, and Participatory (P4) Medicine. The principle of *Shadkriyakala* possesses all four components. It is predictive because it identifies future disease development, preventive because it encourages early intervention, personalized because management is based on individual constitution and disease stage, and participatory because successful prevention requires active involvement of the individual in maintaining health.³⁸

From a public health perspective, the application of *Shadkriyakala* in *Jwara* prevention has considerable significance. Early recognition of risk factors, promotion of healthy lifestyles, seasonal adaptations, and strengthening of host resistance can reduce the incidence of febrile illnesses and improve community health outcomes. Therefore, the integration of *Shadkriyakala* with modern preventive strategies may provide a comprehensive and holistic framework for disease prevention.³⁹

VII. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS OF *SHADKRIYAKALA*-BASED *JWARA* PREVENTION

The increasing burden of infectious diseases, seasonal febrile illnesses, and emerging public health challenges highlights the importance of preventive healthcare approaches. Ayurveda offers a unique preventive framework through the theory of *Shadkriyakala*, which emphasizes identification and management of pathological changes before the appearance of overt disease. The application of this concept to *Jwara* prevention has significant implications for both individual and community

health. ⁴⁰One of the major strengths of *Shadkriyakala* is its focus on early risk identification. The stages of *Sanchaya* and *Prakopa* facilitate recognition of factors that predispose individuals to disease, allowing timely corrective measures. Such an approach aligns with modern public health strategies that emphasize risk reduction, health promotion, and disease prevention rather than treatment alone. ⁴¹

The principles of *Swasthavritta*, including *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, hygiene practices, and health-promoting behaviors, can be implemented at the community level to reduce susceptibility to *Jwara*. Public awareness regarding healthy lifestyle practices, seasonal adaptation, and personal cleanliness may contribute significantly to the prevention of febrile illnesses and improvement of overall health outcomes. ⁴²

The concept also supports the development of predictive and preventive healthcare models. By identifying subtle physiological disturbances before disease manifestation, healthcare professionals can implement targeted interventions and reduce the burden on healthcare systems. This approach is particularly relevant in managing seasonal outbreaks and recurrent febrile conditions. ⁴³

Table 6. Public Health Relevance of *Shadkriyakala* in *Jwara* Prevention

Public Health Aspect	Contribution of <i>Shadkriyakala</i>
Health Promotion	Encourages healthy lifestyle practices
Disease Prevention	Identifies disease before manifestation
Community Health	Supports population-level preventive measures
Seasonal Health Management	Promotes adaptation through <i>Ritucharya</i>
Predictive Healthcare	Facilitates early risk identification
Reduction of Disease Burden	Minimizes morbidity and complications

Furthermore, the integration of Ayurvedic preventive principles with contemporary public health programs may strengthen efforts aimed at reducing the incidence of febrile illnesses. Such integration can contribute to sustainable healthcare by promoting

self-care, community participation, and preventive awareness. ⁴⁴

Therefore, the application of *Shadkriyakala* in the prevention of *Jwara* extends beyond individual patient care and offers valuable insights for population-based health promotion strategies. Its preventive orientation, coupled with practical lifestyle interventions, makes it highly relevant in the context of modern public health. ⁴⁵

VIII. CONCLUSION

Jwara remains one of the most significant disease entities described in Ayurveda, not only because of its widespread occurrence but also due to its profound impact on physical and mental health. The Ayurvedic concept of *Shadkriyakala* provides a systematic understanding of disease evolution, highlighting opportunities for intervention before the manifestation of overt clinical symptoms. This unique framework reflects the preventive orientation of Ayurveda and emphasizes the importance of early recognition and timely management of pathological changes.

The application of *Shadkriyakala* to *Jwara* prevention demonstrates that disease is a dynamic process rather than an isolated event. By identifying stages such as *Sanchaya*, *Prakopa*, *Prasara*, *Sthanasamshraya*, *Vyakti*, and *Bheda*, Ayurveda offers a structured approach for preventing disease progression through appropriate dietary, lifestyle, behavioral, and therapeutic measures. The principles of *Swasthavritta*, including *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Sadvritta*, hygiene practices, and *Rasayana*, serve as practical tools for implementing these preventive strategies at both individual and community levels.

Furthermore, the close resemblance between *Shadkriyakala* and modern concepts of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention highlights the contemporary relevance of Ayurvedic wisdom. The theory also aligns with emerging healthcare paradigms that emphasize predictive, preventive, and personalized approaches to disease management. Such integration has the potential to strengthen public health initiatives and reduce the burden of febrile illnesses.

In conclusion, *Shadkriyakala* offers a comprehensive preventive model for understanding and managing *Jwara*. Its emphasis on early detection, health

promotion, and stage-specific intervention underscores the enduring relevance of Ayurvedic principles in modern healthcare and supports their application in the development of holistic and sustainable disease prevention strategies.

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