



Ayurvedic Nutritional Assessment Scale's Development and Validation

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ABOUT THE STUDY

The bodies as well as the diseases are formed by the food; happiness and misery are dependent on the wholesome and unwholesome foods and hence an adequate nutritional level is an essential pillar for the wellbeing. Before prescribing any form of dietary or lifestyle changes it is essential to understand the condition and requirement of the person, hence an assessment beforehand helps in better prescription. The aim of the current study was to develop and validate a nutritional assessment scale, with applicability in Ayurvedic facilities for research and clinical practice.

Before prescribing any form of dietary or lifestyle changes it is essential to understand the condition and requirement of the person, hence an assessment beforehand helps in better prescription [1]. A combination of factors like including physical, environmental, mental can result in impaired nutritional levels and thus hampering the overall wellbeing. Many screening tools, anthropometric measurements, biomarkers, and conditions have been proposed to identify people at nutritional risk. Three of the main screening tools devised are the Nutritional Risk Screening 2002 (NRS 2002), the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST), Mini Nutritional Assessment (MNA). The Subjective Global Assessment (SGA) is an assessment tool that aims at predicting clinical outcome. However, there is no such tool till now which can assess the nutritional status as a holistic manner considering the principles of Ayurveda.

Assessment served as the basis for development of Ayurvedic nutritional assessment scale. SGA as such was not eligible to be used as a screening tool in Ayurveda due to various shortcomings like it does not captures the information regarding the basic Ayurvedic nutritional aspects like Agni [2]. The Ayurvedic nutritional assessment scale is one of the first to be developed for Ayurvedic nutritional assessment.

The sections/dimensions of the final Ayurvedic nutritional assessment scale were constructed similar to the initial concept for the development of tool [3]. The first factor Agni consisted of four items reflecting the strength of the Agni-Avara, Madhyama and Pravara and the state of Dosha related with Agni like Samagni,

Teekshnagni, Mandagni and the Vishamagni. These are the commonest character of Agni that affects the nutrition [4]. It is said that all the diseases start from abdomen and that deranged state of Agni causes Kshaya (under nutrition) and Vrudhhi (Over nutrition) in the body.

What we eat and how we eat decides what nutrients we will get when the food will be assimilated, hence the questionnaire includes, a section to assess the compliance to dietetic rules [5]. This section includes 9 questions based on the rules mentioned in Charak Samhita. Ayurvedic nutritional assessment scale is consistent with the criteria that 4-6 items are required to measure 1 factor for example items like dry skin, dry hair, palpitations on little efforts, tastelessness etc. were included for Rasa Kashaya. The variance of the items selected through EFA was 68% which satisfies the criterion of 60%. The Cronbach's alpha of Ayurvedic nutritional assessment scale was good and the spilt half showed good result. The nutritional status thus assessed can be used for further measured intervention based on Ayurvedic principles.

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