

## Ayurvedic Management of Dyslipidemia: A Comprehensive Review of Classical Concepts and Contemporary Evidence

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### ABSTRACT

Dyslipidemia is a prevalent metabolic disorder linked to abnormal lipid regulation and an elevated risk of cardiovascular disease. While conventional therapies are effective, their long-term use is often limited by constraints and side effects, leading to increased interest in complementary approaches like Ayurveda. This review offers an analytical overview of Ayurvedic concepts pertinent to the understanding and management of dyslipidemia, integrating classical Ayurvedic principles with contemporary scientific evidence. A traditional literature review was conducted using classical Ayurvedic texts and scientific databases, including PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar. Relevant literature on dyslipidemia, Medoroga, Ayurvedic management, medicinal plants, and clinical evidence was analyzed and synthesized. Although dyslipidemia is not explicitly described in Ayurveda, it can be conceptually linked to Medoroga, SantarpanajanyaVyadhi, and MedovahaSrotodushti. Ayurvedic management emphasizes correcting metabolic dysfunction through NidanaParivarjana, Agni Deepana, Shodhana, Shamana, dietary regulation, and lifestyle modification. Medicinal plants and formulations like Guggulu, Triphala, Arjuna, Garlic, and Medohara Guggulu have shown potential in lowering lipids, providing antioxidant benefits, and reducing inflammation in both preclinical and clinical studies. Nonetheless, challenges such as limited standardization, methodological variability, and a lack of high-quality clinical trials persist. Ayurveda presents a holistic and potentially advantageous approach to managing dyslipidemia. However, challenges including limited standardization, methodological variability, and insufficient high-quality clinical trials remain.

**Keywords:** Ayurveda, Dyslipidemia, Integrative Medicine, Shodhana, Shamana

### INTRODUCTION

Dyslipidemia is a metabolic disorder marked by elevated levels of total cholesterol, low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C), triglycerides, and/or decreased high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C).[1] It stands as a significant modifiable risk factor for atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD), contributing notably to endothelial dysfunction, chronic inflammation, and cardiovascular morbidity and mortality.[2] Globally, dyslipidemia affects a large portion of the adult population, with studies indicating a high prevalence among both genders; approximately 39% of adults worldwide have elevated total cholesterol, impacting millions of men and women in both developed and developing countries.[3] The burden is particularly rising in low- and middle-income nations due to sedentary lifestyles, unhealthy diets, obesity, and metabolic disorders. Conventional management includes statins, fibrates, ezetimibe, and lifestyle modification. Long-term therapy may lead to adverse effects, medication intolerance, and residual cardiovascular risk.[4] Ayurveda offers a holistic perspective on metabolic disorders through the concepts of Dosh, Agni, Dhatu, Ama, and Srotas. While classical texts do not explicitly mention dyslipidemia, it can be conceptually linked to Medoroga, SantarpanajanyaVyadhi, and MedovahaSrotodushti.[5] Ayurvedic management focuses on NidanaParivarjana, Shodhana, Shamana, dietary regulation, and herbal therapies, many of which have shown lipid-modulating and cardioprotective potential in recent studies.[6]

### AIM OF THE REVIEW

This review aims to critically assess the Ayurvedic understanding and management of dyslipidemia by integrating classical conceptual foundations with modern scientific evidence. It seeks to explore Ayurvedic pathophysiological correlations, therapeutic principles, medicinal plants and formulations, and available experimental and clinical data relevant to lipid regulation. Furthermore, it intends to identify current research gaps and highlight future directions for evidence-based integration of Ayurvedic approaches in dyslipidemia care.

### Methodology

This review was conducted through a comprehensive narrative literature review of classical Ayurvedic texts and contemporary scientific literature related to dyslipidemia. Relevant articles were searched from electronic databases like PubMed, Scopus, Google scholar and ScienceDirect by using keywords like “Dyslipidemia”, “Ayurveda”, “Medoroga”, “Ayurvedic management”. A literature review was done to ascertain the Ayurvedic concepts related to lipid metabolism disorders from classical texts like *CharakaSamhita*, *SushrutaSamhita* and *AshtangaHridaya*.

### Comparative Concept of Dyslipidemia in Modern Medicine and Ayurveda

Dyslipidemia is viewed differently in modern medicine and Ayurveda, yet both systems associate it with metabolic dysfunction and chronic disease risk.<sup>[7]</sup> Modern medicine explains dyslipidemia through abnormalities in lipid metabolism and serum lipid levels, whereas Ayurveda correlates it conceptually with *Medoroga*, *SantarpanajanyaVyadhi*, and *Rasavaha-MedovahaSrotodushti*. The following table presents a comparative overview of the modern and Ayurvedic perspectives on dyslipidemia.

**Table 1: Modern Medicine and Ayurvedic Perspective of Dyslipidemia**

Aspect	Modern Medicine Perspective	Ayurvedic Perspective
Definition / Disease Concept	Dyslipidemia is a metabolic disorder characterized by abnormal serum lipid levels including elevated TC, LDL-C, TG, and/or reduced HDL-C. <sup>[8]</sup>	No direct disease entity equivalent to dyslipidemia is described in classical texts; conceptually correlated with <i>Medoroga</i> , <i>SantarpanajanyaVyadhi</i> , and <i>Srotodushti</i> . <sup>[9]</sup>
Classification	Classified as primary (genetic/familial) and secondary (associated with diabetes, obesity, hypothyroidism, lifestyle factors). <sup>[10]</sup>	Can be interpreted under <i>SantarpanajanyaVyadhi</i> (diseases caused by over-nutrition) and disorders involving <i>Kapha-Meda</i> imbalance. <sup>[11]</sup>
Etiology and Risk Factors	Unhealthy diet, sedentary lifestyle, obesity, smoking, alcohol use, diabetes mellitus, genetic predisposition, aging, endocrine disorders. <sup>[12]</sup>	Excessive intake of <i>Guru</i> , <i>Snigdha</i> , <i>MadhuraAhara</i> , lack of exercise ( <i>Avyayama</i> ), excessive sleep, sedentary habits, impaired <i>Agni</i> , and over-nutrition ( <i>Santarpana</i> ). <sup>[13]</sup>

Pathophysiology / Lipid Metabolism	Disturbance in lipid synthesis, transport, utilization, and clearance leading to accumulation of cholesterol and triglycerides. <sup>[14]</sup>	<i>Mandagni</i> causes formation of <i>Ama</i> , leading to vitiation of <i>Kapha</i> and <i>MedaDhatu</i> , impairment of <i>Rasavaha</i> and <i>MedovahaSrotas</i> , and abnormal fat metabolism. <sup>[15]</sup>
Disease Correlation	Recognized as a major cardiovascular risk factor contributing to atherosclerosis and metabolic syndrome. <sup>[16]</sup>	Conceptually associated with <i>Medoroga</i> , <i>Sthaulya</i> , <i>SantarpanajanyaVyadhi</i> , and <i>Rasavaha–MedovahaSrotodushti</i> . <sup>[17]</sup>
Role of Regulatory Factors	Influenced by enzymes, lipoproteins, hormones, receptors, and genetic regulation of lipid metabolism. <sup>[18]</sup>	Governed by imbalance of <i>Dosha</i> (mainly <i>Kapha</i> and <i>Vata</i> ), derangement of <i>Agni</i> , vitiation of <i>Dhatu</i> ( <i>Rasa</i> and <i>Meda</i> ), and accumulation of <i>Ama</i> . <sup>[19]</sup>
Clinical Manifestations	Often asymptomatic; may present with xanthomas, obesity, hypertension, chest pain, and features of metabolic syndrome. <sup>[20]</sup>	Manifestations resemble features of <i>Medoroga</i> such as <i>Ati-sweda</i> (excess sweating), <i>Anga-gourava</i> (heaviness), <i>Alasya</i> (lethargy), and obesity-related symptoms. <sup>[21]</sup>
Complications	Atherosclerosis, coronary artery disease, stroke, peripheral vascular disease, pancreatitis, metabolic syndrome. <sup>[22]</sup>	Progressive <i>Srotorodha</i> (channel obstruction), <i>Kapha-MedaDushti</i> , and predisposition to chronic metabolic and cardiovascular disorders. <sup>[23]</sup>
Diagnostic Criteria and Biomarkers	Diagnosed using lipid profile parameters: TC, LDL-C, HDL-C, TG, non-HDL cholesterol, ApoB, and inflammatory biomarkers. <sup>[24]</sup>	Diagnosis is based on <i>Dosha-Dhatu-Mala</i> assessment, <i>Agni</i> status, <i>Srotas</i> examination, <i>NidanaPanchaka</i> , and clinical features of <i>MedaDushti</i> . <sup>[25]</sup>
Samprapti (Pathogenesis)	Excess caloric intake and metabolic dysfunction alter lipid homeostasis, resulting in dysregulated lipoprotein metabolism and vascular injury. <sup>[26]</sup>	<i>NidanaSevana</i> → <i>Agnimandya</i> → <i>AmaUtpatti</i> → <i>Kapha-MedaVridhhi</i> → <i>Rasavaha/MedovahaSrotodushti</i> → <i>Srotorodha</i> → manifestation of <i>Medoroga</i> -like condition. <sup>[27]</sup>

#### Ayurvedic Management Approaches in Dyslipidemia

Ayurvedic management of dyslipidemia focuses on correcting the underlying metabolic imbalance rather than only reducing lipid levels. The treatment approach includes elimination of causative factors (*NidanaParivarjana*), improvement of digestive and metabolic function through *Agni Deepana* and *AmaPachana*, and restoration of *Dosha* balance. Both *Shodhana* (purificatory) and *Shamana* (conservative) therapies play important roles in management.<sup>[27]</sup>

*Shodhana* therapies such as *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *LekhanaBasti*, and *Udvardana* are employed to remove accumulated *Dosha* and excess *Meda*. In addition, *ShamanaChikitsa* utilizes herbal drugs, polyherbal formulations, and *Rasayana* therapies to support lipid metabolism, improve overall health, and reduce the risk of metabolic complications.<sup>[28]</sup> The following table summarizes the major Ayurvedic principles and therapeutic modalities used in dyslipidemia management.

**Table 2: Ayurvedic Management Strategies for Dyslipidemia**

Section	Therapeutic Approach	Description / Role in Dyslipidemia
Ayurvedic Principles of Management	<i>NidanaParivarjana</i>	Avoidance of causative factors such as unhealthy diet, sedentary lifestyle, excessive fatty food intake, and stress.
	<i>Agni DeepanaandAmaPachana</i>	Improves digestive and metabolic fire ( <i>Agni</i> ) and helps in digestion of toxic metabolites ( <i>Ama</i> ).
	<i>DoshaShamana</i>	Balances mainly <i>Kapha</i> and <i>VataDosha</i> involved in lipid metabolism disorders.
	<i>ShodhanaTherapy</i>	Bio-purificatory therapies used to eliminate accumulated <i>Dosha</i> and excess <i>Meda</i> .
	<i>Pathya–Apathya</i>	Emphasizes healthy diet, exercise, and lifestyle modifications while avoiding heavy and oily foods.
<i>ShodhanaTherapy</i> in Dyslipidemia	<i>Panchakarma</i>	Detoxification procedures aimed at restoring metabolic balance and clearing body channels ( <i>Srotas</i> ).
	<i>Vamana Karma</i>	Therapeutic emesis mainly indicated for <i>Kapha</i> dominance and excess fat accumulation.
	<i>Virechana Karma</i>	Therapeutic purgation useful for correcting <i>Pitta</i> and metabolic disturbances.
	<i>LekhanaBasti</i>	Medicated enema with scraping ( <i>Lekhana</i> ) action to reduce excess <i>MedaDhatu</i> .
	<i>Udvardana</i>	Dry powder massage that helps reduce obesity, improves circulation, and decreases subcutaneous fat.

<i>ShamanaChikitsa</i>	Herbal Drugs	Herbs like Guggulu, Triphala, Arjuna, and Guduchi are commonly used for lipid regulation.
	Polyherbal Formulations	Classical formulations such as TriphalaGuggulu and MedoharaGuggulu support fat metabolism.
	<i>Rasayana</i> Therapy	Rejuvenative therapy that improves overall metabolism and cardiovascular health.
	Mechanism of Action	Ayurvedic medicines may act through lipid-lowering, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and metabolic regulatory effects.

#### Medicinal Plants and Formulations with Scientific Evidence

Several Ayurvedic medicinal plants and classical formulations have demonstrated potential benefits in the management of dyslipidemia through lipid-lowering, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory activities. Herbs such as *Guggulu*, *Triphala*, *Arjuna*, *Lashuna* (Garlic), *Musta*, *Haritaki*, *Amalaki*, and *Guduchi* have been observed to support lipid metabolism and cardiovascular health.<sup>[29]</sup> Classical formulations, including *YogarajaGuggulu*, *MedoharaGuggulu*, and *TriphalaGuggulu*, are traditionally used to reduce excess *Meda*, improve metabolic function, and promote systemic balance.<sup>[30]</sup> The available experimental and clinical evidence suggests their potential role as supportive interventions in dyslipidemia management.

#### Contemporary Scientific Evidence

The potential role of Ayurvedic interventions in dyslipidemia has also been supported by some modern scientific studies. Several Ayurvedic herbs and formulations have been shown to have lipid-lowering, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory properties in preclinical studies. Clinical trials and systematic reviews have reported the beneficial effects of agents such as *Guggulu*, *Triphala*, and *Garlic* in improving serum lipid parameters, including a reduction in total cholesterol, LDL-cholesterol, and triglycerides.<sup>[31]</sup> However, current evidence is limited by variations in study design, sample size, and standardization of formulations. Safety assessments suggest that most Ayurvedic medicines are generally well tolerated when used appropriately issues of quality control, dose regulation, and toxicological assessment remain important considerations for their wider use in clinical practice.

#### Challenges and Research Gaps

Despite promising findings, several challenges limit the wider acceptance of Ayurvedic management in dyslipidemia. Lack of standardization of Ayurvedic drugs, variability in herbal formulations, and insufficient quality control remain major concerns.<sup>[32]</sup> Many available studies are constrained by small sample sizes, short study duration, and methodological limitations, reducing the reliability and generalizability of outcomes. Therefore, well-designed randomized controlled trials, standardized formulations, and robust safety evaluations are needed to strengthen the evidence base.<sup>[33]</sup> Future research should focus on mechanism-based studies, integrative treatment models, and large-scale clinical investigations to validate the therapeutic potential of Ayurveda in dyslipidemia management.

### DISCUSSION

Dyslipidemia remains a major global metabolic disorder and an important contributor to cardiovascular morbidity and mortality. While conventional therapies effectively improve lipid profiles, concerns regarding long-term adverse effects and residual risk have increased interest in complementary approaches. Ayurveda provides a holistic framework by correlating dyslipidemia with *Medoroga*, *SantarpanajanyaVyadhi*, and *MedovahaSrotodushti*, emphasizing correction of metabolic dysfunction through *NidanaParivarjana*, *Shodhana*, *Shamana*, and lifestyle regulation.<sup>[34]</sup> Scientific evidence suggests that Ayurvedic herbs and formulations such as *Guggulu*, *Triphala*, and *Garlic* may exert lipid-lowering, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory effects.<sup>[35]</sup> However, limitations in standardization, study design, and clinical validation necessitate high-quality trials to establish their efficacy and safety in evidence-based dyslipidemia management.

## CONCLUSION

Dyslipidemia is a prevalent metabolic disorder and a major risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, which require effective and sustainable management strategies. Ayurveda offers a holistic and complete perspective by conceptually relating dyslipidemia to *Medoroga*, *SantarpanjanyaVyadhi*, and *MedovahaSrotodushti*. Ayurvedic management emphasizes correction of metabolic imbalance through *NidanaParivarjana*, *Agni Deepana*, *Shodhana*, *Shamana*, dietary regulation, and lifestyle modification. Several medicinal plants and classical formulations, including *Guggulu*, *Triphala*, *Arjuna*, and *MedoharaGuggulu*, have shown promising lipid-lowering, antioxidant, and cardioprotective properties in experimental and clinical studies. However, limitations related to drug standardization, methodological variability, and insufficient large-scale clinical trials continue to challenge wide scientific acceptance. Integrating classical Ayurvedic principles with contemporary scientific research may provide a valuable complementary approach for dyslipidemia management. Future investigations focusing on standardized formulations, robust clinical evidence, and mechanism-based studies are essential to validate the efficacy, safety, and translational potential of Ayurvedic interventions in evidence-based cardiovascular and metabolic healthcare.

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