

**Review Article**

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# **Fundamental qualities of food and their impacts in three Gunams in Siddha - A Review**

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## **Abstract**

### **Keywords**

Three gunams,  
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The Siddha system stands for the antiquity of the medicinal tradition prevalent in the Indian subcontinent. It describes the curing method of mind and body connection by using herbs and plants. Three gunam theory in Siddha explains about psychological state. Siddhars explains three gunams namely Sathuvam, Rasatham and Thamasam. Food plays a vital role in determining our daily health and state of mind. Being an external factor, food influences three dhosams. Foods also governed by this qualities and imbibe their nature in human body and psychology. This review focuses about its relation from various literature. It also enhance the knowledge and significance of following Siddha diet.

## **Introduction**

The Siddha system stands for the antiquity of the medicinal tradition prevalent in the Indian subcontinent. It describes the curing method of mind and body connection by using herbs and plants. Food plays a vital role in determining our daily health and state of mind. Being an external factor, food influences three dhosams. Siddhars explains three gunams namely Sathuvam, Rasatham and Thamasam. This three qualities are psychological state. Foods also governed by this qualities and imbibe their nature in human body and psychology.

### **Three Gunas in siddha**

Siddha Yugi explained 96 thathuvam in his text Yugi Chinthamani. One of these 96 principle, Gunam is related to physical, social, psychological and spiritual aspect of personality. They are Sathuvam, Rasatham and Thamasam. Sathuvam means balanced, Rasatham means passionate and thamasam means dull and darkness.

- Sathvic behaviors are positive personality like blissful, wisdom, contentment, happiness, caring and sincerity.
- Rajasic characters are activeness, wisdom, love, affection, morality, bravery, charity, encouragement.
- Thamasic behaviors are negative personality like anger, frustration, anxiety, emotional, moody, dullness, laziness, lying and ignorance.

### Three gunas in food

Our food ingredients, quality and its cooking procedure have an effect on both mind and body. In Siddha all food ingredients are fall into three categories. They are

- Sathvic food keeps the body light, gives mental clarity and peace of mind.
- Rajasic food provokes excessive activity in the body and makes the mind state agitated.
- Thamas food generates heaviness in the body and dullness of mind.

### List of three gunas food ingredients

| S.no | Food ingredients  | Sathvic food  | Rasatha food  | Thamas food   |
|------|-------------------|---|---|---|
| 1    | <b>Cereals</b>    | Raw rice<br>Samba rice<br>Wheat<br>Samba wheat  | -   | Parboiled rice  |
| 2    | <b>Pulses</b>     | Green gram<br>Black gram  | Toor dal<br>Chana dal   | Green peas<br>Horse gram  |
| 3    | <b>Millets</b>    | Foxtail millet  | -   | Finger millet<br>Sorghum<br>Pearl millet<br>Kodo millet                               |
| 4    | <b>Nuts</b>       | Almond  | Cashew<br>Groundnut   | -   |
| 5    | <b>Spices</b>     | Cumin seeds<br>Pepper<br>Cardomum<br>Dry ginger<br>Fenugreek<br>Sesame<br>Nut meg<br>Arillus of the nut<br>Saffron<br>Dry coconut | Turmeric<br>Asafoetida<br>Coriander<br>Chilli<br>Tamarind<br>Poppy seeds<br>Cloves<br>Cinnamon<br>Ajwain<br>Mustard | Garlic  |
| 6    | <b>Vegetables</b> | Cluster beans<br>Bitter gourd<br>Cucumber<br>Plantain<br>Turkey berry<br>Citron   | Lady's finger<br>Green chilli<br>Ash gourd<br>Snake gourd   | Brinjal<br>Drumstick<br>Onion<br>Broad beans<br>Bottle gourd<br>Ridge gourd<br>Radish |

|    |                       |  |  |  |
|----|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| 7  | <b>Green leaves</b>   | Sessile<br>Methi<br>Garden nightshade<br>Corainder<br>Curry leaves<br>Veld grape | Betal leaves   | Drumstick<br>Indian sorrel<br>Amaranth<br>Chicory              |
| 8  | <b>TUBERS</b>         | Colacasia  | Elephant yam   | Potato<br>Palm sprout  |
| 9  | <b>FRUITS</b>         | Amla<br>Mango<br>Grapes<br>Dates<br>Wood apple<br>Guava<br>Jamun fruit<br>Banana | Pomegranate<br>Fig<br>Lemon                          | Custard apple<br>Cashew apple                                  |
| 10 | <b>Sweeteners</b>     | Cane sugar<br>White rock candy   | -  | Palm sugar<br>Palm rock candy                                  |
| 11 | <b>Dairy products</b> | Cow milk<br>Cow curd<br>Cow ghee<br>Cow butter<br>Paneer                         | Goat milk<br>Goat ghee                               | Buffalo milk<br>Buffalo curd<br>Buffalo ghee<br>Buffalo butter |
| 12 | <b>Cooking oil</b>    | Sesame oil<br>Mahua oil  | -  | Castor oil   |
| 13 | <b>Beverages</b>      | Tender coconut   | -  | Palm toddy<br>Coconut toddy                                    |
| 14 | <b>Meat</b>           | -  | Mutton<br>Rabbit<br>Sea fishes                       | Freshwater fishes<br>Beef<br>Pork                              |
| 15 | <b>Herbs</b>          | <i>Sesbania grandiflora</i><br><i>Azadirachta indica</i>                         | <i>Mesua nagassarium</i><br><i>Cassia auriculata</i> | <i>Cannabis sativa</i><br><i>Pappaver somniferum</i>           |

## Discussion

If we compare this three gunas, Sathuvam gives positive feel like love and contentment while Rasatham gives stimulatory effect to mind and on contrary, Thamasam gives dullness effects on mind. In Siddha food pyramid, Thamasais at lowest level and Sathuva is at highest level. To increase sathuva nature one should take nutritious foods. To reduce Rajas, limit the in taking of foods that are stimulating in nature. Usage of narcotics and alcohol increases thamas gunam.

By adding sathuva and rasatha food we can manage and balance these gunas.

## Conclusion

Siddha three guna food pyramid gives dietary regimen for each guna individual. All these three gunams are experienced by an individual during the life time due to stress. To overcoming thamas behavior, one should gradually follows sathuva and rajasa food ingredients. This review provides the information about food ingredients and

its qualities and their impact on three gunas. This review paper will help us to understand about relation between food and three gunams.

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