

Ayambil Overview

Ayambil Oli is considered very auspicious, efficacious and as one of the most important festivals in Jainism. The festival is also considered to be 'shashwathi' - meaning the festival is eternal, existing in all time cycles of past, present & future. Ayambil is one of the external or Bahya Tap falling within Rasparityag - giving up attachment for taste. Jains consider the austerity of Ayambil as a way to purify the body and mind, encourage spiritual growth and practice self-restraint. By observing Ayambil, one can experience various health benefits and live in harmony with the environment.

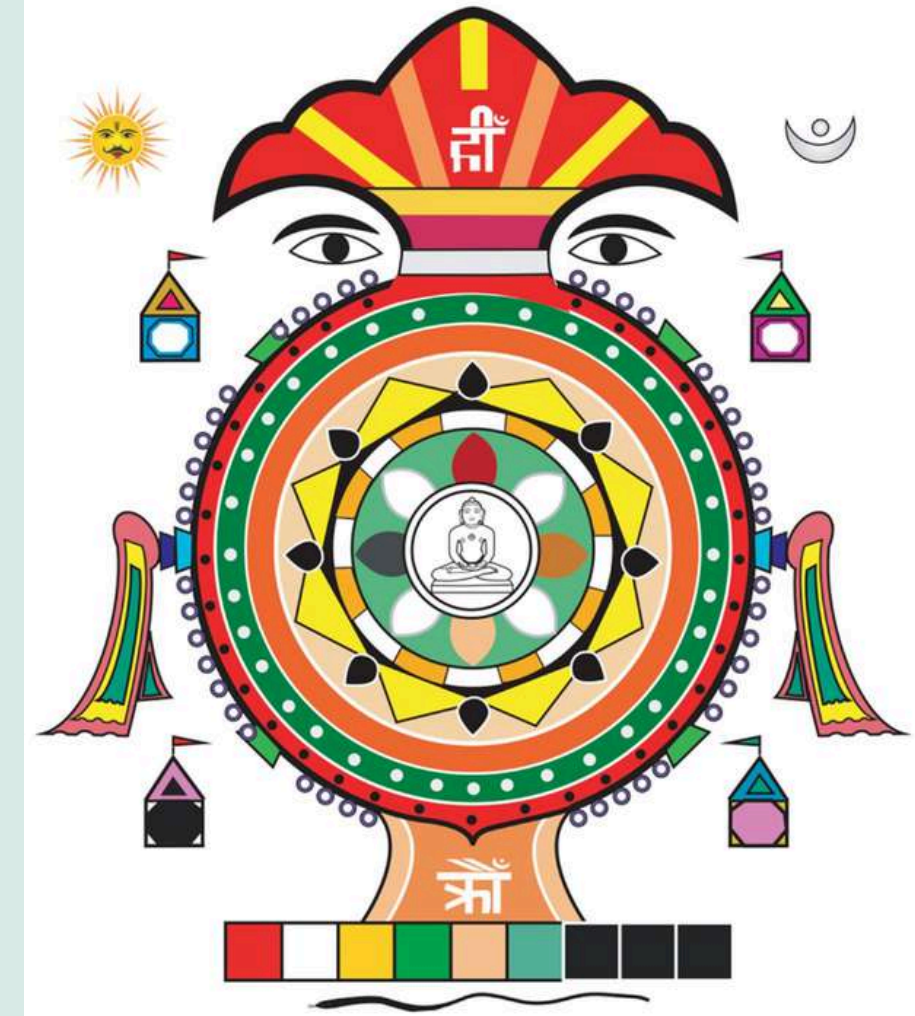
The Festival of Ayambil, which last for nine days, is observed by many Jains twice a year. The first one falls in the bright fortnight of Chaitra month (March/ April) and the second during the bright fortnight of Asso month (September/ October). During the nine days of Ayambil, puja, holy recitation, mediation and other rituals in honour of Navapad take place. 'Nava' means nine in Sanskrit and Prakrit languages and 'Pada' means post. Hence, the word Navapada means nine supreme posts of the Universe - which are **Arihant**, **Siddha**, **Acharya**, **Upadhyaya**, **Sadhus** (Panch Paramesthi), **Darshan** (faith), **Gnan** (knowledge), **Chaitra** (conduct) and **Tap** (penance).

Ayambil are of three types, each primarily different in terms of number of days the austerity is undertaken.

- A single Ayambil fast.
- Ayambil Oli - 'Oli' means 'a line' and Ayambil Oli indicates a line of nine days of Ayambil fasts, undertaken consecutively during the Ayambil Oli festival. The end of the festival is celebrated on the 10th day when Parna is held.
- Navapad Oli - If Ayambil is observed every year twice - nine days each time for four and half years (in total eighty one days), then it is said that one has completed Navapad Oli.

The word Ayambil actually is a colloquial word with its roots in the Sanskrit word - ACHAMALA - 'Acham' - soup + 'amla' - sour, that is giving up of tangy sour taste is doing Ayambil.

Ayambil is observed by having only one meal a day of plain food which is devoid of any special taste and spices, which is boiled or cooked without oil/ghee and also milk, curd, green , raw vegetables and fruits are not consumed.





AYAMBIL OVERVIEW

Ayambil is part of Rasparityag – one of the external tap. Rasparityag means giving up attachment for tastes. The tongue is an organ that looks for tastes. Our attention generally stays drawn towards the tasty foods and drinks. This happens to be a more or less insatiable craze. The hankering for tastes does not allow a person to keep the peace of mind. Some restraint must be applied to it. Ayambil austerity is observed with that end in view.

In the ayambil penance, an important principle is conveyed in the message – “life is not eating, but food is taken to maintain the life.” The festival is observed in an endeavour to achieve victory over taste, to attain spiritual upliftment and shed karma bondage.

AYAMBIL FOOD

Jainism, like in Ayurveda, recognises six tastes – sweet, sour, salty, bitter, pungent and astringent – each of which has an essential role to play in our physiology, health and well-being, including our overall state of mind and consciousness.

Jains have identified certain foods that give rise to the four passions or kashays – anger, greed, pride(ego) and deceit by changing the natural inherent qualities of the mind, body and soul and pervert them are called Vigai. Vigai are classified as:-

- **Laghu Vigai** – Consisting of Six Types – Sugar(jiggery), milk(dudh), clarified butter(ghee), curds(dahi), oil (tel) and fried items(pakwans).
- **Maha Vigai** – Consisting of Four types – butter (makhan); honey(madh); eggs/meat/fish (maans) and alcohol(madra). Jains are advised to refrain from consuming these at all times.



LAGHU VIGAIS



MILK



Ghee



Curds -Yogurt



Sugar



Frying Oil



Fried Food



Vegetables/fruits



Spices



Ordinary Salt

Pulses | Lentils



Food Not Allowed

Food Allowed

AYAMBIL FOOD

Ayambil food has to be made fresh in the morning- that is food can be boiled, soaked or precooked - on the day of Ayambil only. Precooked items from the previous day are not permitted.

Ayambil food is devoid of the six Vigais - sugar, milk, ghee, oil, curds (yogurt) and fried items. The food is prepared without the use of any spices except dried ginger (soonth), pepper, asafetida (hing), pipramul or ganthoda and roasted salt - salt that is roasted in the oven till it is red hot.

Ordinary salt, spices like chilli powder, haldi powder, dry dhaniya or coriander, jeera, as well as vegetables and fruits are not permitted during Ayambil.

Permitted food during Ayambil includes cereals like wheat, rice, chapatis made from bajri flour, boiled pulses like moong dal, chana, rajma etc. Ayambil food is cooked in water which helps the body in absorbing food nutrients which helps in instant energy.

The prepared food is consumed once a day in one sitting, preferably whilst sitting on the floor. Boiled water can be consumed only after sunrise and before sunset.

The overall aim is to eat enough food for the sustenance of the body to survive.

The desire to eat and procreate are thought to be two of the most primal ones. Jainism has asserted that the control of the organ of taste is the most difficult to control, even more than the urge to procreate as we start eating from birth till death, whereas we only indulge in sexual pleasures for a limited period during our lifetime. Control of the tongue leads to control of all the senses.

Eating Ayambil food is the first step in controlling the senses.

UPVAS (FASTING) = SUPPRESSION OF THE MIND

AYAMBIL = CONQUERING THE MIND



JAIN FESTIVAL AYAMBIL OLI



Dev
(God)

ॐ 2 2

Ohm Hrim Namō Arihantanam

ॐ 2 2

Ohm Hrim Namō Siddhaanam

Guru
(Teacher)

ॐ 2 2

Ohm Hrim Namō Aayariyaanam

ॐ 2 2

Ohm Hrim Namō Uvajjaayanam

ॐ 2 2

Ohm Hrim Namō Loe Savva Saahuman

Dharma
(Religion)

ॐ 2 2 2

Ohm Hrim Namō Dansanassa

ॐ 2 2 2

Ohm Hrim Namō Naanassa

ॐ 2 2 2

Ohm Hrim Namō Charitassa

ॐ 2 2 2

Ohm Hrim Namō Tavassa



જાન્યવાર

