

OMNI NEURAL NETS PVT LTD

Temple.AI Knowledge Base · Parihara Series



ARTHRITIS & JOINT DISORDERS

Chottanikkara Bhagavathy Temple

Chottanikkara, Ernakulam District, Kerala



‡ Guruthi Pooja at Keezhkavu · 12 Pots Turmeric+Lime · Pala Tree Nail Tradition · 8PM Daily

Primary Source: Abhyudaya Foundation – K Nanda Kishore Reddy

► <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwmTohjIY-gCCOWsWoHkKf0B71thMJFb3>

Pavan Kumar Rachumallu, AI Solution Architect · Omni Neural Nets Pvt Ltd · Living Document

Understanding Arthritis in Ancient Wisdom

Arthritis — encompassing rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, and joint degeneration — is classified in Ayurveda primarily as **Amavata** (rheumatoid, caused by ama-toxins and disturbed Vata) and **Sandhivata** (osteoarthritis, Vata-dominant joint depletion). The Ashtanga Hridayam treats these extensively, noting their deep-seated, chronic nature requiring sustained intervention.

In Kerala's temple healing tradition, the **Chottanikkara Bhagavathy Temple** — one of Kerala's most powerful and renowned shrines — holds a specific healing tradition for joint-related disorders through the Guruthi Pooja at the Keezhkavu shrine of Bhadrakali.

Two Shrines, One Pilgrimage: A complete visit to Chottanikkara involves TWO shrines: (1) The Main Temple above — Bhagavathy as Saraswati in morning, Lakshmi at noon, Durga in evening. (2) Keezhkavu below — Bhadrakali's fierce shrine where the Guruthi Pooja for disease-removal is performed. Both must be visited for the parihara to be complete.

About the Temple

TEMPLE NAME

Chottanikkara Bhagavathy Temple

LOCATION

Chottanikkara, Ernakulam Dist., Kerala

MAIN DEITY

Bhagavathy / Rajeshwari Devi

KEEZHKAVU DEITY

Bhadrakali (Fierce Form)

FROM KOCHI

~20 km (40-min drive)

FAMOUS FOR

Mental healing, disease removal, Guruthi Pooja

GURUTHI POOJA

Daily at 8:00 PM (Keezhkavu)

TRADITION

Tantric Kerala tradition (Tantrism)



The sacred Pala tree (Alstonia scholaris) at Chottanikkara — devotees drive nails to represent liberation from disease/evil. Note the embedded nails and cloth offerings.

The Sacred Parihara (Remedial) Protocol

Ritual 1 — Guruthi Pooja at Keezhkavu (8:00 PM Daily)

What is Guruthi Pooja? Guruthi (also spelled Gurithi) is a Tantric Kerala ritual in which a symbolic substitute for blood — a red liquid made of turmeric, lime, and water that turns deep red through the chemical reaction — is offered to Bhadrakali. This represents the offering of "demon blood" to the fierce goddess, who accepts the disease-energy carried by devotees as her sacrifice, thereby relieving them of the affliction.

1 The 12 Pots: Twelve earthen pots filled with turmeric powder, slaked lime, and water are prepared. When mixed, the liquid turns blood-red (the same chemical reaction used to detect turmeric). These 12 pots represent 12 manifestations of disease-energy being offered to Bhadrakali.

2 8:00 PM Ceremony: Formerly performed only on Fridays, the Guruthi Pooja is now conducted DAILY at 8:00 PM at Keezhkavu — making Chottanikkara accessible to all pilgrims. The pooja includes Sanskrit and Malayalam mantras, drumming (Chenda), and lamp offerings.

3 Devotee Participation: Pilgrims seeking relief from arthritis and joint disease participate by presenting a written petition (ola — palm leaf) or verbal declaration of their condition to the priests before the ceremony begins.

4 Receiving Prasadam: The blessed turmeric water (diluted Guruthi) is applied on the affected joints by devotees as external application — a ritual echoing turmeric's Ayurvedic use as an anti-inflammatory (Curcumin).

Ritual 2 — Pala Tree Nail-Driving Tradition

One of Kerala's most visually striking temple practices: devotees drive iron nails into the sacred Pala tree (*Alstonia scholaris*, also known as Saptaparni or Devil's Tree) at Chottanikkara. The act symbolizes *nailing down* the disease or evil that afflicts them — surrendering it to the tree, which is considered a residence of the divine and a transmuter of suffering.

1 Devotees purchase small iron nails from temple stalls (typically a symbolic 1–3 nails).

2

With focused prayer naming the disease/affliction, they drive the nail into the Pala tree — symbolically fixing the disease in place (preventing it from spreading) and surrendering it to Bhagavathy.

3

The practice is performed for arthritis, joint pain, mental illness, evil eye, and chronic conditions. Regional tradition holds that the tree absorbs the energy of the disease as devotees release it through the nail.

Medical Endorsement

Notably, **cardiologists and orthopedic specialists from Ernakulam city** have been documented visiting Chottanikkara to pray for their patients suffering from severe joint and cardiac conditions. This cross-domain endorsement from medical professionals adds credibility to the temple's healing tradition.

Healing Invocation (Bhadrakali, Keezhkavu):

"Om Bhadra Kalyai Namah · Amavata Sandhivata Vinashanaya · Guruthi Nivedya · Rogam Nasaya Svaha"

(O Bhadrakali, accepting this Guruthi offering, destroy Amavata and Sandhivata in me)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I visit only Keezhkavu without the main temple?

Temple tradition strongly recommends visiting both — the main temple first (receiving Bhagavathy's protection and blessing), then Keezhkavu (for the specific disease-removal ritual). Priests generally advise this sequence for full parihara efficacy.

Q: Is the 8:00 PM Guruthi Pooja open to all or restricted?

The ceremony is open to all devotees regardless of religion, caste, or background — Chottanikkara is known for its inclusive tradition. Non-Hindus are typically permitted in the temple premises though inner sanctum access follows temple norms.

Q: How often should I visit for arthritis parihara?

Traditional practice recommends visiting on 7 consecutive Fridays (Sukravara) for the arthritis-specific parihara, with Guruthi Pooja on each visit. After this, monthly visits on Fridays to maintain and sustain the healing intention.

Q: Is turmeric in Guruthi Pooja actually effective on joints?

Scientifically, curcumin (active compound in turmeric) has documented anti-inflammatory properties and has been studied in clinical trials for arthritis. The ritual application of Guruthi prasadam on joints thus combines spiritual intention with a known Ayurvedic anti-inflammatory.

Q: What is the Pala tree and why is it sacred?

Alstonia scholaris (Pala in Malayalam, Saptaparni in Sanskrit) is considered a divine tree. Its white flowers emit a powerful fragrance at night, and the tree is associated with Yaksha beings and divine presences in Indian tradition. At Chottanikkara it serves as a vessel for receiving devotees' disease-burdens.

► Video Reference — Abhyudaya Foundation

K Nanda Kishore Reddy · Abhyudaya Foundation · SumanTV Devotional World

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwmTohjIY-gCCOWsWoHkKf0B71thMJFb3>

References & Sources

- Abhyudaya Foundation – K Nanda Kishore Reddy, Temple Research Series (SumanTV Devotional World)
- Kerala Tourism Documentation – Chottanikkara Bhagavathy Temple
- Ashtanga Hridayam – Vagbhata, Chapter on Amavata and Sandhivata

⚠ Disclaimer: This document is prepared for spiritual and cultural education purposes only. The information presented about temple rituals, parihara practices, and traditional beliefs is drawn from devotee testimonials, temple traditions, and regional cultural sources. It does not constitute medical advice. Always consult a qualified medical practitioner for health concerns. The temple practices described are matters of faith and personal devotion. Omni Neural Nets Pvt Ltd does not make any medical or therapeutic claims.

Temple.AI Knowledge Base

Parihara Series — Where Ancient Wisdom Meets Modern Wellness

► Watch the Full Video Series

Abhyudaya Foundation – K Nanda Kishore Reddy · SumanTV Devotional World

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwmTohjiY-gCCOWsWoHkKf0B71thMJFb3>

This is a living document. Updated periodically as new research is gathered.

Pavan Kumar Rachumallu, AI Solution Architect · Omni Neural Nets Pvt Ltd