

AN AYURVEDIC REVIEW AND IMPORTANCE OF ASHTAVIDH AHARA VISHESH
AYATANA IN CHARAKA SAMHITADr. Nishma Nanavati¹, Dr. Manisha Vaja² and Dr. Jasmin Gohel^{3*}¹Reader, Dravyaguna, Manjushree Research Institute of Ayurvedic Science, Piplaj, Gandhinagar, Gujrat.²Lecturer, Kriyasharir, Manjushree Research Institute of Ayurvedic Science, Piplaj, Gandhinagar, Gujrat.³Reader, Shalyatantra, Noble Ayurved College and Research Institute, Bamangaam Junagadh, Gujrat.

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ABSTRACT

According to Ayurveda health is a complete balance state of Dosha, Agni, Dhatu and mala. A healthy person is whose atma, mana, and indriya feel well. The prajoyana of Ayurveda is to protect health of healthy and to cure disorder in the disease. Acharya Charak has mentioned, Ahar, Nidra, and Brahmacharya as tri upastambha. Ayurveda places special emphasis on Ahara and right way of eating food. For the method of taking food. Acharya Charak has defined Ashta Aharvidhivisheshayatana in a very systematic and scientific manner. Combination of food, cooking method, quality and quantity of food. A thorough understanding of ashtaaharvidhivisheshayatana with help in reducing agnidushti (digestive distress) and achieving the both prajoyana of Ayurveda. It's dependent upon food and their proper food preparation method. The Prajoyana of Ayurveda is to guard the health of the healthy and to cure dis-orders within the diseased condition. Proper knowledge of this Ahar Vidhi Visheshayatana will help in reducing diseases and help for a proper healthy diet. Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana (Eight types of special directions for ingestion of food). According to Acharya Charaka only the normal quantity of Ahara cannot provide the good result of Ahara because the result of Ahara depends upon Ahara, Vidhi, Vishesh, Ayatan Eight types of special direction have been given by Acharya Charaka for ingestion of food. According to WHO's definition of health "a state of physical mental and social wellbeing and not merely an absence of disease". These eight factors are most important ways to maintain healthy diet. It gives a fair idea about what? When? Why? How? and Which? Food material should be consumed for promotion of positive health. A proper knowledge of these Ahar vidhi vishesh ayatan.

KEYWORDS: Health, Triupastambha, Ahara, Ashta ahara vidhi visheshayatana, Agnidushti (digestive stress).

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, 'Trividha Upastambha' are described in Sutrasthan of Charak Samhita. Ahara, Swapna (Nidra) and Brahmacharya are the three pillars of Shareera in which Ahara is the prime need. Without Ahara life would not continue very long. If we study the Ancient Literature since Vedic era, we can easily observe the importance of dietic concept among them. The awareness about diet and its rules and regulations can be found everywhere. Ahara plays a pivotal role in the maintenance of health. For this reason, Ahara has been given the prime place among the Trayopastambha.

Ahara is very essential for nourishment & protection of life. Development of sense organs, mind & body depends upon good qualities of food. Health is Wealth. According to WHO's definition of health is as "a state of physical mental and social wellbeing and not merely an absence of disease."^[1] The normal health depends upon the Ahara. Ahara plays an important role to provide nutrition

to the body. It is mentioned in Ramayana that "Bhuke bhajan na hue gopala" (Ramchirtar Manas). this quotation used by Sant Kavi Tulsi Das Ji in Ramayana clearly indicates that the hungry man cannot develop himself. Ahara provides nutrition to the body but it is more beneficial when a perfect method as described in Ayurvedic literature is adopted only quantity of Ahara is not beneficial for health but it depends on the Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan. This method clearly indicates that it is clearly mentioned in Ayurvedic literature that only a perfect dose of Ahara is not beneficial to maintain perfect health but every man has to be follow some special direction of food which is clearly mentioned in the Charaka Samhita. The details about the Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan^[2] (special direction of food) are as given below.

- 1) Prakriti
- 2) Karana
- 3) Sanyoga
- 4) Rashi

- 5) Desha
- 6) Kala
- 7) Upyoga sanstha
- 8) Upayokta

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodology

As this is conceptual study, it comprises the review of the available literature in the ancient classical texts, scientific journals, dissertations, research paper etc. concerned with this concept. Literary data was collected and analyzed.

1. Prakriti^[3] (Swabhav or Nature)

The natural qualities like *Guru*, *Laghu* etc. which is present at the time of origin in *Ahara Dravya*. This total qualities of *Ahara* is the *Prakriti* of that particular *Ahara*, for example –*Munga* is *Laghu* from nature and *Unada* is *Guru* from nature. The specific quality of particular food and drug it is known as the *Prakriti* the individual drug, some drugs are cold and some are hot in nature this is the particular quality of the individual drug. Some drugs burn in hot atmosphere and some in cold atmosphere. Some are burning cool atmosphere but their action is hot. Some drugs are burning in hot atmosphere but their action is cool. This particular nature of the drug is known as *Prakriti* is of the individual drug. It is the moral duty of the physician to advise to take the drug according to the disease and Complication. The natural qualities like *Guru*, *Laghu* etc. which is present at the time of origin in *Ahara Dravya*. This total quantity of *Ahara* is the *Prakriti* of that particular *Ahara*, for example –*Munga* is *Laghu* from nature and *Unada* is *Guru* from nature.

2. Karana^[4] (Sansakara or transformation)

Karan means the processing of food (i.e. samskara). Some foods may not be suitable for direct consumption in order to make foods suitable for consumption their form should be changed. It is the making or refinement of the natural products which means 'imparting other properties. The factor karan includes various methods like.

Jalasamyoga, -cleansing with water.

Agnisamyoga, -heat processing (heating, boiling, cookinge.g. The nature of rice is guru but by agnisamyoga it can be converted into laghu.

shaucha, -cleaning and washing to eliminate the impurities is known as shauch.

manthana-grinding, For example -Dahi is said to be heavy for digestion and also shothkrit i.e., it is responsible for shotha/inflammation, but when it undergoes churning process, it gets converted into 'buttermilk having laghu property i.e light for digestion and used as the best medicine for shoth desha, -place or region of food (the food properties can be changed by changing its place).

kala, -time period, season.

and bhajana. -storage of food articles.

Karan refers to method of processing of food. *Karan* i.e. *samskara* is responsible for change in property of food. *Agnisankaran*, *jalasanyog*, *Shaucha*, *Manthana* are some ex- amples of *samskara*. Some food articles are not suitable for consumption in their original form. It has to undergo some procedure or *samskara* so that it can be accepted by body. Some food has *prakriti* of vitiation of *doshas*, this property can be changed by different processing over food i.e.

Karan

The development (generation or production or transformation) of different new qualities in *Ahara Dravya* which is not present at the time of origin is known as *Karana*. The new qualities are developed in the *Ahara Dravya* due to cleaning, washing and cooking, polishing.

For example: Rice is guru but when it is cooked it becomes Laghu. When the food and drugs are boiled and cleaned their quality is changed it is increased generally. For example uncooked rice is cool from nature but when it is boiled it is converted in to hot in nature this particular quality changed is called as *Karana* and one of the other example polished rice is not as beneficial as brown (unpolished) rice.

3. Sanyoga^[5] (combination)

When two are more than two *Dravya* combine together, this combination is known as *Sanyoga*. Due to this combination some special qualities are developed which was not present separately. Sometimes this combination may be harmful for the life. For example combination of Ghee and Madhu in equal quantity creates toxic effect on the body although Ghee and Madhu are not toxic individually. For example –honey, fish, milk if these *Ahara* is using after mixing then these *Ahara* is produced *Kushta Roga* but use individually these are not harmful to our body. ad one the other example rice and pulses (*Dal*) taken together are beneficial and complementary.

4. Rashi^[6] (quantity or total amount of food)

Rashi means quantity or total amount of *Ahara Dravya*. It may be calculated from two types.

- a) Sarva Graha
- b) Pari Graha
- a) Sarva Graha Rashi

The total quantity of *Ahara Dravya* in diet is the *Sarva graha Rashi*.

- b) Parigraha Rashi

The individual quantity of *Ahara Dravya* is known as *Parigraha Rashi*. The quantity of particular food and drug is known as *Rashi* of the individual drug. For example 100 gm potato, 50 gm onion, 50 gm tomato and 200 gm water this particular combination of become 400 gm and their separate. quality is known as 100 gm potato, 50 gm onion, 50 gm tomato and 200 gm.

5. *Desha*^[7] (Local place)

The climates of different places in the country are different. The effect of climate is depends upon the *Ahara Dravya*.

This is the reason that some *Ahara Dravya* are born in the hot atmosphere and some are born in the cold climate. The *Ahara Dravya* which is born in the hot atmosphere is becomes *Ushna* (hot) and the *Ahara Dravya* born in the cool temperature is cold in nature. This is due to the climate effect of *Ahara Dravya*.

6. *Kala* (time)^[8]

Kala is the sixth factor. It denotes condition of the body whether it is healthy or sick (unhealthy). It is of two types.

i) *Nityaga kala*:- it depends on *Ritu satmaya*. For eg:- the food which is *Satmya* in the particular *Ritu* for individual is beneficial for that person.

ii) *Avasthik kala*:- it depends upon the unhealthy condition of the person. For e.g:- Milk is harmful in the acute fever but is beneficial in the chronic fever.

7. *Upayoga Samstha*^[9] (Law of utilization of food for the individual)

One should take diet after proper digestion of the previous food otherwise when it is taken without proper digestion of the previous diet; it becomes harmful to the health. Because it is one of the major cause of imbalance of *Doshas*. This is the law of utilization for the food.

These are the directions necessary for appropriate food digestion.

Do's

- ✓ Food should be *ushna, hridya*.
- ✓ The food should be eaten after the last meal has been digested.
- ✓ Should include all the *Rasas* namely - *Madhura, Amla, Lavana, Katu, Tikta, Kashaya* in daily diet.
- ✓ Should eat food which is nourishing and suitable to particular temperament.
- ✓ Eating with full concentration and one should bring only good thought in mind that this food is good for me.
- ✓ Place for eating should be neat, clean and pleasant.

Dont's

- ❖ Food articles antagonistic in potency or contrary to each other in action.
- ❖ Too fast or too slow food eating.
- ❖ Laughing, talking, speaking or using mobile while eating.
- ❖ Taking food during nervous, angry, anxious state of mind
- ❖ Long term & too much use of any of six *Rasas*.

8. *Upayokta*^[10]

It means who consumes the food. Sometimes due to continuous utilization of a particular food it becomes

Satmya to the individual and is not harmful at any cost, but is beneficial for the life. For eg: - due to continuous utilization of curd it becomes *Satmya* to the individual and is not harmful at all rather beneficial for the life.

Benefits of *Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan*

A healthy and balanced diet according to the above mentioned special directions can protect the human body against certain type of disease, in particular non communicable disease such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases some type of cancer and skeletal disorder and All the eight types of special direction food are very essential for good and happy life. The person and physician having knowledge of special direction of food are beneficial for healthy and long life. This knowledge is very helpful for treat the any type's diseased patient and change all type of physically, mental as well as social status of the diseased patient.

DISCUSSION

Ahara is one of the three supporting factors of life i.e., *Ahara, Nidra* and *Brahmcharya*, which plays a key role in the promotion of health & prevention of diseases. Physical, Mental, Social, Intellectual, Emotional health could be balanced by congenial diet. *Ahara* being a part of daily routine, if one concentrates a little more on dietetic rules along with quality, quantity and mode of intake then overall effect on health can be enhanced. Nowadays, we are neglecting the digestive capacity, nutritional value of food products, time sense of food intake and are more interested in eating tasty, ready to eat food materials. All these factors lead to manifestation of different metabolic diseases. It is also observed that many diseases are arising merely due to these faulty dietary habits. In this context, concept of *Ashta Ahara vidhi vishesh ayatane* is most ideal in today's lifestyle.

Nowadays life has become superfast. So, people are adopting convenient ways of diet which is causing various health problems. The codes & conducts related to *Ahara* have been forgotten. Therefore, there is a need to enlighten this concept of *Ahar Vidhi Vishesh ayatane* as explained in ancient Ayurveda classics. Ayurveda deals with both *Swasthyarakshana* and *Vyadhiparimoksha*. The adaptation of the concept of *Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatanas* will be helpful in fulfillment of both these *Prayojanas*.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above mentioned description and discussion we have come to the conclusion that everybody should follow the rules and regulation whenever he takes any *Ahara Dravya* in his daily routine. Some person having *Vataja prakriti, Pittaja prakriti, and Kaphaja prakriti*; some people are generally prone to the disease of *Vataja, pittaja, Kaphaja Doshas*. Because the *Prakriti* plays an important role in the formation of the disease of it the diet is taken as per the guideline

everybody may protects his health to control the imbalance of Dosha in the body and will be able to maintain his health.

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