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CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF AAHAR PARINAMKAR BHAV IN THE CONTEXT OF AYURVEDA & MODERN SCIENCE

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, the art of living deals with all aspects of life from birth to death. Human life is supported by three pillars-Ahara, Nidra, Brahmacharya.[1] The causes of the diseases are mentioned as Asatmyaendriyarthasamyoga, Pragnaparadha and Parinama.[2] etc i.e. improper Ahara, Vihara (food habits and lifestyles). In this era of modernization, the lifestyle of people is changed significantly. Factors like high calorie food, stress, and Irregular dietary Habits etc contribute to life style disorders. This is the time to explore the secrets, concepts and principles mentioned in Charaka Samhita. Aahara is awesome of all meds and is viewed as one among three sub mainstays of Ayurveda. Aahara is vital to support life and keeping up with ordinary physiological working of human body. Aahara gives life span, tone, strength, sustenance and resistance. Aaharparinamkar bhavas in the body helps in absorption of food, change of processed food into elements of body for its digestion. Ingested panchbhautik food is bio-changed into the body tissues. Assuming food bears characteristics working with the body elements, it can feed and recharge them. So Charakacharya have made sense of the aahara parinamakara bhavas; which are the different variables that change food from complex structure to an edible and absorbable structure. Hence aahar parinamkar bhavas are the variableschanging over panchbhautik aahar into body element. A thorough understanding of these principles, interpreted through classical Ayurvedic doctrines and viewed through a modern physiological lens, not only highlights the intricate correlation between diet and health but also emphasizes the preventive and therapeutic roles of diet in modern lifestyle disorders.

KEYWORDS: Aahar parinamkar bhav, Aahar, Diet, Aahar parinam, Methods of Diet taking.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is reflective in its treasures and principles as antiquity goes back to Vedas which are the original sources of the subject matter of Ayurveda. The available literature is in the form of Samhita which means “Samyak Hitam Pratipadyam Yashyaha” (Vachaspatyam) and “compilation of knowledge". Only afew Samhitas are available today in a better state and the Charaka Samhita enjoys the place of moon among the stars. Charaka Samhita has exercised its sovereignty by virtue of its time proven principles and approach of disease manifestation and treatment principles. In this present era of modernization, people are neglecting the causative factors for the diseases and rushing towards treatment methodologies. It’s the need of the hour to concentrate on the concept of “Nidana parivarjana chikitsa[3]” i.e. towards causative factors. So the present review was taken to evaluate the Aahar parinamkar bhav.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To understand modern and Ayurveda concept of Aaharparinamkar bhavas.
2. To establish importance of aharparinamkar bhavas as conversion unit of panchbhautik aahar into body assimilated entity.

Ahara Parinama Kara Bhavas

Ahara is that when substance consumed, which on their vipakva nourishes their respective gunas of Pancha mahabhuta in the body. Parinama means the process of digestion and metabolismof ingested food. Bhava means the factors present inside the body. Thus, Ahara Parinama Kara bhavas3 are the factors present in the Shareera which are responsible for the digestion and metabolism of ingested food. They are six in number.

1. Agni (Ushma) 2. Vayu (Vata) 3. Kleda (Hydrolyzing agent)
4. Sneha (Softening agent) 5. Kala (Time) 6. Samayoga.

1. Ushma (Heat factor)[3]

Ushma (Heat) is parallel to agni (fire). “Ushmapachti” means, just as the flames of fire boil rice from raw

grains, this ushma digests ingested food. So, ushmais compared to agni. Due to its effect the food which is taken in gets digested and ahara rasa is formed. This leads to the nourishment of Rasa Raktadi dhatus. Basically, it speaks about the various digestive enzymes secreted along with the digestive juices meant for digestion of different kinds of food.

2. Vayu (Nervous mechanism)[4]

Vayu propels the food to the next organ.`Vayurapakarshati' means, vayu transports food near the site of agni to facilitate digestion. It also stimulates agni, thereby facilitating digestion of food. The types of vatainnvolved in this process are Prana vata, Samanavata and Apana vata. It is viewed in the modern science as the peristaltic movements and the stimulation of autonomic nervous system, leading to secretion of digestive juices in different parts of the alimentary canal. Vyana vata attends the functions such as annaswadana (feeling of tastes of food), separating waste and nutrient portions of the food and supplying nourishment to all the Dhatus in proper order6. Apana vata located in the Apana Desha, attends to functions such as elimination of vit7 etc. Apakarshana in the context of digestion can be correlated with

- The process of deglutition,
- Movements of GIT, and
- Nervous stimulation of digestive juices.

Deglutition8 or swallowing refers to passage of food from the oral cavity into the stomach. It occurs in three stages. Though beginning of deglutition is a voluntary act, later it becomes involuntary and is carried out by a reflex action called deglutition reflex. Gastric motility can be described as Motility of the empty stomach, which includes:

- Migrating motor complex, and
- Hunger contractions. Gastric motility related to food, includes
- Receptive relaxation,
- Mixing peristaltic waves, and
- Gastric emptying

Motility of small intestine9 can be described as Motility during inter digestive period, which includes:

- Migrating motor complexes
- Motility during digestive period
- Mixing movements such as segmentation contractions and pendular movements,
- Propulsive movements such as peristaltic contractions and peristaltic rush, and
- Movements of villi. Motility reflexes, which comprises
- Peristaltic reflex
- Gastroileal reflex, and
- Intestinointesinal reflex.

The movements of colon are

- Haustral shutting,
- Peristalsis, and
- Mass movements.

Vata also stimulates Agni in order to digest food. Regulation of salivary secretion regulated only by nervous mechanisms. ANS is involved in the regulation of salivary secretion.

Gastric secretion has three phases of secretion. They are

- Cephalic (only nervous)
- Gastric phase (nervous hormonal)
- Intestinal phase (mostly hormonal)

Regulation of pancreatic secretion is regulated by both nervous and hormonal factors. Pancreatic juice is

- Cephalic phase (nervous)
- Gastric phase (hormonal)
- Intestinal (hormonal)

Bile secretion is a continuous process though the amount is less during fasting. Secretion of bile from the liver and its release from GB are influenced by some chemical factors. Secretion of brush border enzymes is regulated by both hormonal and nervous factors. Hormone gastrin is secreted by G cells of the stomach and it stimulates gastric glands to secrete gastric juice with more pepsin and hydrochloric acid and also it accelerates gastric motility. Substance P increases the mixing and propulsive movements of the small intestine. Cholecystokinin is produced by I cells of duodenum and jejunum and it contracts gall bladder and stimulates exocrine pancreatic secretion. Vasoactive intestinal polypeptide stimulates secretion of the small intestine and relaxes mooth muscles of intestine.

Functions of myenteric10 plexus are

- Control of motility of gut
- Inhibition of pyloric sphincter
- Inhibition of ileocaecal valve

Meissner's plexus controls the secretory activity and blood flow to the gut.

3. Kleda (Hydrolyzing factor)[5]

Kledaha"sithilyanapadayati" meanskleda disintegrates (hydrolyses) the globules of food ingredients into droplets i.efood breakdowns by kledata making it easy for digestion. This function is carried on by the actions of both kledaka kapha (in stomach) and bhodaka kapha (in oral cavity). It also helps for deglutition of the food taken through oral cavity by forming bolus.

When the food is taken into mouth, it is moistened and dissolved by saliva. Mucus membrane of the mouth is also moistened by saliva. Mucin of saliva lubricates the bolus and facilitates swallowing. By the solvent action of saliva, it dissolves the solid food substances so that the dissolved substances can stimulate the taste buds. The stimulated taste buds recognize the taste. Chemical digestion, through a process called hydrolysis, uses water and digestive enzymes to break down the complex

molecules. For example, the basic building blocks of proteins areamino acids. The bonds that hold amino acids together are peptide bonds. To break the peptide bonds in a protein, a hydrolysis reaction is needed and enzymes like proteases are needed to break up the protein. So this hydrolysis reaction can be considered as kleda to some extent. Gastric juice contains insoluble and soluble types of mucus. The insoluble mucus is such a viscid that it forms a gel-like coat over the mucosa. The intestinal juice contains mucus, which is secreted by Brunner's gland and goblet cells. Mucus secretion serves a protective role preventing HCL and chyme from damaging the duodenal mucosa.

Water content of digestive juice is:

- Gastric juice - 99.45%
- Pancreatic juice - 99.5%
- Liver bile - 97.5%
- Succus entericus - 99.5%

4. Sneha (Unctuous factor, Softening Agent)

"Sneho mardhavam janayati".

The unctous factor softens the ingredients of food. As a result, the digestive enzymes act smoothly. This action can be compared to the action of pachaka pitta especially the bile formed due to the intestinal lipase, whose basic function is to emulsify the fats can act easily and digest the food. It also enhances the function of agni.

5. Kala (Time factor)

"kalahaparyaptinbhinirvartayati" is the time taken for the digestion of food. It means, for proper digestion of food 3-6 hours are required depending upon the type of consumed food. Even in the presence of all other factors, digestion requires time for completion.

6. Sanyoga (Combination of food substances)

Sanyoga refers to the combination or mixing of two or more substances, where the resulting mixture acquires qualities different from those of the individual components. New properties may emerge that were not present in the original substances. Such combinations

Rashi (Quantity of food) (Ch.Vi.1/21-4)

Rashi refers to the quantity of food consumed, which is vital for maintaining good health. Each individual has a specific food requirement, and both overeating and undereating can be harmful. Food should be consumed in the right amount, suited to one"s capacity and energy needs. There are two types of Rashi: Sarvagraha Rashi, which considers the total quantity of all food items together, and Parigraha Rashi, which considers the quantity of each item separately. For example, eating all items served is sarvagraha, while selectively consuming a few in specific amounts is parigraha. Understanding and following the appropriate rashi, based on individual needs and preferences, is essential for balanced nutrition and overall well-being.

Desha (Habitat of food)

'Deshah punah sthanam', Desha covers the place where the food (or medicinal herbs) is grown, place to which they are exported, the place where they are utilized. There are three types of Desha: Jangala (dry/desert regions, Vata-predominant), Anupa (marshy areas, Kapha-predominant), and Sadharana (moderate zones). Foods from Jangala desha are light and tend to aggravate vata, making them unsuitable for individuals with vata constitution or disorders, but beneficial for those with kapha imbalances. However, such foods may still suit natives of jangala regions due to habitual adaptation. Understanding the nature of the region and its influence on food is essential for appropriate dietary choices. Kala (Time of consumption of food) Kala refers to the time factor in food consumption, which plays a crucial role in maintaining health. It is of two types: Nityaga Kala (daily and seasonal time) and Avasthika Kala (situational or conditional time). Nityaga Kala includes daily meal timings, ideally twice a day and seasonal dietary guidelines as explained in Ritucharya. Avasthika Kala considers the individual's age and health condition. Diet should be adapted according to life stages, Bala (childhood/youth), Madhyama (middle age), and Vardhakya (old age) as well as during illness, to aid recovery and ensure appropriate nourishment.

CONCLUSION

Agni and ahara parinamakara bhava both are accountable for the progression of transformation of ingested food into minute particle which can be absorbed by all tissues of the body. Each ahara parinamakara bhava has a precise role in the method of digestion. In the existence of all the ahara parinamakara bhavas food gets renewed into ahara rasa with its optimal qualities which in twirl provide nutrition to all dhatus. Lack of these ahara parinamakara bhava leads to indigestion. To tie all the knots together, vayu, kleda, sneha, kala, samayoga along with ushma bhava (agni) are pivotal for the purpose of excellent pachana kriya. Hence maintenance of Agni in order to proper Ahar Parinaman is important. Maintaining good appetite, use of digestive stimulate and ensuring regular bowel movements are of main importance in enkindling the digestive fire and preventing the production of root cause of all diseases, i.e., Ama/Agnimandya.

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