

A CONCEPT OF VIRUDDHA AHARA IN PRESENT ERA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has given prime importance to *Aahara* (diet), amongst three sub pillars (*Upastambha*) of life. *Ahara* is considered to be vital for a human body as it provides the basic nutrients, which are very essential to carry out the basic activities of digestion and metabolism. *Ayurveda* emphasizes on consuming healthy and nutritious diet. *Viruddha Ahara* is a unique concept described in *ayurveda*. The difference of proper health and disease is based on the difference between wholesome and unwholesome diet (*ahara*). The diet which disturbs the balance among the body elements is called *Viruddha ahara*. Acharya Charaka explained in detail and said that person who consume *Viruddha Ahara* is prone to disbalance of dosha leading to many disorders. Ancient literature makes it quite clear that some diets and their combinations are referred to as *Viruddha anna*, or incompatible diets. In today's era, the daily routine, food habits are extremely changed. Due to these drastic changes in life style and food habits our body gets exposed to various toxins. The modern lifestyle, which is too responsible for the accumulation of toxins in the body, also results in a variety of junk foods including pizza, breads, potato chips, sugary drinks and other foods. Food of this kind has a correlate to *Viruddha ahara*.

KEYWORDS: *Viruddha ahara*, *Upstambha*, Incompatible food, Junk food.

INTRODUCTION

Ahara (diet) is very important to sustain life and maintaining normal physiological functioning of human body.^[1] *Ahara* is the vital breath of living beings because the people rush to the food. Varna (Complexion), Prasada (cheerfulness), Svara (good voice), Jeevana (life), Sukha (happiness), Saara (contentment), Bala (strength), Medha (intellect) – all these are dependent on food.^[2] *Ahara* not only provides nourishment but protects from infections, enhances process of growth & development, improves functioning of sense organs and imparts physical & mental wellbeing. According to a person's *Prakriti*, *Agni*, *Saara* etc; *Ayurveda* provides a logical and scientific method for choosing the right *Ahara* (food). *Ayurveda* claims that *Ahara* has both good and bad qualities. The *Ahara* factor is thoroughly covered in *Ayurveda* because it uses a comprehensive approach to healing. *Ayurveda* made specific references to a healthy diet and its advantages. *Ayurveda* places a strong emphasis on eating the correct kind of diet that is balanced and nourishing for good living. *Viruddha Ahara* is a unique concept described in *ayurveda*. The difference between wholesome and unwholesome *ahara*

is the basis for the distinction between adequate health (happy) and unhealth (unhappiness). The diet, which disturbs the balance among the *Tridosha*, is called as *Viruddha Ahara*. The word *Viruddha* is made up of by adding the Prefix "Vi," the word *Viruddha* is derived from the root "*Rudhir Avarni*." This results in two things, i.e., when mixing two or three things, the stronger one overpowers or affects the weaker ones. This has been accepted principally in *Ayurveda*.^[3] *Acharyas* given specific definition of *Viruddha ahara* in specific words like,

According to Acharya Charaka

Any food that dislodges the *doshas* (morbid humours) but does not expel them from the body is referred to be *Viruddhahara*. The Substance which are contrary to *dehadhatu* behave with *viruddha* (antagonist) to them is called *Viruddha ahara*.^[4]

According to Acharya Sushruta

In the 20th chapter of *Sutrasthana*, *Hitahitiyam Adhaya*, *Acharya Sushruta* explains many notes of *Viruddhahara*; including *Karma viruddha* (functionally incompatible), *Maana viruddha* (quantitatively incompatible), *Samyoga*

viruddha (unsalutary combinations) and *Rasa viruddha* (Incompatibilities amongst two tastes).^[5]

According to Acharya Vagbhatta

Any food that dislodges the *doshas* (morbid humours) but does not expel them from the body is referred to be *viruddha ahara*.^[6]

The different varieties of *Viruddha Ahara* that have been mentioned in *Ayurvedic* literature can be summarized as follows:

- 1. Desha Viruddha** - The food items having similar properties to that of *Desha* is called as *Desha Viruddha*. It is stated that one should take food having properties opposite to corresponding *Desha*.^[7]

Charakacharya considered only *Bhumi Desha* as *Desha Viruddha* whereas *Gangadhara* has explained *Desha Viruddha* as *Bhumi Desha* as well as *Sharira Desha Viruddha*.

Example:

- *Ruksha, Tikshna ahara* in *Maru bhumi* like consumption of alcohol in desert land.
- *Snigdha, Sheeta ahara* in *Anupa bhumi* like cool milkshakes and juices.

- 2. Kaala Viruddha**: - Consuming food items having similar properties to that of *Kaala* i.e. Season.^[8]

Example:

- *Sheet ahara* in *Hemant Ritu* like consumption of Ice-creams in winter.
- *Katu* and *Ushna ahara* in *Grishma Ritu* like spicy pavbhaji and missal pav in summer.

- 3. Agni Viruddha**: - Food taken without knowledge of individual's *Agni*

which may be either of 4 types *Mrudu, Madhyama, Tikshna* and *Vishama*.^[9]

Example:

- *Laghu* and *Alpa Matra Aahara* for *Tikshna Agni* like consuming *Churmura* (popcorn etc.) in excessive hungry condition.
- *Guru* and *Adhika Matra Aahara* in *Manda Agni*.

- 4. Matra Viruddha**: - There are some food items which act as *Viruddha Aahara* when mixed in equal proportion.^[11]

Example:

- Cow's Ghee + Honey in equal proportion.

- 5. Saatmya Viruddha**: - Consuming such food items for which that individual is not used to.^[12]

Example:

- Chinese food by Indians.
- *Madhura* and *Sheeta aahara* by a person who is used to *Katu* and *Ushna aahara*.

- 6. Dosha Viruddha**: - Food items having similar properties to that of *Doshas*, which causes *Dosha dushti* are called as *Dosha Viruddha*.^[13]

Gangadhara has elaborated this term in 3 types:

- *Dosha Viruddha* according to *Rasa - Kashaya Rasa for Vata*.
- *Vyadhi Viruddha* -Curd mixed with rice for *Kushtha*.
- *Dravya Swabhava*- Poison (*Dhatu pradushana dravya*).

- 7. Sanskara Viruddha**: - Food prepared by wrong method is *Sanskara Viruddha*.^[14]

Example:

- Reheating Food items - French Fries.
- Reheating oil which is used once.
- Heated Honey (mixing with hot water, cooking biscuits).

- 8. Veerya Viruddha**: - Consuming food items having opposite *Veerya* at the same time termed as *Veerya Viruddha*.^[15]

Example:

- Fish of *Ushna Veerya* consumed with *Sheeta Veerya* Milk.

- 9. Krama Viruddha**: - Food Consumed by wrong sequence is considered as *Krama Viruddha*.^[16]

Example:

- Sweet Dishes after meal.

- 10. Koshtha Viruddha**: - Here *Chakrapani* and *Gangadhara* said that any drug or food item taken without proper knowledge of individuals *Koshtha* termed as *Koshtha Viruddha*.^[17]

Example:

- Strong Laxatives by *Mrudu Koshtha* person,
- Barbeque food and baked food consumed by person who is habitual to Constipation i.e., *Krura Koshtha* person.

- 11. Awastha Viruddha**: - Consuming food without exact knowledge of own health and bodily conditions.^[18]

Example:

- Alcohol consumption by Laborers.

- 12. Parihara Viruddha**: - Consuming cold food items after hot and spicy food are *Parihara Viruddha*.^[19]

Example:

- Cold drinks after Samosa.

- 14. Paak Viruddha**: - Food which is not properly cooked i.e., uncooked, partly cooked, partly burned etc. Half-baked food is *Paak Viruddha*.^[20]

Example:

- Half fried egg.

- 15. Upachaara Viruddha**: - Consuming food items which are not supposed to consume after specific treatment or act is *Upachaara Viruddha*.^[21]

Example:

- Drinking cold water after *snehapana*, after steam bath.

16. *Samyoga Viruddha*: - Consuming food items which are not supposed to combine with each other is *Samyoga Viruddha*.^[22] Especially *Amla rasa* fruits with milk.

Example:

- Amla Rasa* with *Madhura Rasa* - Strawberry milkshake, Banana milkshake.

17. *Hrut Viruddha*: - Consuming food items which are not pleasant to consumer is *Hrut Viruddha*.^[23]

Example:

- Bitter melon, Decoctions for Children.

18. *Sampat Viruddha*: - Food items prepared by using unhealthy ingredients is *Sampat Viruddha*.^[24]

Example:

- Sheera* prepared in vegetable Oil, Food substance /fruits which haven't fulfilled their original taste or damaged taste or over ripped.

19. *Vidhi Viruddha*: - In *Ayurveda* there is detail explanation of rules for food consumption under *Aahara Vidhividhana* concept. Consuming food without considering those rules is *Vidhi Viruddha*.^[25]

Example:

- Not consuming food which is hot and fresh - food from Lunch box.

Categorization of junk food according to various types of *Viruddha ahara*:-

No.	Viruddha Ahara	Junk Food
1.	Veerya Viruddha	Eating Ice cream with Hot fudge
2.	Sanskara Viruddha	Potato chips
3.	Matra Viruddha	Ghee and Honey with in equal quantity
4.	Agni Viruddha	Large Heavy meal at night in Tikshnagni easily digested, whereas in Mandagni food is slowly digested and take a long time
5.	Kala Viruddha	Ice cream in winter season
6.	Krama Viruddha	Consume food before the earliest food is digested or in absence of proper appetite
7.	Samyoga Viruddha	Fruit Salad, Cheese, fruit, milk along with banana
8.	Parihara Viruddha	Cold water after hot tea
9.	Paka Viruddha	Half cooked, Burnt food
10.	Hridya Viruddha	Eating food not liked by person
11.	Sampata Viruddha	Over ripen mangoes, Banana
12.	Vidhi Viruddha	Eating food while watching T.V. or talking
13.	Dosha Viruddha	Kapha prakriti person eating ice cream Vata prakriti person eating light, dry foods Excessive exercise
14.	Koshtha Viruddha	Milk given in krura koshtha person
15.	Awastha Viruddha	Vata vitiating foods and drinks like dry, cold food by the person who is occupied in heavy manual work etc
16.	Desha Viruddha	Eating spicy food in hot city
17.	Satmya Viruddha	Vegetarian person eating cake containing eggs
18.	Upachara Viruddha	Drinking cold water after taking ghee

No.	Junk Foods	Type of Viruddha ahara
1	Milk shake, Fruit salads	Rasa & Veerya Viruddha
2	Juice, Alcohol, Alcohol after Hot spicy food	Upachara Viruddha
3	Cold water or Soft Drinks before Hot tea	Koshtha & Agni Viruddha
4	Spicy Punjabi food with cold drinks	Awastha & Koshtha Viruddha
5	Sizzling Browne ice cream with Hot Chocolate	Guna, Agni, Samyoga Viruddha
6	Popcorn with Watching Movie	Matra Viruddha
7	Popcorn Along With Cold drink	Vidhi Viruddha

DISCUSSION

As per *Ayurvedic* text certain food products or their combinations act as *Viruddha Aahara* which deteriorate *Sharirastha Dhatus*. There is total 18 types of *Viruddha Aahara* explained by Acharya *Charaka* and their commentators *Chakrapani* and *Gangadhara*. Consumption of *Viruddha Aahara* leads to several diseases by aggravating *Sharirastha Prakruta Doshas*

and deteriorating *Prakruta Dhatus*. Now a day, due to changing life style, urbanization and fascination of western culture, food habits of society are changing. There is noticeable change in food habits and preparatory methods between early time and in present era. In 21st century, life is very fast and competitive. Everyone wants to be the best. Because of this, a person of this era compromise with their food habits and consumes an incompatible diet and food habit which leads to most of

the diseases, From the above information it can be understood that regular consumption of any type of *Viruddha Ahara* can lead to number of disorders. *Acharya Charaka* has enlisted them in his *Samhita*. Some of them are acute while some are chronic diseases. All those can be classified as follows:-^[26]

- *Shandhya* (Impotency)
- *Andhya* (Blindness)
- *Visarpa* (Erysipelas)
- *Jalodara* (Ascitis)
- *Visphota* (Pustules)
- *Unmada* (Insanity)
- *Bhagandara* (Fistula in ano)
- *Murchha* (Coma/fainting)
- *Mada* (Narcosis)
- *Aadhmana* (Abdominal distention)
- *Galgraha* (Obstruction in throat)
- *Pandu roga* (Anemia)
- *Ama* (Endogenous toxin)
- *Kilasa* (Leucoderma)
- *Kushtha* (Various skin disorders)
- *Grahani* (Sprue)
- *Shoatha* (Swelling or oedema)
- *Amlapitta* (Acidity)
- *Jwara* (Fever)
- *Pinasa* (Allergic Rhinitis)
- *Santana Dosha* (Infertility problem)
- *Mrutyu* (Death)

Such food combinations are given in the texts as incompatible with proper reason;^[27]

- *Dadhi* (Curd) should not be consumed in the night. Because curd is acidic in nature. It aggravates *Pitta* and *Kapha doshas* which later on produces a lot of heat in the stomach. A curd is heavy, slow to digest and produces constipation. It can be best digested at lunch time when the digestive abilities are the strongest.
- Warm honey should not be consumed by the person suffering from heat exhaustion or sun stroke. Because after heated honey becomes poison and this can cause death.
- Avoid consuming cold water immediately during or after a meal hot tea or coffee. Because it diminishes the *Agni* and causes various digestive problems.
- Avoid eating bananas with milk. Because it can diminish *Agni*, change the intestinal flora producing excess toxins in the body. The combination may also cause cold, cough and even produce allergies.
- After consuming green leafy vegetables, drinking of milk should be avoided.
- After eating *Muli* (radish), *Lasuna* (garlic), *Tulasi* (basil) one should not be consumed milk because of the risk of skin disorders (Leprosy).
- All Sour substances are incompatible with milk.
- *Ghee* (Clarified butter) kept for more than ten consecutive days in a bronze vessel should be avoided as unwholesome.

- Avoid eating melons and grains together. Melons digest quickly whereas grains take more time. This combination will upset the stomach. Melons should be eaten alone or left alone.
- Milk and melons both should not be consumed at a same time. Because both are *Sheet* (cold) in nature, but milk is *Saraka* (laxative) and melon is *Mutrala* (diuretic). Milk takes longer time to digest. Moreover, the action of hydrochloric acid in the stomach causes the milk to curdle. For this reason *ayurveda* advises against taking milk with sour fruits.
- Avoid eating melons and grains together. Melons digest quickly whereas grains take more time. This combination will upset the stomach. Melons should be eaten alone or left alone.
- Sweet and sour fruits should never be combined as in a fruit chat.
- Fruits should be eaten as such and as a different meal.
- Avoid eating raw and cooked foods together. One can have the salad first and then proceed for dinner after a short gap.
- Likewise honey and ghee in equal quantity, hot water after taking honey is antagonistic.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it is clear that *Viruddha Ahara* is an important aspect of today's improper dietary habits. *Viruddha Ahara* can lead to various disorders. This unknowingly can lead to several hazardous diseases even death in the patients. Therefore, it is important to enlist the causative incompatible dietary factors and advise the patients to avoid such etiological factors (*Nidana Parivarjana*) especially, the children who nowadays consume a lot of flavoured food items and fried chips (potato, corn) etc. Here the role of preservatives and the salts used are said to have carcinogenic effects. *Ahara* is not only meant for maintenance of health but is also very important in the curative aspect while treating various diseases. Similarly, patients of food poisoning and adverse effects of preservatives may be treated with same line of treatment. The need of the study is to increase awareness and consciousness among the general public about hazards of Incompatible Food. *Acharya Charaka* mentioned that diseases caused by intake of *Viruddha Ahara* (incompatible foods and drugs) can be cured by following therapies- *Vaman Karma* (Medicated Emesis), *Virechana* (Purgation), Administration of Antidotes (Administration of substances which are of converse qualities), Taking Prophylactic measures. We should follow the rules and regulation related to *Ahara* as per mentioned in classical *Ayurvedic* texts.^[28] Layman should follow Panchakarma Therapy as a preventive measure according to specific Season which is described in *Ayurvedic* texts.

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