

A REVIEW ARTICLE ON SHISHIR RITU

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ABSTRACT

In *Ayurveda* there are various methods to maintain *Swasthya Avastha* (Healthy state) of body and brain, one should follow dietary and behavioural pattern according to different *Ritus* which is defined in *Ritucharya*. It is thoroughly explained in *Ayurvedic* texts. Changing season affects the external environment and due to this it will affect our body. Therefore our body should be adaptable to different environment changes without disturbing the Homeostasis of the body. Main aspect of *Ayurveda* that it deals with the preventive aspects of body it can be achieved by properly following regimens which are mentioned in our classics. Daily diet and behavioural regimens of *Hemanta* and *Shishira Ritus* are highlighted here along with its modern aspects. These can be correlated to winter season in modern perspective. In this article we learn that: changes occurring in our body during these *Ritus*, its adverse effects on our body, How one can overcome these adverse effects, modern aspects affects and prevention. With understanding of these aspects, one can easily lead to good health without gaining any ill health. Lifestyle disorders are serious problem now a days. Method of prevention for these diseases discussed here. For preventing these types of disorders the only way is to understand *Ritucharya* and makes the body to adjust with this changing environment.

KEYWORDS: Ritucharya, Swasthya Avastha, Dietary and Behavioural Regimens.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, there are many types of diseases are originating and some diseases for which one was adapted are getting disappeared. Then also the *Ayurvedic* approach towards diseases and health remains the same. *Ayurveda* gave more emphasis on how to maintain health and how to prevent the diseases by properly following healthy *Aharas* and *Viharas* according to different *Ritus*. By following these principles, we can avoid all types of life style disorders. In *Swastha Chatushka* of *Charaka Samhita*, *Acharya* clearly mentions about the *Pathya*.

Aharas and *Viharas* that everyone should follow for attaining healthy state of both *Shareera* and *Manas*. And also explains about its importance in preventing the diseases that can occur in future. These should be followed by considering the *Ritus*. The main aims of *Ayurveda* are

1. *Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam*
2. *Athurasya Vikara Prashamanam*

Ritucharya has been defined by many archarya's for maintaining a healthy lifestyle but in modern time, we don't have enough knowledge to think about our health and other things due to this peoples are getting vulnerable towards diseases with this changing environment. With following these methods one will get an healthy immune system and adaptability towards changing environment and there will not be any change in dosha of body. The main key for survival is to get adapt in this environment quickly. In Chapter 6th of *Charaka Sutrasthana*, *Tasyashitiya Adhyaya* it is written that "If a person have knowledge and rigoursly follow dietary patterns in accordance with different seasons will help to increase strength and complexion of a person. with these we can prevent lifestyle disorder also.

RITU

It is derived from the Sanskrit root "Ri" that means "to go" It denotes time or suitable time. The year is divided into two periods i.e. *Ayana* (Solstice) depending on the direction of movement of the sun i.e. *Uttarayana* (Northern solstice) and *Dakshinayana* (Southern Solstice). Each of these is formed of three *Ritus*.

A year consists of six seasons.

1. *Shishira*- Extreme Winter
2. *Vasantha*- Spring
3. *Grishma*- Summer
4. *Varsha*- Monsoon
5. *Sharad*- Autumn
6. *Hemanta*- Early Winter

In this article we will know about adaptation in *Shishira* and *Hemanta* ritu.

Hemanta Ritu

Hemanta Ritu is from November to January. During this time general conditions of body include.

1. Dominant *Rasa*- *Madhura*.
2. Dominant *Mahabhoota*- *Prithvi* and *Ap Mahabhoota*.
3. Dominant *Guna*- *Snigdha*, *Sheeta* and *Guru*.
4. *Dosha* - *Pitta Prashamana*.
5. *Deha Bala*(Body Strength)- *Pravara* (Maximum).
6. *Agni Bala* (Fire)- *Pravara* (Maximum)

During this time period one should follow this diet.

AHARAS (Diet Regimens)

During this ritu nights are longer and days are shorter in comparison to *Grishma* ritu. Due to this person feels hungry with starting of the day.

S/he should start day with following

- Anoop Mamsa
- Ikshu rasa
- *Snigdha*, *Amla* and *lavana Ahara*
- *Sura* i.e. prepared with *Molasses* and *rice flour*
- Pastries prepared from *Wheat*
- *Masha*
- *New grains* i.e. *Navamannam*
- *Dairy products*

VIHARAS (Lifestyle Regimens)

- *Vyayama* (Exercise) – One should do Exercise on daily basis
- *Snana* with *Kashaya Dravya* prepared *Jala* – One should bath daily with mild hot water
- Application of paste of *saffron*
- *Agaru Dhupna* (*Agarbatti Fumitation*)
- *Yukyarkakiranaan* – One should expose to sun In regular manner
- One should wear shoes
- *Vyavaya* (indulging in Sexual pleasure).
- Residing in underground cellar,
- *Niyuddha* (*Wrestling*)

Other Vihara's

- *Abhyanga*
- *Jentaka Sweda*.
- Oil application on head

Apathya Viharas

- One should avoid day time sleep
- One should avoid cold winds

Shishir Ritu

Shishira Ritu is considered from January March approximately. General conditions of the body include.

- Dominant *Mahabhoota*- *Akasha Mahabhoota*.
- Dominant *Guna*- *Ruksha*, *Laghu* and *Sheeta*.
- *Dosha* affected- *Kapha Chaya*.
- *Deha Bala* (Body Strength)- *Pravara* (Maximum).
- *Agni Bala* (Fire Strength)- *Pravara* (Maximum).
- Dominant *Rasa*- *Tiktha*.

The *Hemanta* and *Shishira Ritu* has similar nature. There are two differences in ritu

- *Rukshata* as because it began in *Adana Kaala*.
- *Sheeta Adhika* (more cold) because of *Megha Marutha Varsha* (*Cloud, Wind and Rain*)

Seasons

In India Winter starts from November and generally long till March. Reason of this that during this time sun moves to southern hemisphere and because of that northern part of india receives less temperature and it became cold. Due to cold season there are many changes which occurs in our body. People become sick and weak and develop many type of diseases but there is one question which arise that 'are winters bad as we think?' let's find this answer in texts of many acharyas

Winter

Word winter is derived from proto indo European word 'Wend' which means 'Water'. Winter is coldest season of the year after autumn and before spring.

Diet Regimens

This is best season to improve immunity, so during this season one should eat healthy food and exercise on daily basis so he will get healthy and immune body. Healthy food include fresh vegetables and fruits, dairy products, nuts, oil seeds, whole grains/legumes and ghee, spices. During this time, warm foods are required to satisfy craving and nourishment to the body.

- One should eat Root Vegetables
- *Carrot* – It has rich source of *Vit-A* and *beta-ceratine* is also present in that
- *Potato* – Rich source of *carbohydrate*
- *Onion, Garlic, Raddish* - rich in *isothiocynates* and *phytochemicals* which is good in preventing cancer
- *Fresh Fruits* – *Pappaya* and *pineapple* because of there warming qualities
- *Indian Gooseberry* – It is great source of *Vit- C*
- *Spices* – *Mustard, black pepper, turmeric*, are good sources for acting against the *microbese* and also good immunity buildup
- *Tulsi* – It protects from cough and improve immunity

Behavioural Regimes

- One should wear warm clothes to keep body temperature in normal state.
- Days become shorter and night become longer then one should change it's sleep schedule
- One should not stay awake till late night
- One should avoid sleeping in day time

DISCUSSION

Acharya Charaka writes that if one follow *Pathya Aharas* and *Pathya Viharas* daily then he will attain *Swasthya Avastha* (Healthy state) and also get immune from *Ajathanam Vikaranaam* (those diseases that can occur in future. The forthcoming diseases can be compared to life style disorders so for preventing these, *Ritucharya* plays a vital role as for the above mentioned we have to make balance with different seasons also. In *Hemanta. Ritu* due to its *Sheeta Guna* atmosphere become cold. Vata has *Yogavahi* quality and *Sheeta Guna* will do *Agni Avarodha* in humans. Due to coldness in the environment, normal flow of the *Agni get obstructed* to the outside. A potter who is making earthen vessels by placing them in a pit and covering them after keeping the fire will produce more heat. Same is happening in our body like *Sheeta Vata* will cover our whole body which has already *Agni* inside. Due to this heat will be produced in our body i.e. *Agni* (Digestive fire) will become stronger. This enhanced *Agni* is capable of digesting large quantities of food. Therefore *Guru Aharas* should be taken properly in this *Ritu* which includes Newly Harvested grains etc. If not taken on proper time *Aharas*, *Agni* will start to attack the *Rasa Dhatu* and will finally lead to *Vata Prakopa*. Therefore we should get disciplined about *Guru Aharas* and proper food at proper time inured to prevent this *Vata Prakopa*.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda treat people according to their body types guide them to live a life in proper manner. With changing environment our body also get affected, it is very important for our body to get adapted with these changes. If it fails to stay correlate with environment it will affect our body and mind leading to *Dosha Vaishamya*. In long term, these imbalances leads towards various types of life style disorders. To prevent these disorders, the best way is to understand *Ritucharya* which explains about the various dietary and behavioural regimens according to different seasons. with proper understanding and applying these guidelines, one can easily achieve our primary goal "*Swasthasya Rakshanam*". It also brings about Strength, Complexion and longevity without disturbing the equilibrium of the body and mind.

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