

A REVIEW STUDY OF IDEAL LIFESTYLE AND DIET FOR CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

In this 21st century, life style has changed very rapidly. As life style is changing in the society, diet, habits, are also changing very rapidly. Now-a-days people take fast food regularly; moreover they show negligence in taking care of their health. Due to this lifestyle children's diet harms their physical development at an early age. Children do not get proper vitamins and important nutritional constituents. As a result of this, children suffer from various nutritional deficiency diseases. The brain reaches full development stage by the age of five years. From the age of five years physical growth starts for which nutritious diet is much needed. In *Ayurveda* text *balavstha* is considered up to the age of 16 years. This is the most important phase of our life where most of the physical growth, mental growth and development of immunity take place. Now-a-days we can also see obesity in very early childhood tends to continue into adolescence and through to adulthood and leading to many diseases. For avoiding all this we can do parent's counseling about lifestyle modification like less screen time, playing outdoors games, avoid junk food and by following healthy diet. The aim of writing this paper is to highlight the concept of ideal lifestyle and healthy diet to the researchers in the field of dietetics and medicine.

KEYWORDS: Diet, Growth, Development, Immunity, Ashtaahar vidhi, Prakruti, Doshas.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda has strongly advised that a person should never consume food out of greed or when he is unaware of what he eats. One should knowingly and decidedly eat food. Living body is principally grown out of food; hence it is vital to test what a person is consuming.^[1]

Diet and nutrition are most important for health and equally important in management of disorders. The maximum nutrition disorders were identified in the 18th-19th century and after that the concept of the diet and nutrition became the area of interest for the researchers. Dietetics is the science which applies the principle of nutrition, to the planning and preparation of food and regulation of the diet in relation to both maintenance of health and treatment of diseases.^[2]

The word diet is derived from the Greek "Diata", meaning mode of life, a word that until the last century was often used in a much broader sense than its current meaning.^[3] Ayurveda the traditional system of India describes 'Aahar' in two meanings i.e. the act of food intake and for food items^[4] Whatever is eaten with mouth or ingested is called Aahar. Food has been considered as life of living beings. Thus diet is not only

necessary to living long (Annam vrittikaranam)^[5] but also necessary for good health. Food eaten in proper amount, with all rules and regulations sustains the life, refreshes all sense organs, organs of functions along with mind, nourishes all dhatavah (tissues), increases memory, intelligence, strength, oja, provides good complexion and luster to the body.^[6]

The word dietetics was noted after the recognizing the importance of dietetics in health and management of disorder. Many association of dietetics were found all over the world for example, American Dietetic Association has defined dietetics as a profession which applies the integration and application of principles derived from the disciplines of food, nutrition, management, communication, biological, physiological, behavioral and social sciences to achieve and maintain human health.^[3,7] Dietitians supervise human nutrition, the regulation of diet, alters nutrition of patients based upon the medical condition and individual needs.^[8]

All the Ayurvedic compendia have described the unique effects of diet in health as well as in diseased state thousand years ago. Acharya Charak has quoted that the state of health depends on diet and dietetic, faulty intake

of diet results in diseased state. The person who wants to be free from different diseases should eat Hitakar Aahar (suitable diet) in appropriate amount on appropriate time. Ayurveda has given an extensive description about diet and dietetics under the preview of Ashtha Aahar Vidhi Visheshayatana (eight specific factors related to method of food cooking, processing, food combinations and its intake)^[9,10] and Dwadash- Pravicharana (rules related to intake of meal).^[11]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A comprehensive literature search was done on the concept of Ahara, Dietetics and Ashtha Aahar Vidhi Visheshayatana from standard text books of Ayurveda and Nutrition, research articles from different online journals of standard e-database like PubMed, PubMed Central, Google Scholar, Medline and Science Direct were searched to get relevant research papers related to manuscript. The concept of dietetics and Ashtha Aahar Vidhi Visheshayatana were analyzed in view of nutrition science and scientific researches.

Specific Considerations for Diet and Dietary intake (Ashtha Aahar Vidhi Visheshayatana).^[9,10] in Ayurveda

Charaka the great physician of Ayurveda has described Ashtha Aahar Vidhi Visheshayatana means eight specific considerations regarding food and dietary intake,^[9,10] which are responsible for healthy and unhealthy effects of ingested Aahar (diet) namely.

1. Prakriti (original qualities of food)
2. Karana (producing specific qualities by processing and cooking of food)
3. Samyoga (food combination)
4. Rasi (quantity)
5. Desh (place of origin of food)
6. Kala (time factor)
7. Upayoga sanstha (rules of intake)
8. Upayokta (user)

DOSHAS FOR KIDS^[12]

Just like adults, children each have a unique balance of doshas based on their body type and personality. While it's important to understand your child's individual needs and tailor their Ayurvedic routine for them, you should also be aware that childhood as a whole is considered a "Kapha phase." This means that all children tend to have excess Kapha energy to help them grow and develop. The excess does not necessarily indicate that all children are imbalanced, but that they may need extra considerations for their Kapha energy to keep them healthy and happy.

Ayurveda for Kids – Vata Dosha

In addition to Kapha energy, children will also have their own blend of Vata, Pitta, and Kapha doshas. Children who have strong Vata doshas are likely to be highly creative, quick-witted and energetic. They may also be prone to anxiety, restlessness, have difficulty sleeping and might be picky eaters. With this in mind, Vata kids

should be allowed to play in the sunshine and partake in other warm activities. Honey, fruits and naturally sweet items are considered acceptable for this dosha, and Vata children will also benefit from meditation or mindfulness exercises.

Ayurveda for Kids – Pitta Dosha

Pitta children are generally articulate, smart, confident and may be prone to strong bursts of anger or frustration. Pitta children might also have a sharp appetite, and they generally do not like to skip meals. Children with this dosha should avoid activities that will fire them up, and should instead practice mindfulness and be served cooling, fresh foods like fruits and vegetables.

Ayurveda for Kids – Kapha Dosha

Finally, children with strong Kapha tendencies are often compassionate, steady, focused and may be lethargic or even a little lazy. They likely sleep well and genuinely enjoy their food. Although all children have Kapha energy, too much of this dosha can cause an imbalance. To correct this, Kapha-dominant children should be encouraged to exercise or practice yogic stretches daily. They should avoid cold, heavy foods like milk and cheese, and should instead eat spiced foods with garlic, ginger or cinnamon.

AYURVEDIC ROUTINES FOR KIDS^[12]

Beyond establishing a proper diet, Ayurveda for kids is also focused on developing healthy daily routines for children. Western and Eastern medicine agree that a set daily routine will help kids develop healthy habits that will benefit them for life. Here are some tips to get your child started with an Ayurvedic routine:

Rise early: Both children and adults benefit from waking early and staying in tune with the sun. Children tend to be early risers anyway, so this should be easy. Although children are encouraged to wake at the same time each day, if they had a bad night of sleep then getting up a little later is always permissible!

Drink some water: Encourage your child to start the day with a glass of water. Drinking water 30 minutes before a meal also aids in digestion.

Use the bathroom: Teach your child to listen to their body's needs, and start building the habit of using the bathroom in the morning. This will help your child develop a regular morning routine.

Morning massage or stretching: This Ayurvedic practice helps invigorate the body and wake the muscles. For babies or very small children, a parent or other caretaker can gently massage and stretch the muscles for 10-15 minutes. Older children can be taught to practice various yogic stretches themselves.

Eat right: Throughout the day, children should be served fresh, nutritious food at mealtimes. Make sure to take

into account your child's dosha when preparing food for them. Encourage your children to develop mindfulness around food, and when they eat ensure they are free from distractions like screens or other activities.

Get moving: Since children have an excess of Kapha energy, they will need extra help to stay active and learn healthy routines. Whether it's vigorous playtime in the backyard, a swimming class, little league sports or a daily walk around the neighborhood, make sure your child stays active.

Get enough sleep: At the end of a long day of growing and learning, make sure your little one is tucked into bed on time. Even teenagers should ideally be in bed no later than 10 pm.

DISCUSSION

The above discussion elucidate that the concept of diet and dietetics was very well described by Ayurvedic scholars. They have given great importance to diet and dietetics in nutrition, maintenance of health as well as in causation and management of diseases. The harmful effects of faulty intake of food have also been described. Food eaten in proper amount, with all rules and regulations sustains the life, refreshes all sense organs, motor organs along with mind, nourishes all dhatavah (tissues), increases memory, intelligence, strength, oja, provides good complexion and luster to the body.

Traditional food processing and preparation methods described under Ashtha Aahar Vidhi Visheshayatana (Eight Specific Considerations for diet and dietary intake) can be used to enhance nutritive value of nutrients in diet and to avoid the harmful effect of diet due to wrong processing and faulty food intake methods.

The dietary considerations and ideal lifestyle described in Ayurveda may be applied in the field of nutrition science and medicine for welfare of human beings. Scientific studies could be done on Ashtha Aahar Vidhi Visheshayatana (eight specific considerations for diet and dietary intake) and Dwadash Pravicharana (rules related to intake of meal).

CONCLUSION

To provide healthy life style to children Ayurveda regimen play important role also Asta Ahar vidhi visheshayatan gives protocol for making food and rules for preparing food. Than physical and mental health of the child in better way Through following Ayurveda dietary rules and regulation.

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