

**GREESHMA RITU- IN AYURVEDA AND MODERN PERSPECTIVE WITH ITS
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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, the science of life advises various dietary and behavioural regimens for maintaining the *Swasthya Avastha* (Healthy state) of both *Shareera* and *Manas*. These should be followed according to different *Ritus* for getting desired benefits which are defined as *Ritucharya* (Regimens according to different seasons). Its importance has been explained widely in different classics of *Ayurveda*. There are lot of changes occurring in different seasons. These changes in the season will in turn affect the external environment where we are living. Due to these changes in both season and external environmental environment, our body and mind will also get affected. During the transition period from one season to another season, different changes occurring in the season will affect the normal balance of our body and mind. Therefore it's necessary that our body should adapt to this changing environment without disturbing the Homeostasis of the body. At this point understanding *Ritucharya* is important as by following the regimens mentioned in each *Ritu* will help to prevent all the diseases that can occur in each season. *Ayurveda* also gives importance to preventive aspects rather than treatment aspects. Here Dietary and behavioural regimens of *Greeshma Ritu* are highlighted along with its modern aspects. In modern perspective this can be correlated to summer season. This is the season in which humans get affected with different types of communicable diseases. Due to the changes occurring in our body due to these along with following wrong regimens can lead to life style disorders in future. The different points going to deal here includes: What are the changes occurring in our body during the *Greeshma Ritu*, What are its adverse effects on our body, How to overcome these adverse effects, How can it be correlated with modern aspects. By proper understanding of these aspects, we can avoid all unhealthy regimens that can lead to diseases. At the same time by following regimens according to the classics will help to attain the healthy state and can prevent the life style disorders.

KEYWORDS: *Swasthya Avastha*, *Greeshma Ritu*, Dietary and Behavioural Regimens.**INTRODUCTION**

In the present era, life style disorders are becoming a serious problem. The main reason behind these is the unawareness of the society about the season and various regimens that we should have to follow in different seasons. Various new diseases are getting originated day by day. Then also the approach of *Ayurveda* towards every diseases and health remains the same as *Ayurveda* is giving more emphasis on how to maintain health and how to prevent the diseases. For this understanding *Ritucharya* is important. By properly following healthy *Aharas* and *Viharas* according to different *Ritus*, we can attain the *Swasthya Avastha* (healthy state). Therefore for attaining the healthy state, *Dinacharya* and *Ritucharya* have been explained by different classics of *Ayurveda*. The dietary and behavioural regimens that we should follow in different seasons according to the

changes occurring in environment and our body for the maintenance of health and for preventing the diseases is *Ritucharya*. As we all are behind our life goals there is no enough time for us to sit and think about our health. Due to the lack of time, intake of artificially prepared foods and not following any regimens according to the season will disturb the balance of our body and mind leading to the *Dosha Prakopa* and gradually to different types of life style disorders. Different types of changes are occurring in the season during its transition period from one season to another season. Whatever changes occurring in it will directly or indirectly affects our body and mind also. So our body should have to get familiar with these changes in the environment. If we are modifying accordingly, it can lead to various types of Somatic and Psychosomatic diseases in future. Survival of the fittest is the main principle we have to follow here

to cope up with this changing environment. "If a person understands and follows diet and regimens in accordance with different seasons will help the person to get *Bala* (strength) and *Varna* (complexion)".^[1] By these we can prevent life style disorders.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To highlight the basic concepts of *Greeshma Ritu* with dietary and life style regimens explained in *Brihattaryees*.
2. Understanding of this in modern perspective.
3. Significance of its understanding in present era.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

1. *Ritucharya* explained in *Brihatrayees* with its commentaries.
2. Websites and other relevant articles related to *Greeshma Ritu*.
3. Websites and other relevant articles related to Summer season.
4. All these concepts are properly collected, analyzed and arranged in a sequential manner for the proper understanding of it in disease prevention and maintenance of health.

GREESHMA RITU

"*Charya*" is derived from the verb root "*Cara*" which means movements and eating i.e. diet and movements. *Ritucharya* means "Mode of living in different seasons" General conditions of the body include:

1. Predominant *Rasa- Katu*.
2. Predominant *Guna- Ruksha, Laghu and Ushna*.
3. Effect on Dosha- *Kapha Prashamana* and *Vata Chaya*.
4. Deha Bala- *Avara* (Minimum)
5. Agni Bala- *Avara* (Minimum).

GENERAL FEATURES

- Sun is intense.
- Wind blows south-westerly and *Asukaha* (unpleasant).
- Earth is heated.
- Rivers are *Tanu* (light) with little streams.
- The pairs of *Cakravakas* bewildered and moving here and there for the search of water.
- Shrubs, grasses and climbers are getting dried and fallen down.
- Leafless trees.^[2]

AHARAS

- Cereals which are of *Madhura* (sweet) *Rasa* and *Laghu*(light) *Guna*.
- *Snigdha* (unctuous) *Guna*
- *Sheeta* (cool) *Guna*
- *Drava Padartha* (Liquid preparations)

- *Sakthu*- After bathing with excessive cold water, taking mixture of *Sakthu* (roasted barley flour) and sugar in the form of *Lehya* (paste like preparation).
- *Sali Dhanya* (variety of rice) should be taken along with *Jangala Mamsa* (meat of desert animals).
- *Mamsa Rasa* (meat soup) which is *Na Athi Khana* (Not much concentrated).
- *Rasala* (well shaken curd mixed with sugar and pepper).
- *Raaga* (sweet, sour and salty syrup)
- *Shadava* or *Khadava* (juice prepared with various fruits).
- *Panchasara Panaka*- stored in fresh earthen pot after making them sour and should be taken using earthen spoon.
- *Sheetala Ambu* (cold water) should be taken mixed with *Karpooora* (camphor).
- During night time, *Shashanka Kirana* (*Talisa Choorna Vataka*) should be taken along with *Mahisha Kshira* (buffalo milk) mixed with *Sita*(sugar) and made *Sheetala* (cold) by *Chandra* (moon) and *Nakshatra*(stars).^[3]

VIHARAS

- *Divaswapna* (daysleep)
- Days should be spent in forests having *Ruddha Ushna Rashmi* (obstructed sunrays) with very tall trees acting as barrier for hot rays of the sun.
- At night, should sleep in the *Saudhaprshtha*(terrace of the house) with plenty of moonlight.
- Body anointed with *Chandana* (sandal).
- Wearing *Maala*(garlands) of *Karpura* (sandal) and *Mallika* (jasmine flower).
- Clothing which are *Su-Sukshma Tanu* (extremely thin).^[4]

APATHYA AHARAS

- *Lavana*(salt), *Amla*(sour) and *Katu*(Pungent) *Rasa*.
- *Madhya*- If needed should drink less quantity of *Madhya* added with more quantity of water.^[5]

APATHYA VIHARAS

- *Vyayama*
- *Vyavaya*
- Exposure to sunrays.

SUMMER SEASON

It is the hottest of all the climates falling between spring and autumn season. In this summer solistice, days are long and nights are short with length of the day decreasing as the season progresses after the solistice.^[6]

FOOD REGIMENS

- Water- Keeps the body cool. Due to high humidity sweat will not evaporate quickly and prevents the body to release heat in an efficient manner.

Therefore should have to drink water even though we are not feeling thirsty in increased quantities regardless of the activities we are doing.

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Foods which are light and cool
- Raw salads and juices
- Protein rich meals
- Sprouted beans, nut and yogurt
- Plenty of Drinking water, lemon juice, Coconut water, thin buttermilk
- Low calorie food
- Nutritional supplements
- Vitamin C
- B Complex Vitamin
- Energy Tonic
- Stress Protector
- Green tea- As natural components that can speed up our metabolism.^[7]

FOOD REGIMENS TO BE AVOIDED

- Fried Food- Fried and excessive fat food will lead to Lethargy slows down the digestive process and makes the skin unhealthy.
- Tea and Coffee- As they are Diuretic, it can cause increased urination leading to the loss of water and dryness of the skin.
- Overeating- Eat only light food.
- Skipping of breakfast- Eating breakfast provided with healthy fat and proteins will make our metabolism into high gear and will provide energy for the whole day.
- Ice cream and high calorie barbecues as they will hamper our metabolism again.
- Carbonated beverages, alcoholic beverages and high sugar beverages- Contains preservatives, colours, sugars and are acidic in nature. They will act as Diuretics and will cause the loss of fluids through urine.
- Soft Drinks- Contains Diluted Phosphoric acid which can damage the inner lining of Digestive Tract and hampers the proper functions of the system. Excessive drink of these will lead to increased Phosphorous levels in our body which will make the calcium to separate from the bones and will move into the blood. These will make bone porous, arthritis, bone spur and kidney stones. These will also reduce the mineral levels to such an extent which makes the enzyme function improper leading to indigestion.
- Very chilled liquids- Drinking these will make us cool only for some time and won't help us to cool down in the summer. Drinking cool liquids when feeling hot will lead to slight constriction of blood vessels in the skin and will decrease heat loss.
- Intake of vegetables like spinach, radish, hot peppers, onion, garlic, beetroot as they will produce more heat in our body.
- Dried Fruits^[8]

BEHAVIOURAL REGIMENS

- Maintain good hygiene
- Loose, light coloured clothes
- Maintaining good hygiene- Bath 2 or 3 times a day to get rid of sweat and bad odour from our body.

BEHAVIOURAL REGIMENS TO BE AVOIDED

- Cigarettes and Alcohol
- Tight fitting clothes
- Exposure to direct sun rays between 10 am and 4 pm as this is the peak time of Ultraviolet rays.

DISCUSSION

During this season, *Kapha Dosha* of the people decreases every day and *Vata Dosha* increases because of the *Teekshnamshu* (sharp penetrating power) of the sun. As this is the last Ritu of Adana Kaala, Sharira and Agni Bala are less. The sun draws up the moisture of the nature. So sweet, cold, liquid foods and drinks are beneficial. *Madya* should be avoided, if needed should be drunk by adding more quantity of water. If not following this rule, it will lead to *Shosha* (swelling), *Sithilatha* (debility), *Daha* (burning sensation) and *Moha* (delusion). *Panchasara* preparation of *Vagbhata-Madhu*, *Kharjura*, *Mridvika*, *Prushaka* and *Sita Panchasara* preparation of *Susruta- Ksheera*, *Sharkara*, *Pippali*, *Madhu* and *Sarpi*. *Sashanka Kirana- Vataka* containing pieces of *Karpura* ie. *Talisa Churna Vataka* is *Ruchikara* (increasing taste) and appetizer.^[9]

Modern aspects can be discussed under three headings:

1. Food regimens
2. Behavioural regimens
3. Common health problems

Food Regimens: Due to lack of water, excessive heat and more output of urine, summer season makes our body more dehydrated. The best way to withstand this condition is to keep our body hydrated by drinking plenty of water and fluids. Drinking 8-9 glasses of water per day is needed for making our body hydrated. Nutritional supplements are needed for making our body energetic. B complex Vitamin supplements are needed for the production of cellular energy and also for calming the Nervous System. Anti Oxidants and Vitamin C are required to protect our body from regular stress and also Chemical Pollutants.

Behavioural Regimens: Exercise is the best way to maintain the healthy state of our body. But doing it in summer season will make our body more stress and it can lead to various serious ailments. Due to the heat in summer, less blood will be circulated to the muscles which results in the increase of the Heart Rate. Therefore proper precautions are needed during this season while doing exercise. Always keep the body cool by drinking water etc as it helps for sending more blood to circulate

in our skin. Also by drinking water during exercise will make our body hydrated.

Common Health Problems in Children and Adults:

There are various diseases associated with summer season. It does not mean that every individual is going to get affected with these disorders. Then also ever one even though they are healthy or not can take the safety measures to prevent these disorders. Here when compared to treatment, safety or precautionary measures are playing the important role.^[10,11]

1. Dehydration- It is one of the common disorders affecting the children during this season. Risk of it increases as they are indulging more in outdoor plays and they sweat a lot when compared to other seasons leading to electrolyte imbalance. Even though they drink water more than the usual, it will not be that amount which is sufficient for the body i.e. very less. Different signs include extreme thirst, fatigue and less output of urine. The best remedy for this is providing with adequate amount of water, Oral Rehydration solution, Coconut water and Butter milk. By these it will help for restoring the lost minerals and salts through over sweating.
2. Sunburn- One of the most serious ailment where the skin will appear red and will cause itching and blister formation. The best way to prevent this is to use sun hats, sunscreen while going out at least 15 minutes before going out and avoiding the peak time of the sun while going out.
3. Heat Strokes- Next stage of sunburn. It is a serious condition which occurs due to the exposure to intense heat of the sun. The main features include High temperature, Dizziness, Rapid breathing and Increased Heart Rate. The best way to prevent this is to restrict the sports and other activities to early morning and late evening hours, use of shawl to cover the face.
4. Allergies- Occurs due to high pollen counts and inhalant allergens. The most common one is Hay Fever which causes Sneezing and Nose irritations. The best way to prevent this is trying to minimise the contact with allergens and pollen.
5. Fungal Infection- High humidity and more sweating during this season will create a perfect environment for the growth of fungus and will lead to fungal infections. The main areas of this include underarms, groin, between the toes and areas which don't have much space for the air to travel. The main symptoms include constant itching and redness. The best way to prevent this is to change the dress stained with sweat frequently during a day, washing the hands and feet frequently, maintain good hygiene and wearing clean and dry clothes.
6. Prickly Heat- Common ailment affecting the children which occurs due to excessive sweating leading to the sweat gland blocking. Young children are commonly affected due to their underdeveloped sweat glands. Appears as tiny raised spots over the surface of the body associated with itching and mild

redness. The best way for relief is to keep them in cool environment and also to wash the area with Luke warm water.

7. Skin Rashes- Due to too much sweating, the sweat gets accumulated in our body and clothes. By constant rubbing and wearing of these clothes for a prolonged period of time will cause itching and finally lead to rashes.
8. Insect bites- As insects like mosquito, bees, wasp etc love hot and humid climate, the frequency of insect bite increases. The best way to prevent this is to take adequate ways for the protection from these insects.
9. Eye Irritation- Due to the exposure to the intense heat, it can lead to irritation and dryness of the eyes. The best way to prevent this is to hat with large brim and sun glasses with UV protection.
10. Swimmers Ear- This is one of the common diseases in children occurring due to too much time in pool to escape from the heat of the sun. Due to this, chances are there for the water to collect in the outer ear leading to bacterial growth and infection referred as Swimmers Ear. This is associated with pain and itching in the ears. The best way to prevent this is to wear swim cap for covering the ears from the entry of the water.
11. Food Poisoning- Due to the excessive heat, foods can spoil easily and can lead to food poisoning. The best way to prevent this is to keep the leftover food inside the refrigerator and also the food must be properly cooked.
12. Diarrhoea- As food gets spoiled easily due to the excessive heating and also due to contaminated water and food, Diarrhoea is a common ailment during this season. To prevent this, the best way is to drink water and eat food after properly boiling it.
13. Chicken Pox- In this Varicella Zoster virus travels through the droplet present in the environment by the person infected through his coughing and sneezing. This virus remains dormant in our body till the favourable weather conditions for spreading.
14. Measles- The Paramyxo virus will have faster breeding during the summer season and will lead to Measles.
15. Jaundice- Is produced due to the intake of contaminated food and water which is more during the summer season.
16. Typhoid- It is caused due to Salmonella typhi bacteria. The contaminated food and water sources are the favourable breeding places for these bacteria. Due to the consuming of these, it will lead to the production of Typhoid.^[12,13]

CONCLUSION

Charaka Acharya in *Tasyasheetiya Adhyaya* of *Sutrasthana* clearly mentions that if we follow *Pathya Aharas* and *Pathya Viharas* considering the Ritus is the best way to attain *Swasthya Avastha* (Healthy state) and to prevent *Ajathanam Vikaranaam* (those diseases that can occur in future).

तश्च नित्यं प्रयुंजीत स्वास्थ्यं येन अनुवर्तते। अजातानां विकाराणां अनुत्पत्तिकरं च यत्॥ (च.सू. ५)^[14] The diseases that can occur in future can be compared to life style disorders. These disorders are occurring due to the *Apathya Aharas* and *Viharas* we are doing without considering the season. These can lead to *Doshavaishmya* and diseases which will become very difficult to cure. So for preventing these, understanding *Ritucharya* plays an important role. *Ayurveda* makes the people analyse about their body constitution and makes the people to modify according to their body constitution. As changes which are occurring in the environment affect our body also in turn leading to diseases, it is very important for our body to get familiar with these changes. If we are not modifying accordingly, it will affect our body and mind leading to lifestyle disorders in future. By proper understanding and following these regimens mentioned under *Ritucharya*, we can easily achieve our primary and most important goal “*Swasthasya Rakshanam*”. It also brings about Strength, Complexion and longevity without disturbing the equilibrium of the body and mind.

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