

## IMPORTANCE OF ASHTVIDH AAHAR VISHESH AYATAN

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## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda defines normal health as a balanced state of *Doshas*, *Dhatus*, *Agni*, *mala* and happiness of *Atma*, *Indriyas* and *Manas* as well as the physical mental and social wellbeing. According to WHO's definition of health "a state of physical mental and social wellbeing and not merely an absence of disease". Proper nutrition is very essential for healthy life. *Ahara* (food) is the main source of nutrition. According to Ayurveda *ahara* is the most important thing for healthy life and type of *ahara* we eat affect our body as well as mind. Nowadays, people are adopting sedentary lifestyle. Also, the craze for junk food is increasing in rural areas also. The change in food habit, lack of knowledge about proper nutrition are causative factors for many diseases. Ayurveda has mentioned about *Astavidh ahar vidhi vishesh ayatan* in which Acharyas has explained in detail about properties of food, effect of combination of different food articles, quantity of food to be consumed, properties of food substances according to their cultivation area, cooking procedure etc. These eight factors are most important ways to maintain healthy diet. It gives a fair idea about what? When? Why? How? and Which? Food material should be consumed for promotion of positive health. A proper knowledge of these *Ahar vidhi vishesh ayatan* will help in reducing disorders caused due to improper diet and help for healthy diet.

**KEYWORDS:** *Trayoupasthamba, ashtavidha aahar vidhivishesh aayatanani, Prakriti, Karan.*

## INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, '*Trividha Upastambha*' are described in *Sutrasthan* of Charak Samhita. *Ahara*, *Swapna (Nidra)* and *Brahmacharya* are the three pillars of *Shareera* in which *Ahara* is the prime need. Without *Ahara* life would not continue very long. If we study the Ancient Literature since Vedic era, we can easily observe the importance of dietic concept among them. The awareness about diet and its rules and regulations can be found everywhere. *Ahara* plays a pivotal role in the maintenance of health. For this reason, *Ahara* has been given the prime place among the *Trayopastambha*.

*Ahara* is very essential for nourishment & protection of life. Development of sense organs, mind & body depends upon good qualities of food. Health is Wealth. According to WHO's definition of health is as "a state of physical mental and social wellbeing and not merely an absence of disease."<sup>[1]</sup> The normal health depends upon the *Ahara*. *Ahara* plays an important role to provide nutrition to the body. It is mentioned in *Ramayana* that "*Bhuke*

*bhajan na hue gopala*" (*Ramchirtar Manas*). this quotation used by *Sant Kavi Tulsi Das Ji* in *Ramayana* clearly indicates that the hungry man cannot develop himself. *Ahara* provides nutrition to the body but it is more beneficial when a perfect method as described in *Ayurvedic* literature is adopted only quantity of *Ahara* is not beneficial for health but it depends on the *Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan*. This method clearly indicates that it is clearly mentioned in Ayurvedic literature that only a perfect dose of *Ahara* is not beneficial to maintain perfect health but every man has to be follow some special direction of food which is clearly mentioned in the *Charaka Samhita*. The details about the *Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan*<sup>[2]</sup> (special direction of food) are as given below.

- 1) *Prakriti*
- 2) *Karana*
- 3) *Sanyoga*
- 4) *Rashi*
- 5) *Desha*
- 6) *Kala*
- 7) *Upyoga sanstha*

8) *Upayokta***MATERIALS AND METHODS****Methodology**

As this is conceptual study, it comprises the review of the available literature in the ancient classical texts, scientific journals, dissertations, research paper etc. concerned with this concept. Literary data was collected and analyzed.

**1. Prakriti<sup>[3]</sup> (Swabhav or Nature)**

The natural qualities like *Guru*, *Laghu* etc. which is present at the time of origin in *Ahara Dravya*. This total qualities of *Ahara* is the *Prakriti* of that particular *Ahara*, for example –*Munga* is *Laghu* from nature and *Unada* is *Guru* from nature. The specific quality of particular food and drug it is known as the *Prakriti* the individual drug, some drugs are cold and some are hot in nature this is the particular quality of the individual drug. Some drugs burn in hot atmosphere and some in cold atmosphere. Some are burning cool atmosphere but their action is hot. Some drugs are burning in hot atmosphere but their action is cool. This particular nature of the drug is known as *Prakriti* is of the individual drug. It is the moral duty of the physician to advise to take the drug according to the disease and Complication. The natural qualities like *Guru*, *Laghu* etc. which is present at the time of origin in *Ahara Dravya*. This total quantity of *Ahara* is the *Prakriti* of that particular *Ahara*, for example –*Munga* is *Laghu* from nature and *Unada* is *Guru* from nature.

**2. Karana<sup>[4]</sup> (Sansakara or transformation)**

*Karan* refers to method of processing of food.<sup>5</sup> *Karan* i.e. *samskara* is responsible for change in property of food. *Agnisanskaran*, *jalasanyog*, *Shaucha*, *Manthana* are some ex- amples of *samskara*. Some food articles are not suitable for consumption in their original form. It has to undergo some procedure or *samskara* so that it can be accepted by body. Some food has *prakriti* of vitiation of *doshas*, this property can be changed by different processing over food i.e.

**Karan**

The development (generation or production or transformation) of different new qualities in *Ahara Dravya* which is not present at the time of origin is known as *Karana*. The new qualities are developed in the *Ahara Dravya* due to cleaning, washing and cooking, polishing.

For example: Rice is *guru* but when it is cooked it becomes *Laghu*. When the food and drugs are boiled and cleaned their quality is changed it is increased generally. For example uncooked rice is cool from nature but when it is boiled it is converted in to hot in nature this particular quality changed is called as *Karana* and one of the other example polished rice is not as beneficial as brown (unpolished)rice.

**3. Sanyoga<sup>[5]</sup> (combination)**

When two are more than two *Dravya* combine together, this combination is known as *Sanyoga*. Due to this combination some special qualities are developed which was not present separately. Sometimes this combination may be harmful for the life. For example combination of *Ghee* and *Madhu* in equal quantity creates toxic effect on the body although *Ghee* and *Madhu* are not toxic individually. For example –honey, fish, milk if these *Ahara* is using after mixing then these *Ahara* is produced *Kushta Roga* but use individually these are not harmful to our body. ad one the other example rice and pulses (*Dal*) taken together are beneficial and complementary.

**4. Rashi<sup>[6]</sup> (quantity or total amount of food)**

*Rashi* means quantity or total amount of *Ahara Dravya*. It may be calculated from two types.

- a) *Sarva Graha*
- b) *Pari Graha*

**a) Sarva Graha Rashi**

The total quantity of *Ahara Dravya* in diet is the *Sarva graha Rashi*.

**b) Parigraha Rashi**

The individual quantity of *Ahara Dravya* is known as *Parigraha Rashi*. The quantity of particular food and drug is known as *Rashi* of the individual drug. For example 100 gm potato, 50 gm onion, 50 gm tomato and 200 gm water this particular combination of become 400 gm and their separate. quality is known as 100 gm potato, 50 gm onion, 50 gm tomato and 200 gm.

**5. Desha<sup>[7]</sup> (Local place)**

The climates of different places in the country are different. The effect of climate is depends upon the *Ahara Dravya*.

This is the reason that some *Ahara Dravya* are born in the hot atmosphere and some are born in the cold climate. The *Ahara Dravya* which is born in the hot atmosphere is becomes *Ushna* (hot) and the *Ahara Dravya* born in the cool temperature is cold in nature. This is due to the climate effect of *Ahara Dravya*.

**6. Kala (time)<sup>[8]</sup>**

*Kala* is the sixth factor. It denotes condition of the body whether it is healthy or sick (unhealthy). It is of two types.

- i) *Nityaga kala*:- it depends on *Ritu satmaya*. For eg:- the food which is *Satmaya* in the particular *Ritu* for individual is beneficial for that person.
- ii) *Avasthik kala*:- it depends upon the unhealthy condition of the person. For e.g:- Milk is harmful in the acute fever but is beneficial in the chronic fever.

**7. Upayoga Samstha<sup>[9]</sup> (Law of utilization of food for the individual)**

One should take diet after proper digestion of the previous food otherwise when it is taken without proper digestion of the previous diet; it becomes harmful to the

health. Because it is one of the major cause of imbalance of *Doshas*. This is the law of utilization for the food.

These are the directions necessary for appropriate food digestion.

#### Do's

- ◆ Food should be *ushna, hridaya*.
- ◆ The food should be eaten after the last meal has been digested.
- ◆ Should include all the *Rasas* namely - *Madhura, Amla, Lavana, Katu, Tikta, Kashaya* in daily diet.
- ◆ Should eat food which is nourishing and suitable to particular temperament.
- ◆ Eating with full concentration and one should bring only good thought in mind that this food is good for me.
- ◆ Place for eating should be neat, clean and pleasant.

#### Dont's

- ◆ Food articles antagonistic in potency or contrary to each other in action.
- ◆ Too fast or too slow food eating.
- ◆ Laughing, talking, speaking or using mobile while eating.
- ◆ Taking food during nervous, angry, anxious state of mind
- ◆ Long term & too much use of any of six *Rasas*.

#### 8. *Upayokta*<sup>[10]</sup>

It means who consumes the food. Sometimes due to continuous utilization of a particular food it becomes *Satmya* to the individual and is not harmful at any cost, but is beneficial for the life. For eg: - due to continuous utilization of curd it becomes *Satmya* to the individual and is not harmful at all rather beneficial for the life.

#### Benefits of *Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan*

A healthy and balanced diet according to the above mentioned special directions can protect the human body against certain type of disease, in particular non communicable disease such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases some type of cancer and skeletal disorder and All the eight types of special direction food are very essential for good and happy life. The person and physician having knowledge of special direction of food are beneficial for healthy and long life. This knowledge is very helpful for treat the any type's diseased patient and change all type of physically, mental as well as social status of the diseased patient.

#### DISCUSSION

*Ahara* is one of the three supporting factors of life i.e., *Ahara, Nidra* and *Brahmcharya*, which plays a key role in the promotion of health & prevention of diseases. Physical, Mental, Social, Intellectual, Emotional health could be balanced by congenial diet. *Ahara* being a part of daily routine, if one concentrates a little more on dietetic rules along with quality, quantity and mode of

intake then overall effect on health can be enhanced. Nowadays, we are neglecting the digestive capacity, nutritional value of food products, time sense of food intake and are more interested in eating tasty, ready to eat food materials. All these factors lead to manifestation of different metabolic diseases. It is also observed that many diseases are arising merely due to these faulty dietary habits. In this context, concept of *Ashta Ahara vidhi vishesh ayatane* is most ideal in today's lifestyle.

Nowadays life has become superfast. So, people are adopting convenient ways of diet which is causing various health problems. The codes & conducts related to *Ahara* have been forgotten. Therefore, there is a need to enlighten this concept of *Ahar Vidhi Vishesh ayatane* as explained in ancient Ayurveda classics. Ayurveda deals with both *Swasthyarakshana* and *Vyadhiparimoksha*. The adaptation of the concept of *Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatanas* will be helpful in fulfillment of both these *Prayojanas*.

#### CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above mentioned description and discussion we have come to the conclusion that everybody should follow the rules and regulation whenever he takes any *Ahara Dravya* in his daily routine. Some person having *Vataja prakriti, Pittaja prakriti, and Kaphaja prakriti*; some people are generally prone to the disease of *Vataja, pittaja, Kaphaja Doshas*. Because the *Prakriti* plays an important role in the formation of the disease of it the diet is taken as per the guideline everybody may protect his health to control the imbalance of *Dosha* in the body and will be able to maintain his health.

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