

## A REVIEW ON: IMPLIMENTATION OF YOGIC DIET IN TODAY'S ERA

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### ABSTRACT

We don't eat to be healthy, we don't eat to live better, we just eat for taste. So, don't make your body a graveyard or a junkyard. Keeping this in mind *Acharya Charaka* has stated three sub pillars of the body- *Aahara*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*. Here *Aahara* is stated first which shows it's importance to sustain and maintain the life. *Ayurveda* has described the rules and process to take *Aahara* viz are *Ashta Aahara Vidhi Visheshayatana* and *Aahara Vidhividhana* respectively. Normally Yogic diet includes *Satvica Aahara*. *Satvica Aahara* referred as a sentient diet. It is based according to both *Ayurveda* and *Yoga*. The pure, natural, clean etc are considered under *Satvica Aahara*. We

should not only inculcate food under *Satvica Aahara* but also consider *Ahimsa*, *Alobha*, etc under this term. Food and behaviour both should include in Yogic diet. Food is responsible to maintain our physical health and also for our good and bad thoughts. Food differs according to person to person. One should consider Yogic diet along with *Prakriti* of the person and food item (i.e. *Gunas* of that *Aahara*). For this, one should know about *Ashta Aahara Vidhi Visheshayatana* and its importance. This paper defines what is *Satvica Aahara*, their qualities, their effects on body and mind. It also defines the *Rajsica* and *Tamsica Aahara*, their qualities and effects. it is important for a person to know about all the three diet variations so as to distinguish between good and bad diet. Hence this is a sincere attempt to prove the importance of Yogic diet in one's life through this paper.

**KEYWORDS:** *Ashta Aahara Vidhi Visheshayatana, Rajsica Aahara, Satvica Aahara, Tamsica Aahara, Yogic diet.*

## INTRODUCTION

Yogic literature considers food as *Brahma*. The classical and ancient literature on Yoga provides golden and important rules for mankind like *Yuktahara- Vihara* etc. It is said that human being is the best creation on the earth because it has ability to choose. *Aahara* is important for maintenance of physical health also important part of curative aspect for the body. *Aahara* is responsible for maintenance of our good and bad thoughts. The diet which is taken by the Yogis is called as Yogic diet & also known as lacto-vegetarian diet.

According to Yogic literature, diet is divided into 3 main categories using 3 *Gunas* (attributes) vitz is *Satvica, Rajsica* and *Tamsica Aahara*. *Satvica* diet is also known as Yogic diet. Now a day everyone knows about Yoga and it's benefits in day today's life. But only few people follow the rules of Yoga. All human being losing their values of life and every person is trying hard to follow the unnatural and unhealthy modern life style blindly. So, unknowingly they are acquiring dreadful habits. Yoga shows us the pathway for healthy life and healthy living. This is an attempt to prove the importance of Yogic diet in one's life through this article.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

Following traditional literature have been reviewed critically and compared with the dietary guidelines:

1. *Bhagavdgita*
2. *Hathayoga pradipika*
3. *Gheranda Samhita*
4. *Charaka Samhita*
5. *Ashtanga Hridaya*

## YOGA

Yoga is ancient and traditional method for meditation. Yoga is effective in controlling mind and the body activities. The word Yoga derived from "YUJ" *Dhatu* which means to join or to unite. Yoga is controller of the activities of the mind. The ultimate goals of Yoga are physical and mental health, social and spiritual health and self-realization. This goal is achieved by full yogic diet, positive lifestyle and pure thoughts.

**PHYSIOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF YOGA**

1. Stable autonomic nervous system
2. Decreases pulse rate and respiratory rate
3. Normalizes Blood pressure
4. Normalizes gastrointestinal and endocrine functions
5. Improves excretory functions
6. Increases strength and energy level
7. Immunity increases

**PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF YOGA**

1. Increases somatic awareness
2. Increases self-acceptance and self- actualization
3. Increases social adjustment
4. Decreases depression and anxiety

**BIOCHEMICAL BENEFITS OF YOGA**

1. Normalizes Glucose and sodium level
2. Normalizes lipid profile
3. Increases haemoglobin
4. Increases Oxytocin and prolactin level
5. Increases oxygen level in brain

**CONCEPT OF AAHARA**

The element or *Dravya* that taken for nourishment of our body is known as *Aahara*. *Ayurveda* gives special importance to *Aahara* as measures for better health living and wellness. *Acharya Vagbhata* has stated 3 sub pillars of the body- *Aahara*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*.<sup>[1]</sup> The first preference of the *Aahara* indicates it's importance in one's life.

Yogic literature believes that diet is a fundamental part of Yoga. The Western dietician have mainly focused on physical health. Effect of food on mind has not more importance. They are more concern with only with nutritive values of food. They analyse food items on the basis of protein, fat, carbohydrate and vitamins etc.

## YOGIC DIET

Yogic literature describes that every object is made up of from 3 *Gunas* i.e. *Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. These *Gunas* are different from each other in their nature. *Satva* is an indicator of purity, bliss and creativity. *Rajas* is the indicator of impatience, stimulation and pain. *Tamas* is said to be an indicator of darkness, ignorance and immobility. The quality or property of an object is determined by the dominance of a particular *Gunas*. Thus, the objects are *Satvica*, *Rajsica* or *Tamsica*. Similarly, food items and the consumers are also divided as *Satvica*, *Rajsica* and *Tamsica*. In Shrimad Bhagvad Gita, Lord Shri Krishna describes the classification of diet as follow.

## SATVICA DIET

*Satva* is known as quality of purity & goodness. The person who has control on his own senses is known as *Satvica*.<sup>[12]</sup>

आयुः सत्वबलारोग्यं सुखप्रितिविवर्धनाः ।

रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्याहारा सात्विकप्रियाः ॥ (भ.गि.१७/८)

The food which increases life, vigour, energy, health, happiness & cheerfulness, which is savoury, unctuous, substantial & agreeable are liked by *Satvica* persons.<sup>[2]</sup> *Satvica* food is also considered as positive food. These foods are live, pure, clean & wholesome. *Satvica* food mainly contains roughage, cellulose, vitamins, water and high quantity of minerals. These foods are fresh, lubricating, non-stimulating and non-constipating. This food provides more energy to the body. This diet is essential for moral and intellectual discipline.

## ADVANTAGES OF SATVICA DIET

1. This diet is refreshing, soothing and rejuvenating. So good for healthy life.
2. Easy for digestion so helps in normal excretion.
3. This food has cleansing property and help in detoxification of the body.

## RAJSICA DIET

*Rajas* is indicator of stimulation, pain and impatience.<sup>[12]</sup>

कट्वम्ल लवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरुक्ष विदाहिनः ।

आहाराराजसस्येष्टा दुःखशोकभयप्रदा ॥ (भ.गि.१७/९)

The person which has pleasure in enjoyment and passion known as Rajsica.<sup>[12]</sup> The food which is liked by these persons is bitter, sour, salty, extreme hot, dry and burning property.<sup>[3]</sup> This diet produces pain, grief and fear. These foods are poor in vitamins, minerals and other essential nutrients. They are deficient in roughage, fibres and cellulose. These are fermented and stale food. This diet is considered as negative to mind and body.

#### **DISADVANTAGES OF RAJSICA DIET**

1. Due to bitter, pungent, burning property and acidic in nature, they lead to diseases of *Pitta Dosha* like *Amlapitta* (hyperacidity), ulcers, heart burn etc.
2. It causes indigestion, constipation and problems related to it.
3. This diet causes lifestyle disorders like obesity, diabetes, arthritis insomnia.
4. It also causes mental disorders like anxiety, depression and many behavioural diseases.

#### **TAMSICA DIET**

*Tamas* is indicator of darkness, ignorance and immobility.<sup>[12]</sup>

यातयामं गतरसं पूति पर्युषितं च यत् ।

उच्छिष्टमपि चामेध्यं भोजनं तामसप्रियं ॥ (भ.गि.१७/१०)

The person which has greed, anger, lust known as *Tamsica* person.<sup>[12]</sup> These person likes stale, tasteless, twice cooked, stinking food, impure food.<sup>[4]</sup> These foods are poor in roughage, cellulose, water, minerals and vitamins. These are processed foods. They are starchy, spicy, refined, fried and fatty food. They are stimulating in nature and acidic in nature. They activate mucus formation in the body.

#### **DISADVANTAGES OF TAMSICA DIET**

1. Due to high fat and proteins, they arouse indiscipline, selfishness, desire, uncontrolled behaviour and mood swings.
2. They cause hyperacidity due to spicy, irritating and acidic in nature.
3. They cause indigestion and constipation.
4. These foods retain in the body for longer time.

Some examples of *Satvica*, *Rajsica* and *Tamsica* diet are given below:

**Table No. 1**

<b>SATVICA</b>		<b>RAJSICA</b>	<b>TAMSICA</b>
Cow's milk, Cream, cheese Sweet fruits, Butter, Ghee, curd Grapes, apples, Bananas, Papaya, Mangoes, Pears, Oranges, figs, Pineapples, Potatoes, Spinach, Cabbages, Tomatoes, Vegetables.	Cucumber, Pumpkin, Cauliflower, Lady's finger, Peaches, Raisins, Almonds, Red rice, Unpolished rice, Wheat, Barley, Dried peas, Oat, Green gram, Dates, Green pulse, Cereals, Groundnut, Lemon, Dried ginger, Honey.	Meat, eggs, fish, Chillies, Salt, Pickles, Chutney, Mustard, Tamarind, Sour and hot things, Coffee, Tea, Carrots, Spices, Cocoa, Sauce, Alcohol, Jam, Jelly, Soups, Preserved and Fermented foods, Milk and Bakery products, Fast food, Junk food,	Pork, beef, Wine, Tobacco, Garlic, Onions, Stale things, Rotten things, Unclean things, Twice cooked food items, All liquors, All drugs, Soybean, White flour, Ice- creams, Heavy foodstuffs, Chocolate, Intoxicants, Iron & Zinc rich food.

**AAHARA VIDHI VISHESHAYATANA**

It explains the laws of do's and don'ts regarding to the diet and drinks. These factors determine the wholesome and unwholesome effects of the diet and methods of *Aahara sevana*. These are important and special factors in dietetics. These factors must be remembered before taking the food. *Acharya Charaka* has defined it in a very scientific and systemic manner.<sup>[5]</sup> It gives the basic dietary guidelines about choosing the appropriate food item, cooking methods, combination of food items, quality and quantity of the food.

In today's era, there is bad eating habits, wrong cooking methods, irregular timing, imbalances diet. Due to this we are suffering from various lifestyle diseases of unknown etiopathogenetic. These diseases can be avoided by using regimens described in *Ayurvedic Samhitas*

1. *Prakriti* – Nature of the food item
2. *Karana* – Processing of the food item
3. *Samyoga* – Combination of different food
4. *Rashi* – Quantity of the food which is taken
5. *Desha* – Habitat of the food item
6. *Kala* – Time period like age, season or condition
7. *Upayoga Samstha* – Dietetic rules
8. *Upayokta* – Various habits and state of an individual

### **MITAHARA**

It is also called as *Yukti-Aahara*. It is an appropriate or measured diet. It's qualities are explained in *Ghearand Samhita* and *Hathayoga Pradipika*.

1. According to *Hathyoga Pradipika*, eating unctuous, sweet food, leaving one quarter of stomach empty, this is called as *Mitahara*. This food should be offered to God Shiva i.e. almighty (one should not eat for own satisfaction).<sup>[6]</sup>
2. According to *Gheranda Samhita*, the food which is pure, sweet, unctuous and which fills the half of the stomach and which is taken to please the God in oneself.<sup>[7]</sup>

Above mentioned definitions of *Mitahara* recommend a complete code regarding to the food.

### **DO'S WITH REGARDS TO FOOD**

Everyone must understand that every individual is differ from one another and his requirements are also different. Therefore, it is necessary that every person should know his or her mental and physical requirements. The *Gheranda Samhita* and *Hathyoga pradipika* gives us some guidelines about this.

1. Easy digestible, agreeable, unctuous, cow's milk products, nutritious, sweet and which nourishes the *Dhatus* i.e. elementary substances, suitable to that own's *prakriti*.<sup>[8,9]</sup>
2. One should not eat within one *Yama* (three hours) after one full meal. This time period is depending upon the energy requirements of that individual.

### **DON'TS WITH REGARDS TO FOOD**

Hard, polluted, putrid, heat producing, stale, extreme cold or hot diet should be avoided.<sup>[10]</sup>

### **DISCUSSION**

Yogic diet has great influence not only over our physical well-being but also over our thoughts. It can help you to maintain the same energized, light feeling that is achieved through *Yoga*. Today, peoples are multitasking such as- talking over mobiles/ working/ reading etc while eating. This multitasking can cause the slow, constant releasing of stress hormones in the body. These hormones stimulate sympathetic nervous system. As a result, peoples are more prone to lifestyle disorders like- diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases, hypertension. *Satvica* diet is considered as Yogic diet. Junk food is rich in sugar, salt and fat. This food is habit forming, excites the mind and causes multiple diseases. *Satvica* diet forms an ideal diet, keeping the body nourished. *Rajsica* & *Tamsica* diet can upset our physical or

emotional balance. A true Yogic diet is seems too strict to follow. But with effort we can create a new life balance through Yogic diet. *Pathyapathya* (do's and don'ts regarding to diet and lifestyle) is very important component of Ayurvedic prescription. Sometimes, only dietary management in itself becomes a complete treatment. Ayurvedic dietetics considers food is the mean of balancing the *Dosha*. The modern medical nutrition considers only quantity and nutritional content of the food. Yogic literature evaluates the quality of the diet on the basis of Ayurvedic consideration and not on Western parameters.

## CONCLUSION

Yogic diet has tremendous potential for healthy life and living but one has to walk through it. Food has been classified on the basis of *Trigunas* and identified as *Satvica*, *Rajsica* and *Tamsica*. Out of these *Satvica* food has been recommended whereas *Rajasica* and *Tamsica* are prohibited. Yogic diet not only nourishes the gross body but also subtle the body. Therefore *Yuktiahara – Vihara*, *Mitahara* have been recommended. *Mitahara* should be cultivated as regular habit.

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