

IMPORTANCE OF ASTA AHARA VIDHI VISHESHA AYATAN FOR LONGEVITY

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ABSTRACT

Health as well as diseases is dependent on various factors. As *Acharya charak* is said that *Ahara, Nidra* and *Brahmacarya* are *Triupstambha* (three sub pillars), which support the body itself. Here *Ahara* has been placed first, which shows that it is most important to maintain the life. Every human wants to have a blanced diet. *Ahara* supplies bio-energy to body. This bio-energy is supplied by proper and adequate nutrition in the form of its essential constituent's viz. Proteins, Carbohydrates, Fats, Minerals, Vitamins and Water. Food plays a important role in development, sustenance, reproduction and termination of life. Through centuries, *Ahara* is responsible factor for human beings, in

health and diseased state. *Ahara* is not only needed for the continuity of life, but also for *Bala, Varna, Upacaya* and longevity etc. In other medical sciences, food is considered important, but not the manner of eating. *Ahara* is a basic need for survival of life, for intake of *Ahara Ayurved* has enlisted some special conditions which need to be followed to obtain complete benefits of the food. They are called as *Ahara Vidhi Vishesha Ayatan*. Sanskrit use the term *Dirgha Ayau* for longevity. According to *Ayurveda* longevity, means a complete balance in body, mind and soul, and then living a long life.

KEYWORDS: *Ahara-Vidhi Vishesha Ayatan, Hita-ahar, Ahita-ahar, longevity.*

INTRODUCTION

According to *Ayurveda* balance diet as one of the essential part of healthy life. It is likely that no other science has described the unique effect of diet as thoroughly, as *Ayurveda* described

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thousand years ago. *Ayurveda* has given detail discipline and process to take the *Ahara* for an individual and in general both. This discipline is called as *Ahara Vidhi*, where all the rules about the diet and the drinks are given. Basically *Ayurveda* is having an introducing concept that the health and the disease both are the product of *Ahara*, only the difference is *Hita Ahara* increase the health and *Ahita Ahara* decrease the health. *Aacharya Charaka* has given a single lined sutra regarding the *Vidhi* of diet, which lead to a healthy life. The person who wants to be free from disease should eat *Hitakar Ahara* in proper amount on proper time.^[1]

The whole diet is a main cause for the growth and development of the body. Our ancient *Ayurvedic* texts decribed all aspects of *Ahara* and *Asta-Ahara Vidhi Vishesha Ayatan* (Eight aspects of Dietetics). *Ahara Vidhi Vishesha Ayatan* means the factors responsible for healthy and unhealthy effect of the *Ahara* and methods of *Ahara sevana* (Special rule for diet intake.) These eight factors should be considered before taking food^[2] : 1. *Prakriti*, 2. *Karana*, 3. *Samyoga*, 4. *Rashi*, 5. *Desha*, 6. *Kala*, 7. *Upyoga- sansatha*, 8. *Upyokta*.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1. To increase the heath and longevity of humans.
2. Humans free from diseases so that they live a long life.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials related to *Ahara* and *Ahara Vidhi Visheshaytan*. The main *ayurvedic* text used in this study are *Charak Samhita*, *Susruta Samhita*, *Astanga Sangraha*, *Astanga Hridaya*, *Bhavprakash*, *Yogratnakar*, *Rog Vigyan* and current articles.

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, Emotional health increased by balance 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 different metabolic diseases. It is also observed that many diseases are arising due to wrong dietary habits. In this concept of *Ashta Ahara vidhi vishesh ayatane* is most ideal in today's lifestyle. It gives a fair idea about What? When? Why? How? And Which food material? should be consumed.

- 1. Prakriti (Natural Qualities)^[3]:** Each individual has a fundamental *prakriti* determined at the birth and this signify his or her basic physical, physiological and psychological behavior. It also equivalently, every food item has its own *prakriti*. *Prakriti* is a *Swabhava*, It means natural quality of food i.e. like *Guru*, *Laghu*. These are the innate properties of substances. On the basis of nature^[4] Green Gram, deer meat are *Laghu*, while Black Gram, Meat of Pig, Buffalos are *Guru*. Nowadays, many hybrid foods are in use e.g. Wheat, Rice, Sugarcane, Watermelon, Mango, Maize etc but in hybrid food articles all the natural qualities are not present. So *Prakriti* is a factor which gives the complete knowledge about foods, that's why it has been explained first among the eight factors.
- 2. Karana (Processing of Substances):** *Karana* is also known as *Sanskara*. *Karan* is the making of the *dravya* for the *sanskara* that are added to the properties of those substances. This alteration is brought about by dilution, application of heat (vaporization, distillation and sublimation), clarification, emulsification, storing, maturing, flavoring, impregnation, preservation. As by processing, *Vrihi* is a difficult in digestion, becomes light when transformed in to *Laja* after frying, on the other hand, flour of roasted grains becomes heavy when processed in to cooked bolus.^[5]
- 3. Samyoga (Combination):** *Samyoga* means combination of two or more substances. This chemical combination exhibits special properties that are not seen in case of individual substances, For example -the combination of Honey and Ghee, Honey and Ghee taken alone is beneficial to the body but combined together, they become toxic. Similarly, Honey and Ghee in equal quantity, Honey and rain water in equal quantities, honey and Lotus seed are antagonistic.^[6] So we can say that though *Samyoga* is very useful but it may be harmful too. A few examples of its usefulness are Guda and Curd in combination are more useful as it is having *Snehana*, *Tarpana*, *Hridya* and *Vataghna* effects. Milk with Ghee used regularly is the best *Rasayana*^[7]
- 4. Rasi (Quantity):** The concept of *Rashi* as explained above states that *Ahara* in proper *matra* gets digested comfortably and promotes the life span. *Rasi* consists of *Sarvagrho* and *Parigrha*. Quantity of food taken in its entirety is *Sarvagrho* and the Quantity of each of its ingredients is *Parigrha*. A person should have his diet in proper amount; it means that a person should have diet according to his digestive power (Agni).^[8] *Ahara* should be

consumed in proper amount since less food causes malnutrition while excess food leads indigestion and heaviness.

5. **Desa (Habitat):** it is a geographic region. Food substances differs in quality due to difference in the soil and climate. In *ayurveda* Desha is considered as *Bhumi Desha* and *Deha Desha*. *Ahara* should be taken according to *desh*. *Deshapariksha* is one of the vital aspect in understanding patient regarding dietary habits of patients probability of diseases related to the diet and accordingly treatment and *Pathyapathya* aspect.
6. **Kala (Time):** Time is used in two senses, time in the general sense and time in the sense of stage. The sence of stage is used in relation to disease (*Avasthika Kala*) and the general sense is used in relation to seasonal (*Nitayaga Kala*), in form of day and night. In *Swastha-avastha*, Kala is considered as *Nitayaga*. In this condition *Ahara* should be taken according to *Dincharya* and *Ritucharya*, which help the body function to acclimatize with the external environment. In *Rugnavastha*, *Avasthika Kala* is considered by *Vyadhi Avastha*. E.g. in *Naveen Jwara*, *Langhana* should be done for 7 days, but if *Jwara* is *Jeerna Ghritapana* is indicated.
7. **Upyoga Samstha (Dietetic Rules)^[9]:** It simply means the dietetic rules. It contains everything related to Diet, how to eat, when to eat, what to eat.
The *Ahara* should be *Ushna*(warm), tasty, qualitative, easily digestible.
The food should be *Snigdha*.
The food should be taken in suitable quantity according to the *Prakriti* and *Agni* of a person.
8. **Upyokta (The User)^[10]:** The user is he who makes use of food, habituation depends on him. Creating healthy by habitual intake of things comes under *Upyokta* and known as *Satmya* which differs person to person. As the *Prkriti* of *Ahara Dravyas* is considerable factors, the *Prakriti* of *Upyokta* is also considered for healthy diet.

CONCLUSION

Today's life has become superfast. So, people are eating stale food which is causing various health problem and diseases. *Ahara* is one of the vital aspects of life and provides several health benefits and gives maximum nutritious value especially when consumed in proper manner, while avoidance of concept of *Ahara Vidhi Vishesha Ayatan* not only devoid

nutritious value of food but also causes many health ailments including diarrhea, indigestion, hyperacidity, and anorexia. The rules related to *Ahara* have been forgotten. Therefore, there is a need to advice this concept of *Ahar Vidhi Vishesh Ayatane* as explained in ancient *Ayurveda* classics. *Ayurveda* deals with both *Swasthyarakshana* and *Vyadhiparimoksha*. The use of this concept of *Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatanas* will be helpful in achieve of both these *Prayojanas*.

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