

**ROLE OF RITUCHARYA IN LIFESTYLE DISORDER: A REVIEW****\*<sup>1</sup>Dr. Navedita Kumari, <sup>2</sup>Dr. Anupam Pathak and <sup>3</sup>Dr. Kiran Sharma**<sup>1</sup>PG Scholar Dept. of Swasthviritta & Yoga,<sup>2</sup>Professor & H.O.D. Dept. of Swasthviritta & Yoga,<sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor Dept. of Swasthviritta & Yoga,

Sriganganagar College of Ayurvedic Science &amp; Hospital, Tantia University, Sriganganagar - 335001, India.

Article Received on  
23 Feb. 2021,Revised on 16 March 2021,  
Accepted on 04 April 2021

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20215-20275

**\*Corresponding Author****Dr. Navedita Kumari**PG Scholar Dept. of  
Swasthviritta & Yoga  
Sriganganagar College of  
Ayurvedic Science &  
Hospital, Tantia University,  
Sriganganagar - 335001,  
India.**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda proclaims that the environment and man constantly interact with each other and are influenced by their mutual relationship. As long as this interaction remain balanced, the main retains the state of health. Entire functioning of body is regulated by the doshas, which itself are affected by external environment (diurnal and seasonal), food habits and habitats, physical and mental conditions etc. *Ritu*, the season, classified by different features express different effects on the body as well as the regimen (*Charya*), regarding diet and behavior to acclimatize seasonal enforcement easily without altering body homeostasis. This is very important aspect of preventive medicine as mentioned in *ayurvedic* texts.<sup>[1]</sup> Lifestyle disorders are very common in the present era, basically originating from lack of following seasonal regimens due to lack of concentration in seasonal characteristics. A

firm scientific analysis is the base which holds true even on date. In the review article, various regimens in diet and lifestyle as mentioned in the classics of Ayurveda and their importance on lifestyle disorders has been discussed.

**KEYWORDS:** *Ritucharya*, lifestyle disorders, seasonal regimens.**INTRODUCTION**

According to Ayurveda, entire functioning of human body is regulated by the *dosha*, which itself are affected by external environment. Ayurveda, the age old science of life has always emphasized to maintain the health and prevent the disease by following proper diet and

lifestyle regimens rather than treatment and care of disease. The basic principle followed in the *ayurvedic* system of medicine is *swasthyashya swasthya rakshanam*,<sup>[2]</sup> which means to maintain the health of the healthy rather than *aturasya vikara prashamanam*,<sup>[3]</sup> means to care the disease of diseased. For this various health care measures are mentioned in the Ayurveda, *ritucharya* (seasonal regimens) is an important one of them to balance the rhythmic seasonal variations of *dosha, bala, agni and rasa*. Education of *ritucharya* offers individuals and groups opportunities to increase their knowledge, awareness, skill and support to adopt regular practices of seasonal regimens. *Ritucharya* is prominently discussed in the first few chapters in most of the *samhitas* of Ayurveda. Prevention of disease to maintain health is being the first and foremost aim of holistic science of Ayurveda. The *ritucharya* mentioned in the classic of Ayurveda has been discussed and emphasis has been given on the likely impact on lifestyle disorders. Each *ritu* (season) consists of two months. In this way, year is divided of *ritucharya* into six seasons, out of them *magha-phalguna* make *shishira* (late winter), *Chaitra-vaishakha* make *vasanta* (spring), *jyestha-ashadha* make *greeshma* (summer), *shravan-bhadrapada* make *varsha* (rainy season), *ashwin-kartika* make *sharad* and *margshirsha-pausha* make *hemanta* (early winter).<sup>[4]</sup>

**Classification of seasons:** The year according to Ayurveda is divided into periods- *Ayana* (solstice) depending on direction of movement of sun that is *uttarayana* (northern solstice) and *Dakshinayana* (southern solstice).<sup>[5]</sup> Each is formed of three *ritu* (season). It is the form in which the nature expresses itself in a sequence in particular and specific in present form in short, the seasons. A year consists of six seasons, namely, *shishira* (winter), *vasanta* (spring) and *greeshma* (summer) in *uttarayana* and *varsha* (monsoon), *sharda* (autumn) and *hemanta* (late autumn) in *dakshinayana*.

**Uttarayana and its effect:** *Uttarayana* indicates the ascent of the sun or northward movement of the sun. In this period, the sun and wind are powerful. The sun takes away the strength of the people and the cooling quality of earth. It is also called *adana kala*. According to modern science this can be compared with the gradual movement of earth around the sun to the position, in which rays of the sun falls perpendicularly at the 30-degree meridian of the north pole on June 21<sup>st</sup> every year called as summer solstice.

**Dakshinayana and its effect:** *Dakshinayana* indicates the descent of the sun or movement of the sun in south direction. In this period, the wind is not very dry, the moon is more powerful than sun. The earth becomes cool due to the clouds, rains and cold winds. According to

modern science, this can be compared with the gradual movement of the earth around the sun to the position in which the rays of the sun fall over 30-degree meridian of the south pole perpendicularly on Dec 21<sup>st</sup> every year, is called as winter solstice.

### **Regimen of different season**

#### **Shishira (winter)<sup>[6,7]</sup>**

##### **General conditions**

Mid –Jan to mid-March approximately is considered as *shishira ritu* (winter). During the season, the environment remains cold, along with cold winds. The predominant rasa and *mahabhuta* during the season are tikta and akasha, respectively. The strength of the person becomes less, deposition of the kapha dosha occurs and *agni* remains in a higher state.

**Diet regimen:** Foods having *amla* (sour) as predominant taste are preferred. Cereals and pulses, wheat, gramflour products, new rice, corn and other are advised. Ginger, garlic, *haritaki* (fruits of Terminalia chebula), pippali (fruits of piper longum), sugarcane products and milk products are to be included in the diet.

Foods having katu (pungent), tikta (bitter), Kashaya (astringent) predominant rasa to be avoided. Laghu (light) and shita (cold) foods are advised to be prohibited.

**Lifestyle:** Massage with oil/power/paste, bathing with lukewarm water, exposure to sunlight wearing warm clothes is mentioned to follow. *Vata* aggravating lifestyle like exposure to cold wind, excessive walking, sleep at late night are to be avoided.

#### **Vasanta (spring)<sup>[8,9]</sup>**

##### **General conditions**

Approximate time is from mid- March to mid- May. This season is considered as season of flowing and origin of new leaves. Predominant rasa and *mahabhuta* during the season are Kashaya (astringent), *prithvi* and *vayu*, respectively. Strength of the person remains in medium degree, vitiation of kapha dosha occurs and *agni* remains in manda state.

**Diet regimen:** One should take easy digestible foods. Among cereals, old barley, wheat, rice and others are preferred. Among pulses, lentil and others can be taken. Food items tasting tikta (bitter), katu (pungent) and Kashaya (astringent) are to be taken.

Foods which are hard to digest are to be avoided. Those which are *sheeta* (cold), *snigdha* (viscous), *guru* (heavy), *amla* (sour), *madhura* (sweet) are not preferred. Cold drinks, curd and so on are also to be prohibited.

**Lifestyle:** One should use warm water for bathing purpose, may do exercise during Vasant Ritu. Udvartana (massage) with powder of *Chandana* (*Santalum album*), *Kesara* (*Crocus sativus*), *Agaru*, and others, Kavala (gargle), *Dhooma* (smoking), *Anjana* (collyrium), and evacuative measures, such as *Vamana* and *Nasya* are advised. Day-sleep is strictly contraindicated during this season.

### **Grishma (summer)**<sup>[10,11]</sup>

#### **General condition**

Mid-May to mid-July (approximately) is considered as *Grishma* (summer) season. Environment is prevalent with intense heat and unhealthy wind. The river-bodies dried and the plants appear lifeless. The predominant Rasa is *Katu* (pungent) and *Mahabhuta* are *Agni* and *Vayu*. The strength of the person become less, deposition of *Vata* Dosha occurs, but the vitiated *Kapha* Dosha is pacified during this season. *Agni* of the person will remain in mild state.

**Diet regimen:** Foods which are light to digest—those having *Madhura* (sweet), *Snigdha* (unctuous), *Sheeta* (cold), and *Drava* (liquid) *Guna*, such as rice, lentil, etc, are to be taken. Drinking plenty of water and other liquids, such as cold water, buttermilk, fruit juices, meat soups, mango juice, churned curd with pepper, is to be practiced. At bedtime milk with sugar candy is to be taken. *Lavana* and food with *Katu* (pungent) and *Amla* (sour) taste and *Ushna* (warm) foods are to be avoided.

**Lifestyle:** Staying in cool places, applying sandal wood and other aromatic pastes over the body, adorning with flowers, wearing light dresses and sleeping at day time are helpful. During night one can enjoy the cooled moonrays with breeze. Excessive exercise or hardwork is to be avoided; too much sexual indulgence and alcoholic preparations are prohibited

### **Varsha (monsoon)**<sup>[12,13]</sup>

#### **General condition**

Mid-July to mid-September (approximately) is considered as *Varsha Ritu*. During this season the sky is covered by clouds and rains occur without thunderstorm. The ponds, rivers, etc.,

are filled with water. The predominant Rasa and Mahabhuta during this season are Amla (sour), and Prithvi and Agni, respectively. The strength of the person again becomes less, vitiation of Vata Dosha and deposition of Pitta Dosha, Agni also gets vitiated.

**Diet regimen:** Foods having *Amla* (sour) and *Lavana* (salty) taste and of *Sneha* (unctuous) qualities are to be taken. Among cereals, old barley, rice, wheat, etc., are advised. Besides meat soup, *Yusha* (soup), etc. are to be included in the diet. It is mentioned that one should take medicated water or boiled water. Intake of river water, churned preparations having more water, excessive liquid and wine are to be avoided. The foods, which are heavy and hard to digest, like meat, etc., are prohibited. Honey is the major ingredient to food. One should have to intake honey with water in the rainy season.

**Lifestyle:** Use of boiled water for bath and rubbing the body with oil properly after bath is advised. Medicated *Basti* (enema) is prescribed as an evacuative measure to expel vitiated *Doshas*. Getting wet in rain, day-sleep, exercise, hard work, sexual indulgence, wind, staying at river-bank, etc., are to be prohibited.

### **Sharad (autumn)**<sup>[14,15]</sup>

#### **General condition**

The period between mid-September to mid-November is *Sharad Ritu* (autumn). During this time the Sun becomes bright, the sky remains clear and sometimes with white cloud, and the earth is covered with wet mud. The predominant Rasa is *Lavana* (salty) and predominant Mahabhutas are *Apa* and *Agni*. The strength of the person remains medium, pacification of vitiated Vata Dosha and vitiation of Pitta Dosha occur, and activity of *Agni* increases during this season.

**Diet regimen:** Foods are having *Madhura* (sweet) and *Tikta* (bitter) taste, and of *Laghu* (light to digest) and cold properties are advised. Foods having the properties to pacify vitiated Pitta are advised. Wheat, green gram, sugar candy, honey, *Patola* (*Trichosanthes dioica*), flesh of animals of dry land (*Jangala Mamsa*) are to be included in the diet. Hot, bitter, sweet, and astringent foods are to be avoided. The food items, such as fat, oils, meat of aquatic animals, curds, etc., are also to be not included in the diet during this season.

**Lifestyle:** Habit of eating food, only when there is a feeling of hunger is recommended. One should take water purified by the rays of sun in day time and rays of moon at night time for

drinking, bathing, etc. It is advised to wear flower garlands, and to apply paste of Chandana (*Santalum album*) on the body. It is said that moon rays in the first 3 h of night is conducive for health. Medical procedures, such as *Virechana* (purging), *Rakta-Mokshana* (bloodletting), etc, should be done during this season. Day-sleep, excessive eating, excessive exposure to sunlight, etc., are to be avoided.

### **Hemanta (late autumn)<sup>[16,17]</sup>**

#### **General condition**

Mid-November to mid-January is considered as *Hemanta* (late autumn) *Ritu*. Blow of cold winds starts and chillness is felt. Predominant Rasa during this season is Madhura and the predominant Mahabhutas are Prithivi and Apa. The strength of a person remains on highest grade and vitiated Pitta Dosha gets pacified. Activity of Agni is increased.

**Diet regimen:** One should use unctuous, sweet, sour, and salty foods. Among cereals and pulses, new rice, flour preparations, green gram, Masha, etc., are mentioned to be used. Various meats, fats, milk and milk products, sugarcane products, Shidhu (fermented preparations), Tila (sesame), and so on, are also to be included in the diet. Vata aggravating foods, such as Laghu (light), cold, and dry foods are to be avoided. Intake of cold drinks is also contraindicated.

**Lifestyle:** Exercise, body and head massage, use of warm water, *Atapa-sevana* (sunbath), application of Agarū on body, heavy clothing, sexual indulgence with one partner, residing in warm places is recommended. Exposure to strong and cold wind, habit of day sleep, etc., are mentioned to be avoided.

### **CONCLUSION**

Ayurveda proclaims that there are similarities between human beings and the universe, and specify that the endogenous and exogenous imbalances are responsible for causation of diseases. To maintain the health and equilibrium of Dosha with seasonal variation, and for prevention of diseases, the important concept of Ritucharya has been described.

### **REFERENCES**

1. Charaka Samhita- Sutra Sthana 6/12-13, by Kashinath shastri Chaukhambha; Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi.

2. Charaka Samhita- Sutra Sthana 30/26, by Kashinath shastri Chaukhambha; Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi.
3. Charaka Samhita- Sutra Sthana 30/26, by Kashinath shastri Chaukhambha; Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi.
4. Charaka Samhita- Sutra Sthana 6/4, by Kashinath shastri Chaukhambha; Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi.
5. Charaka Samhita- Sutra Sthana 6/5, by Kashinath shastri Chaukhambha; Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi.
6. Charaka Samhita- Sutra Sthana 6/19,20,21, by Kashinath shastri Chaukhambha; Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi.
7. Susrutasmhita, Sutra sthana, 6/26, by Ambikadutta Shastri. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi.
8. Charaka Samhita- Sutra Sthana 6/22-26, by Kashinath shastri Chaukhambha; Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi.
9. Susrutasmhita, Sutra stana, 6/27-30 by Ambikadutta Shastri. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi.
10. Charaka Samhita- Sutra Sthana 6/27-32, by Kashinath shastri Chaukhambha; Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi.
11. Susrutasmhita, Sutra stana, 6/31-32, by Ambikadutta Shastri. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi.
12. Charaka Samhita- Sutra Sthana 6/33-40, by Kashinath shastri Chaukhambha; Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi.
13. Susrutasmhita, Sutra stana, 6/35-36, by Ambikadutta Shastri. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi.
14. Charaka Samhita- Sutra Sthana 6/41-48, by Kashinath shastri Chaukhambha; Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi.
15. Susrutasmhita, Sutra stana, 6/37-38, by Ambikadutta Shastri. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi.
16. Charaka Samhita- Sutra Sthana 6/9-18, by Kashinath shastri Chaukhambha; Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi.
17. Susrutasmhita, Sutra stana, 6/24-25, by Ambikadutta Shastri. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi.