

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF VARSHA AND SHARAD RITU W.S.R. TO “AMLAPITTA”

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda proclaims that the environment and man constantly interact with each other and influenced by their mutual relationship. As long as this interaction remains balanced, the man retains the state of health. Entire functioning of the body is regulated by the *dosha*, which itself are affected by external environment, food, habits and habitats, physical and mental conditions etc. *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen) is the basic and important endowment of *Ayurveda* to balance the rhythmic seasonal variations of *dosha*, *bala*, *agni* and *rasa*. If a person does not follow *ritucharya* will go to develop diseases according to vitiated *dosa* in a dominant condition. *Amlapitta* is a clinical condition which has become a common problem for most of the people in this

modern era, due to changing life style, increased pace of life, stress as well as changing foods and foods habit. *Amlapitta* shows higher prevalence in *Varsha* and *Sharad ritu* because of the *sanchaya* and *prakopa* of *pitta dosha* and due to lack of knowledge about *ritucharya*. *Amlapitta* is significantly related with seasonal variation, Since the cure of *Amlapitta* with the modern medicine is only temporary and diseases symptoms fluctuate with seasons therefore it is the need of the era to provide appropriate community education and awareness about the important of *ritucharya* and it's role in the prevention of *Amlapitta*.

KEYWORDS: *Ritu*, *Varsha Ritucharya*, *Sharad Ritucharya*, *Amlapitta*.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to *Ayurveda* entire functioning of human body is regulated by the *dosha*, which itself affected by external environment. Man and environment constantly interact with each

other and influenced by their mutual relationship the balanced state of this interaction retains the human health.

In Ayurveda more emphasis has been given to promotion and preservation of health of healthy individuals. For this various health care measures are mentioned in Ayurveda, *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen) is an important one of them to balance the rhythmic seasonal variation of *dosha, bala, agni, rasa*.

Education of *Ritucharya* offers individuals and groups opportunities to increase their knowledge, awareness, skill and support to adopt regular practice of seasonal regimen. In Ayurveda it is said that if a man knows the suitable *ahara* and *vihara* for every season and practices accordingly his strength and luster will enhance and never suffers from seasonal diseases.

Amlapitta (Hyperacidity) is a *pittatmak* diseases showing diurnal and seasonal variation with higher prevalence in *varsha* and *sharad ritu* because of the *sanchaya* and *prakop* of *pitta dosha*. Causes of *Amlapitta* are increasing in day to day this may be due to faulty dietary habits, non observance of *ritucharya* and the non proper living style of people.

Management of acid peptic disorder with the modern medicine is purely temporary and having serious side effects. So this is the demand of the society and responsibility of *Ayurvedic* experts to evaluate certain *Ayurvedic* methods for the management of *Amlapitta* ; *Ritucharya* is a safe, effective, cheap and easily administered way of life for *Amlapitta* management.

2. AIM

To study the *Varsha* and *Sharad Ritucharya* with special reference to *Amlapitta*.

3. OBJECTIVE

- To study the fundamentals of *ritucharya*.
- To study the *Varsha* and *Sharad ritucharya* according to *Ayurvedic* texts.
- To study the role of *Varsha* and *Sharad ritucharya* in *Amlapitta*.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

4.1. Ritu and Ritucharya

The word *Ritucharya* is made up of two words *ritu* and *charya*. *Ritu* means season the specific time and *charya* means *charana* or lifestyle. Thus the meaning of *ritucharya* is “The healthy lifestyle (*pathya ahara* and *vihara*) that is to be followed during six different seasons”.

Depending upon the position of sun with respect to the earth the year or *samvatsara* is divided into two *ayana*- *uttarayana* or *adana kal* and *dakshinayana* or *visarga kala*.^[1] Each *ayana* include three *ritus*. There are six *ritus* in a year depending upon the position of the sun from one *rashi* to the other.^[2] This is known as *ritu* cycle of six seasons. Six *ritus* are divided on the basis of the predominant effect of sun and moon. *Charaka* said that *vata* is responsible for differentiation of *ritus*.^[3] Each season is of two months period and specific *ritucharya* is described for each season.

The indian meteorological department designates four different seasons – Monsoon-pre monsoon-post monsoon, winter and summer.

4.2. Different Ritus

<i>Ritus</i>	Indian month ^[4]	English month	Influential <i>Rashi</i>
<i>Shishira</i>	<i>Magha, Phalguna</i>	Mid Jan to March	<i>Makara, Kumbha</i>
<i>Vasanta</i>	<i>Chaitra, Baishakha</i>	Mid March to May	<i>Meena, Mesha</i>
Grishma	<i>Jyeshtha, Ashadha</i>	Mid May to July	<i>Vrisha, Mithuna</i>
Varsha	<i>Shravana, Bhadrapad</i>	Mid July to Sept	<i>Karka, simha</i>
Sharad	<i>Ashwina, Kartika</i>	Mid Sept to Nov	<i>Kanya, Tula</i>
Hemanta	<i>Margashirsha, Pausha</i>	Mid Nov to Jan	<i>Vrishichika, Dhanu</i>

4.3. Effect of Ritus on tridosha

A particular rhythmic pattern of three *doshas* occur in relation to six seasons. *Sanchaya* (accumulation), *prakopa* (aggravation) and *Prashaman* (mitigation) of all three *doshas* takes place when the sun changes from one *rashi* to the other.

Dosha	<i>Sanchaya</i> ^[5] (Accumulation)	<i>Prakopa</i> (Aggravation)	<i>Prashama</i> (Mitigation)
Vata	Grishma	Varsha	Sharad
Pitta	Varsha	Sharad	Hemanta
Kapha	Shishira	Vasanta	Grishma

4.4. Fundamentals of *Ritucharya*

- While passing through six seasons our body is bound to face different variations and accordingly it is likely to get affected if the same routine is followed in all seasons.
- The basic principle of *ritucharya* is to preserve the equilibrium of *doshas* through the concept of *samanya* and *vishesha*.
- Knowledge and regular observance of suitable *ritucharya* (*Ahara* and *vihara* for different seasons) is mainly for the maintenance of health and prevention of diseases. For diseased persons *ritucharya* has to be modified accordingly.
- The seasons are differentiated according to month, *rashi* and characteristics. More importance has been given to the appearance of characteristics.
- *Ritusandhi* is the time period of 14 days, including last seven days of the previous *ritu* and first seven days of next *ritu*. During this period the regimen of the preceding season should be discontinued gradually and that of the succeeding seasons should be adopted gradually to prevent the diseases.^[6]
- *Yamdanshtra* is the period of total 16 days i.e. the last eight days of Kartika month and first eight days of *Margashirsha*. During this period mainly pitta aggravates which causes improper digestion, many diseases and fatal consequences. so only those people can live happily who take easily digestible and less amount of food.^[7]

4.5. *Varsha* and *Sharad Ritucharya*

4.5.1. *Varsha Ritucharya*-

Mid July to mid September is considered as *varsha ritu*. During this season the sky is covered by clouds and rains occur without thounderstrom. The ponds ,rivers etc. are filled with water. The predominant *rasa* and *Mahabhuta* during this season are *amla* and *prithvi* and *agni* respectively. The strength of the person again becomes less, vitiation of *vata dosha* and deposition of *pitta dosha* are occur.

Do's

- Food which contain sweet, acid, salt, greasiness/unctuous and hot should be taken.
- Old rice, wheat and barley should be taken
- Clarified butter, milk, buttermilk, boiled and cooled water, ladyfinger, luffa, pumpkin.
- Garlic, pepper, ginger, dry ginger, asafoetida, jeera powder, turmeric and coriander help enhance digestion and improve immunity.

- Food with honey, living in dry place, wearing of light cloths, use of flowers and perfumes, *Pragharshan*, *Udvardana*, *Basti*, *Virechan*, *Vamana*, *Dhupan*/Fumigation of herbs.

Don't

- Curds, dry foods, vegetables, river water, sleep in day time.
- Don't over walk in these days, physical exercise.
- Living under dew, Eastern wind, Excessive sunlight exposure (sun bath), Intercourse.

4.5.2. Sharad Ritucharya

The period between mid September to mid November is *Sharad ritu*. 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* and predominant *mahabhutas* are *Apa* and *Agni*. The strength of the person remains medium, pacification of vitiated *vata dosha* and vitiated of *pitta dosha* occur and activity of *agni* increases during this seasons.

Do's

- Food that are cold in potency, easily digestible, astringent, bitter and sweet.
- Wheat, rice, barley, moong, gramme, fenugreek, sweet lime, orange, sapota, coconut, cumin, coriander, aniseeds, sugar and sugarcane, cow's milk, ghee, black grapes; are especially recommended food in this season.
- One can consume *Hansodak* - A water that is pure by both rays of *agasti* star and sun rays.
- Herbs like *chandan*, *usher*, *shatavari*, *amla* are beneficial to consume.
- Go for light walk in moonlight, save yourself from direct sunlight and eastern winds.
- Cloth should be clean, loose and light colored, living under moonlight.
- *Panchkarma* – *Raktamokshan*, *Virechan*.

Don't

- Acetic, acrid, hot, salty, sour, fried, spicy foods, hot in potency and heavy to digest.
- Asafoetida, red chilli, sesame seed oil and mustard oil, ginger, curd, garlic, onion, tamarind, cucumber, ladyfinger, brinjal, groundnuts are insalubrious in this season.
- Over eating, sleeping during day time, oil and fried stuff are especially prohibited.
- Morning dew, alkali base food, fatty food, hard sun rays, alcohol, eastern wind.

4.6. Relation of Dos and Dents with *Amlapitta*

4.6.1. *Amlapitta*

The *Amlapitta* is constituted of the words *Amla* and *Pitta*. The term *Amla* has been used as an appellation to *pitta*. Through the *Amla* has been said as a natural property of *pitta* along with *Katu rasa* according to *Charaka*.^[8]

Sushruta has enlisted *Katu* as it's original *rasa* and mentioned that when the *pitta* become *Vidagdha* it transforms to *Amla* in *rasa*.^[9]

The disease in which the patient has indigestion, exhaustion without any exertion, nausea, eructations with bitter or sour taste, feeling of heaviness of the body, burning sensation in the chest and throat and loss of appetite is to be called as *Amlapitta*.^[10]

5. DISCUSSION

Amlapitta shows higher prevalence in *Varsha* and *Sharad ritu* because of the *sanchaya* and *prakopa* of *pitta dosha* and also due to lack of knowledge about *Ritucharya*. Most of patients of *Amlapitta* not following the *Ritucharya* so patients were taking their normal diet or more amount of food as compared to amount of *ahara* told in *Ritucharya* it causes *agnimandya* in patients.

In *Varsha ritu* the *agni* is weak. It is already debilitated by summer it undergoes further decreases and get vitiated by the *dosha*'s.

The *pitta dosha*'s get aggravated by the effect of thick clouds, fall of water, cold wind having snow, dirty water because of rain, warmth of the earth and sourness intake of spicy, hot food and drinks. Intake of more amount of food and drinks there were further aggravation of *pitta* causing *Amlapitta* in patient's.

In *Sharad ritu* the person become's accustomed to the cold of *Varsha ritu*. When he gets suddenly exposed to the warm rays of sun, the *pitta dosha*'s; which has undergone increase in *Varsha* become greatly aggravated during *Sharad*.

In modern language the weather in the month of October in the indian sub contient is called as October heat. During October and November with the apparent movement of sun towards south increases insolation and this increases the temperature of the body. As *Varsha ritu* has concluded with cessation of monsoons there is simultaneous commencement of *Sharad ritu*

(period of October heat). Due to increased temperature in conjunction with elevated humidity, everyone is infuriated with increased perspiration. Climate changes obviously affect human body. In this time of year *pitta dosha* gets aggravated.

All above totally causes and pathogenesis of *Amlapitta*. The properties of *pitta* is hot, sharp, light, moist, oily, fluid and sour. The regimen/diet suggested in *varsha* and *sharad ritu's* (sweet, bitter, astringent, cold, easily digestible, dry) is to pacify *pitta dosha*. *Amlapitta* shows higher prevalence in *varsha* and *sharad ritu* because of the *sanchaya* and *prakopa* of *pitta dosha*. Hence to prevent *Amlapitta* particular *Ritucharya* has to be followed.

6. CONCLUSION

Ayurveda proclaims that there are similarities between human being 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. The highest prevalence of *Amlapitta* found in *Varsha* and *Sharad ritu* with predominance of *pitta dosha* which is mainly associated with non observance of *Ritucharya*. There is great need to prevent *Amlapitta* through the observance of appropriate *Ritucharya*.

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