

**IMPORTANCE OF AHARA VIDHI VIDHANA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Ahara* (food) is very important to sustain life and maintain normal physiological functioning of human body. *Acharya Charaka* has given *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* (dietary guidelines) which helps us preventing from many disease arising due to faulty dietary habits. So many guidelines are explained in *ayurvedic* texts, which are titled as *Ahara Vidhi*, where the law of do's and don'ts about diet and drink are given. This present study is taken to find out dietary guidelines in *Ayurveda*. This study also implies there is extensive scope of scientific testing on this field in order to justify the textual references.

**KEYWORDS:** *Ahara*, *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana*, dietary guidelines.

**INTRODUCTION**

Adequate nutrition is the basic need for healthy life but without knowing the proper dietary guidelines one cannot gain optimum benefit from the food consumed. *Ahara* is considered as one of the key pillars (upstambhas) of life in *Ayurveda*.<sup>[2]</sup> In present era, due to change in lifestyle, man is giving least importance to his diet and dietary rules. *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* is a kind of *karma* or method that is equally important as food. Many diseases can be prevented arising due to faulty dietary habits. The application of these rule is effective in maintenance of health as well as in the curative aspect for many diseases.

***Ahar Vidhi Vidhana*<sup>[1]</sup>**

Our classics described *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* which are the foundation of dietetics. It indicates the method of *Ahara*, these are *Ushna*, *Snigdha*, *Matravat*, is consumed after the digestion of previously ingested food, *Virya Avirudha Ahara*, is to be taken into *Iste deshe* where it is

provided with *Ista sarvopakaran*, not to be taken speedily, not to be taken too slowly, taken without talking with others, taken without laughing, taken with the concentration of the mind.

**1. Ushnam asniyat<sup>[3]</sup>**(eat warm and freshly cooked food)

The first requisite regarding prepared meal is that it should be taken *ushna* (hot). One should eat warm food because it tastes well and the food consumed stimulates the digestive process, get digested quickly, normalize function of *Vata dosha* and reduce *kapha dosha* (which obstructs digestion process).

*Ayurveda* also recommends that we should drink warm water, as cold water can weaken our *Agni* (digestive fire). One should take warm water during and after meals. water boiled and reduced to one-eighth, one fourth or half of the original quantity are called *ushnodak*.<sup>[4]</sup> Warm water stimulates hunger and kindle digestive fire, help digestion, soothes throat, cleanses bladder, reduce hiccups and alleviates increase *Vata* and *kapha*.

**2. Snigdham asniyat<sup>[5]</sup>**(eat unctuous food)

One should eat unctuous because it tastes well, the food consumed stimulates any dormant digestive process, get digested quickly, normalize the function of *Vata*, nourishes body, provide fitness to sense organ, increase strength and enhance complexion.

**3. Matravad asniyat<sup>[6]</sup>**(eat in proper quantity)

One should eat in proper quantity without disturbing *Vata, Pitta and Kapha* because that only helps promote one's life span, easily passes down the bowels, does not disturb the *Agni* (digestive fire), and gets digested without discomfort.

**4. Jirne sniyat<sup>[7]</sup>**(eat after complete digestion of previous meals)

One should eat when the previous meal is digested because if one eats before earlier meal is digested, mixing with undigested food will vitiate all the *doshas* quickly. On the other hand, when one eat after the previous meal is well digested, the *doshas* do not get vitiated, *Agni* is stimulated, appetite is increased, entrances of the channel get cleared, eructation is pure, heart is normal, there are natural urges to pass bodily wastes and there is no obstruction to their passage, and the eaten food enhances one's life without afflicting any *Dhatu*.

**5. Viryaviruddham asniyat<sup>[8]</sup>**(eat suitable combination of food)

One should take food consisting of the items that are non- antagonistic in nature to ensure one is not afflicted with the disorder caused by food that is unsuitable to the individual.

**6. *Iste dese istasarvopakaranam casniyat*<sup>[9]</sup>** (eat at right place with right accessories)

One should eat in a favourable place and with favourable accessories because it is important to feel comfortable and satisfied while eating.

**7. *Natidrutam asniyat*<sup>[10]</sup>** (do not eat too fast)

One should not eat quickly to ensure the food does not get into the wrong passage, and that the person is able to ascertain the quantities and taste of the food or even detect any defect in the food.

**8. *Nativilambitam asniyat*<sup>[11]</sup>** (do not eat too slowly)

One should not eat too slow, because by eating too slow one does not get satisfaction, eat much, and the food become cold and is digested irregularly.

**9. *Ajalpannahasan tanmana bhunjita*<sup>[12]</sup>** (eat with proper concentration on eating and with normal mental state).

One should eat with extreme concentration on the food, while not talking or laughing. By taking food while talking or laughing or with mind elsewhere, he is inflicted with the same defect as by eating too fast.

**10. *Atmanamabhisamiksya bhunjita samyak*<sup>[13]</sup>** (eat with self- awareness)

One should eat with proper consideration to self, i.e. knowing one's own constitution and tastes. He / she should take food that is suitable to him.

## DISCUSSION

Human body is said to be the bio- product of food and healthy life starts with healthy food. *Ahara* is one of the *Trayo upsthambha*<sup>[14]</sup> that helps to maintain vitality. rule of food intake and its importance is explained in charak Samhita vimansthan 1/24 under the heading of *upayoga samstha* in *Astha Ahara Vidhi Vishesayatana*, which again mention the set of dietary rules that benefit man to maintain a healthy life. The application of these rule is effective for *swastha* as well as for *atura*<sup>[15]</sup> as it helps in maintaining the physiological condition of body therefore, all person should follow these rules while eating the food to remain healthy and enhance the span of life.

## CONCLUSION

Viewing the above points it can be conclude that *Ahara* should be taken according to *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana*. According to *kashyap Samhita* food as always been an important way to treat

illness and maintain health and that's why he called food as *Mahabhaishyaja*.<sup>[16]</sup> Hence not only diet but also method of food intake has an important role in continuity of healthy life therefore, *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* is an important aspect of *Ahara* w.r.t maintenance of health.

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