



## A REVIEW OF NINDITASHANA - FORBIDDEN DIETARY HABITS OF AYURVEDA CLASSICS

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Deepa S. J. and <sup>2</sup>Dr. Srinivasa S.

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, Dept. of Kriya Shareera, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Institute of Ayurveda and Hospital, Anchepalya, Mysore Road, Bangalore, Karnataka – 560074.

<sup>2</sup>Professor and Head, Department of Kayachikitsa, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Institute of Ayurveda and Hospital, Anchepalya, Mysore Road, Bangalore, Karnataka – 560074.



\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Deepa S. J.

Associate Professor, Dept. of Kriya Shareera, Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Institute of Ayurveda and Hospital, Anchepalya, Mysore Road, Bangalore, Karnataka – 560074. Email id:

Article Received on 14/09/2024

Article Revised on 04/10/2024

Article Accepted on 24/10/2024

### ABSTRACT

Maintaining physical and mental well-being relies on a balanced diet and regular activities. Improper dietary habits primarily contribute to various diseases termed nindita ashana in Ayurveda. Nindita Ashana comprises three detrimental eating patterns: samashana, adhyashana and vishamashana. These habits can lead to impairment in digestion, and an imbalance of Dosha, Dhatu and Mala, there in produces different diseases. Recent studies claim that unhealthy dietary lifestyle have been the most common cause of various diseases. Hence in this paper, an attempt has been made to explore literary concepts of nindita ashana and its correlation with contemporary forbidden dietary habits and their consequences.

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, Ashana, Disease, Forbidden dietary habits, Health Consequences.

### INTRODUCTION

Health is the supreme foundation for achievements in life. Health and disease are dependent on various factors, among them food occupies the prime position.<sup>[1]</sup> So food is said as one among the Trayopasthambha (sub-pillars).<sup>[2]</sup> Features of health such as complexion, clarity in the body, good voice, longevity, happiness, strength, satisfaction, nourishment and intellect are dependent on food.<sup>[3]</sup> This can be obtained by following good dietary practices such as consuming food - warm, in appropriate quantity, after the digestion of the previous meal, in a pleasant place with concentration and other rules.<sup>[4]</sup>

Certain methods of dietary practices are termed as forbidden (Nindita Ashana) which include Samashana, Adhyashana and Vishamashana. Such dietary habits if followed, results in the disturbance of Agni, Dosha, Dhatu and Mala leading to the manifestation of various diseases or even death.<sup>[5]</sup> In this era, owing to sophistication and modernization, dietary habits have become indiscriminate leading to various diseases.

### CONCEPT OF NINDITASHANA

The word **Nindita** indicates “**Nindayasya Jateeti Nindita**” which means forbidden, blamed, prohibited etc and such one should not be adopted.<sup>[6]</sup> **Ashanam** means Bhakshanam, Annam (the eatables or food).<sup>[7]</sup> So nindita

ashana indicates the forbidden dietary habits which should not be practiced.

The concept of nindita ashana is explored within the context of Grahani Dosha Chikitsa,<sup>[8]</sup> Annapanavidhi Adhyaya<sup>[9]</sup> and Matrashiteeya Adhyaya<sup>[10]</sup> in Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Astanga Hrudaya respectively. This underscores the consensus among all the Acharyas that improper food habits are the prime cause for agni dushti. It in turn produces the Ama which vitiates the Tridosha and lodges in different channels to produce various ailments. Hence Ninditashana acts as an indirect cause for the vitiation of Dosha.<sup>[11]</sup>

The health is dependent on the matra of the food. Matra is of two categories. Samyak matra and asamyak matra. The samyak matra is also termed as samyak yoga indicates proper quantity and proper quality of food which is conducive to health. While the asamyak yoga (improper combination) is the major problem to cause disease.<sup>[12]</sup>

Asamyak matra constitutes seven sub-types namely i) sankernaasana, ii) viruddhashanam, iii) amatrashana, iv) ajeernaashana, v) samashana, vi) adhyashana, and vii) vishamashana.<sup>[13]</sup> These subdivisions ultimately can be considered as - the virudhashana under **samashana**, the sankeernashana and amatrashana under **vishamashana**

and ajeernashana under **adhyashana**. Thus at the end, the three things that are the main causative factors in the manifestations of diseases.

**Concept of Samashana and its consequences:** Suitable and unsuitable foods<sup>[14]</sup> or wholesome and unwholesome food<sup>[15]</sup> consumed together is Samashana. The word suitable, wholesome and conducive conveys the same meaning and the same holds good with unsuitable, unwholesome and non-conducive too.<sup>[16]</sup> Some of the examples of Samashana includes - consuming the combination of red rice and barley rice,<sup>[17]</sup> old grains and new grains, tender vegetables and dried vegetables,<sup>[18]</sup> cow's milk and fish.<sup>[19]</sup>

In samhitas, some of the food articles are mentioned as unwholesome or inferior, like barley in monocotyledons, black gram in dicotyledons, mustard plant in leafy vegetables, beef in animal flesh, sheep's milk in milking animals, saf oil in plant source oil, buffalo fat in marshy origin animal fat, potato in tubers.<sup>[20]</sup> These are the food articles which are seen to be used frequently along with rice and other food stuffs in day-to-day life.

Similarly, red rice, green gram, wheat, rock salt, gooseberry etc by nature itself to be wholesome to the body, correspondingly barley etc. by nature unwholesome.<sup>[21]</sup> The combinations of these wholesome and unwholesome are prohibited. Likewise, intake of milk with curd, fish is considered as samyoga viruddha.<sup>[22]</sup> All these combinations are found as the strong causative factor in the manifestation of various diseases such as rasavaha sroto dusti,<sup>[23]</sup> urustambha vyadhi,<sup>[24]</sup> and also as a contradictory factor in swayathu vyadhi.<sup>[25]</sup>

There are various supportive research works that aid in understanding samashana. Beef is a commonly consumed non-vegetarian diet all over the world. A study released by the world cancer research fund reported strong evidence that red and processed beef meat causes bowel cancer and they recommend people to eat an average of 300 grams per week.<sup>[26]</sup>

A research study from the Harvard School of public health establishes the consumption of processed beef with a high incidence of coronary heart diseases and diabetes mellitus as it contains high levels of undesirable saturated fat.<sup>[27]</sup>

Potato is a major food component used all over the world. The fried items made by potato are rich in unsaturated fatty acids which increases the level of low-density lipids in the body, a main cause for coronary heart diseases.<sup>[28]</sup> Baked potato contains more sugar than unbaked which is the direct cause of obesity and increased blood sugar level.<sup>[29]</sup>

Thus, with the help of these research claims it can be stated that samashana leads to various ailments.

**Concept of adhyashana and its consequences:** Repeated intake of food<sup>[30]</sup> or consuming food even before the digestion of the previously consumed food<sup>[31]</sup> or consumption of food in indigestion state<sup>[32]</sup> is termed as adhyashana. Understanding of adhyashana is incomplete without knowing the anna kala (proper time of food). This can be analyzed by considering the signs of complete digestion and food timings.

Signs of complete digestion are the proper evacuation of urge of stool and feces, feeling of lightness in heart, proper movement of doshas in their channels, proper belching with appetite, evacuation of flatus, ignited the digestive fire, normal functioning of sense organs and lightness in the body.<sup>[33]</sup> People are supposed to take food once these signs are appreciated. Food timing is the ahara sevana kala. Shastras suggests evening and morning time as the two bhojana kala (food timings)<sup>[34]</sup> and states that in samagni person the time taken for the complete digestion of food is 4 yama (12 hours).<sup>[35]</sup> The yogaratnakara's view stands appropriate for today's scenario which says one should not take food before 1 yama (3 hours) and not too fast for 2 yama (6 hours).<sup>[36]</sup> This also holds well that the gastric emptying takes 3-4 hours in an adult, so after the complete gastric emptying next meal is advised.

Adhyashana leads to the vitiation of all three doshas and produces various ailments. Annavaaha sroto vyadhi like alasaka, grahani, ajeerna, atisara, pittaja udara, arshas krimikosta are produced due to the adhyashana. Similarly, stoulya and hrudroga of rasavaha sroto vyadhi; shonita dushana, visarpa, kusta of raktavaha sroto vyadhi; mutrakruchra of mutravaha sroto vyadhi; ardhavabhedaka and also vitiates the pureeshavaha srotas. Thus, the adhyashana causes sarva dhatu shaitilya and vyadhi.

Research work showed that people following adhyashana mostly suffered from pureeshavaha srotogata vyadhi, indigestion, and fever which re-establishes the fact that adhyashana causes diseases.<sup>[37]</sup> Studies showed that repeated intake of soft drinks increased calorie intake. The soft drinks offer energy, displacing other nutrient sources, thereby known to cause diabetes and obesity.<sup>[38]</sup> One more common form of adhyashana is repeated intake of coffee or tea. Small doses of caffeine stimulate the brain, whereas large doses irritate gastric mucosa, a major cause of peptic ulcers.<sup>[39]</sup>

Thus, by these research facts it is revalidated that adhyashana causes frightful diseases.

**Concept of vishamashana and its consequences:** Ahara consumed in improper quantity i.e. in more quantity (Atimatra) or less quantity (Alpamatra) and at improper time (Akala) is referred to as 'Vishamashana'.<sup>[40]</sup> Akala constitutes 'Aprapta Kala Bhojana' (consumption of food before complete digestion) and 'Kalateeta Bhojana' (intake of food after a

very long time of digestion).<sup>[41]</sup> So the food consumed in irregular time and in improper quantity comes under the spectrum of Vishamashana.

Certain rules for the consumption of food are mentioned as ahara vidhi visheshayatanas namely swabhava (nature), samyoga (combination), samskara (transformation), rashi (quantity) desha (habitat), kala (time) upayoga samstha (rules) and upabhokta (an individual who consumes food).<sup>[42]</sup> Ignoring these rules and consuming the food also comes under the purview of vishamashana.<sup>[43]</sup>

Vishamashana is agni vaishamyakara, samana vayu prakopakara and tridoshakara. It produces diseases of annavaha srotas like ajeerna, gulma, tridoshaja atisara; pranavaha sroto vikara like hikkaswasa, kshayaja kasa; rasavaha sroto vikara like jwara and it causes sarva dhatu shilitata, produces prameha, dwaja bhanga and sthanya kshaya.

Vishamashana constitutes early or delayed food consumption and less or more quantity of food, as per Hemadri, any one or permutation and combination of above can also be taken under the heading of vishamashana.<sup>[44]</sup>

This vishamashana leads to a broad spectrum of diseases of different systems. The very early ingestion (aprapta kala) leads to vitiation of all 3 doshas, especially kapha.<sup>[45]</sup> delay in ingestion (kalateeta bhojana) leads to the vitiation of vata in the abdomen and makes it difficult for digestion.<sup>[46]</sup> Excessive quantity food intake leads to the simultaneous increase of all doshas.<sup>[47]</sup> amatra or less quantity of food does not satisfy and does not nourish the body which leads to vata prapoka.<sup>[48]</sup>

A recent study proved that intake of more calorie food in excess quantity produces obesity.<sup>[49]</sup> The malnourishment seen in underdeveloped countries and in low socio-economic status, is due to lack in food quantity and quality.<sup>[50]</sup> A study conducted states that, the cause for the increase in the incidence of obesity over the past decade is untimely meals, frequent eating, and excess consumption<sup>[51]</sup> which comes under the category of vishamashana.

All the above-mentioned recent studies suggest that forbidden dietary habits (Ninditashana) is one of the major etiological factors for various diseases especially those that are produced by changed lifestyles and these diseases are termed life style disorders.

## CONCLUSION

The concept of ninditashana which are mentioned in Ayurvedic classics should be considered as the combination of samashana, adhyashana, vishamashana which is one of the leading causative factors for various diseases, especially lifestyle diseases of the current day. The concepts are still today true which are evident in

recent studies. So, to maintain health one has to concentrate on his diet.

## REFERENCES

1. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Sutra Stana 28/45, 181.
2. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Sutra Stana 11/35, 74.
3. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Sutra Stana 27/349-350, 174.
4. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Sutra Stana 28/45, 181.
5. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Chikitsa Stana 15/237, 525.
6. Deva Raja Radha Kanta, Shabdha Kalpa Druka, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, 2: 675.
7. Deva Raja Radha Kanta, Shabdha Kalpa Druka, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, 1: 154.
8. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Chikitsa Stana 15 chapter.
9. Acharya YT. Sushruta Samhita, editor Nibandasangraha of Dalhana, Varanasi: Chaukamba Surabharati Prakashan, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 46 chapter.
10. Vaidhya H P. Astanga Hrudaya, editor Ayurveda Rasayana of Hemadri, Chaukhambha orientalia, 2005; Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 8 chapter.
11. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Vimana Stana 6/11, 254.
12. Vaidhya H P, Astanga Hrudaya, editor Ayurveda Rasayana of Hemadri, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 8/2, 147.
13. Vaidhya H P, Astanga Hrudaya, editor Ayurveda Rasayana of Hemadri, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana, 147.
14. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Chikitsa Stana 15/236, 525.
15. Acharya YT. Sushruta Samhita, editor Nibandasangraha of Dalhana, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 46/508, 251.
16. Vaidhya H P, Astanga Hrudaya, editor Ayurveda Rasayana of Hemadri, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 8/33, 137.

17. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Chikitsa Stana 15/236, 526.
18. Acharya YT. Sushruta Samhita, editor Nibandasangraha of Dalhana, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 46/508, 251.
19. Acharya YT. Sushruta Samhita, editor Nibandasangraha of Dalhana, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 46/508, 251.
20. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Sutra Stana 25/39, 131.
21. Acharya YT. Sushruta Samhita, editor Nibandasangraha of Dalhana, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 20/4-5, 94-95.
22. Acharya YT. Sushruta Samhita, editor Nibandasangraha of Dalhana, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 20/7, 95.
23. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Vimana Stana 5/13, 251.
24. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Chikitsa Stana 28/8, 613.
25. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Chikitsa Stana 12/20, 484.
26. Diet and cancer organization, world cancer foundation; evidence and judgment, chpt4, 109-12.
27. Patty W Siri-Tarino, Qi Sun, Frank B Hu, and Ronald M Krauss; Meta-analysis of prospective cohort studies evaluating the association of saturated fat with cardiovascular disease; The American journal of clinical nutrition, 2010; 91: 535-46.
28. www.Wikipedia, encyclopedia.htm atherosclerosis, 4-5.
29. Holt SH, Miller JC, Petocz P, Farmakalidis E, A satiety index of common foods, European Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 1995; 49: 675-690.
30. Sharma S. Astanga Sangraha, editor Shashilekha of Indu, Varanasi, Choukamba Sanskrit series, reprint, 2008; Sutra Stana 10/27, 105.
31. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Chikitsa Stana 15/236, 526-7.
32. Acharya YT. Sushruta Samhita, editor Nibandasangraha of Dalhana, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 46/508, 251.
33. Vaidhya H P, Astanga Hrudaya, editor Ayurveda Rasayana of Hemadri, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 8/55, 160.
34. Tripaty I, Tripati D S, Yogaratnakara, Vaidyaprabha Hindhi commentary, 1<sup>st</sup> ed; 1998, 1/108, 54.
35. Sharma S. Astanga Sangraha, editor Shashilekha of Indu, Varanasi, Choukamba Sanskrit series, reprint, 2008; Sutra Stana 11/55, 115.
36. Tripaty I, Tripati D S, Yogaratnakara, Vaidyaprabha Hindhi commentary, 1<sup>st</sup> ed; 1998; 1/109, 54.
37. Vyasa Hitesh A, Dwivedi RR, Prevelence of Adhyashana in patients attending IPGT and RA hospital and its effect on health, Ayu journal, Jul-Sept 2011.
38. Vartanian Lenny R., Schwartz Marlene B. Brownell Kelly D., Effects of Soft Drink Consumption on Nutrition and Health - A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis, American Journal of Public Health, April 2007; 97(4).
39. www.wikipedia, encyclopedia.htm. Health effect of caffeine.
40. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Chikitsa Stana 15/236, 526-7.
41. Acharya YT. Sushruta Samhita, editor Nibandasangraha of Dalhana, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 46/509, 251.
42. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Vimana Stana 1/21-23, 235-7.
43. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Nidana Stana 6/10, 221.
44. Vaidhya H P, Astanga Hrudaya, editor Ayurveda Rasayana of Hemadri, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 8/33, 137-8.
45. Acharya YT. Sushruta Samhita, editor Nibandasangraha of Dalhana, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 46/472, 248.
46. Acharya YT. Sushruta Samhita, editor Nibandasangraha of Dalhana, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi, reprint, 2009; Sutra Stana 46/473, 248.
47. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Vimana Stana 2/7, 238.
48. Acharya YT. Charaka Samhita, editor Ayurveda Deepika of Chakrapanidatta, Varanasi, Chaukhambha orientalia, reprint, 2011; Vimana Stana 2/7, 238.
49. Elizabeth J Parks, Megan A, Mc Crory, When to eat and how often? American Journal of Nutrition, 2005, 81: 1-4.

50. Swarna Sadasivam Vepa, Impact of globalization on the food consumption of urban India, 215-30.
51. Elizabeth J Parks, Megan A, Mc Crory, When to eat and how often? American Journal of Nutrition, 2005; 81: 1-4.