



SWASTHAVRITTA FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF GERIATRIC CARE WSR TO ROLE IN HEALTH RESTORATION

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ABSTRACT

Ageing is considered as a *Swabhavik Vyadhi* which is the result of continuous physical, mental and psychological changes during lifespan. Due to the increasing age, prevalence of disease also increases. *Ayurveda* provides us various ways to manage and promote the good health. One can slow the process of old age, through various ways such as consumption of *Satmya Ahara*, following proper routine and avoiding improper lifestyle (*Vihara*). *Swasthavritta* is a concept of maintaining life by good code of conduct. It represents the stability of a person to carry out his duties and fulfilling the requirement of body. It helps the person in living a healthy life. According to *Ayurveda* classics, disciplined lifestyle in young age is a best way to prevent the geriatric problems. One should always try to follow principle of *Swasthavritta* by adapting healthier lifestyle and *Ahara*.

KEYWORDS: *Ahara, Swasthavritta, Vihara, Ayurveda, Swabhavik Vyadhi.*

INTRODUCTION

According to the law of life, anything which takes birth (*Utpatti*) at the end eventually dies. *Ayu* (lifespan) is considered as time period from conception till death. It occurs naturally as a result of interaction of *Kala* with human being. Lifespan is divided into *Bala* (early stage of life), *Madhya* (middle stage of life) and *Vriddhavastha* (old age) on the basis of changes that take place during a lifespan such as growth, development, maintenance, degenerative processes etc. For the maintenance and promotion of good health at every stage of life, *Ayurveda* works on three concepts which are depicted in **figure 1**. Due to the modern lifestyle; increase in facilities, technology; people are becoming inactive towards their daily routine and are getting involved in faulty eating habits (*Asatmya* and *Viruddha Ahara*) as well as faulty lifestyle (*Vihara*). As a result people are becoming prone to various diseases at a very early age, facing problem of untimely ageing and in the old age they face a lot of serious problems.^[1-5]

Ayurveda is an ancient medical science which deals with every aspect of health. It emphasizes more on the prevention of diseases. Scholars have provided various instructions to preserve *Ayu* and to promote healthy living. *Swasthavritta* is derived from two words, *Swastha* and *Vritta*. *Swastha* is a stage of person when he is free from any ailment or disease. *Vritta* means controlling

mind and body by following some set of rules. Thus *Swasthavritta* is a unique concept of *Ayurveda* which helps a person in living a healthy and well balanced life through good code of conduct.^[5-8]

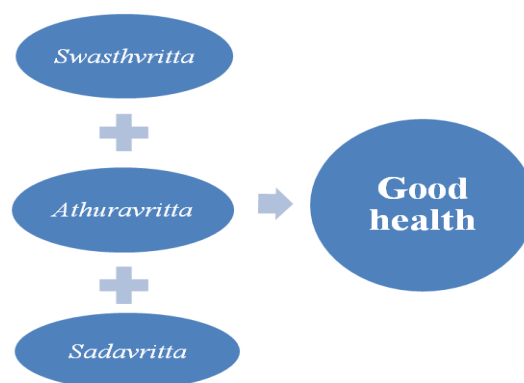


Figure 1:- Ayurveda concepts to promote good health.

When person crosses sixty years of age, his physiological system get diminished thus he becomes more prone to the pathological changes. Such pathological changes increase the susceptibility of an individual towards the diseases. According to the data of World Population Ageing 2019 released by United Nations, 703 million persons were of sixty five years of age in the global population. This share has increased from six percent in 1990 to nine percent in 2019.

Changes which occur during old age

Vridhnavastha is the last stage of a lifespan which involves anatomical, physiological and psychological changes. It is a stage of *Vata Dosha* predominance which is responsible for increase in degenerative processes occurring inside the body. It is characterized by diminished *Bala* (Strength), *Indriyas* (senses), *Dhatu* (constituents of body), *Virya* (semen), *Parakrama* (bravery), *Smarana* (memory) and *Vachana* (speech) etc. It also causes aggravation of some qualities in the body such as *Ruksha*, *Laghu*, *Shita*, *Kshara*, *Shushka* which again increases the chances of disease occurrence. *Vridhnavastha* can give rise to many diseases like arthritis, heart disease, urinary disorder, high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, dementia etc.

Geriatric care

Jara chikitsa (geriatric care) covers two dimensions of promoting and managing good health. Modern medical science is useful in providing treatment for the diseases but in old age treatment becomes tough. Therefore *Ayurveda* focuses on promoting good health in all the stages of life.

Health is the state of equilibrium of *Doshas*, *Dhatus*, *Mala*, *Agni* and *Indriyas* with *Atma*. *Agni* is the metabolic power which provides nourishment to the body. *Prakriti* defines the predominance of *Doshas* which is responsible for the healthy status of a person. Environmental factors also have influence on the *Swasthya*. According to *Ayurvedic* scholars, seasonal changes also have their affect on the individual's health. Therefore *Ritucharya* is given a special place in the prevention methodology by *Ayurveda*. *Swasthvritta* and *Sadavritta* provide us some guidelines like following healthy life style; use of therapies like massage (*Abhyanga*), *Seka*, *Vyayam* (exercise), *Nasya* (nasal drops) and *Rasayanas* to promote and preserve health.

Swasthvritta in geriatric care

Swasthvritta comprises of *Dinacharya* (routine from morning to sleep), *Ritucharya* (specific diet and regimen in different season) and avoiding *Adharaniya vega*. This should be done to avoid *Ama* accumulation in the body. It is an important part of geriatric care. Geriatric care deals with the preventive, medical and social aspects of health. One should always try to avoid untimely ageing (*Akalaja Jara*) and delay *Kalaja Jara*. *Swasthvritta* helps in balancing *Doshas*, *Dhatus* and *Agni*. Modern day lifestyle is full of activities which are responsible for the vitiation of *Doshas*. The sedentary lifestyle, lack of physical exercise, stress, faulty dietary habits etc. have increased prevalence of heart problems, lifestyle disorders, psychosomatic problems, gastric problems etc. The regimen of *Swasthvritta* can provide relief from such types of illness. *Dinacharya* is necessary to regulate the balance of *Doshas*. During morning time, *Kapha dosha* is dominant and thus following of *Swasthvritta* activities can help in pacifying *Kapha Dosha*. *Pitta Dosha* is dominant in the afternoon and activities of afternoon as

mentioned by the *Swasthvritta*, if followed, then can help in balancing of *Pitta Dosha*. During night time, *Vata Dosha* becomes predominant thus one should avoid taking meal just before going to bed and should take proper sleep to avoid vitiation of *Vata Dosha*. *Swasthvritta* also mention about the *Ahara*, *Vihara*, *Vyayama* etc. which can help in preserving, promoting physical, mental and social health of a person.

Role of Swasthvritta in restoration of health

- ❖ Waking up late in morning leads lethargy and lack of enthusiasm. *Swasthvritta* suggest waking up in the *Brahma Muhurta* (early morning). It helps in regulating metabolic activities, *Nityakarma* help in evacuation of all faecal matter out from the body which helps in removing *Ama*.
 - ❖ After consuming food, person should walk for few minutes. It helps in pacifying the vitiated *Pitta Dosha*. Sleeping during day time should be avoided as it aggravates *Kapha* and *Pitta*.
 - ❖ One should consume food 3-4 hours before going to bed to avoid *Vata* vitiation which causes indigestion and *Anindra*.
 - ❖ Person should take proper sleep of eight hours to prevent vitiation of *Vata*. *Anindra* can lead to weakness, indigestion, anger etc.
 - ❖ *Sadavritta* should be followed by avoiding excessive indulgence in wrongful activities which can cause damage to the *Dhatus*.
 - ❖ *Vyayama*, *Yoga* should be done to promote physical as well as mental health.
- According to *Ayurvedic* scholars, promotional aspect of *Jara chikitsa* has an important role in avoiding *Akalaja Jara* and preventing *Kalaja Jara*. To achieve this, adaptation of *Swasthvritta* along with *Rasayana sevana* is very important.

➤ Dinacharya

Every act of routine specified in *Dinacharya* is protective in nature. One should wake up early in the morning and should always attain nature's call. Tongue and oral cavity should be cleaned by the twigs of *Khadira*, *Karanja*, *Nimba* to stimulate digestion. Eyes should be washed with *Triphala* water every day. *Anjana* (Collyrium) should be used to prevent *Kaphaj Roga* and clean the eye which makes them shining, and promote vision. Tobacco intake should be strictly avoided. *Nasya Karma* is a procedure in which oil drops are administered in each nostril twice a day. It should be done to avoid diseases of nose, head, ears and throat, headache, facial palsy, Rhinitis; *Urdhva Jatugata Vyadhi*, graying of hairs and excessive hair fall. It produces lightness in the head, makes it calm and helps in good sleep. It enhances the activities of *Indriyas*, improves the strength of muscles and vessels of the head.

Abhyanga is a process of massaging whole body specially scalp by the oil to prevent dryness of body and stiffness of joints resulting into delay in ageing in elderly people. Oil massage provides softness to skin; free

movement of joints and muscles; eliminates metabolic wastes. *Shirobhyanga* helps in elimination of diseases of head. For massaging, *Tila Taila* (sesame oil), *Sarshapa Taila* (mustard oil), or any medicated oil like *Narayana taila* can be used. *Karñatarpaṇa* is nourishing ear by oil drops to prevent *Badhira* (deafness) and *Uchchhaih shruti* (partial deafness). Exercise increases the stamina of the body, efficiency of the vital organs, strengthen heart muscle, reduces the blood pressure, fat ; improves circulation, prevent the back pain, control sugar in the blood, improve sleeping time, clear the *Srotas* etc. Old people should go for walk daily. *Snana* (bathing) helps in removing sweat and impurities of the body. It enhances the digestive power, appetite and strength. After *Snana*, person should wear clean clothes and should do the worship to relieve stress and to feel the positive energy.

During old age, people face a lot of problems like *Arocaka* (anorexia), *Smritinasha* (dementia), *Manovasada* (depression), stroke, poor dentition, delayed gastric emptying, oral infections, taste change etc. Dehydration is the most common problem which is noticed in old age people and therefore fluid intake should be increased. Due to deficiency of vitamin C and D, their intake should be increased through nuts, milk, *Pravala Pishti*, *Pravala Pancamrita* etc. Proper *Ahara* is necessary for nourishment, strength, increasing life span, *Ojas*, *Bala* and *Agni*.

➤ *Sadavritta*

It focuses on developing right balance between mind and body for the growth of a person. To achieve a healthy & wealthy life person should follow *Sadavritta*. One should be free from lies, greed, grief, fear, pride and excessive passion.

➤ *Ratricharya*

Nidra is a process of repairing damaged cells. It promotes strength and balance of *Dhatu*s. During *Ratricharya*, one should consume *Laghu bhojan*. Before sleeping relax the mind and be thankful to the god for everything.

➤ *Ritucharya*

Environment has direct influence on the health and therefore person should adapt to proper *Ahara* and *Vihara* according to the season. During *Varsha ritu*, person should eat *Madhur-amlalavan, laghu, snigdha dravyas*. Person should consume water kept in mud vessel, *Madhur* diet, plenty of liquid diet in the *Grishma Ritu*. During *Sharad Ritu* intake of *Madhur, Tikta, Kashay, Laghu*, rice, green gram etc should be preferred. [6-10]

CONCLUSION

According to *Ayurveda*, there is no shortcut for a healthy life and to achieve it one should follow strict set of rules. It includes proper routine of *Ahara, Vihara* and *Acharas*. Geriatric care requires maintenance of *Ama, Agni* and *Ojas*. *Rasayana* therapy provides rejuvenation effect and

therefore it should be combined with the *Swasthivritta* to obtain best results. Physical care, mental care and social health are important aspects of geriatric care. *Vridhnavastha* is a *Swabhavik Vyadhi* and everyone has right to enjoy every stage of their life. *Swasthivritta* is a concept of prevention of diseases. By following rules of *Swasthivritta* as preventive measures along with *Panchankarma* and *Rasayan dravyas*, one can achieve a long and healthy life.

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