

A CRITICAL REVIEW ON VIRUDDHA AHARA: CONCEPTUAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Ahara plays an important role in our life. Actually, our healthy life mainly depends on the different types of Ahara which we consume in our daily routine. So Acharya Charak mentioned Ahara in the three Upastambha of Ayurveda. Viruddha Ahara, or incompatible diet, is a very important issue discussed by ancient Ayurveda. The substances which are contrary to dhatus behave with Viruddha to them. This Viruddha Ahara may be in terms of properties, combination, processing, place, time, dose etc. or natural composition. The main aim of this review article is to compile and evaluate the concept of Viruddha Ahara. All the descriptions of Viruddha Ahara mentioned in different Ayurvedic texts were critically analyzed and discussed to check their relation. After critically analyzed it is concluded that if due to Viruddha Ahara, various types of diseases appear in our body, so we should take the Ahara according to Ayurvedic concepts mentioned in different Ayurvedic texts.

KEYWORDS: Ahara, Upastambha, Incompatible diet, Viruddha Ahara.**INTRODUCTION**

Viruddha Anna or incompatible diet is very important issue discussed by ancient Ayurveda workers. It is said to be the cause of many systemic disorders as per Ayurveda literature. Persons who consume Viruddha Ahara are prone to many disorders. It is very important to correlate the mechanism as to how Viruddha Ahara is a cause of many metabolic disorders. It is also essential to know how certain food combinations interact with each other and create a disease. Viruddha Ahara is defined by Charaka.^[1] He clearly says that certain diet and its combinations, which interrupts the metabolism of tissue, which inhibits the process of formation of tissue and which have the opposite property to the tissue are called as Viruddha Anna or incompatible diet.

The food which is wrong in combination, has undergone wrong processing, consumed in incorrect dose, and/or consumed in incorrect time of the day and in wrong season can lead to Viruddha Ahara. With the help of modern technology and biochemistry aspects, it becomes easy to elaborate the effect of Viruddha Ahara. Food-food interaction is a serious issue but not much alerted one. Most of these food-food interactions are harmless but it is always better to know about some of them. The literal meaning of word Viruddha is opposite. It sounds that the food combination of certain type of food may have -

- Opposite properties
- Opposite activities on the tissues

- May exert some unwanted effect on the body when processed in a particular form
- May exert undesirable effects, when combined in certain proportion
- May have unwanted effect if consumed at wrong time.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

- The whole article is based on literary review collected from classical Ayurvedic text and their respective commentaries is Sanskrit as well as Hindi have been referred for this literary work.

According to Acharya Charaka

Any food that dislodges the doshas (morbid humours) but does not expel them from the body is referred to be Viruddhahara. The Substance which are contrary to dehadhatu behave with virodha (antagonist) to them is called Viruddha ahara.^[2]

According to Acharya Sushruta

In the 20th chapter of Sutrasthana, Hitahitiyam Adhaya, Acharya Sushruta explains many notes of Viruddhahara; including Karma viruddha (functionally incompatible), Maana viruddha (quantitatively incompatible), Samyoga viruddha (unsalutary combinations) and Rasa viruddha (Incompatibilities amongst two tastes).^[3]

According to Acharya Vagbhatta

Any food that dislodges the doshas (morbid humours) but does not expel them from the body is referred to be

viruddha ahara.^[4]

Ayurveda literature has described various types of *Viruddha Ahara*,^[5] which can be summarized as follows:

1. *Desha* (place) *Viruddha*
2. *Kala Viruddha*
3. *Agni Viruddha*
4. *Matra* (quantity) *Viruddha*
5. *Satmya* (wholesome) *Viruddha*
6. *Dosha Viruddha*
7. *Sanskar* (mode of preparation) *Viruddha*
8. *Veerya* (potency) *Viruddha*
9. *Koshtha Viruddha*
10. *Avastha* (state of health) *Viruddha*
11. *Kram* (sequence) *Viruddha*
12. *Parihar Viruddha*
13. *Upachar* (treatment) *Viruddha*
14. *Paak* (cooking) *Viruddha*
15. *Samyoga* (combination) *Viruddha*
16. *Hriday Viruddha*
17. *Sampad* (richness of quality) *Viruddha*
18. *Vidhi* (rules for eating) *Viruddha*

Examples of incompatibility/antagonistic (*Viruddha -Aahara*)

1. *Veerya Viruddha* (potency incompatibility) — fish + milk.
2. *Sanskar Viruddha* (processing incompatibility) — heated honey.
3. *Matra Viruddha* (dose incompatibility) — honey + cow's ghee mixed in equal proportion.
4. *Krama Viruddha* — hot water after taking honey.
5. *Kala Viruddha* — (time incompatibility) pungent substance in summer and cold substances in winter.
6. *Krama Viruddha* (order incompatibility) — consuming curd at night. Taking *Madhura Rasa* food or *Dravya* at the end of meals and *Tikta* and *Katu Rasa Dravyas* (food substances) at the starting of meals.
7. *Samyoga Viruddha* (combination incompatibility) — fruit salad or milk + banana.
8. *Parihar Viruddha* (contraindication incompatibility) — consuming cold water immediately after having hot tea or coffee.

Diseases due to food incompatibility

Maharshi Charka mentions that such types of unwholesome diet can lead to diseases like abdominal distension, stiffness in neck, varieties of anaemia, indigestions, insanity, various skin diseases, diseases of intestines, fever, rhinitis, and infertility etc. It can be observed from the above list that *Viruddha Ahara* can lead to disorders up to impotency, infertility, and defects in pregnancy, thus it has an impact up to *Shukra Dhatu Dushti*.^[6] If the above list of diseases is classified as per the body system, it can be said that, immune system, endocrine system, digestive system, nervous system, and circulatory systems are affected by continuous consumption of *Viruddha Ahara*.

According to *Vagbhata* diseases occurs due to *Virudha Ahara* are *Atisara*, *Ajeerna*, *Krimi*, *Vishaphota*, *Shopa*, *Mada*, *Vidradhi*, *Gulma*, *Rajayakshma*, *Jwara*, *Raktapitta*, *Ahtomahagada*.^[7]

Madhava has included *Viruddha Ahara* is one among the etiological factor of the following conditions- *Atisara*, *Krimi*, *Unmada*, *Vatarakta*, *Amavata*, *Shoola*, *Kushta*, *Amlapitta*, *Ashrugdhara*, *Masurika*.^[8]

Food incompatibilities in Today's Perspective

Viruddha Ahara can lead to inflammation at a molecular level. Number of food incompatibilities is mentioned in old *Ayurvedic* literature, such as *Charaka* and *Sushruta Samhitas*. Along with these types of food combinations some are also use in today's era. We have to identify those new food incompatibilities which are used today in day-to-day life as per *Ayurvedic* perspective and made research on them and has to create awareness in public about its consequences.

Virudha Ahara can be categorized into:

1. *Karma Virudha*,
2. *Krama Virudha*,
3. *Veerya Virudha* and so on.

Such food combinations can prove harmful, which may be imparting its untoward effects on immune system, cellular metabolism, and growth hormone. A new branch called topography (a science related to combination of food) is emerging, which tells about the combination of basic categories of the food. As per this science proteins must not get combined with starch and carbohydrates and may be consumed differently.

1. Consuming proteins and starches together will result in delayed absorption.
2. Similarly eating sugars and acid fruits hinder the action of ptyalin and pepsin, reducing the secretion of saliva, and delaying digestion. If insufficient amylase is present in the mouth, starch will not be digested at all in the stomach, instead clogging up the works until amylase in the small intestine can get to work on it.^[9]

This unwanted effect of wrong combinations of food is not limited up to gastrointestinal tract, but may affects the major systems of the body. Such reactions can be less important but on long term, it can be fatal to precipitating serious side effects.

Virudha Ahara we are taking now-a-days unknowingly, are more harmful. For example;

a) Green tea or black tea and milk - Tea contains flavonoids called catechus, which have many beneficial effects on the heart.

When milk is added to tea, then a group of proteins in milk, called caseins interact with the tea to reduce the concentration of catechus. So, avoid tea and milk together.

b) Milk and yoghurt - As you know consuming both

together can precipitate milk inside the stomach that may irritate and induce vomiting. So, avoid milk and yoghurt together.

c) Tea and garlic - Tea contains anticoagulant compounds called coumarin. When combined with garlic (that also has anticlotting properties), they may increase the risk of bleeding, so better to avoid tea and garlic together.^[10]

d) Pomegranate juice and grapefruit juice - Pomegranate juice and grapefruit juice are both known to block the cytochrome P450 3A4 enzyme in the intestine and increase blood levels of many medications you are taking. Taking these two juices together may synergize the above action.^[11]

e) Unripe (green) tomatoes or potatoes and alcohol - The unripe green tomatoes contain huge amount of solanine, which may interact with alcohol. You may feel more sedation if the intake is more.^[12]

DISCUSSION

Mode of Action of Viruddha Ahara

Association between dietary pattern and diseases has always been a field of interest among the health professionals. Frequent intake of combination of incompatible food leads in to production of toxins. Then in the alimentary tract this toxins provoke all *Doshas* and which get mixed with digestive juice and then *Rasa Dhatu* and so on it spread from one *Dhatu* to next *Dhatu*. Thus, this *Doshas* spread from *Koshtha* (gut) to *Shakha* (*Dhatu*s and skin). While travelling through all over the body where ever there is *Khavaigunya* (inherent deformity) it gets lodged and shows the symptoms of the diseases. Effects of incompatible food can be classified in to *Aashukari* (acute) and *Chirakari* (chronic) which may be modified in the form of symptoms or diseases.

Viruddha Ahara taken regularly could induce inflammation at a molecular level, disturbing the eicosanoid pathway creating more arachidonic acid leading to increased prostaglandin-2 and thromboxane, this inflammatory effect is an important effect as these all are the basic pathologies that create *Agni Mandya*, *Ama*, and a number of metabolic disorders.

The growth and maintenance of body tissues depend on the intake of proper food. The nutrients like proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and certain active principles present in various food/drugs are essential for performing various functions of the body.

The management of *Virudha Ahara* induced diseases - it is advisable to intimate the therapy with *Amapachana* with *Vishahara* drugs like *Shunti*, *Haridra*, and *Shirisha*, any incompatibility among the drugs of formation in terms of *Rasa*, *Virya* and *Vipaka* may alter the therapeutic activity.^[9]

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The person who habitually takes *Viruddha Aahara* should be subjected to either of *Shodhana therapy*

mainly *Vamana* (therapeutic emesis) and *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation) or *Shamana* (pacifying) therapy denending upon the *Doshik* vitiation with drugs which are qualitatively opposite to such *Viruddha Aahara*.^[10] Along with drug therapy gradual shift from unwholesome diet to wholesome diet should be done with care. Sudden change of dietary pattern may not be suitable for the person so this must be done in slow manner.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it is clear that *Viruddha Ahara* is an important aspect of today's improper dietary habits. *Viruddha Anna* can lead to various disorders. This unknowingly can lead to several hazardous diseases even death in the patients. Therefore, it is important to enlist the causative incompatible dietary factors and advise the patients to avoid such etiological factors (*Nidana Parivarjana*) especially, the children who nowadays consume a lot of flavoured food items and fried chips (potato, corn) etc. Here the role of preservatives and the salts used are said to have carcinogenic effects. *Ahara* is not only meant for maintenance of health but is also very important in the curative aspect while treating various diseases. Similarly, patients of food poisoning and adverse effects of preservatives may be treated with same line of treatment. The need of the study is to increase awareness and consciousness among the general public about hazards of Incompatible Food. *Acharya Charaka* mentioned that diseases caused by intake of *Viruddha Aahara* (incompatible foods and drugs) can be cured by following therapies- *Vaman Karma* (Medicated Emesis), *Virechana* (Purgation), Administration of Antidotes (Administration of substances which are of converse qualities), Taking Prophylactic measures. We should follow the rules and regulation related to *Ahara* as per mentioned in classical *Ayurvedic* texts. Layman should follow Panchakarma Therapy as a preventive measure according to specific Season which is described in *Ayurvedic* texts.

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