

**STUDY OF ASHTA AHAR VIDHI VISHESHAYATANE BY AYURVEDA: A REVIEW****Dr. Ramesh M. Bansode*¹ and Vd. Supriya Chikhalekar²**¹PG Scholar, Department of Kriya Sharir, Government Ayurved College, Nanded.²Professor, Department of Kriya Sharir, Government Ayurved College, Nanded.***Corresponding Author: Dr. Ramesh M. Bansode**

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ABSTRACT

In present era, diet and lifestyle are major factors thought to influence susceptibility to many diseases. Ayurveda places special emphasis on *Ahara* and believes that healthy nutrition nourishes the mind, body, and soul. According to *Ayurveda* the living human body and diseases that afflict it are both the product of *Ahara*. *Ahara* is considered as one of the key pillars (*Upstambhas*) of life in Ayurveda. Nowadays people forget the basic principles of healthy food. Due to a lack of information or incorrect information about healthy food many lifestyle diseases are taking place. *Ayurveda* strongly believes the reason for all disease lies within our digestive process. What we eat reflects upon our body and mind. *Acharya Charak* mentions food as *prana* or life of living beings if taken properly but if taken in a faulty manner may cause death. 1.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda, ahara, Upstambhas, prana.***INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda defines health as balance of *Dosha, Agni, Dhātu and Mala*, as well as the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. This definition of health is in coherence with WHO's definition of Health as "A state of Physical, mental, Social and spiritual wellbeing and not merely an absence of disease."

1) *Ayurveda* places special emphasis on *Ahara* and believes that healthy nutrition nourishes the body, mind and soul.

2) Nowadays, many lifestyle diseases are increasing day by day due to incorrect eating practices and cookery procedures.

3) In *Ayurveda* classics emphasis has been laid regarding the right way to eating food.

4) Food consumed in the right manner serves as nectar to rejuvenate the body and maintaining the health.

5) *Ayurveda* offers some basic dietary guidelines that include choosing appropriate food, combinations of food, cooking methods, quality & quantity of food, nature of consumer, geographical and environmental conditions etc.

6) *Ayurveda* classics describe all these aspects in a very systematic and scientific manner which is called as *Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatane*.

Need of study

These are 8 major aspects of food convention that includes compatibility of food articles which are determinant factors for the maintenance of Health. It gives a fair idea about what?

When? Why? How? and Which?

- 1) Prakriti or Nature of food articles
- 2) Samskara or method of their processing
- 3) Combination
- 4) Quantity
- 5) Habitat
- 6) Time
- 7) Rules governing intake of food.
- 8) Wholesomeness to individual who takes it.

1. Prakriti

The nature of the food. Depending on whether the food is easily digestible or not, food can be classified in heavy and light qualities. Meat is heavy for digestion while rice and vegetables are lighter. This is the basic nature of the food and while eating we must take this into consideration.

1) original qualities of food and medicine are expected here.

2) *masha- guru*
Mudga- laghu

3) acc to *prakriti* we must have advice it

4) season

5) time

There are two types of food-the one which is easily digestible is known as light food and that which take time to digest is known as heavy food; such as black gram(heavy) and green gram (light).

2. Preparation

Processing is nothing but transformation of food to various forms. These properties are infused by contact of water and fire, cleaning, storing, maturing, flavoring etc.

- 1) *Jal Sanyog*: The matter of hard properties turn soft due to combination of water. Example: Cold Infusion, Soaking of Rice in water.
2. *Agni Sanyog*: Though Rice is heavy by nature but turns light after heating. Example : peya
3. *Shauch* (Purification): Generally the poison has the nature to kill but if treated and purified according to ayurvedic method it turns to healer of diseases.
- 4) *Manthan* (Churning): Generally, Curd if used in excess or in an inappropriate manner can cause edema and swelling. At the same time when it is churned with ghee (clarified Butter) it removes the same edema or swelling caused by the inappropriate affect of the same.
5. *Desh* (Locality): The characteristics and features of the food material and drug/medicines changes according to the locality.
6. Time-Period: Fresh Grains are heavy in nature, these grains get light after one year and more. Ayurveda recommends the light turned grain consumption i.e. After one year or more. Although the weight shows only negligible change.-rice, jaggary.
7. *Bhawna* (Trituration): Some species of Aconitum are poisonous. When it is titrated with cow urine for 3 days the species gets purified and can be significantly used in small doses forms.

3. Combination (samyoga)

It is the aggregation of two or more substances. This exhibits peculiarities which are not seen in case of individual substances. Every food entity have some kind of particular action. When they are combined with two or more entities, sometime they become poison and sometimes the action gets enhanced.

For example: honey and ghee are very beneficial for the body individually but when they are consumed together in equal proportion, they become poison and can leads to death. The same is true for fish and milk also.

4. Quantity (Rasi)

Rasi consists of *sarvagraha* (total amount) and *parigraha* (individual amount) which ascertain the results of the food taken in proper and improper quantity.

Quantity of food is very important because it bestows the power of digestion. If the food is heavy to digest, then half of the quantity must be taken from that is required. For the easily digestible food, quantity should not be more than that is required. This is because, 1/3 part of our stomach should be filled with food, next 1/3 part with liquid and remaining 1/3 should be left empty. This makes the digestion easy.

5. Desh

Ayurveda has divided place in three types -marshy, arid and normal. Also we have to consider the place in

relation with temperature and cold climate condition. Food must be eaten in place, which is clean. If the surroundings are good and *sattvic*, the food is better absorbed and has good effect on the body and mind.

Habitat (Desh) – Desh denotes place relating to growth as well as distribution of the substances and also the suitability in respect of place. The food produced in desert area increases the Vata and that which grows in marshy land increases *Kapha*. And the food which is grown in moderate climate is good for health. The area in which we dwell also has to be considered and suitable food has to be consumed. Desh also refers to our body, hence age and nature of body also has to be considered under this.

6. Time

When the previous food has been properly digested then only the next should be consumed. One must also change the type of the food as well as its quantity and quality depending on the seasonal changes. The main meal must be taken between 10 to 2 in the afternoon, which is Pitta time.

The conditional one is related to disorder while the eternally moving one to seasonal suitability. Also time (*kala*) refers to both time and the age. Some food should not be taken during night, egg curd.

7. Upayog sanstha

- 1) Food must be while it is hot. This will naturally increase the digestive fire.
- 2) Meals must be taken in relaxed, calm and cheerful atmosphere. Similarly eating too slowly or too rapidly, eating while talking, laughing, thinking or watching television is also not advisable. One should not eat, when the person is nervous, angry, anxious, or in disturbed state of mind. It is better if we concentrate on the food only with the thought that this food is going to benefit my body and mind. Smoking or drinking too much water or any other liquid after eating is not advisable.

8. Upayokta

Person taking food (*Upayokta*) – Upayokta is that who consumes the food. One should take the food only which is compatible for him. It depends on '*Oka-satmya*' i.e. suitability developed by practice. Every person must take into consideration, his own capacity of his digestive power, the season, time of day & whether the previously taken food has been digested or not.

DISCUSSION

Adequate nutrition is the basic need for healthy life but without knowing proper dietary guidelines one cannot gain optimum benefit from the food consumed. There are many guidelines related to diet and its contents in modern aspect but the *Ayurvedic* approach has its unique importance. *Acharya Charak* has given *ahara vidhi vidhan* (dietary guidelines) which can prevent many diseases arising merely due to faulty dietary habits.

Every person must take into consideration his own constitution, capacity of his digestive power, the season, time of day, and whether the previously taken food has been digested or not.

CONCLUSION

Viewing the above points it can be conclude that *ahara* should be taken according to *ahara vidhi vidhan* (dietary guidelines) are truly scientific as mentioned by our *Acharyas*. Many diseases can be pre-sing merely due to faulty dietary habits. Healthier eating habits may help risk for type-2 diabetes, heart dis-ease, stroke, cancer, infertility and many other health problems.

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