

**INFLUENCE OF AYURVEDOKTA AHARA-VIHARA FOR DEERGHAYU
– A REVIEW**

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda Prayojnam “Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam” Prevention & “Aturasya Vikar Prashmanam” manage the disorders for a healthy life. In the present Era Over stress, Lack of exercise, Heavy work load, Smoking, Alcohol, Pollutions, Consumption of unhealthy and preserved food, impaired digestive and metabolism, reduces immune system, which affects functioning of body and leads to variety of life style disorders like Dyslipidemia, Hypertension, Stroke, Cardiovascular disease, Hypothyroidism, Diabetes, PCOD, Cancer etc. For healthy body we have to need proper Ahara, Vihara and Nidra. Ayurveda has mentioned three sub pillars, which helps to maintain three pillars (Three Dosha) of living body. The body being sustained by the right use of these three subpillars, grows in strength, complexion and development and endures for the full pre-ordained span of life. Among them Food plays an important role as it causes immediate nourishment, strength and support to the body. It increases the expectancy of life, brilliance, enthusiasm, memory, Ojas and digestive capacity. A man always becomes healthy only when he properly follows Dinacarya (daily regimens), Nisacarya (night regimens) and Ritucarya (seasonal regimens), otherwise he will become diseased. A person is devoid of diseases, if he regularly consumes suitable diet and follows suitable deeds.

KEYWORDS- *Ayurveda, Ahara, Vihara, Swasthya, Charya, Longevity*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda in Sanskrit means ‘Science of life’. For fulfilling the quest of longevity *Bharadwaj* seek *Ayurveda* from *Indra*. The propagation of *Ayurveda* is as follows

BRAHMA



DAKSHA PRAJAPATHI



ASWINIKUMARAS



INDRA



BHARDWAJA

Along with system of preventive medicine, *Ayurveda* also emphasizes a healthful and

enlightened lifestyle a concept that's gaining wide acceptance across the globe. *Ayurveda* has first emphasis on *Ahara*, *Vihar* and *Nidra* of healthy person, which are important for healthy body. Persons, who wish to prolong their healthy life, which is essential and instrumental in achieving *Dharma* (righteousness), *Artha* (materialistic uses such as earning money) and *Sukha* (pleasure achieved in this mortal world and pleasure going to be achieved in the immortal world after death) have to follow or obey the preaching of *Ayurveda* which is the wisdom of life whole heartedly with endeavour. Period between birth and death is known as life. Long life means this period is more. During this period there is constant wear and tear, growth of body, reproduction to adjust according to the circumstance all these functions are carried out by the organs, tissue and cells of the body during the whole life. *Vaidyajivana* describes that 'If a man uses *Pathya* there is no need of any medication and if the patient doesn't observe *Pathya* and indulges in *Apathya* the medicine will not act. Hence, it may be said that treatment can be carried by regulated and wholesome or salutary diet without the use of medicine¹.

Ahara

'*Ahara*' is that – what we eat. It includes everything we eat or drink. *Ahara* is the cause of the birth, maintenance and destruction of all forms of life on this earth. From 'Diet' only we acquire following things–*Abhivruddhi* (constant growth), *bala* (energy), *Arogya* (well being-Health), *Varna* (colour), *Indriya Prasadatwa* (proper functioning of the *Indriyas* (sense organs)). *Aharavaishamya* (improper diet) is the cause

of *Aswasthya* (illness)². According to *Ayurveda* body is said to be made up of *Panchamahabhutas* (pentads) and hence the food also needs to be *Panchabhautic* (made up of *Panch* (five) *Mahabhutas*) then only food can get digested and be utilised for *Panchamahabhutas* (the basic constituents of body) which in turn result in growth of body³. The diet should be made up of all the six *Rasas* (*Shadarasatmak*) i.e. *Madhur* (sweet), *Amla* (sour), *Lavana* (salty), *Katu* (hot), *Tikta* (bitter), *Kashaya* (astringent). It has also been stated that according to the properties diet again can be of 2 types i.e. *Guru* and *Laghu* i.e. Heavy to digest – *Guru* and easy to digest – *Laghu*. The substances which are wholesome / salutary to the body or channels of the body and substances which are pleasing or which bring delightfulness to the mind are known as *Pathya*⁴. On the contrast *Apathya* are unwholesome or unsalutary substances, adversely affects the body and are unpleasant to the mind. As a matter of fact, the concept of *Pathyapathya* is similar to the concept of *Upasayanupsaya* and refers to the entire spectrum of good and bad in the range of both *Ahara* and *Vihara*.

Vihara

Vihara means the procedure and routine to be observed during health and disease. *Vihara* (lifestyle) is accumulative product of our natural physical capacity at co-ordination with its mental functioning, consisting of habits, behaviour, every day diet and living pattern, family history and the environment in which we grow. The Modern world is currently facing an epidemic of lifestyle related diseases like Diabetes, Obesity, Heart diseases etc which

primarily result from stress, improper diet and irregular or sedentary lifestyle (lack of discipline and physical activity). *Ayurveda* believes that in order to achieve and maintain healthy living (*Arogya*), it is essential to practice a healthy *Vihar-Dincharya*, *Rutucharya*, *Nidra*, *Yoga*, *Sadvritta* and *Achara Rasayana*.

Types of Ahara

Peya (drinkable), *Lehya* (lickable), *Adya* (chewable), *Bhakshya* (eatables, snacks) are to be understood as more heavy (difficult for digestion) in their succeeding order⁵.

Matra

One should take food in proper quantity. This quantity of food depends on the power of digestion. The food taken in proper quantity provides certainly strength, complexion and happy life to the person without disturbing normalcy⁶. Considering four parts of the stomach, one should take food such that 2 parts of the stomach get filled by the solid food taken, one part to be filled by water or other liquid matter and one part should be kept free for the *Vayu* to move⁷. *Guru* food may be consumed only upto half the way before the point of satisfaction. *Laghu* food may be taken in only upto the point of satity. The limited quantity is defined again as the quantity, which gets digested on time without causing any type of difficulty during the process of digestion.

Indicated food

One should take usually *Sastika*, *Sali*, *Mudga*, *Saindhava*, *Amalaka*, Barley, Rain water, Milk, Ghee and Honey. It should take as a daily routine the articles which maintain the health and prevent the unborn disorders⁸.

Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatan

There are eight specific factors of method of dieting such as – *Prakriti* (Nature), *Karana* (Processing), *Samyoga* (Combination), *Rasi* (Quantity), *Desa* (Place), *Kala* (Time), *Upayogasamstha* (Rules for dieting), *Upayokta* (Who consumes the food)⁹.

Acharya *Charaka* has prescribed method of dieting for healthy and the sick who takes wholesome food timely and usually- one should eat warm, unctuous, in proper quantity, after the previous food is digested, non- antagonistic, in favourable place, with all the favourable accessories, not too fast, not too slow, not while talking or laughing and with full concentration after due consideration to the self.

Ahara Parinamkar Bhavas

These are the factors leading to transformation of food such as – *Usma* (digest), *vayu* (absorbs), *Kleda* (produces looseness), *Sweda* (generates softness), time and balanced use brings about the equilibrium of *Dhatu*s which are the products of digestion¹⁰.

Asana Vicara-regimen of food

The twelve kinds (qualities) of food such as *Sita* (cool), *Usna* (hot), *Snigdha* (unctuous fatty), *Ruksa* (dry, fatless), *Drava* (Liquid), *Suska* (dry), *Ekakala* (once a day), *Dvikala* (twice a day), *Ausadhayukya* (mixed with medicine), *Matrahina* (less in quantity), *Dosaprasamamana* (mitigating the *dosas*) and *vrtyartha* (protecting health)¹¹.

Vihara

Dincharya

Dincharya means healthy and sustainable pattern of lifestyle obeying the biological cycles of nature. To achieve this, *Ayurveda* prescribes a specific routine in general, also taking into consideration the *Prakriti* or

constitution of every individual. *Dincharya* practises include waking up early in the morning, elimination of our natural wastes, maintaining oral hygiene (cleaning teeth and tongue etc), exercising regularly, body massage, bathing, clothing, eye care, nasal care etc.

BRAHMA MUHURTA: A healthy person has to awake or get up from his bed in the *Brahma Muhurta* to safe guard his own life¹².

ABHYANGA: *Abhyanga* (oil bath) is advocated daily. It prevents old age and uncontrolled tiredness and *Vata* diseases. It promotes vision, tissue nourishment, life span, sleep, skin texture and stamina. It is done with intensity on head, ear and feet.¹³

SNANA: Regular bathing enhances appetite, acts as an aphrodisiac, increases life span, and promotes lustre and strength. It subsides itching sensation, impurities, tiresomeness, sweat, drowsiness, thirst, burning sensation in skin.¹⁴

NASYA: Every year one should use *Anutaila* for *Nasya* thrice a day in early rains, autumn and spring when the sky is free from clouds. By this one not get attacked suddenly by disorders of part above *Jatru* and even in advanced years, old age does not find strength in his best organ(head)¹⁵.

VASTRADHARANAM: Wearing clean clothes enhances charm, fame, life span, removes inauspiciousness, produces pleasure, auspiciousness and eligibility for a congregation.¹⁶

GANDHAMALYA DHARANAM: Use of fragrances and garlands is aphrodisiac, produces good smell, longevity, charm,

nourishment and strength, pleasing manners and destroys inauspiciousness.¹⁷

RATNADHARANA: Wearing of gems and ornaments promotes, wealth, auspiciousness, longevity, prosperity, destroys calamity, produces happiness, charms and *Ojas*.¹⁸

PADA MALAMARGA PRAKSHALANA: Cleaning of feet and excretory orifices frequently promotes intelligence, purity, longevity and destroys inauspiciousness and dirt.¹⁹

KESHA NAKHADIKARTANA: Cutting of hair, beard, moustaches, nail etc, and hair dressing is nutritive, aphrodisiac, life promoter and provides cleanliness and beautification.²⁰

DANDA DHARANA: Use of stick to support a slipping person, averts enemies, gives strength and longevity and destroys fears.²¹

ADHARANIYA VEGAS: Natural urges should not be controlled forcibly. The urges are *Vata* (Flatus), *Vit* (defaecation), *Mutra* (Urination), *Ksavadhu* (Sneezing), *Trt* (Thirst), *Ksudha* (Hunger), *Nidra* (Sleep), *Kasa* (Cough), *Sramasvasa* (Exertional breath), *Jrmbha* (Yawning), *Asru* (Tears), *Chardi* (Vomiting) and *Retas* (Ejaculation of semen). All the diseases are generated either due to forcible control or forcible expulsion of natural urges.²²

DHARANIYA VEGAS: A person, who wishes the best in this mortal world as well as in the immortal world, has to control psychological urges. They are *Lobha* (Greediness), *Irsya* (Jealousy), *Dwesh* (Hatred), *Matsarya* (Malicious or envious nature) and *Raga* (Attachments). One should also have control over his sensory stimulations²³.

Rtucharya

The year has got six parts according to division into seasons. Amongst them the the period of three seasons – from Sisira to Grisma – is known as Adana when the sun takes northward course. The period of other three seasons from Varsha to Hemanta is Visarga with the sun following its southern course. One's diet leads to promotion of strength and complexion only if he knows the wholesomeness according to season depend on behaviour and diet.²⁴

Nidra

The duos of our life like *Sukha* and *Dukha*, *Pusti* and *Karsya*, *Balas* and *Abala*, *Vrsata* and *Klibata*, *Jnana* and *Ajanana*, *Jivitam* and *Najivitam* are entirely dependent upon the sleep regimen. If a person sleeps during daytime or sleeps in excess or sleeps less than needed, that type of regimen diminishes the health and life span of a person like the process of annihilation²⁵.

Sadvritta

Sadvritta comprises of two words 'Sat' meaning good and 'Vritta' meaning *acara* or regimen, *Sadvritta* not only includes mental faculties, but also rules related with general hygiene, religion, food consumption, sexual intercourse and exercise, following which leads to prevention of psychological, physical, psychosomatic disorder. By this one can maintain a long and healthy life.²⁶

Yoga

That which unites is *Yoga*. It is the state of balance between failure and win or body and mind. According to Swami Aravinda 'Role of *Yoga* is around personality development in physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and intellectual level. *Yoga* stimulates our concentration and can help eliminate toxins

from our body. It is also known to produce harmony between the body and nature through the three basic aspects of human elements, the mind, mental, spiritual. This helps to improve immunity and builds resistance against diseases.²⁷

Achara Rasayana

The person who is truthful free from anger, abstaining from wine and women, nonviolent, non-exerting, calm, sweet-spoken, engaged in *japa* and cleanliness, perseverant etc. One can never attain the fruits of *Rasayana* if he is not undergone grossly the process of elimination of his physical as well as mental impurities. The formulation meant for providing longevity and alleviating senility and disease²⁸.

DISCUSSION

Longevity according to *Ayurveda*, means a complete balance in body, mind and soul, and then living a long life. Without this balance, a person cannot enjoy the real benefit of longevity; a state of permanent happiness and peace. In *Ayurveda* the person tries to attain longevity not only to satisfy the physical aspiration, but also to fulfil the needs of mind and soul. *Ayurveda* mentioned many ways of Regimens for attaining the longevity. By proper intake of *Ahara*, in proper quantity and in proper way helps in the proper digestion and metabolism, which maintains the healthy body. *Vihara* explained is not only for getting a healthy body but also for maintaining a healthy mind. These daily observances were encouraged in order to maintain the synchronicity of Circadian rhythms with time of the day, night and seasons (*Dinacarya*, *Ratricharya* and *Ritucharya* respectively) and to help ward

off all acute or chronic condition that have a deleterious influence on the ageing process.

CONCLUSION

The body is vehicle on which one rides to their destination. If the body is weak or sick, one cannot function properly and cannot achieve the goals of life. Therefore for longevity, good health is very important. There are rules, living styles and diets according to personal constitution and according to various seasons, which are good for life and health. There are more instructions relating to proper mixing of food items, proper eating, proper exercise and timely cleansing of metabolic waste from the body, proper diet and regimen during sickness and proper quality and quantity of food taken. These factors are responsible for a good or bad status of life.

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