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Review Article

Revealing The Concept Of *Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana* In ModernRashi Sharma¹ Sunil Kumar²1.MD scholar, Department of *Sharir Rachana*, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur2.Professor, Department of *Sharir Rachana*, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur

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Abstract

Ayurveda is one of the oldest healthcare systems which emphasizes on protecting the health of a healthy human being and taking care of diseased too. Health is basically a balance between three fundamental states i.e. Physical, Mental and Spiritual states and their relationship with the external environment. *Ahara*(food) which we eat is one of the most important and foremost content of *Tri-Upastambha*(*Ahara*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*). *Ahara* acts as a relationship manager between internal body and external environment. Classical texts of *Ayurveda* cover an array of themes on food. *Charaka Samhita* has very scientifically explained the *Ahara vidhi visheshayatana* which enlightens qualitative characteristics of food, its processing manners, combinations, quantity, seasonal variations ,dietary rules.This paper can reinvent the concepts of health and nutrition in *Ayurveda* and develop a healthy perspective in

advanced era of systems biology.In today's era due to lack of knowledge about concept of *Ahara vidhi visheshayatana*(Rules of Eating) , individuals are facing Digestive distress. The

Digestive distress ultimately leads to several diseases of unknown etiology. If we adapt these rules of diet in our regime we can protect ourselves from such disorders.

Keywords: Ahara; Triupastambhas ;Nidra ;Vidhi ;Brahmacharya

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is one of the oldest healthcare system which emphasizes on protecting the health of a healthy person and taking care of diseased too.⁽¹⁾ Health is basically a balance between three fundamental states i.e Physical, Mental and Spiritual health and their relationship with the external environment. In classics of *Ayurveda* three desires of life are mentioned. They are *Praneshana, Dhaneshna, Parlokeshna*⁽²⁾. For the fulfillment of very first desire i.e. *Praneshana*, *Ahara* (food) is one of the most important aspect of human life. Moreover the third desire i.e. *Parlokeshna* is achieved by good *Laukik, Vedic* and *Mokshsadhak karma* which ultimately depends on *Ahara*. Among *Ahara, Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*- the three *upstambhas*⁽³⁾, *Ahara* is the foremost supporting pillar of life. It is the relationship manager between internal and external environment. *Ahara* is the only cause of production of *Rasa* and attributes towards balance of *doshas* and nutrition of *Dhatus*. All of them are basic fundamentals of *Ayurveda* which directly or indirectly depends on *Ahara*. The healthy body or the diseased one, both are directly controlled by *Ahara*.

Classical texts of *Ayurveda* covers an array of themes on food. The perspective of health and nutrition in *Ayurveda* is now-a-days a guideline for Modern Dietetics and

nutrition. The concept of food, way of eating, combinations, cooking methodologies is reinventing the concepts of *Ayurveda* in advanced era of systems biology and establishing them. A healthy Dietary Regimen along with an active lifestyle is the bedrock of good health. *Charak Samhita* has very scientifically explained the *Ahara vidhi visheshayatana* which enlightens Qualitative characteristics of food, Quantity, Processing manners, Combinations, Seasonal variations, Dietary rules.

In today's era due to lack of knowledge about concept of *Ahara vidhi* or Rules of Eating, individuals are facing Digestive distress. The work pressures and competitive environment along with this Digestive distress is causing several diseases of unknown etiology.

Ahara vidhi visheshayatana includes eight major aspects of food convention that are determinant factors for maintaining health.

Material and Methods

Classical literature of *Ayurveda*, National and international publications, Internet media, Previous research works.

Ashtha Ahara vidhi visheshayatana

Eight major aspects of food convention are⁽⁴⁾

- ❖ *Prakriti*- Qualitative characteristics of food
- ❖ *Karan*- Processing of food
- ❖ *Samyoga*- Combinations of food
- ❖ *Rashi* – Quantity of food
- ❖ *Desha* – Habitat of food
- ❖ *Kaal*- Time and Seasonal variations
- ❖ *Upayoga samstha*- Rules for dieting
- ❖ *Upayokta*- person who consumes food
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- ***Prakriti/ Qualitative aspect of food***- The basis principle applied in designing a Dietary Regimen. It describes the natural qualities of food with respect to its effects after digestion. Adequacy and Balance of diet- these two principles of modern Dietetics are covered under *Prakriti*. The food which we are consuming should contain proper amount of six nutrient classes i.e. water, carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins and minerals for performance of essential functions. Each nutrient class should be in a balanced proportion in that complete diet. *Charak* mentioned example of *Guru* and *laghu* pulses ie *urad* and *moong* respectively which is actually their adequacy of nutrient class and their effects after digestion.
- ***Karan /processing of food***- It is basically modification in properties of food stuff by various *sanskaras* i.e. *Jal sanyog*, *agni sanyog*, *shauch*, *manthan*, *desha*, *kaal*, *bhavna*, *kaalprakarsh* and *bhajana*. Michael Pollan discovers enduring power of four classical elements- fire, water, air, earth- to transform stuff of nature into delicious things to eat and drink . These factors help him to learn grilling, baking, fermenting etc. Which is ultimately the power of various *sanskaras* mentioned in *Ayurveda*.
- ***Sanyog/Combinations***- combinations of nutrients create magic in diet. If we see it in broader aspect ,it's simply principle of Density which means packing of most nutrients in a diet.
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- ***Rashi/Quantity***-After selecting what to eat "how much "factor should be analyzed. *Charak* has mentioned *Sarvagraha* and *Parigrahrashis* which in broader aspect is adequacy of diet and calorie control of diet respectively.
- ***Desh/Habitat***- Few areas are quite famous for top production of certain grains and pulses etc .Reason is soil, water content, environmental conditions which makes them nutritionally supplemented and thus habitat creates a difference.
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- ***Kaal/ Time and Seasonal variations***- It can be *Nityag* or *Avasthik*. *Nityag* is according to seasonal conditions, the food type that should be preferred and *Avasthik* is Dietary Regimen of diseased person .Every disease has it's own do's and don'ts condition for intake of type of food.
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- ***Upyogsanstha/Rules of Eating***- As stated in classics of *Ayurveda* ,*upyogsanstha* depends on *Jeerna lakshana* which is understood by symptoms like *udgaarshuddhi*, *Utsaah*, *yathochit vegautsarg*, *laghuta*, *shudha* (hunger), *pipasa* (thirst). Wide range of symptoms are described in *Ayurveda* stating when to eat food. Today's dieticians state "Eat when u are hungry and not when you are bored". Whole of *Ahara vidhi vidhan* comes under this.

Do's:-

- Food should be tasty, warm, Qualitative, unctuous and easily digestible
- It should be eaten neither too fast nor too slow .
- Food should be eaten only when hungry, after last meal has been digested.
- Should include all *rasa* ie sweet, salty, sour, pungent, bitter, astringent in daily diet.
- Should focus on food while eating.
- Should eat in comfortably sitting position.
- Should eat in pleasant surroundings with utensils and preparations of individuals choice.

Don'ts:-

- The food should not be incompatible with each other.
- Eating should not be in hurry.
- Should not be very slow either.
- Should not eat when emotionally upset.
- Should avoid too much use of any particular *rasa* (taste) .
- **Upyokta/User-** The principle of Moderation is related to user. It states that an individual if consuming a particular food

from very long time it would not create any problem because of “*oak satmya*”. Good nutrition does not have to be boring. So add variety to one's diet according to one's adaptability .

Discussion and Conclusion

Human body requires energy for all processes undergoing to maintain life, energy, repair and maintenance. To achieve a complete health , a well balanced diet is very essential . Diet is an important component of life and has either aggravating or pacifying effects on *doshas*. *Ayurveda* has described specific diet, food processing manners, planning of diet which if admired properly will keep homeostasis of *doshas*. Food rules described in *Ayurveda* are framed in terms of culture rather than science, though in many cases Science has confirmed what culture has long known, not surprisingly, these two different vocabularies often come to the same conclusion. So if we adapt these rules of Eating i.e. *Ahara vidhi visheshayatana* in our Dietary Regime we can protect individuals from disorders with unknown etiology and can achieve both aims of *Ayurveda*.

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