



LIFESTYLE DISORDERS AND ITS MANAGEMENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO GRAMYA AHARA: A SURVEY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of Ayurveda is maintaining health of the healthy and curing the diseased. The equilibrium of health if distorted and there is a continuous rise in lifestyle disorders by the changing diet and lifestyle of modern era, caused by factors like poor diet, stress and lack of exercises. *Gramya ahara* refers to the unwholesome dietary habits and behavioural patterns which has the capacity of vitiating all the *doshas* in the body. Lifestyle disorders like obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular issues, digestive problems etc are believed to arise when the *doshas* are disrupted. By embracing the approach of *gramya ahara* and aligning our diet with the rhythms of nature, we have the potential to prevent *dosha* imbalances and lifestyle disorders, fostering a state of equilibrium and vitality.

KEYWORDS : *Gramya ahara*, Lifestyle disorders, *Gramya vihara*, Unwholesome diet

INTRODUCTION

The concept of *gramya ahara* has been described by *Acharya Charaka* while describing *rasayana* in *charak Samhita*. It is the faulty dietary and lifestyle habits which vitiates all the *doshas*, *dhatu* and *mala* and has the potential of causing all diseases which necessitates the use of *rasayana* for its treatment.

Gramya ahara is the unwholesome dietary and lifestyle habits which disturbs the state of equilibrium of *dosha*, *dhatu* and *mala* of body and has the potential of causing all the lifestyle disorders like heart diseases, obesity, Type 2 Diabetes, stroke, Hypertension, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Asthma, Osteoporosis etc.

In today's world, medical science has done a lot of development and has managed to bring under control lots of diseases which were a threat to mankind in past years. Lifestyle disorders still remain a dilemma to our society though which is in continuous progression with passing years. It can be prevented, managed and cured by the ayurveda's approach of *gramya ahara*.

Gramya ahara is a category of faulty dietary habits and food stuffs that effects one's immunity, strength, health and well being. When this *gramya ahara* is consumed and practiced over the years, it has the potential of causing all the diseases due to it effect on body *dhatu*s. These faulty dietary factors are called *gramya ahara* and the faulty lifestyle factors are called *gramya vihara*¹.

Importance to *ahara* and *vihara* has always been given in our ancient *samhitas*. *Annapana chatushka* and *swasthya chatushka* has been mentioned in *charak Samhita*. Three subpillars are also described in ayurveda as *ahara* (food), *nidra* (sleep), and *brahmacharya* (celibacy), which clearly shows the importance of *ahara*².

In 2nd part (pranakamiya adhyaya) of *rasayana* chapter of *chikitsa sthan*, *Acharya Charak* has mentioned that all the diseases are caused by the consumption of *gramya ahara*. Also the various dietary and behavioural factors are mentioned that comes under *gramya ahara*³.

Dietary habits that are considered *gramya ahara*⁴-

1. Foods that are amla (sour), lavana (salty), katu (pungent), and kshar (alkali)

2. Dry vegetables and dry meat
3. Sesame seeds, paste of sesame seeds and foods with flour preparations
4. sprouted grains and pulses
5. Freshly harvested grains and pulses
6. Incompatible and unsuitable foods
7. Dry and foods rich in alkaline
8. Abhishyandi (channel blocking) foods
9. Klinn (moist), heavy, spoilt and stale foods
10. Untimely consumption of food and in varying quantities
11. Eating before the previous meal is digested

Lifestyle habits-

1. Daysleep
2. Excess alcohol intake
3. Over indulgence in sexual activities
4. Irregular and excessive exercises
5. Over exhaustion

Psychological factors-

1. Fear (Bhaya)
2. Anger (krodh)
3. Grief (shoka)
4. Greed (lobha)
5. Bewilderment/state of confusion (moh)

Effect of *gramya ahara* on *dhatu*s-

1. Muscles become loose and flabby
2. Joints become loose
3. Blood decomposes
4. Liquefaction of fats
5. Bone marrow does not reside in bone
6. Semen is not secreted in sufficient quantity
7. Oja becomes depleted

Clinical conditions occurring due to *Gramya Ahara*-

- Exhaustion
- Languid
- Excess sleep
- Feeling of sleepiness (*Tandra*)
- Laziness
- Lack of enthusiasm
- Difficulty in breathing
- Incapability of any bodily or mental labour
- Deprivation of memory and intelligence
- Loss of lustre
- Turned to home of various diseases

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1. To study the role of *gramya ahara* as the causative factor for various lifestyle disorders
2. A survey study to establish the role of *gramya ahara* as causative factor in all the diseases

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Data is collected from the ancient ayurvedic texts mostly *charak Samhita*.

100 people were questioned about their diet and lifestyle in the form of a self prepared questionnaire from the points mentioned in the *shloka* of *rasayana* chapter of *charak Samhita* to study the effects of *gramya ahara* as a causative factor for various diseases specially lifestyle disorders. Survey was done randomly on the people from various parts of India to check if they are consuming *gramya ahara* and *vihara* on daily basis and if suffering from any disease. People were selected from the age group of 10 to 50 years. Pregnant and lactating mothers were excluded. Percentage of people consuming *gramya ahara-vihara* and suffering from lifestyle diseases were calculated out of 100 people surveyed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Consumption of gramya ahara-vihara	YES	No
1. Prefer sour foods like tamarind/ raw mango/ citrus fruits?	30%	70%
2. Take extra salt with food?	42%	58%
3. Take spicy food regularly?	67%	33%
4. Take products with baking soda regularly?	12%	88%
5. Take dry meat/ dry vegetables/ frozen food frequently?	16%	84%
6. Take sesame seeds in food frequently?	23%	77%
7. Take refined flour items/milk products/puffs/pastries/burgers/pizzas?	84%	16%
8. Take sprouted pulses/grains?	38%	62%
9. Consume freshly harvested grains?	8%	92%
10. Consume incompatible foods like milk and salt/milkshakes?	100%	0%
11. Prefer dry or alkaline food products?	40%	60%
12. Take heavy foods/ curd excessively or at night?	91%	9%
13. Consume stale/ putrid foods?	87%	13%
14. Consume irregular/untimely food?	96%	4%
15. Take meals before the previous meal is digested?	93%	7%
16. Indulge in daysleep regularly?	54%	46%
17. Excessive alcohol consumption?	19%	81%
18. Over indulgence in sexual intercourse?	5%	95%
19. Indulgence in over or irregular exercises?	8%	92%
20. Get fearful of even minor things?	32%	68%
21. Get angry over small things?	53%	47%
22. Get tensed and depressed over small mishappenings?	27%	73%
23. Feel greedy for other's goods?	18%	82%
24. State of confusion/ difficulty in decision making?	47%	53%

People consuming gramya ahara- 100%

People suffering from any present illness- 94%

People not suffering from any present illness- 6%

Gender-wise distribution	Percentage
Male	40%
Female	60%

Socio-economic status	Percentage
Upper	23%
Middle	32%
Lower	45%

Dietary Habits	Percentage
Veg	35%
Non-veg	20%
Mixed	45%

Diseases	Percentage
Obesity	23%
PCOD	5%
Dislipidemia	15%
Hypertension	10%
Gastric issues	35%
Headaches	6%

All the 100 people surveyed are consuming gramya ahara and vihara and 94 out of which are suffering from one or the other present illness and lifestyle disorders like obesity, PCOD, Hyperlipidaemia, gastric issues etc. Consumption of gramya ahara and increasing sedentary lifestyle leads to the accumulation of various diseases in our body as gramya ahara vitiates all the doshas and dhatus resulting in the disturbed equilibrium⁵.

There is not a single person found out of 100 who was not consuming any gramya ahara or vihara mentioned in our Samhita. It shows even when the medical science and technologies are in continuous development, lifestyle disorders are not coming under control and are a threat to humankind due to the changing diet and lifestyle of the people.

6 out of 100 people, mostly children, gym instructors etc did not possess any present illness despite consuming gramya ahara. Concept of immunity has also been described in charak samhita where some factors are mentioned that can reduce the effect of incompatible foods consumption, thus preventing from diseases. These factors are strong digestive fire, young age, people who are habitual of exercises and snigdha diet⁶.

CONCLUSION

Consumption of gramya ahara and vihara are continuously increasing in today's era with each passing day which in causing the disturbance in the equilibrium of dosha and dhatus of body resulting in all the diseases. Changing diet and lifestyle habits have caused the continuous upsurge in the lifestyle disorders. These lifestyle disorders can be prevented, managed and cured by the elimination of gramha ahara from our diet and gramya vihara from day to day lives.

Embracing the principles of Gramya ahara can help prevent the lifestyle disorders by promoting healthier eating habits and aligning with nature's rhythms.

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