Review Article

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Ayurved

DIETETICS IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT The healthy bodies as well as the diseases are nothing but the outcome of Ahara. Out of all the factors for maintenance of positive health, properly food taking occupies the most important position because diet or Ahara is the basic medicament other than any substance. Though one is not able to sustain life without Ahara. In today's fast life, many norms regarding diet & regimen have been compromised which is showing the overall declining status of health in the society. Ahara and its related codes and conducts have been long forgotten by the human being; hence to evaluate this ancient science of dietetics this study was undertaken. For this total positive health, Ayurveda has given three sub pillars – Ahara , Nidra and Brahmacharya which comes under the social medicine. These are the code and conducts for taking diet of any dietetic science having physiological and functional consideration.

KEYWORDS : Ahara , Health, Diseases, Diet rules

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda has given three sub pillars – Ahara ,Nidra and Brahmacarya which supported the body itself . Ahara has been enumerated first , which shows its importance . The healthy bodies as well as the diseases are nothing but the outcome of Ahara. The virtue attributed to food includes the physical growth and development, appearance, intellect, the voice, physical and mental strength and stamina, finally the very existence. Ayurveda says that food is responsible for intellect and creativity too .

Concept Of Ahara

The word Ahara is very much familiar since time immemorial .Various classics describe Ahara in their own unique way Shabdakalpadrum explain that Ahara is swallowed through throat after eating. Vacaspatyam states Ahara is as food. .Acharya Dalhana opines that the substance which is swallowed through anna-nasika is called Ahara, Acharya Cakrapani opines that Ahara means anything which is ingested and thus it includes both diet and drugs. Acharya Gangadhara says that anything which is ingested by the tongue down to the throat is called Ahara. Therefore , drugs are also included in Ahara So, it can be concluded that the word Ahara means any substance which is taken in via the mouth and swallowed through throat.

The qualities of food have a direct effect on how the body accepts and digests a particular type of food even our outlook can be affected , such as the mind feeling sharp and irritable after eating hot chilli peppers. Along with the properties of the rasa, virya, vipaka and prabhava is also used to describe the properties and effect of various foods, herbs and medicine on the body.

Aharaparinamkar Bhav / Factor those take part in digestion

- Ushma
- Vayu
- Kleda
- Sneha
- Kaal
- Samyog

Ushma / Jatharagni / Pachakagni :

According to Ayurveda science, our body is made up of seven basic dhatus and three doshas. To nourish that dhatus , ahara rasa is very important. Ahara rasa is produced by the ahara (food) with the help of Jatharagni.

As in the environment, the fire is used to cook the raw food to make it edible; in that same manner, the Jatharaagni which is present in the Koshtha (mahastrotasa) is helpful to convert the food in the form of the dhatu pushtikar bhava. This results in increase the Oja, bala, Varna, etc. To maintain the balance between tridoshas, jaatharagni plays an important role. To maintain the good functioning of the body, the Jatharagni is must be conserved.

According to Achary Chrak , Agni is said to be an important constituent of the body. Which is helpful to preserve the Prana, Oja, Aayu, Bala, Varna, Utsaha, Upachaya, Prabha and complete healthy status.

In Srimadbhagvadgita the agni is called as the Sarvapaka, is helpful to digest all types of Dravyas (sthul and Sukshma).

Vayu/ Vatadosha

Vata dosha is the main controller of the kinetic functions which takes place within the body.

Vata dosha is responsible for the intake of food and to excreate the waste products which are formed during the digestive process.

The main three types of vata dosha (Prana vayu, Saman vayu, Apan vayu) takes part in the digestive system.

- Prana Vayu

Prana vayu is present in oral cavity and throat. The food enters in oral cavity is masticated and then entered in the oesophagus. This process of swallowing/deglutition is takes place under influence of Prana vayu.

Udgar: After complete digestion of the food, the air entered with the food is excreated as the udgara.

- Saman Vayu

Samaan vayu increases the digestive power of the Jatharagni. That is, the samaan vayu indirectly improves the digestion

By keeping food in intestine, Saman Vayu breaks it into Parthiv, Aapya, Aagneya, Vayavya, Nabhas form. separate useful and waste products.

Because of procedure of digestion there is formation of useful and waste products. This procedure is done by Saman Vayu. Saman vayu transport the useful part i.e. annarasa to hridaya, and the remaining waste products (mutra, purish) to the lower portion of the koshtha.

Saman vayu also increase the pachana Shakti (digestive power) of the jatharagni. As in nature, the fine blow of air increases the power of fire; in the same manner, the prakruti samana vayu increases the power of the jatharagni. This function of the samana vayu is called as 'Agnisandhukshan' (stimulation of the digestive juices).

After complete digestion of the food, it is divided into saara bhag (useful part) and kitta bhag (waste products). The digested useful part is called as Annarasa. The kitta bhaga is differentiated into purish and the mutra. This differentiation is depend on the functioning of the Vata dosha.

- Apana Vayu

Ahara mala is of various types like purish, mutra, dushit vayu Apan vayu is mainly situated in the Pakvashaya, where the purisha and other malas are kept for some time before its vegakala (excretion). After the sensation of excretion, the malas are excreted through their routes of excretions.This all process is run under influence of the Apana vayu.

Kleda & / Shaithilyakara Bhava:

Kleda is moisture.They ease the process of digestion and protect the

seat of digestion. Such a way they are essential factor for better digestion. These factors are represented by bodhak and kledeka kapha moistens the food and splits the bolus of food into smaller parts as a result the food is easily digested and bodhak kapha also moistens the food and lubricate food mass facilitating for deglutition .

Sneha/ Mardavkara Bhava

Softness is essential for the movements of small intestine & stomach. Mucin is also present in saliva and gastric juices. Saliva and gastric juices also contain mucin which convert the food into liquid, smooth & soft which helps in working of jatharagni.

Kaala Yoga / Paryapta

Time also contribute in proper digestion of eaten food. After eating food by chewing properly, it takes 1-2 hrs. to make chime in the stomach. It takes 4-5 hrs. for complete digestion of food in small intestine. After that most of the water is absorbed in large intestine which turn the remaining part of indigested, food in thick, form which is called as pakwa mala. The paka in this avastha is called as katu avsthapaka. It take 12-14 hrs for all these process.

It means one should not have food until the eaten food is completely digested. hence one should not eat for 3hrs after having food. Food must get certain period to get digested.

Samayoga

Samayoga means Samyakyoga of Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana. So, it indicates the importance about Visheshayatana along with Agni. Agni is proper but Visheshayatana is not maintain, it will surely lead to diseases related to Agni because Agni is disturb. When the food is taken properly and according to rules of food taking, then only the benefits of Ahara can be achieved. Any defect in diet and even in their preparation leads to ill disease. The faulty dieting habit is an etiological factor for dosha.

Ahara Vidhi Vishesa Ayatanani

Charaksamhita describe the eight principles of Aharavidhi. These are the code and conducts for taking diet of any dietetic science having physiological and functional consideration. Compatible food only beneficial foods should be consumed because it is responsible for maintaining good state of health. One has to consume food by due regards to Prakriti, Karana, Samyoga, Rashi, Desha, Kala, Upayogasamstha, & Upayokta.

Name of the Factor	Explanation	Explanation with Example
Prakrti	Prakrti indicates the nature of the substance, i.e. inherent attributes of diets and drugs.	Masha is heavy and Mudga is light.
Karana	Processing of food substances. Processing results in the transformation of the inherent attributes of substances.	Transformation of the food quality is effected by dilution, application of heat, cleansing, churning, etc
Samyoga	Combination of two or more food substances.	Combination of honey & ghee or honey, fish and milk.
Rashi	Quantity of substances to be taken	Quantity of all things involved is Sarvagraha and that of each and everything individually is Parigraha
Desha	Desha denotes the habitat of food substances.	It determines the variations of the qualities of the substances according to their geographic region, due to different soil etc.
Kala	Time as age, seasons and conditions	Time factor is described in dual context; one pertains with daily and seasonal variations while other deals with individual's conditions of age and disease.
Upayoga Samstha	It consists of dietetic rules	----------
Upayokta	Habit and state of individual It means the person who takes food	It means the person who takes food

Upayogasamstha (dietary rules)

- Stimulation of agni- eat warm & fresh food
- Oiliness- for lubrication of visceral organ
- Quantum- Such food maintains physiological level of Dosha
- One should eat only when previous meal is digested Sign- feeling hungry,light,defecation taking place normally
- Opposite quality- two opposite strong qualities should be avoided to eat together
- Appropriate place & utensil-clean,hygienic & pleasant
- Not eat very fast- eat very fast it develop vomit,chokes,insults food & disliking towards food
- Not eat very Slow
- Ajalpan ,without too much talking .
- Eat with appropriate manner

Importance Of Food Taken In Proper Quantity

Taken in Appropriate quantity, food certainly helps the individual in bringing about strength, complexion happiness & longevity without disturbing the equilibrium of dhatus & doshas of the body.

CONCLUSION

The healthy bodies as well as the diseases are nothing but the outcome of Ahara. Out of all the factors for maintenance of positive health, properly food taking occupies the most important position because diet or Ahara is the basic medicament other than any substance. Though one is not able to sustain life without Ahara. In today's fast paced life, many norms regarding diet & regimen have been compromised which is showing the overall declining status of health in the society. Ahara and its related codes and conducts have been long forgotten by the human being; hence to evaluate this ancient science of dietetics this study was undertaken. From all above statements one can say that' In short everything depends on diet.

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