



REVIEW ARTICLE: AYURVEDIC DIETARY CONCEPTS

Ayurveda

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KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION-

Aahar (diet), Nidra (sleep), Bramhacharya (abstinence) are Recognized as three Upstambha (pillar) of human being, that are essential for smooth life. Among them Aahar is considered as best sustainer of life (vridhikaranm shreshtam) A balanced diet in Ayurved is planned in relation to known Panchbhoutik composition and Tridoshik impacts in living body.

Aahar has prime role in maintaining health and also treating various diseases. According to Acharya Kashyapa aahar is considered as 'Mhabheshjya' that is great medicine. A good nutrition plays important role in management of many lifestyle disorders, but in now a days life becomes too fast noon has time for take proper diet, so lifestyle related disorders arising rapidly, Acharya Charak has stated that diet sustain life if taken with discipline in proper manner. Hence with the help of Ayurvedic diet plan we can preserve us from lifestyle disorders.

For proper maintaining of positive health one should first of all eat food in proper quantity. The quantity of food to be taken again depends on the pattern of digestion. The power of digestion and metabolism again varies according to the season as well as the age of individual. The standard measurement of food for an individual is to be determined on basis of one's own digestive capacity.

A. What is Diet (Aahar)?

- The vyutpatti (formation of word) or definition of aahar is Which can be swallowed by mouth, or the substance which is useful for growth of sharir dhatu that is aahar. In Ayurved there are saptdhatu (Rasa, Rakta, Mansa, Meda, Asthi, Majja, and Shukra) which are helpful for survive life of human.

B. Importance of diet:

In Charak samhita, Acharya Charak explained the Aahar (diet) and its benefits. Aahar(diet) is a life of living being happiness, good voice, life, satisfaction, power, intelligence etc. All are depended on Aahar (diet). All activities performed by human being are based for his food.

C. Origin of diet³(Aahar)

- As we know that everything has made up by 5 main basic element (Panchmahabhuta) i.e. Aakash(Space), Vayu(Air), Tej (Fire), Jal (Water), Prithvi (Earth).
- Like this Aahar is also made up by 5 elements. At first Akash followed by Vayu, Jal, Tej and Prithvi we get Aahar from plants which are originating from earth (Oshadh). Humans obtain their food from plants.

D. Which is ideal diet?

- Acharya charak explained the definition of ideal diet⁵. The diet which rebuilds the worn out systems nourishes and maintains equilibrium of body constituents. One should eat food, which is hot, unctuous, in due measure, after the digestion of previous food, and non antagonistic in potency. The diet should have proper taste, smell, colour and which helps to grow sharir Dhatus such diet is to be considered as ideal diet.
- It should be taken in a hygienic place, not so fast and not too slowly, diet should be consumed without talking and laughing with full concentration and having proper regard to it. The Ahar acts as the Indhana (fuel) for the jathragni and other agnis in the body.

E. Concept of incompatibility of food according to Ayurveda (Virudha aahar)

The Ayurvedic text gives great emphasis on the compatibility and

incompatibility of certain foods. Acharya Charak described in detail the 18 fold denominators of virudhahar, i.e. dietary incompatibility, Aaharavyas become incompatible due to their mutually contradictory qualities by combination (samyog), by method of preparation (sanskara), by virtue of place(desh), time(kala), dose (matra) and some others by their inherent nature (swabhava).

Acharya charak mentioned that the intake of incompatible food is responsible for causation of sterility (vyandhatva), blindness (andhatva), herpes (visarpa) ascites (udar) etc.

The types of viruddhara are as follows- There are 18 types of viruddha ahar.

- Desh virudha (place)
- kaal virudha (Time/season)
- Agni Virudha
- Matra viruddha(quanty)
- Satmya virudha(wholesome)
- Dosha virudha
- Sanskar viruddha(mode of preparation)
- Veerya virudha(potency)
- Koshtha viruddh
- Aavstha viruddha (state of health)
- Krama viruddh(sequence)
- Parihar viruddha
- Upachar viruddha(treatment)
- Paak virudha (cooking)
- Samyog virudha (combination)
- Hriday virudha
- Sampad virudha (richness of quality)
- Vidhi virudha (role for eating)

F. Proper quantity of diet.-(Matravat Aahar)

In Ayurveda acharya told that if diet take in proper quantity⁸, it acts like medicine. Hence as per opinion of acharya Kashyap diet is Mhabhahishjya. But How much quantity of diet should be taken? Acharya Vagbhat gave the answer for this question, according to Ashtang Hridayam⁸ considering 4 parts of stomach one should take food such that 2 parts of stomach get filled by food taken, one part filled with water and other liquid materials and remaining 1 part should be kept free for vayu (gases)

G. Classification of diet according to Ayurved

- The stage of vedic times, the rishis had researched and categorized the gross and subtle qualities and effect of food in three categories in Satvik, Rjasika, Tamsik
- Based on rasa -According to Bhavprakash⁹
 - Chusya
 - Peyam
 - Leham
 - Bhakshyam
 - Bhojyam
 - Charvyam
- Based on gunas- There are 20 types of ahar which are based on Gunas¹⁰ (properties) i.e. Guru-Lghu, Ushna- Sheet, Snigdha-Ruksha, Sthir-Sara, Mrudu -Kathin, Vishad -Pichil, Slashan-Khara, Sukshma-Sthool, Sandra-Dravya.
- Based on vikalpa¹¹ - i.e. Aparisankheya
- based on origin 1. Sthavara 2. Jangama
- Based on Prabhav¹² (action) 1. Hitkar 2. Ahitkar

- g. Based on Utilization 13 1. Aashit- 2. Khadit 3. Peet 4. Lidh
- h. Based on varga 14
1. Shook(cereals & millets)
2. Shamidhanya (pulses)
3. Mansa (fish or meat)
4. Shaka (vegetable)
5. Fala (fruit)
6. Harita(greens)
7. Madya(alcoholic)
8. jala (water)
9. Goras (milk and milk product)
10. Ikshu (sugarcane and its product)
11. Kritanna (cooked food)
12. Aahar yogi (Adjuncts of food)

H. (Aannakaal) Time of taking diet 15

For healthy life diet should be taken at proper time, otherwise many lifestyle related disorders may be arising. In Charkasamhita and other Ayurvedic text (grantha) there are explained at what time diet should be taken. According Dincharya and Rutucharya it varies. Some Ayurvedic vaidya told that heavy and oily diet should not be taken after evening, diet should be taken in pittakal, etc. there are lots of scientific reason behind these all sentences. In Ashtang Hridayam, Acharya Vagbhat 15 proper mention in a brief and which should be applied in modern lifestyle also.

Proper excretion of urine and stool, doshas go to their respective sthana (site) strotasa are clean and free from blockage and indriyas i.e. sense organs are sharp and attentive, one feels lightness of body blenching with proper smell to it with proper excretion of Aapan vayu heart becomes Nirdosha i.e. we feel like eating and drinking, if all are above mentioned signs are present then we should take a diet.

a. Sequence of taking diet with respect to rasa 16 (taste)-

Order in which one should take the diet, first one should eat food of sweet taste for the purpose of pacification. Sweet taste is helpful for pacification of vata and pitta present in digestive tract. Then one should sour and salty substance as they increases function of digestive juice. Then one should take bitter and astringent substance, for purpose of pacification of kapha, these rasa are pittashamak. They reduce acidity of stomach. One should take fruit like pomegranate first in diet then take liquid material and then lastly semisolid and solid food. Diet should be taken in above mentioned sequence. Hence in our Indian culture diet is made up by these 6 rasa (taste) and called as Shadrasatmka Aahar.

- *Rules and regulations related to Aahar (diet)- Aaharvidhividhan 17*
Diet as well as the method of diet intake both have equal importance. In other medical sciences, food and nutrition is considered important, but not the dietary habits i.e. the etiquettes followed eating. ayurvedic classics have emphasized on some examination methods, rules and regulation for taking diet.

• Ushnam ashniyat –intake of warm food

The term ushna refers to temperature of food and not ushna goona. ushna food stimulate the digestive fire and gets digested quickly, it is also good in taste.

• Snigdham ashniyat-intake of unctuous food

It is also stimulate digestive fire and do vatanu- lomanam., provides firmness to sense organ, by stimulating kledak kapha.

• Laghu ashniyat.-

It includes both quality and quantity of food. As per quality meaning of laghu here means easy to digest, which takes less time to digest and as per quantity, food should be taken in small amount.

• Jirne viryavirudham –

Means one should take food only when previous meal is digested. 5.

• Ishta deshe, Ishta sarvopakarnam

-This term refers to eating in a hygienic place provided with all thenecessary things for sounds pshycological condition during meal. One should take food with all accessories and should not produces disturbing emotions like kama, krodh, chinta, bhaya etc.

• Na ati drutam Ashniyat.-

Food should not be taken too hurriedly. If food taken too hurriedly there is increases chances of vimargaman of aahar i.e. food enters in wrong passage.

• Na ativilambanam ashniyat-

Food should take too slowly because this will not give satisfaction to

the individual.

• Ajalpan, Ahasn, Tanmana, Bhunjita-

One should not talk or laugh while taking food. The most important statement is that the food should be eaten with enough concentration towards the eating process. Talking and laughing divert the attention from the meals and food is eaten too hasily or too slowly. Thus uniform speed of eating not maintained.

DISCUSSION-

The main aim of Ayurveda is to preserve the health of healthy person and to treat the disease. The diet and regimen which is beneficial to the body and gives happiness to the mind. Aahar plays important role in healthy disease and convalescent states. It is more important than medicine itself. Lots of importance is given to the diet with regard to its processing, quality, quantity, classification, time for taking diet and so on.

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