



" VIRUDDHAHARA - UNDERSTANDING THE RELEVANCE OF INCOMPATIBLE FOOD COMBINATIONS IN PREVENTING LIFESTYLE DISORDERS"

Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT

Aahara is one of the prominent pillar including in Tryopstambha in Ayurveda and term Viruddhahara has originated from its basic principles. Ayurveda considers "Viruddha" as opposite or contradictory and "Aahara" means food, thus incompatible combination of foods may be deleterious to health. In other words, as per Acharya Charak any food item that causes the imbalance of Vata, Pitta and Kapha in our bodies and not permitting them to come out causing digestion malfunctioning, metabolic imbalances even leads up-to long term diseases. Acharya Charak defines different 18 types of Viruddha such as Desh Viruddha, Samyoga Viruddha, Samskara Viruddha etc. In today's fast forwarding lifestyle, consumption of processed foods, irregular eating patterns, and the mixing of incompatible foods such as dairy products with fruits or proteins with starch, fried food and fast food are increased. So, the relevance of Viruddhahara is becoming increasingly apparent with the rise of lifestyle diseases like obesity, diabetes, and heart conditions, many of which can be linked to poor dietary choices and combinations. The present article is intended to explore the concept of Viruddhahara in classics and its implication in present generation.

KEYWORDS

Ayurveda, Aahara, Viruddha, Dosha, Incompatible, Samyoga

INTRODUCTION

Diet is considered important for the human body as it supplies essential nutrients required for fundamental processes such as digestion and metabolism. In Ayurveda, the concept of Viruddhahara (incompatible diet) is a significant issue discussed by ancient scholars.

"Viruddha" means opposite . It means that some combinations of foods can:

- Possess opposing properties
- Demonstrate actions on bodily tissues that are the opposite and contradicting
- Cause ill-effects in certain preparations
- Adverse reactions in certain mixtures of ingredients
- Causes hazardous effects if consumed at wrong timings.

In essence, the idea of "Viruddha" implies that the wrong combination of food can lead to adverse effects on the body, depending on how they are prepared or when they are consumed.

Material And Methods- Literature Review-

- **According to Acharya Charak-** Viruddha or an incompatible diet refers to meals and medications that aggravates the Doshas from their regular location but do not remove them from the body. Acharya Charak describes 18 types of factors responsible for dietetic incompatibilities-
- 1. **Desh Viruddha (Place incompatible)-** Taking of food items which have similar properties as geographical area can act as Viruddhahara because they contribute to aggravation of Doshas. Ex- Kapha Vardhak Aahara in Anupa Desha (Marshy Land).
- 2. **Kala Viruddha (Time incompatible)-** According to Ritucharaya diet should taken according to variation in season, at that time, if person take food of similar quality it will result in aggressive vitiation of Dosha. Ex.-Taking of Katu and Ushna Aahara in summer season.
- 3. **Agni Viruddha-** Four types of Agni are explained in Ayurveda in which Jatharagni is responsible for digestive power. According to this if quantity or quality of food taken is not appropriate according to Jatharagni is a Agni Viruddha. Ex.-Guru and Adhika Aahara in Mandagni.
- 4. **Maatra Viruddha-** Food items which are mixed in equal proportions and act as a Viruddhahara. Ex.- Madhu and Ghee when mixed in equal amount.
- 5. **Satmaya Viruddha-** Satmaya means used to, food articles to which an individual is got used to in his day to day life is known as Satmaya. Taking items opposite to Satmaya result in vitiation of Dosha. Ex-Person who consume Katu Rasa, Ushna Virya Aahara

has Madhura and Sita Virya Aahara will be Asatmaya Aahara.

6. **Dosha Viruddha-** Food items having similar properties to Dosha further aggravates Dosha causing Dosha Dushti. Ex- Kasaya Rasa aggravates Vata.
7. **Samskara Viruddha-** Food preparation methods are to improve the nutritional value and overall quality of dietary substances. When these methods are not appropriate with the principles, they can lead to be harmful. Such improper preparation practices are known as "Samskara Viruddha".
8. **Virya Viruddha-** Food items having opposite potency should not be consumed at same time. Ex- Shita Virya products with Ushna Virya products should not be consumed.
9. **Kostha Viruddha-** Three types of Mridu, Madhyama and Krura Kostha are explained according to Dosha dominance. Any food item or drugs taken without proper knowledge of Kostha is termed as Kostha Viruddha. Ex- Strong Laxatives for Mridu Kostha person.
10. **Avastha Viruddha-** Consuming anything without knowledge of State of Health of an individual. Ex- Consumption of Vata aggravating items such as dry, rough food articles after heavy physical workout.
11. **Krama Viruddha-** According to Dincharya concept, food items should be taken after clearance of bowel and after taking bath etc. Food consumed in wrong sequence is considered as Krama Viruddha.
12. **Parihar Viruddha-** "Parihara" refers to foods that should be avoided based on a person's condition. When someone is eating foods that are considered harmful (Apathya) for that disease is called Parihara Viruddha. Ex- Consumption of Hot water after eating pork.
13. **Upchara Viruddha-** Consuming of items that are prohibited during any kind of treatment or violating the rules of any treatment. Ex- Intake of cold water after Snehapana.
14. **Paak Viruddha-** Paak is considered for enhancement of nutritional values of food or for making it easily digestible. If food is over cooked, uncooked, under-cooked or cooked with wrong fuel is considered as Paak Viruddha.
15. **Samyoga Viruddha-** Food items that are harmful when used in combination together are Samyoga Viruddha. Ex- Taking of citrus fruit with milk.
16. **Hridya Viruddha-** It means food items that are not pleasant to a person or according to will of a person.
17. **Sampad Viruddha-** Intake of food items that does not have edible qualities or does not have fully developed edible properties. Ex- Consumption of unripe fruits.
18. **Vidhi Viruddha** – Food consumed without following rules of

Aahara vidhi Vidhaan is known as Vidhi Viruddha.

• According to Acharya Sushruta-

Acharya Sushruta described "Viruddha Ahara" (incompatible food) in the 20th chapter of Sutrasthana, titled "Hitahitiyam Adhyaya." He explained different types of incompatible food combinations:

- **Karma Viruddha (Functionally incompatible):** Ex - Pigeon fried in mustard oil.
- **Mana Viruddha (Quantitatively incompatible):** Ex - Mixing equal amounts of honey and ghee.
- **Samyoga Viruddha (Unhealthy combinations):** Ex - Eating meat of marsh-dwelling animals with newly sprouted grains.
- **Rasa Viruddha (Taste incompatibilities):** Example - Combining sweet and salty tastes.

• According To Acharya Vagbhatt –

Viruddhahara (incompatible food) acts similarly to poison (Visha). Its effects are described like Garavisha (slow poison), where consuming such incompatible foods leads to the production of Ama (toxins), which is considered Visha (poison). The impact of Viruddhahara can be as severe as Tikshna Visha (strong poison), causing immediate harm, or it can be slow-acting, like latent poisons such as Gara and Dushi Visha.

Diseases Due To Viruddhahara- Acharya Charak has mentioned diseases due to Viruddhahara are Visarpa (erysipelas), Andhya (blindness), Jalodara (ascites), Unmada (insanity), Bhagandar (fistula), Moorcha (fainting), Ama Visha (intoxication), Jwara (fever), Aadhmaana (abdominal distention), Pandu (anemia), various skin diseases like Kilasa (Leucoderma), Kustha, Sotha (Oedema), Pinasa (allergic rhinitis). It is mentioned that such type of wrong combinations lead to infertility and impotency. Acharya Charak also mentioned that such type of Viruddhahara can even lead to death.

Viruddhahara In Today's Era-

The last decade has seen a drastic change in dietary practices with the advent of processed foods, fast food and growing culture of eating out. The modern trend is towards taste, quick preparation and time efficacy because of this shift, incompatible and inadequate eating habits are introduced. In present era there are number food incompatibilities are-

- **Fast Foods And Junk:** Increased consumption of animal products, processed foods in high fat/sugar preparations often topped with chemical flavour enhancers etc.. The non-natural behaviour of these foods in the body often leads to indigestion, obesity and metabolic disorders.
- **Meal Timing and Snacking Culture:** Current lifestyles promote irregular eating habits, snacking throughout the day or no regard for circadian rhythm. Eating late at night, especially greasy and heavy foods hampers the digestion process.
- **Dairy And Fruit Combinations:** Mixing milk or yogurt with fruits such as bananas, berries and melons is in vogue courtesy of smoothies and fruit salads. The combination of these two create Ama in the system due to having contradictory properties and it is said that Dairy and fruits need a different digestion environment, thus causing Ama which aggravates allergies, skin problems, gut issues.
- **Globalization Of Diets** - There has been an exchange of food cultures which is good for knowledge but leads others to following unnatural diet practices that goes against their local climate and constitution. Tropical fruits in colder areas or high protein west diet among those regionally exposed to plant-based diets can induce digestive disorders and health issues.

DISCUSSION-

Progress in food processing and storage commercialization has made it possible to sell foods year-round even from miles away. The food culture in India has undergone a massive revolution over the past two decades. For many, particularly the younger generation, eating out has become an everyday event. The boom of fast food and online delivery has also played a part in this. Today, there are no rules on what and when to eat. Previously, we avoided eating at night based on the cycle of our body and curd was not used in night as it is considered as Viruddha. Similarly, milkshakes which are now popular is also form of known as "Samyoga Viruddhahara" (incompatible food combinations). Desserts which is a very popular concept nowadays is also "Karma Viruddha", according to Shadrasa (taste) balance as discussed in Ayurveda. In modern Indian cooking, honey is widely

used but the practice of heating it (Samskara Viruddha) is considered to be harmful in Ayurveda because excessive heat transforms honey into poison another example of "Veerya Viruddha", or incompatibility based on food potency is mixing dairy with fish/meat, like malai chicken for fish/Chicken Malai Tikka.

Eating these incompatible foods regularly can lead to imbalance in the Dhatu (tissue) formation of the body and might be also responsible for lifestyle disorders, infertility, sterility among our younger generation. Most of the lifestyle diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and digestive issues can usually be put under diet incompatible category.

Ayurveda, through exploration of the causes and factors for these conditions have revealed that disease has many fold causation which prompted in stressing prevention as cure by way abstaining from Viruddhahara (incompatible diet) cautioning food compatibility is an important aspect of health freedom.

These changes in food culture could also be associated with the rise in cancer cases, many autoimmune disease, and particularly those that affect the skin has a negative dietary history.

CONCLUSION-

Viruddhahara (incompatible diet) is a very important concept of Ayurveda. Ayurveda provides a comprehensive and systematic understanding of how diet affects our physical and mental health consumed food in the correct way aids in the body's proper development. A balanced diet promotes healthy weight management, disease prevention and restful sleep naturally. While unwholesome eating habits are the source of many diseases. As we know prevention is better than cure, it is very essential to follow guidelines given by Ayurvedic Acharyas to lead a healthy life. It's our prime duty to spread alarming health hazards of Viruddhahara (incompatible diet) ensuring better health and wellness for generations to come.

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