



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Ayurveda

RATRICHARAYA - A BRIEF REVIEW ON NIGHT ROUTINE.

KEY WORDS: *Dinacharya, Lifestyle, Ratricharya, Sadavritta.*
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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has great contribution in treatment of diseases as well as prevention of diseases. *Ayurveda* gives equal importance to *Ahara* and *Vihara*. *Vihara* is defined as the second most important pillar of the *Ayurveda*. The modern world is currently facing an epidemic of lifestyle related diseases like insomnia, diabetes, obesity, heart diseases, etc., as a result of lack of sleep, stress, improper diet and irregular or sedentary lifestyle. Hence the person becomes psychological and physical illness and unable to enjoy full life span. *Ayurveda* believes that in order to achieve and maintain healthy living (*Arogya*), it is essential to practice a healthy *Vihara* like *Dinacharya* (day regimen), *Ratricharya* (night regimen), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), *Ahara Vidhi* (diet rules), *Sadavritta* (code of conducts) etc. are described in detail in *Ayurveda*. *Ayurvedic* lifestyle promotes physical, mental as well as social health and ultimately leads to symptomatic improvement and improvement in the quality of life and thus help in the prevention and management of diseases. Present article aims to elaborate the concept of *Ratricharya* in *Ayurveda* classics.

INTRODUCTION:-

A good medical science should teach people how they should spend their day and night, so that they can prevent majority of diseases and don't really need drugs.

The first and foremost aim of *Ayurveda* has been to maintain the health of an individual by natural means. It advocates a way of life and a routine which can help in maintaining vigor and tranquility in daily life. The principles of health in *Ayurveda*, dealt under two sections, that are *Dinacharya*, *Ratricharya* and second one is *Ritucharya*.

Night covers almost fifty percent of the whole span of life. In companion with day it is usually an inactive phase of life when a man returns back to home for physical and mental rest of body. A major portion of night is mostly passed by sleeping. It is only the early, late evening and the later phase of night which demands care in respect of dietetics, sexual acts and other regimen of life mainly to keep body full of strength and vigor for next coming day's activities. Body as a whole mostly passes through an anabolic phase during night, when reviewed physiologically. During night, a minimal oxidation and combustion at cellular level, leads maximum recoup of energy in body. In comparison to day other body systems also pass to a resting phase. In view of these facts, it is advisable to have little care of diet, drinks and other activities in certain parts of night, besides the hour of sleep.

MATERIAL AND METHOD:-

Acharya Vagbhatta said that the person who are always cautious in analyzing their *Dinacharya* and *Ratricharya* never get afflicted with sufferings.¹ Similar to *Dinacharya* there is not detail description of *Ratricharya* as a separate heading in both treatise of *Charaka* and *Sushruta Samhitas*. It is only *Ashtanga Hridaya* and *Ashtanga Hridaya* and *Bhava Prakasha* and other allied literatures which have spoken a little bit about dietetics and other regimen of *Ratricharya*.

Regimen of *Ratricharya*:-

- *Vridhha Vagbhatta* has given a synoptic review of night regimen, incorporating the dietetics, state of mind, place of sleeping, types of bed and direction of keeping head and legs at time of sleeping.
- In his opinion one should retire to bed after taking light and wholesome food, with peaceful, fair minded, and having accounted entire activities of day.
- The sleeping place should be open and dirt free, protected nearby with faithful attendants.
- The head end should be neither elevated nor depressed but

well leveled to position of shoulders.

- The bed should be spacious in breadth and length, so as to provide unobstructed and comfortable sleep.
- While in lying down in position bed should be strong possessing the height up to knee and well covered with soft mattresses.
- At the time of sleep, head end should be facing to east or south but not towards teachers and elders.
- One should always be religious minded at both early and late phases of night.

Contraindications:-

- *Bhava Mishra* contraindicated certain acts during evening hours. In his opinion, a wise man should give up the acts of eating, sexual indulgence, sleep, study and journey by road during evening hours
- He has further enlightened the merits and demerits of some of natural characteristics of night with their complete biological responses which are bound to participate during course of night.²
- Depicting dietetics regimen of night he has clearly stated that one should take dinner during first part (evening hours) of the night and it should be lesser in quantity, in comparison to day but not heavy and troublesome in digestion.³
- According to *Charaka* one should not take *Saktu* (roasted grain flour) in night. Also one should not take curd in night.⁴

DISCUSSION:-

The instruction given for regimen of night and contraindications, if analyzed in light of *Ayurveda* and modern science today, it elicits many truthful and factual matters for the betterment of health at both physical and mental levels.

- An advice to take light, nutritious and wholesome food, particularly in early parts of night i.e. after sunset or during evening hours, will facilitate easy digestion and keep GIT unloaded.
- The thought free and peaceful state of mind will also help in inducing sound undisturbed sleep free from dreams. The people who are worried, anxious and disturbed minded cannot have good sleep throughout night and thus are likely to get afflicted with prostrations, headache and uneasiness after awakening. That person physically feels laziness and mentally unconcentrated towards their professions in day time.
- Open and dirt free locality for sleep will serve hygienic principle of open and well ventilated atmospheric situations. This will help in easy and quick exchange of useful and harmful gases being inhaled and exhaled during sleeping time, respectively.

- The presence of attendants, during sleep has been mainly preferred for physical protection, from enemies and other harmful agents, particularly for important person having great significance in society.
- Spacious and comfortable bed has been advocated for the sake of free and undisturbed sleep as a short statured and troublesome bed is likely to disturb the same.
- The instructions of keeping head end of body facing towards the east and south is really of great significance in view of magnetic forces of earth acting upon body, at every walkout of life. If the head end is kept facing towards east or south, there will be mild and soothing effects of magnetic force of earth on brain cells and thus the subsequent sleep will be dream free and undisturbed.
- The prescription of early to bed will provide the chance of early to rise in morning and prove proverb "early to bed and early to rise, make a man healthy wealthy and wise."
- *Bhava Mishra* contraindicated certain acts during evening hours. In his opinion, a wise man should give up the acts of eating, sexual indulgence, sleep, study and journey by road during evening hours as these are likely to bring about the disease or ailments, disorders or anomalies in fetus, poverty, diminution in span of life and fear of accidents etc., respectively.⁵
- According to him full moon induces, coldness, enjoyment in sexual orgasm and subsides the thirst and senses of burning in body; the dew, comparatively possesses lesser qualities and causes aggravation of *Vayu* and *Kapha*; the darkness renders frightening; the delusions lead to confusion in *Dishas*, neutralizes *Pitta* and *Kapha*, activates sex and induces dullness in body.⁶

CONCLUSION:-

Unhealthy lifestyles are the principal causes of modern day illnesses, healthy life-styles can result in an improved feeling of wellness that is critical to optimal health. In recognizing the importance of "Years of healthy life," the public health service also recognizes what it calls "Measures of well-being." This well-being or wellness is associated with social, mental, spiritual, and physical functioning. So "Health management is free and enjoyable; But disease management is very costly and painful." One should follow *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya* and *Ratricharya* to spend healthy life.

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