



Review Article

JUNK FOOD AS *VIRUDHAHARA*: AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE ON MODERN DIETARY INCOMPATIBILITIES AND HEALTH RISKS

Pooja Ramesh^{1*}, Prasanth S R²

¹Postgraduate Ayurvedic Physician and Public Health Specialist, ²Associate Professor, Govt. Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India.

Article info

Article History:

Received: 10-06-2025

Accepted: 03-07-2025

Published: 15-08-2025

KEYWORDS:

Virudhahara, Junk Food, Dietary Incompatibility, Ayurveda, Lifestyle Disorders, *Ama*, *Agnimandya*.

ABSTRACT

Virudhahara, or incompatible food, is a foundational concept in Ayurveda that refers to food combinations or preparations which disturb the equilibrium of the *Doshas* but do not facilitate their elimination, thereby leading to the accumulation of toxins (*Ama*) and the onset of disease. This paper explores the concept of *Virudhahara* in the context of rising global consumption of junk food. Junk foods, characterized by high levels of sugar, salt, unhealthy fats, preservatives, and low nutritional value mirror many types of dietary incompatibilities described in Ayurvedic texts, such as *Agni Virudha* (incompatibility with digestive fire), *Samyoga Virudha* (wrong food combinations), *Samskara Virudha* (improper food processing), and *Satmya Virudha* (incompatibility with one's habit or constitution). The study conducts a critical review of Ayurvedic classical references and correlates them with contemporary definitions and harmful effects of junk food consumption. It discusses the physiological mechanisms through which *Virudhahara* leads to *Agnimandya*, *Ama* formation, *Srothorodha*, and eventual manifestation of systemic disorders such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, neurological conditions, and even cancer. The review also identifies factors that can mitigate the effects of *Virudhahara* and outlines classical Ayurvedic treatments like *Shodhana* (purification), *Shamana* (palliative therapies), and *Rasayana* (rejuvenation). By drawing parallels between ancient Ayurvedic wisdom and modern dietary trends, this paper emphasizes the urgent need to re-evaluate current eating habits and adopt preventive strategies rooted in traditional health science.

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, *Virudhahara* refers to the concept of incompatible foods. It describes specific foods or combinations that disrupt tissue metabolism, hinder the normal formation of body tissues, or possess properties that are antagonistic to those of the body's tissues. The proportion of *Virudhahara* consumption increased significantly over the past decade. The literal meaning of word *Virudha* is opposite. It possesses qualities opposite to *Dhatus*. The present generation gives much more importance for satisfying the sense of taste without considering whether the food is healthy to the body or not. The man is always in habit of taking *Virudha* knowingly or unknowingly as a part of

modern life style. Hence the elaborate examples of *Virudhahara* given by *Acharyas* are still relevant. It explains different modalities like *Samyoga virudha*, *Samskara virudha*, *Agni virudha* which is closely related with definition of junk food.

Junk food refers to calorie-dense items high in sugar, fat, and additives, offering little nutritional value as they lack essential nutrients like dietary fiber, protein, vitamins, and minerals. Due to their heavy nature and poor digestibility, such foods can be categorized under *Agni virudha* in Ayurveda, as they impair the digestive fire (*Agni*). It contains different type of ingredients which are contradictory to each other. The trend of having certain food combinations like burger, milk shakes, fruit salad can be considered as *Samyoga virudha*. Charcoal prepared food items have high amount of PCAH [Poly Cyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons] which are highly mutagenic comes under *Samskara* and *Paka virudha*. Intake of Chinese, Mexican, Italian dishes which are not accustomed to our body can be considered as *Satmya virudha*.

Access this article online	
Quick Response Code	
	https://doi.org/10.47070/ijapr.v13i7.3657
Published by Mahadev Publications (Regd.) publication licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)	

Additives, preservatives, flavouring agents etc present in the junk foods may produce *Dosha prakopa* leads to *Dosha virudha*. These *Virudhas* if followed for a long time may produce *Agnimandya* which will further leads to the formation of *Ama*, which will act as *Ama visha* and produces different types of diseases.

Acharya Vagbhata had stated that *Virudhahara* can act as *Garavisha* and can produce toxic manifestations in the body. *Gara visha* is a toxic combination of substances which shows effects after interval of sometime and does not kill the patient instantly. Even though some of the combinations of *Virudhahara* may become fatal like that of *Visha*. For example, combination of gas generating candies with carbonated drinks act like cyanide poisoning. As *Virudhahara* has been mentioned as one of the ingredients in the preparation of *Gara*, we can say that *Virudhahara* also act in a manner similar to it. By comparing the ailments produced by *Virudhahara* and *Gara visha*, we can see that most of them are similar.

Etymology

The word *Virudha* is derived from the root words *Vi + Rudh + Ktha*.^[1] The meaning of the word '*Virudh*' is *Virodha visista*. '*Virodha*' means incompatibility, opposition, and inconsistency and '*Visista*' means distinguished, distinct, peculiar and particular. Thus, the whole meaning is distinguished incompatibility.

Definition

Dravya that which causes *Utklesha* [agitates] of *Doshas* and do not expels it out is termed as *Virudha*.^[2]

Synonyms

In Ayurvedic literature, *Ahitahara* [unacceptable food], *Apathya* [incompatible diet] and *Mithya ahara* [improper diet] words are used very frequently as synonyms for the term *Virudhahara*.

Types of Virudha

Acharya Charaka has elaborately classified *Virudhas* into eighteen different types.^[3] *Susrutha acharya* has cited many examples under *Mana*, *Samyoga*, *Karma* and *Rasadi virudha*. He has specially mentioned *Karma* and *Rasa-Veerya-Vipaka virudha*.^[4] *Vagbhat acharya* has just mentioned *Samskara*, *Matra*, *Desha*, *Kala* and *Samyoga virudhas*.^[5] The detailed description of the eighteen types of *Virudhas* are as follows.

1. Desha virudha

Desha is of three kinds– *Anupa*, *Jangala* and *Sadharana*. *Anupa desha* is predominant of *Kapha dosha* and *Madhura rasa*. People residing there will be of *Kapha vata* predominant. Use of *Snigdha*, *Sheeta* and other food substances of similar qualities in *Anupa desha* are considered as *Anupa desha virudha*. *Jangala desha* is predominant of *Vata dosha* and *Katu rasa*. People residing here

will be of *Vata pitha* predominant. Consuming *Tikshna*, *Ruksha* and other food substances of similar qualities in *Jangala desha* is *Virudha*. There will be *Dosha prakopa* and obstruction to *Srothas* and can lead to diseases like *Kushta*, *Visarpa*, *Prameha* etc. as if Punjabi people consume idli, dosa etc. which are south Indian foods.

2. Kala virudha

Kala is considered as *Ritu* or season. Regimen for each *Ritu* has been advised and observing regimen contrary to the specific season is considered as *Virudha*, i.e., incompatible in respect to time. Consuming *Sheeta*, *Ruksha ahara* in *Sheeta kala* is considered as *Virudha*.

3. Agni virudha

Incompatible in respect to digestive capacity. *Agni* in the body is of four types–*Mandagni*, *Tikshnagni*, *Vishmagni* and *Samagni*. If food is not taken in accordance with the respective *Agni bala* then it will become *Agnivirudha*. Intake of *Guru*, *Snigdha* and *Madhura ahara* in *Mandagni* is *Virudha*.

4. Matra virudha

Incompatibility can also relate to the dose or quantity of food consumed. When food is eaten in the appropriate amount, it is known as *Matravat Ahara*. However, consuming too little (*Hina Matra*) or too much (*Adhika Matra*) deviates from the ideal and is referred to as *Matravirudhahara*. Additionally, when combining certain foods, a specific proportion must be maintained; failing to do so may also result in *Matravirudha*. A classic example is the equal combination of honey (*Madhu*) and ghee (*Sarpi*), which is considered incompatible when mixed in equal quantities.

5. Satmya virudha

Substances which are accustomed for a person is called as *Satmya*.^[6] If one takes substances to which he is not accustomed it is considered as *Virudha*. For example, consuming *Madhura* and *Sheeta ahara* by persons accustomed to *Katu* and *Ushna ahara*. Now a days Indian people used to eat Chinese, Italian, Thai, Mexican foods etc.

6. Dosha virudha

Incompatible in respect to *Doshas*. In case of aggravation of *Pitha dosha* consuming *Ushna*, *Tikshna* and *Katu ahara* leading to further aggravation of *Pitha* and later to various diseases such as *Pidaka*, *Kota* and various dermatological disorders. For example, *Pitha vardaka ahara vihara* in *Kamala*.

7. Samskara virudha

Samskara is the method in which the food is cooked (processing methods). It provides acceptable taste and better qualities to the food.^[7] The different agents like water, fire, utensils which

are utilized in *Samskara* should be properly used with care. Otherwise during *Samskara* the *Ahara* is converted into poison and is termed as *Samskara virudha*. If meat of *Sikhi* (peacock) roasted on *Eranda* stick (castor) it will become poisonous.^[8] So while processing any *Dravya* one should take care about the materials used in processing. The present junk food processing can be taken in this category where many harmful chemicals and preservatives are used for commercial purpose. According to *Dalhanacharya* the term '*Karma*' is used for *Samskara*. So *Susruthacharya*'s *karma virudha* can be correlated to *Samskara virudha* of *Charakacharya*. Eg. Warm curd and meat of *Kapinjala*, *Mayura*, *Lava*, *Tittiri*, and *Godha* cooked with *Eranda taila* in *Eranda/Darvi* fire.^[9]

8. *Virya virudha*

Virya is defined as the potency or efficacy of a *Dravya*. When *Dravyas* are taken in combination they should be of same *Virya* otherwise known as *Virya virudha*. For example, *Chilichima* fish with milk, brinjal- potato vegetable curry etc.

9. *Koshta virudha*

Krura koshta needs a stronger medicine for purgation while *Mridu koshta* requires only mild drugs. Administration of *Mandha virya* and *Alpa matra dravyas* in *Krura koshta* and administration of *Tikshna virya* and *Adhika matra dravyas* in *Mridu koshta* results in *Koshta virudha*.^[8]

10. *Avastha virudha*

Avastha indicates the state of *Doshas* in the body. *Avastha virudha* is the incompatibility in respect to state of health of consumer. *Vyayama*, *Vyavaya* and *Srama* increases the *Vata*. One should take *Snigdha*, *Ushna ahara* after it. Consuming *Vata* aggravating food soon after physical exertion is considered as *Avastha virudha* because it further aggravates the condition. Similarly, intake of *Kapha prakopa ahara* by a person soon after sleep is also *Virudha*.^[8] Eg. Consuming lassi after day sleep.

11. *Krama virudha*

Food is to be taken only by observing certain order like do not eat *Ushna ahara* soon after *Sheeta ahara* or *Snigdha ahara* soon after *Ruksha ahara* and vice versa. Taking food without attending the nature's call for defecation and micturition or when not having proper appetite or after hunger has been aggravated is considered as *Krama virudha*, i.e., incompatibility in respect to sequence of intake.^[8]

12. *Parihara virudha*

Incompatibility in respect to contraindication. *Parihara* means the food substances which are to be avoided depending upon healthy or unhealthy

condition. In diseased condition, intake of food substances which are mentioned as *Apathya* in that particular disease is called *Parihara virudha*. one should avoid food substances which are similar in quality with previous meal. Consuming hot things after taking pork is an example of *Parihara virudha*.^[8] The flesh of boar is *Ushna virya*, consumption of hot substance after consumption of boar flesh can lead to increase in *Ushna guna* in the body leading to *Dhatukshaya*.

13. *Upachara virudha*

Incompatibility in respect to indication. *Upachara* means *chikitsa* or treatment. Use of food incompatible to treatment is called *Upachara virudha*, i.e., intake of cold water or cold food items after the consumption of ghee.^[8]

14. *Paka virudha*

Paka denotes the process of cooking which makes the food palatable and easy for digestion. The kind of fuel used and limits of proper cooking are important. *Pakavirudha* occurs when bad or rotten fuel is used. Under cooked, over cooked or burnt food items also causes *Paka virudha*.^[8]

15. *Samyoga virudha*

Samyoga means combination of two or more substances.^[10] Some substances on combination may become incompatible to the body. For example, intake of sour things with milk. Milk is *Sheeta virya* whereas the sour substance is having *Ushna virya*, these combinations lead to improper metabolism and toxins production and further manifestation of various diseases like *Kushta*. Milk and melons should not be eaten together. Both are cooling, but milk is laxative and melon is diuretic. Milk requires more time for digestion. Moreover, the hydrochloric acid in the stomach causes the milk to curdle. For this reason, Ayurveda advices to avoid milk with sour fruits, yogurt, sour cream, cheese, fish etc.

16. *Hridaya virudha*

The term *Hridaya* means *Manas*. Food items which are pleasing to the mind will also be pleasant to the sense organs. Taste of the food is an important factor promoting likeness of food. The likes and dislikes will be varying from one person to other. Consuming food which is not pleasant in taste is *Hridaya virudha*,^[8] i.e., incompatibility in respect to palatability.

17. *Sampath virudha*

Sampath refers to richness of quality of food products. The substances should reach natural maturity before they are consumed. Only the naturally matured food stuffs have good quality and will perform intended function in the body. Eating of substances that are not matured or over

matured or putrefied will lead to *Sampath virudha*.^[8] The examples of *Sampath virudha* are unripe tomatoes, non-seasonable fruits etc.

18. *Vidhi virudha*

Dietetic regulations and procedures have been advocated in Ayurveda like *Upayoga samstha (Ashtaaharavidhivishesha ayatana)*.^[11] These include eating food which is hot, unctuous, not antagonistic in potency, and in due measure, after the digestion of previous meal, in exclusive place, provided with all accessories, neither too hurry

nor too slow, without talking or laughing, with full concentration and having proper regard to oneself. Not obeying these dietetic rulers is *Vidhi virudha*. For example, taking meal in public is *Vidhi virudha*.

Junk Food

Junk food is defined as a food which is readily available, may or may not be nutritious and high in calories from sugar, fat and salt. Common junk foods include- cakes, biscuits, pastries, pizza, donuts, chocolates, KFC, carbonated beverages etc.

Table 10: Junk food definitions ^[12]

S.No	Definitions	Reference
1	According to a definition of the World Health Organization (WHO) recently reported, junk foods are high in energy, low in nutrient content and/or high in fat (that is, some even contain trans-fats) snack foods that contain added sugar (that is, sugary biscuits, cream-filled sponge cakes, candy and fizzy drinks) or have high salt content (that is, fried potato crisps).	GP Milani, M Silano, A Pietrobelli, C Agostoni. Junk food concept: Seconds out. International Journal of Obesity (2017) 41, 669–671.
2	Junk food (JF) is defined as a food which is readily available, usually inexpensive, may or may not be nutritious. Such foods contain more calories, more salt, have a higher content of saturated fat and contain less iron, calcium and dietary fiber.	NCBI
3	High-fat processed foods and snack foods high in fat and/or sugar.	Northstone K, Emmett P. Multivariate analysis of diet in children at four and seven years of age and associations with socio-demographic characteristics. Eur J Clin Nutr 2005; 59: 751–760.
4	Foods that provide calories primarily through fats or added sugars and have minimal amounts of vitamins and minerals or foods or beverages that have low nutrient density, that is they provide calories primarily through fats or added sugars and have minimal amounts of vitamins and minerals.	Taber DR, Stevens J, Evenson KR, Ward DS, Poole C, Maciejewski ML et al. State policies targeting junk food in schools: racial/ethnic differences in the effect of policy change on soda consumption. Am J Public Health 2011; 101: 1769–1775.
5	Food of minimal nutritional value.	Ritterman Weintraub ML, Fernald LC, Goodman E, Guendelman S, Adler NE. Obesity-related behaviors among poor adolescents and young adults: is social position associated with risk behaviors? Front public Heal 2015; 3: 224.
6	Food high in sugar, high-glycemic starch and saturated fats.	Stanley WC, Shah KB, Essop MF. Does junk food lead to heart failure?: Importance of dietary macronutrient composition in hypertension. Hypertension 2009; 54: 1209–1210.
7	Fast food and other processed foods and beverages such as sodas, candy or high-fat desserts), which has been previously shown to be effective at detecting changes in eating habits.	Mcclain AD, Hekler EB, Gardner CD. Incorporating prototyping and interaction into intervention development: a case study of a dining hall-based intervention. J Am Coll Health 2013; 61: 122–131.
8	Heavily processed, highly palatable and hyper-energetic.	0 Bayol S a, Farrington SJ, Stickland NC. A maternal 'junk food' diet in pregnancy and

		lactation promotes an exacerbated taste for 'junk food' and a greater propensity for obesity in rat offspring. Br J Nutr 2007; 98: 843–851.
9	Peanut butter, hazelnut spread, chocolate-flavored biscuits (cookies), extruded savory snacks, sweetened multigrain breakfast cereal, ham and chicken-flavored processed meat.	Ong ZY, Muhlhausler BS. Maternal 'junk-food' feeding of rat dams alters food choices and development of the mesolimbic reward pathway in the offspring. FASEB J 2011; 25: 2167–2179.
10	Food produced by 'junk brands'.	Bestman A, Thomas SL, Randle M, Thomas SDM. Children's implicit recall of junk food, alcohol and gambling sponsorship in Australian sport. BMC Public Health 2015; 15: 1022.

Harmful Effects of Junk Food [13]

Obesity

Obesity is a global issue defined as an excess of body fat or body weight that is 20% over the ideal. It is now considered as a chronic disease as it is reaching epidemic proportion in developed nations. Obesity is multi factorial disorder of energy balance in which chronic calorie intake is more than energy output. Most of the junk foods have exceeding levels of sugar and fat which are directly associated with obesity.

Diabetes mellitus

Diabetes mellitus is a group of metabolic disorders in which there is high blood glucose level for a prolonged period characterized by frequent urination, polydipsia, polyphagia fatigue or weight loss.

Hypertension

Junk food consists of abundance of salt which causes hypertension by regular use. If it is not treated properly leads to coronary artery diseases.

Heart diseases

The junk food consumption is associated with premature heart disease. The general consensus is that this relationship can be explained by the saturated fats in these foods increasing obesity, diabetes and hyperlipidemia and high salt content raising blood pressure.

Dental cavities

The primary reason why junk food is so bad for oral health is the added salt and sugar found in it. When we eat these foods, debris is more likely to stick to the teeth. This food debris allows acids to build up along the surface of teeth and eventually causes tooth decay and cavity.

Kidney diseases

Junk food is high in calories and contains unhealthy fats that can lead to high sugar levels and obesity. As the kidneys are highly responsive to increased sugar and cholesterol level, consuming junk food in excessive quantities can lead to obesity and increase the load on kidneys.

Neurological disorders

Mental disorders such as drowsiness, laziness, dyslexia, ADHD, loss of balance and lack of concentration occur due to excessive eating of junk food.

Skin rashes

Junk food consists of a lot of additives and chemicals which causes hypersensitivity reactions in skin leading to skin rashes.

Asthma

Asthma is a condition in which a person's airways become inflamed, narrow and swell and produce extra mucus, which makes it difficult to breathe. Different studies found a significant association between consumption of junk food and severe asthma along with other conditions like wheezing and eczema. The high fat levels in junk food weakens the immune system leading to diseases.

Cancer

Obese people have an increased risk of colon, breast, prostate, gall bladder, ovarian, skin cancer and uterine cancer.

Hypoxia

Habitual use of junk food leads to the accumulation of fat in arteries therefore lack of oxygen supply in the body causes hypoxia.

Behavioural problems

Consumption of junk food in early childhood can be results in behavior associated problem like aggressiveness, hyperactivity etc.

Virudhahara and Diseases

Health and diseases are the two sides of the same coin. Man is responsible for his state of health or disease by his good or bad life style. A controlled life is very essential for health. *Virudhahara* is a major factor for all systemic diseases. The main characteristic action of the *Virudhahara* is often slow and deep rooted. The effect of *Virudhahara* can be like that of *Gara visha*. [14]

The action of *Virudhahara* can be represented as follows;

Virudhahara → *Rakta dushti* → Instantaneous death

↓

Agnimandhya → *Ama* → *Srothorodham* → *Dhatu dushti* → *Rogas*

Diseases Caused by the Consumption of *Virudhahara* [According to *Acharya Charaka*] ^[15]

- *Shandya* (Sterility)
- *Andhya* (Blindness)
- *Visarpa* (Skin disorder)
- *Udara* (Ascites)
- *Visphota* (Eruptions)
- *Unmada* (Insanity)
- *Bhagandhara* (Fistula)
- *Murcha* (Fainting)
- *Mada* (Intoxication)
- *Admana* (Abdominal distention)
- *Galagraha* (Obstruction in throat)
- *Pandu* (Anaemia)
- *Ama visha*
- *Kilasa* (Skin disorder)
- *Kushta* (Skin disorder)
- *Grahani* (Sprue)
- *Shotha* (Oedema)
- *Amlapitha* (Acid dyspepsia)
- *Jwara* (Fever)
- *Peenasa* (Rhinitis)
- *Santhana dosha* (Foetal disease)
- *Marana* (Death)

Factors that Pacify the ill Effects of *Virudhahara*

The health status of the individual is determined by the strength of the *Agni*. *Acharya Charaka* stated that incompatibility will not affect those people who are in a state of *Satmya*, *Alpvirudha*, *Diptagni*, *Vyayama*, *Taruna* and *Snigdahara*.^[16]

State of *Satmya*- The body will be accustomed to certain incompatible foods because of daily consumption over long period. Hence the body might have attained a non-sensitizing stage. The power of the body to prevent the development of diseases or ability to resist a developed disease is called *Vyadhi-kshamatwa*. Due to *Satmyata* the equilibrium of *Doshas* will not be tilted. But *Virudhaharas* remain harmless due to *Satmyatwam* only when *Agni* is strong enough to handle it. If *Virudhahara* quantity is more, then it is able to produce devastating effect even it is *Satmya*. So, the people who are concerned about health should avoid *Virudhahara*.

State of *Alpa virudha*- A person taking less amount of *Virudhahara* may not be affected by the ill effects of it.

State of *Diptagni*- *Diptagni* will be able to neutralize *Virudhaharajanya ama* and hence the normal well-being of the individual is not affected.

State of *Tarunam*- *Dosha dhatu malas* are said to have an equilibrium stage in *Tarunavastha* which inherently denotes the excellence of *Agni*. This balanced *Agni* will be able to cope up with the hazardous manifestations of *Virudhahara*.

State of *Vyayama*- *Diptagni* produced by *Vyayama* will be able to neutralize the ill effects of *Virudhahara*.

State of *Snigdahara*- *Snigdahara* is always causing nourishment to *Dhatus* which in turn helps to maintain body in a healthy state just like *Vyayama nitya* and *Tarunavasatha*. Here also *Agni* will be powerful enough to manage the ill effects of *Virudhahara*.

Evidence-Based Insights on *Virudhahara* and Junk Food

Modern research reveals that certain food combinations can impair digestive enzymes, increase intestinal permeability, and promote systemic inflammation mechanisms that align with the Ayurvedic understanding of *Ama* formation and metabolic disturbances.^[17,18] The consumption of ultraprocessed foods (UPFs), often considered incompatible in Ayurvedic terms, has been linked to metabolic endotoxemia, a condition where bacterial endotoxins enter the bloodstream, triggering inflammation and contributing to obesity, insulin resistance, and cardiovascular diseases.^[19] Studies have demonstrated that diets high in fat and sugar can elevate plasma endotoxin levels, leading to oxidative stress and immune system activation.^[20]

Furthermore, Ayurvedic interventions, such as *Rasayana* therapy, have shown promise in mitigating the effects of *Virudhahara*. Clinical studies indicate that *Rasayana* formulations, which include herbs like *Amalaki*, *Ashwagandha*, and *Guduchi*, possess antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and immunomodulatory properties, supporting metabolic health and reducing oxidative stress.^[21]

These findings underscore the relevance of Ayurvedic dietary principles in contemporary health contexts, highlighting the importance of mindful food combinations and the potential benefits of traditional therapies in managing modern lifestyle diseases.

Treatment of *Virudhahara*

Purgation, emesis, antidotes and prophylaxis are used for curing diseases produced by the intake of *Virudhaharas*.^[22] The *Shodana* therapy aims at purification of body from toxins. It involves *Vamana* and *Virechana* to expel the *Utklishta doshas*. If *Doshas* are not so aggravated then *Shamana* can be performed. This is done by using *Dravyas* which are opposite in nature to that of *Virudhahara*. To strengthen the body against the harmful effects of *Virudhahara* '*Hitanna*'

has to be observed. *Chakrapani Dutta* has included *Rasayana* therapy along with it. *Dravyas* like *Triphala* can be utilized for the purpose in *Vatatapika* method of *Rasayana*.^[22] The habits which have been followed for long should not be stopped abruptly as it leads to diseases. So *Virudhaharas* should be discarded in a gradual phase and wholesome foods should be taken in a slow and steady manner.

DISCUSSION

Ahara is the most important factor for the sustenance of life. Among the three *Upasthambas-Ahara*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*; *Ahara* has been given more importance as it is the major component of life which gives energy for all life processes. From ancient days itself different types of dietary patterns existed among different ethnic groups. Those were purely based on their environment and seasonal variations in which they lived. In our classics also different *Acharyas* have mentioned about rules and regulations for the intake of food under so many headings like *Ashtahara vidhi*, *Dwdashashana pravicharas* and *Pathyaapathyas*. Improper practice of these regulations is also discussed as *Virudha* and so many other diseases.

The need for strengthening the nutritional information was realized by an expert committee of which CSE was a part, along with doctors, nutritionists, public health experts, representatives of civil society and industries in 2014. The committee had also recommended labeling of calories, sugar, fat, saturated fat and salt on the front of pack (FoP) of foods. The Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI) have made certain rules regarding the labelling of packaged food. Declaration of added sugars and cholesterol level (mg) in food has been made mandatory. FSSAI will soon make public its draft regulations for front-of-package labeling (FOPL) that recommend a health star rating system.^[23]

CONCLUSION

One should follow healthy food habits in day-to-day life. When *Dinacharya* and *Aharavidhi viseshayatana* are properly followed, the toxicities that junk food can cause in a person can be avoided. Before consumption one must ensure the food, combination is safe and is according to the rules and conditions for intake of food.

REFERENCES

1. Raja Radhakanthadev. Shabdakalpadrumah. Vol. 4. Varanasi; Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2011. p. 420.
2. Srikantha Murthy KR. Ashtanga Samgraha of Vagbhata. Vol. 1. Varanasi; Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2015. A.S. Su.9/7. p. 200.
3. Sharma RK, Dash B. Charaka Samhita English Commentary. Vol. 1. Varanasi; Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2012. Ch. Su.26/86-87. p. 485.
4. Srikantha Murthy KR, editor. Illustrated Susruta Samhita, Sutrasthana (English Translation). Vol. 1. Varanasi; Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2012. Su. Su.20/14. p. 148.
5. Srikantha Murthy KR. Ashtanga Samgraha of Vagbhata. Vol. 1. Varanasi; Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2015. A.S. Su.9/2-9. p. 197-201.
6. Sharma RK, Dash B. Charaka Samhita English Commentary. Vol. 2. Varanasi; Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2013. Ch. Vi.1/20. p. 122-123.
7. Sharma RK, Dash B. Charaka Samhita English Commentary. Vol. 2. Varanasi; Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2013. Ch. Vi.1/22-2. p. 124.
8. Sharma RK, Dash B. Charaka Samhita English Commentary. Vol. 1. Varanasi; Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2012. Ch. Su.26/90. p. 485.
9. Srikantha Murthy KR, editor. Illustrated Susruta Samhita, Sutrasthana (English Translation). Vol. 1. Varanasi; Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2012. Su. Su.20/14. p. 148.
10. Sharma RK, Dash B. Charaka Samhita English Commentary. Vol. 2. Varanasi; Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2013. Ch. Vi.1/22-3. p. 125.
11. Sharma RK, Dash B. Charaka Samhita English Commentary. Vol. 2. Varanasi; Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2013. Ch. Vi.1/22-7. p. 126.
12. Milani GP, Silano M, Pietrobelli A, Agostoni C. Junk food concept: Seconds out. International Journal of Obesity. 2017; 41(1): 1-3.
13. Rajveer B. Junk food impact on health. Journal of Drug Delivery and Therapeutics. 2012; 2(3): 67-70.
14. Sreekumar T. Ashtanga Hridaya Vagbhata, Sutrastana-I, English Translation and Commentary. Vol. 1. Mannuthy, Kerala; Harisree Hospital; 2011. A.H. Su.7/29. p. 205.
15. Sharma RK, Dash B. Charaka Samhita English Commentary. Vol. 1. Varanasi; Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2012. Ch. Su.26/102-103. p. 487.
16. Sreekumar T. Ashtanga Hridaya Vagbhata, Sutrastana-I, English Translation and Commentary. Vol. 1. Mannuthy, Kerala; Harisree Hospital; 2011. A.H. Su.7/47. p. 210.
17. Sabnis M. Viruddha Ahara: A critical view. Ayurveda. 2012; 33(1): 1-8.
18. Mishra AK. Insights into food incompatibilities: Ayurveda and modern perspectives. Journal of Dietary Supplements and Herbal Medicine. 2024; 6(3): 45-53.

19. Amar J, et al. Energy intake is associated with endotoxemia in humans. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. 2008; 88(6): 1-8.
20. Ogilvie AR, et al. Short-term high fat diet induced metabolic endotoxemia in humans. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. 2025; 122(4): 789-795.
21. Bendale YN, et al. Ayurveda Rasayana Therapy leads to tumor regression and improved survival. Clinical Case Reports. 2024; 12(3): e8076.
22. Sharma RK, Dash B. Charaka Samhita English Commentary. Vol. 1. Varanasi; Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2012. Ch. Su.26/104-106. p. 488.
23. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India. [Internet]. New Delhi; FSSAI; [cited 2025 Jul 30]. Available from: <https://fssai.gov.in>

Cite this article as:

Pooja Ramesh, Prasanth S R. Junk Food as Virudhahara: An Ayurvedic Perspective on Modern Dietary Incompatibilities and Health Risks. International Journal of Ayurveda and Pharma Research. 2025;13(7):52-59.

<https://doi.org/10.47070/ijapr.v13i7.3657>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

***Address for correspondence**

Dr. Pooja Ramesh

Postgraduate Ayurvedic Physician
and Public Health Specialist,
Govt. Ayurveda College,
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India.

Email: midhunpooja1316@gmail.com

Disclaimer: IJAPR is solely owned by Mahadev Publications - dedicated to publish quality research, while every effort has been taken to verify the accuracy of the content published in our Journal. IJAPR cannot accept any responsibility or liability for the articles content which are published. The views expressed in articles by our contributing authors are not necessarily those of IJAPR editor or editorial board members.

