



Review Article

SIGNIFICANCE OF AHARA VIDHI VISHESH AYATAN IN THE MANAGEMENT OF NORMAL HEALTH (SPECIAL DIRECTION OF FOOD)

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda defines normal health as a balanced state of *Doshas*, *Dhatus*, *Agni*, *mala* and happiness of *Atma*, *Indriyas* and *Manas* as well as the physical mental and social wellbeing. According to WHO's definition of health "a state of physical mental and social wellbeing and not merely an absence of disease". proper nutrition is very essential for healthy life. *Ahara* (food) is the main source of nutrition. *Ahara* (Food) sustains the life of living beings. All living beings in the universe require *Ahara* (food), complexion, clarity, good voice, longevity, geniusness, happiness, satisfaction, nourishment, strength and intellect are all conditioned by *Ahara* (food). Professional activities leading to happiness in this world, *Vedic rituals* leading to abode in heaven and observance of truth, *Brahmhacharya* leading to salvation are all based on food. Only the individual having a healthy body can afford to perform all activities leading to happiness, heaven and salvation, and for the preservation of health intake of food is essential. Hence food is the basic factor for the attainment of all of them. *Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan* (Eight types of special directions for ingestion of food). According to *Acharya Charaka* only the normal quantity of *Ahara* cannot provide the good result of *Ahara* because the result of *Ahara* depends upon *Ahara*, *Vidhi*, *Vishesh*, *Ayatan* Eight types of special direction have been given by *Acharya Charaka* for ingestion of food.

KEYWORDS: *Ahara*, *Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan*, *Trayo upastambha*.

INTRODUCTION

Ahara has been described in Ayurvedic literature under *Trayo Upastambha* (*Ahara*, *Nidra* & *Brahma Charya*). *Ahara* is very essential for nourishment & protection of life. Development of sense organs, mind & body depends upon good qualities of food. Health is Wealth. According to WHO's definition of health is as "a state of physical mental and social wellbeing and not merely an absence of disease."¹ The normal health depends upon the *Ahara*. *Ahara* plays an important role to provide nutrition to the body. It is mentioned in *Ramayana* that "*Bhuke bhajan na hue gopala*" (*Ramchirtar Manas*). this quotation used by *Sant Kavi Tulsji Das Ji* in *Ramayana* clearly indicates that the hungry man cannot develop himself. *Ahara* provides nutrition to the body but it is more beneficial when a perfect method as described in *Ayurvedic* literature is adopted only quantity of *Ahara* is not beneficial for health but it depends on the *Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan*. This method clearly indicates that it is clearly mentioned in *Ayurvedic* literature that only a perfect dose of *Ahara* is not beneficial to maintain perfect health but every man has to be follow some special direction of food which is clearly mentioned in the

Charaka Samhita. The details about the *Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan*² (special direction of food) are as given below.

- 1) *Prakriti*
- 2) *Karana*
- 3) *Sanyoga*
- 4) *Rashi*
- 5) *Desha*
- 6) *Kala*
- 7) *Upyoga sanstha*
- 8) *Upayokta*

1. *Prakriti*³ (*Swabhav or Nature*)

The natural qualities like *Guru*, *Laghu* etc. which is present at the time of origin in *Ahara Dravya*. This total qualities of *Ahara* is the *Prakriti* of that particular *Ahara*, for example -*Munga* is *Laghu* from nature and *Unada* is *Guru* from nature. The specific quality of particular food and drug it is known as the *Prakriti* the individual drug, some drugs are cold and some are hot in nature this is the particular quality of the individual drug. Some drugs burn in hot atmosphere and some in cold atmosphere. Some are burning cool atmosphere but their action is hot. Some drugs are burning in hot

atmosphere but their action is cool. This particular nature of the drug is known as *Prakriti* is of the individual drug. It is the moral duty of the physician to advise to take the drug according to the disease and Complication. The natural qualities like *Guru*, *Laghu* etc. which is present at the time of origin in *Ahara Dravya*. This total quantity of *Ahara* is the *Prakriti* of that particular *Ahara*, for example –*Munga* is *Laghu* from nature and *Unada* is *Guru* from nature.

2. Karana⁴ (Sansakara or transformation)

The development (generation or production or transformation) of different new qualities in *Ahara Dravya* which is not present at the time of origin is known as *Karana*. The new qualities are developed in the *Ahara Dravya* due to cleaning, washing and cooking, polishing.

For example: Rice is *guru* but when it is cooked it becomes *Laghu*. When the food and drugs are boiled and cleaned their quality is changed it is increased generally. For example uncooked rice is cool from nature but when it is boiled it is converted in to hot in nature this particular quality changed is called as *Karana* and one of the other example polished rice is not as beneficial as brown (unpolished)rice.

3. Sanyoga⁵ (combination)

When two are more than two *Dravya* combine together, this combination is known as *Sanyoga*. Due to this combination some special qualities are developed which was not present separately. Sometimes this combination may be harmful for the life. For example combination of *Ghee* and *Madhu* in equal quantity creates toxic effect on the body although *Ghee* and *Madhu* are not toxic individually. For example –honey, fish, milk if these *Ahara* is using after mixing then these *Ahara* is produced *Kushta Roga* but use individually these are not harmful to our body. ad one the other example rice and pulses (*Dal*) taken together are beneficial and complementary.

4. Rashi⁶ (quantity or total amount of food)

Rashi means quantity or total amount of *Ahara Dravya*. It may be calculated from two types.

a) *Sarva Graha*

b) *Pari Graha*

a) Sarva Graha Rashi

The total quantity of *Ahara Dravya* in diet is the *Sarva graha Rashi*.

b) Parigraha Rashi

The individual quantity of *Ahara Dravya* is known as *Parigraha Rashi*. The quantity of particular food and drug is known as *Rashi* of the individual drug. For example 100 gm potato, 50 gm onion, 50 gm tomato and 200 gm water this particular combination of become 400 gm and their separate

quality is known as 100 gm potato, 50 gm onion, 50 gm tomato and 200 gm.

5. Desha⁷ (Local place)

The climates of different places in the country are different. The effect of climate is depends upon the *Ahara Dravya*.

This is the reason that some *Ahara Dravya* are born in the hot atmosphere and some are born in the cold climate. The *Ahara Dravya* which is born in the hot atmosphere is becomes *Ushna* (hot) and the *Ahara Dravya* born in the cool temperature is cold in nature. This is due to the climate effect of *Ahara Dravya*.

6. Kala (time)⁸

Kala is the sixth factor. It denotes condition of the body whether it is healthy or sick (unhealthy). It is of two types.

i) *Nityaga kala*:- it depends on *Ritu satmaya*. For eg:- the food which is *Satamya* in the particular *Ritu* for individual is beneficial for that person.

ii) *Avasthik kala*:- it depends upon the unhealthy condition of the person. For e.g:- Milk is harmful in the acute fever but is beneficial in the chronic fever.

7. Upayoga Samstha⁹ (Law of utilization of food for the individual)

One should take diet after proper digestion of the previous food otherwise when it is taken without proper digestion of the previous diet; it becomes harmful to the health. Because it is one of the major cause of imbalance of *Doshas*. This is the law of utilization for the food.

8. Upayokta¹⁰

It means who consumes the food. Sometimes due to continuous utilization of a particular food it becomes *Satmya* to the individual and is not harmful at any cost, but is beneficial for the life. For eg: - due to continuous utilization of curd it becomes *Satmya* to the individual and is not harmful at all rather beneficial for the life.

Benefits of Ahara Vidhi Vishesh Ayatan

A healthy and balanced diet according to the above mentioned special directions can protect the human body against certain type of disease, in particular non communicable disease such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases some type of cancer and skeletal disorder and All the eight types of special direction food are very essential for good and happy life. The person and physician having knowledge of special direction of food are beneficial for healthy and long life. This knowledge is very helpful for treat the any type's diseased patient and change all type of physically, mental as well as social status of the diseased patient.

DISCUSSION

In above mentioned description related to special direction of food clearly indicates guidelines of the taking of the diet. Everyone should concentrate mind while taking *Ahara* in his daily routine although the *Ahara* is beneficial for life but it will be more beneficial when it is utilize in the systemic ways as described by *Acharya Charaka*. Now it is clear that only the normal quantity of diet is not beneficial rather it should be taken as per guidelines described by *Acharya Charaka*. Thus everybody should utilize *Ahara Dravya* according to *Prakriti* of the individual over the importance of *Ahara*.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above mentioned description and discussion we have come to the conclusion that everybody should follow the rules and regulation whenever he takes any *Ahara Dravya* in his daily routine. Some person having *Vataja prakriti*, *Pittaja prakriti*, and *Kaphaja prakriti*; some people are generally prone to the disease of *Vataja*, *pittaja*, *Kaphaja Doshas*. Because the *Prakriti* plays an important role in the formation of the disease of it the diet is taken as per the guideline everybody may protects his health to control the imbalance of *Dosha* in the body and will be able to maintain his health.

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