



CONCEPT OF AAHAAR VIDHIVISHESHAYATAN FOR PREVENTION OF DISEASES - A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Metabolic disease is a group of disorders that includes abdominal obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and elevated cholesterol. Nowadays it is a worldwide health problem. Approximately 20% to 30% of the adult populations are affected by this problem. Gradually this number is increasing because of poor lifestyles especially regarding dietary pattern, physical inactivity, stressful life and rapid urbanization. Often these conditions are managed by pharmacological treatment; however, this is not enough in controlling this syndrome. Thus, Ayurveda can play a significant role to prevent this by following particular conducts like dietary regulation, daily regimen, seasonal regimen, pancha-karma and yoga therapy. Among them dietary regulation is very important factor for the prevention of metabolic syndrome and that is more emphasized in different Ayurvedic classics in many years ago.

KEYWORDS: Ahar vidhivisheshayatan, Prevention, Ayurved.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is science of life or longevity. Ayurveda explains two goals to be achieved i.e. Swastharakshana and Vikarprashamana.^[1] In this regard, for the preservation and promotion of positive health, several regimens are mentioned in Ayurveda which mainly includes Dinacharya (daily regimen), Ratricharya (night regimen), Ritucharya (seasonal regimen), Sadvritta (right conduct of life) and Acharya Rasayana (behavioral conducts). To maintain a healthy and disease free life one should follow a daily routine or schedule. If these rules are violated, then surely person suffers from various types of diseases and due to this adverse effects are visible in various forms like early fatigability, stress etc. in almost each and every person.

The most important pillar of human life is food. All the living beings are dependent on it. Every human being wishes to live a long life without any disease. Food helps in the complete growth and development of an individual. The right kind of food is the single most important factor in the growth and development. Improper food habits lead to many disease conditions. Disease free condition is the best source of virtue,

wealth, gratification whereas diseases are the destroyer of the same.^[3] Thus in the perspective of promotion of health and prevention of diseases ayurveda has given utmost importance to food. Ahara is considered one among the trioupasthambas. Among them it is mentioned first as it is most important for the sustenance of life. Food has been considered sacred and was worshipped since the Vedic period.^[4] Food was considered as Brahma and man is considered as the essence of food in the Taittareya Upanishad.^[5] Pure foods lead to the purity of the mind as said in Chandogya Upanishad.^[6] Sapta Ahara Kalpana Vishesh is a beautiful concept explained by Ashtanga Sangraha in the Annapana vidhi adhyaya.^[7]

Diet plays an important part for the development of metabolic syndrome.^[7] Improper dietary habits specially over eating, excessive heavy diet, excessive meat and fish, sugarcane preparations, milk and its preparations increase the kapha dosha in body. Therefore, this kapha dosha produce excess tissue, mucous, fat and that helps to retain the fluid in body. Excess kapha dosha also causes the accumulation of fat that effects on elevated cholesterol and triglycerides level in blood.^[8] The imbalance kapha dosha also slows down the metabolic power as a result disturbs in metabolism and ultimately

leads to weight gain. So Ayurveda considers the diet as medicine and is classified according to their taste, habitat and pattern of metabolism.^[9] As the metabolic rate is varies in different individuals so suitable selection of diet is very important for blanching state of human. According to Ayurveda the human body is ruled by three fundamental lifeforces; these are called biological humors of human body. The three humors are Vata, Pitta and Kapha. These are often translated as "wind", "bile" and "phlegm". Vata is also often called the biological air-humor, pitta the biological fire-humor and kapha the biological water-humor. These all three humors manifest in the body by maintaining and controlling the chemical, hormonal and electrical functions of the human body. The rasa or taste of diet depends on the predominance of particular humor for keeping the body free from diseases.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Literature search from classical texts of Ayurveda had taken.

Type of study:- literary study -fundamental study-Aahar vidhi visheyatana and its role in disease prevention. Literature from modern science related to life style disorders reviewed.

Dietary principles in ayurveda aahar vidhi visheshayaatana

Prakriti- basic characteristics

Prakriti is basic qualitative characteristics of diet in the form of Guru, Laghu etc. Further aahar dravyas (articles) are grouped into different categories for convenience.

Karan - Sanskara –Processing Done

करणं पुनः स्वाभाविकानां द्रव्याणामभिसंस्कारः। संस्कारो हि गुणान्तराधानमुच्यते।
गुणास्तोयाग्निसन्निकर्षशौचमन्थनदेशकालवासनभावनादिभिः कालप्रकर्षभाजनादिभिश्चाधीयन्ते || Cha.Vi.1/22

Processing on food is done to bring about change in properties of food. It may be in the form of cleaning, washing, heating, storing, cooking, roasting, grinding, seasoning etc.

3). Samyoga - Combination of Food

संयोगः पुनर्द्वयोर्बहूनां वा द्रव्याणां संहतीभावः || Cha.Vi.1/22

The combination two or more substances to get positive effects should be done.

The consumption of unwholesome combination known as Viruddha should be avoided.

Viruddha

यत् किञ्चित् दोषमुत्कलेष्य न हरेत् तत् समासतः विरुद्धम् ।। Asth.Hru.Su.7/45

The food which, is not compatible & it causes

aggravation of Doshas but does not expel it out of the body.

यत् किञ्चित् दोषमासाव्य न निर्हरति कायतः आहारजातं तत् सर्वमहितायोपपद्यते ।। Cha.Su.26/85.

The food taken does not nourish the Dhatus in turn vitiate them producing disease.

Contemporary examples of Viruddha Aahar

- Not considering season, age etc. during food intake.
- Heavy exercise after food
- Heavy night food
- Over cooking or under cooking
- Untimely intake of food

Specific examples of Viruddha Aahar

- Milk shakes, fruit salads, adding cream to various dishes,
- Curd taken at night
- Boiling of butter milk Ex: Kadhi etc.
- Deep frying of food.
- Intake of cold water after taking ghee and oily food
- Intake of cold drinks after taking meals.

4) RASHI – Quantity of diet

5) DESHA – Habitat of diet

6) Kala – time as per age, season and condition

कालभोजनम आरोग्यकरणम् | Cha. Su. 5/40

As per scriptures the food should be consumed morning and evening like Agnihotri, according to rules, intake of food in between is not advocated.

सायं प्रातः मनुष्याणां अशनं श्रुतिचोदितम् |

नान्तरा भोजनं कुर्यात् अग्निहोत्र समोविधिः||Su.Ut65-66

Ideal time: When one feels hungry and has the features of digestion

उद्गार शुद्धिरुत्सहो वेगोत्सर्गो यथोचिता |

लघुता क्षुत् पिपासा च जीर्णाहार लक्षणम्||Bhav.Pu.5/118

Clear belching, enthusiasm, proper evacuation of urges, lightness, onset of hunger and thirst are features of properly digested food. Food should be taken at time because hunger is one among the Adharaniya Vegas.

अ।हारम पचति शिखि दोषाणाहार वर्जितः |

दोष क्षय पचेत धातुन प्राणान धातुक्षयेपि वा | | Bhav.Pu.5/110

Agni digests Dosha in absence of food, in absence of Dosha it digests Dhatus and ultimately digests Prana in absence of Dhatu. Bhav.Purv. 5/115

One has to take Ahar like Agnihotri .Aahar having good qualities after analysing Dosha, Kala- Time, season in morning and evening.

7) upayoga samstha-Variable digestibility of different diet

8) Upayokta –Person taking diet

Foods advocated for daily use

षष्टिकाञ्छलिमुद्गांश्च सैन्धवामलके यवान् आन्तरीक्षं पयः
सर्पिर्जाङ्गलं मधु चाभ्यसेत्॥ तच्च नित्यं प्रयुञ्जीत स्वास्थ्यं
येनानुवर्तते। अजातानां विकाराणामनुत्पत्तिकरं च
यत्॥Cha.su.5/12

Cereals like rice, barley pulses like green gram, rock salt, Indian goose berry, water, milk, ghee, meat soup of terrestrial animals, honey are to be taken regularly for prevention of disorders

क्षीर घृताभ्यासो रसयानानां | Cha Su. 25/40

Food habits that lead to disease

Adhyashana- Taking food again and again before digestion of previously taken food

Samashana- Taking the food that is conducive and nonconductive or health together

Vishamashana- Taking food in excess or less quantity, at irregular time interval

Diet Planning In Disease Condition

1. Ahara that help in Samprapti Vighatana of particular disease
2. Dushya/Dosha siddhanta
3. Samanya Vishesh Siddhanta

Srotodushti Prakara

1) **Sanga:** for releasing Sanga/ obstruction

Due to kapha-Katu, Tikta, Kashaya rasayukta ahara is preferred

Due to Vata- Lavana, Amla, Madhura rasayukta ahara is preferred

2) **Vimarga gamana:** Brought to proper channel by respective mahabhuta pradhana dravyas based on whether Urdhva/Adho/Tiryak gamana

3) **Siragranthi**– Lekhana dravyas/respective srotas cleansing dravya based on Dosha

BALA

Intake of milk and milk products like curd, ghee, old rice, barley, wheat, proper sleep, avoidance of excessive exercise.

Meat of buffalo, pig, goat, jiggery, milk, medicated milk, ghee

SATVA

आहार शुद्धौ सत्त्व शुद्धिः सत्त्व शुद्धौ ध्रुवो स्मृतिः।

The food with Sattvika nature is good for pure mind, but practically it is not possible in the present scenario, hence most of the time the food consumed is a combination of Sattvika and Rajasika food. Wholesome food consumed in moderate quantity at proper time with control over mind prevents many diseases that are difficult to cure. Milk and ghee are most essential food substances advocated for daily Use.

Ayurveda recommend taking balanced food which contains six types tastes like sweet, sour, saline, pungent, bitter and astringent.^[12] Ayurveda also mentioned some theories during taking of food. Food should take in hungry state and regular intervals. The speed of taking should not so fast and quantity of diet should be sufficient and that depends on the digestive strength of individuals. Having water in between food is advisable, rather than before or after food. At the end of diet, should take sweet food including milk, ghee, rice, wheat and other grains and legumes, as well as sweet fruits, dates, honey, jaggery and sugar for balancing the pitta because pitta is responsible for digestion in human body. Furthermore, sweet taste nourishes and invigorates the mind, relieves hunger and thirst, increases tissues and improves the immune system.

Predominance of doshas	Alleviating Rasa	Balancing Rasa
Vata	Madhura, Amla, Lavana	Madhura, Amla, Lavana
Pitta	Amla Katu Lavana	Madhura Kashaya, Amla
Kapha	Madhura Amla lavana	Katu, Tikta, Kashaya

Balancing Rasas (dietary taste) in relation to doshas.

Diet may prevent the metabolic syndrome: As the kapha is the main factor for the creation of metabolic

syndrome so kapha aggravating taste such as madhura (sweet), amla (sour) and lavana (salt) should be avoid and kapha alleviating taste like katu (pungent), tikta (bitter), kashaya (astringent) should be take daily.

Groups	Name of food
Grains	Red rice, Wheat, barley, millet, corn, oats.
Vegetables	All green leafy vegetables especially bitter gourd, fenugreek, pointed gourd, carrot, beets, cabbage, cauliflower, white potatoes, green beans, peas and tender radish.
Legumes	Mung, lentils and beans.
Fruits	Papaya, guava, apples, pears, figs, pomegranate and dry fruits (sulfur free).

Groups	Name of food
Fish	Small fish and sea fish.
Dairy/ Beverages	Organic milk (boiled and served hot), herbal tea, spice or cinnamon tea.
Spices	Ginger, cinnamon, black pepper, cumin, mustard seeds, ajwain, saffron, hing, cardamom, cloves, fennel, coriander, mint, garlic, nutmeg, tamarind, sea salt, lemon juice.
Nut and seeds	Small portions of sunflower, sesame and pumpkin seeds and walnuts.
Oils	Mustard, corn, sesame, olive. Ghee in small amounts.

For balancing the kapha dosha the following foods are suggested

DISCUSSION

Diet reflects as vital role to supply nutrient ions and promotes healthy life. In Ayurveda diet is characterized according to their action on the individual and decides by their taste, potency, post digestive effect and pharmacological effect. Particularly taste plays a major task in proper digestion. Ayurveda consider that diet contains six types of basic tastes viz. sweet, sour, salt, pungent, bitter, astrigent and each taste has predominance of particular Dosha (vata, pitta and kapha) and tissue function. So diet is classified on the basis of its properties and its effect on the digestion. Moreover, the quantity of diet, time or season of intake, mode of preparation of diet, habitat of diet and digestive power of individuals also play a significant role in the acceptability of wholesome diet. In Ayurveda, diet classified in many categories. On the basis of psychopharmacological effects, diet is classified into satvik, rajasic and tamasic categories.

Satvic diet is easily digestible, helps to build the immunity, rapid healing response and brings harmony and balance to one's mind. The examples of satvic diet are cereals (red rice), fresh fruits, vegetables, cow's milk, salads, herbal tea, nuts, honey, jaggery and freshly cooked food. Rajasic diet is oily, aromatic, spicy and attractive to taste. This brings energy and makes more angriness. This food includes nonvegetarian food like meat, fish eggs, chicken, canned food, icecream, sugar, all type of pulses and salted foods. Tamasic diet is all types of foods that are not fresh, overcooked, stale food and processed food like frozen food and micro-waved food etc.^[10] This is also not good for health. So satvic diet is supportive for maintenance of positive health and mind.

Now a days with changed lifestyle the metabolic diseases is co-occurrence. Metabolic diseases having several known cardiovascular risk factors, including insulin resistance, obesity, atherogenic dyslipidemia and hypertension.^[11] This syndrome is linked with multiple risk factors and that are responsible for heart disease, stroke and diabetes. The metabolic syndrome is caused by overweight, physical inactivity, poor eating habit and chronic stressful life. The genetic predisposition and aging are also important factors for the causation of this syndrome. Overweight and physical inactivity cause of insulin resistance in body and play a significant role in

the pathogenesis of obesity-related insulin resistance. High dietary fat intake is associated with an oxidative stress and an activation of the pro-inflammatory transcription factor.^[2]

The genetic predisposition is responsible for defective insulin secretion when it combines with insulin resistance this can raise the abnormal plasma glucose levels -Prakriti. Chronic stress leads to physical inactivity, abnormal dietary habit and self-limiting care and these are the predisposition to metabolic syndrome. In 21st century, the metabolic syndrome is very rapidly spreading in all over the world.^[3] Around about one third of urban South Asians have the evidence of the metabolic syndrome due to rapid urbanization and modifying lifestyle that includes faulty food habit, physical inactivity and stressful life.^[6] Ayurveda explained a significant solution for the prevention of metabolic syndrome by following appropriate Ayurvedic dietary regulation, daily regimen, seasonal regimen, panchakarma and yoga therapy. With proper knowledge of ayurvedic diet regulations –Aahar vidhivishayyatana these metabolic diseases can be prevented or controlled.

CONCLUSION

Diet is an important characteristic for healthy and unhealthy status. Hopefully, the above Ayurvedic dietary regulation and food chart may help the followers for the prevention of metabolic syndrome. The eight factors like prakrti (qualitative characteristics of diet) karana (processing of diet), samyoga (mixing/combination of diet), rashi (quantity of diet), desha (habitat of diet), kala (time as per age, season and condition), upayoga samstha (variable digestibility of different diet) upayokta (the person who takes the diet) should be considered before taking the food. Because it facilitates the proper digestion, assimilation and nourishment to the body.^[11] Ayurveda recommend taking balanced food which contains six types tastes like sweet, sour, saline, pungent, bitter and astrigent (**Table 1**).^[12]

Ayurveda also mentioned some theories during taking of food. Food should take in hungry state and regular intervals. The speed of taking should not so fast and quantity of diet should be sufficient and that depends on the digestive strength of individuals. Having water in between food is advisable, rather than before or after food. At the end of diet, should take sweet food including milk, ghee, rice, wheat and other grains and legumes, as well as sweet fruits, dates, honey, jaggery and sugar for balancing the pitta because pitta is

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