



COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF GRAMYA AHARA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a vast and ancient medical science. Unlike other medical sciences, instead of focusing on treatment of any particular disease, Ayurveda focuses more on the healthy living and wellbeing of the patient. For healthy living, Ayurveda emphasizes on consuming right kind of diet which is healthy and nutritious. According to Ayurveda, there are positive and negative attributes of diet. Since, Ayurveda deals with a holistic approach to healing; it covers the diet factor in depth. In Ayurveda, food is considered not only as mixture of the basic ingredients like proteins, vitamins, fats and carbohydrates, but it directs to avoid those food articles (gramya ahara) which are having opposite attributes to be used at same time as per Ayurveda. This sort of food may induce the accumulation of toxins in the body which may end up in chronic and grave diseases like cancer, immune disorders. Hence in this article we will discuss about the detail description of gramya ahara, compatible and incompatible food and its consequences in the diseases.

KEYWORDS: Gramya Ahara, Compatible Diet, Ahara, Incompatible Diet

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is such an eternal science which was promulgated by lord brahma for the welfare of mankind. The fundamental facts of Ayurveda are still applicable because of keen observation based researches, not only to prove its truth but also to understand the fundamentals in better manners. Ayurveda has equated human body with a building. As pillars are required to make the building stable, similarly the need of three pillars and three supporting pillars have been emphasised for human body. The three pillars are three humours ; vata, pitta and kapha¹. The three sub-pillars are ahara (diet), nidra (sleep) and brahmacharya (celibacy)². Here ahara has been enumerated first, which shows its importance. ahara (diet) and vihara (lifestyle) both plays an prominent role in Ayurvedic thought concerning the aetiology of diseases and their cure.

Ahara Responsible For All

The original source of living being and their strength, complexion and ojas is diet, which consist of 6 rasas diet is the causative factor for maintenance, origin and destruction of the universe originated from brahma. It is only due to diet that strength, immunity and clarity of complexion and sense organs develops and so are diseases due to irregularity of diet, hence we want to know substance, taste, properties, potency, final transformation and effect of diet³. In this era of modernization and civilization the society is conscious enough about "What to eat?" The awareness about the food items, their quantity, quality and nutritional values etc. is increasing gradually, then also the popularity of fast food is greater due to the fast life. According to Ayurveda this can be classified as "Prajnaparadha". Due to the demand of time, most of the people are bound to do such things, which adversely affect the health. The people who are health conscious mostly know about "What To Eat?" but least about "How To Eat?" The dietetic code or the rules for diet intake are preserved by our traditions up to some extent, but there is a big question about their awareness in today's society. People basically know very little about them and they who know are little bothered to

obey such rules, even they do not have trust enough to consider the code of diet as an important health matter. The proper method of eating is wrongly being interpreted as mere traditional affair. Though all the people cannot always follow all the rules due to the bindings of fast and forward life, the awareness is needed regarding the subject.

We are living in a world of maximum stress, strain and struggle the unhealthy lifestyle is developing as anew culture among the people. Fast running life, changed dietary habits inappropriate sleep, burning competition and increased workload are the main cause for various physical, mental and psychosomatic disorder.

Varieties Of Ahara

There are four varieties of ahara explained by Acarya Charaka⁴

1. Ashita – food that is eaten
2. Pita - food that is masticated
3. Lidha - food that is drunk
4. Khaduta - food that is licked up

According to susruta⁵

The food which is digested is of

1. 4 types
2. 5 bhutas
3. 6 rasas
4. 2/8 viryas

Compatible Diet

Charakacharya, along with rules and regulations regarding diet described the code of good conduct to be followed at the meal timings. Though they are not directly related to the science of food, but they show the sense of responsibility towards our family and society too. it appears that they are good for our mental health and discipline which has a positive effect on our health. Some of them are related to the hygiene some with religion and some with sense of responsibility.

Eight factors of diet and dietics are explained by Charak Acharya in vimana sthana⁶

1. Natural qualities (prakrati)
2. Preperation (karana)

3. Combination (samyoga)
4. Quantum (rashi)
5. Habitat (desha)
6. Stage of disease (kala)
7. Use (upayoga)
8. User (upayokta)

Acarya Charaka also told about the dietetic rules and procedure for those who are healthy as well as for certain types of patients, concerning tallying of food that is most wholesome. one should eat food which is

Hot⁷ – because it taste well, it stimulates digestive fire, carminates flatus, reduces mucus, hence one should eat hot food

Unctuous⁸ - because it taste well, it stimulates digestive fire, carminates flatus, digested quickly, develops body, provides firmness to sense organs increases strength, produces clarity or complexion; one should eat Unctuous food.

In due measure⁹ – because food taken in due measure only promotes life span without disturbing vata, pitta, kapha. also it passes down easily to anus, doesn't disturbs the digestive fire and gets digested with comfort; hence one should eat in due measure.

When previous meal is digested¹⁰ – because if one eats during indigestion, the eaten food mixed with the product of the earlier meal with that of the later one and vitiates all the doshas quickly, on the contrary, when one eats after the previous meal is digested well the doshas are situated in their own location. agni is stimulated, eructation is pure, heart is normal, flatus passes down. Hence one should eat when previous meal is digested.

Non antagonistic food¹¹ – one should eat food consisting of the items which are non-antagonistic in potency while doing so one is not afflicted with the disorder caused by food antagonistic in potency.

Having favourable place and favourable accessories¹²

Not too fast¹³

Not too slow¹⁴

Without talking and laughing and with full concentration¹⁵

Incompatible Diet

In discussion the subject of incompatibility of food articles Lord Atreya described¹⁶ that articles of diet that are inimical to the body –elements tend to disagree with the system. while describing the meaning of virudhahara acarya explains that the substances, which are contrary to dehadhatus, behave with virodha (antagonism) to them. This antagonism may be in the terms of properties, combination, processing, place, time, dose, etc.

All food articles possess their own Rasa (taste), Guna (characteristics), Virya (potency), and Vipaka (post digestion effect). Some food stuffs also possess Prabhava an unexplained effect. The fate of food articles within our body depends on the state of our digestive fire. When two or more food articles having different taste, energy and post digestion effect are combined the digestive fire can become overloaded, inhibiting enzyme system and result in the production of toxins.

Poor combining can produce indigestion, fermentation, putrefaction and gas formation and, if prolonged, can lead to toxemia, and diseases. For example, eating bananas with milk can diminish digestive fire, change the intestinal flora, produce toxins and cause sinus congestion, cold, cough and allergies. Although both of these foods have a

sweet taste, a cooling energy, their post digestion effect is very different – bananas are sour while milk is sweet. This cause confusion in our system and results in toxins, allergies and other imbalances.

Carakacharya has described the eighteen factors responsible for dietetic incompatibility and said that they are not wholesome for us. These are desha, kala, agni, maatra, saamtya, dosha, samskaara, virya, koshta, avasthaa, krama, parihaara, upachaara, paaka, samyoga, hridaya, sampad, vidhi virudha.¹⁷

Gramya Ahara

Details And Basis Of Identifying

Charak in second quarter of Rasayan adhyaya has described gramya aahar (urban dietary) to be consist of –

Rasa - Amla, lavana, katu, kshar pradhan aahar¹⁸

Preservation - paryushit anna, Shuska shaka, shuska mansa, content which have a very low nutritional value¹⁹

Varjita Ahara - Klinna, guru, pishtanna, teel-tail & kalka and ruksha, and abhisyanidi aahar which are source of extra calories.²⁰

Virudha - Virudha, asatmya, visham aahar, and which have an impact on our immune system.²¹

Vihara – Avyayam, adhyasana, Day sleeping²²

Psychological Factors - such as bhaya, krodha, lobha, shoka, moha which are cause for the neuro-hormonal imbalance, for example excess adrenaline secretion and inturn over sympathetic activity.²³

Pathogenesis Of The Diseases Occurred Due To Gramya Ahara

Due to intake of gramya aahar following changes occur in the sharira.

A) Mansani shithilbhavanti²⁴ – muscles becomes flabby. (i.e. abhadha, anibida mansa)

B) Vimuchyante sandhaya²⁵ – the joints becomes loose.

C) Vidahyate raktam²⁶ – the blood becomes decomposed.

D) Vishyandate cha-analpam meda²⁷ –the fats gets extremely liquified. Due to the diet rich in dravya guna meda dhatu drava guna vridhi takes place causing fat to get liquify

E) Na – Sandhiyate ashtishu – Majja²⁸ – the marrow does not cling to the bone. Majja dhatu is unable to reside in ashtidhatu.

F) Shukram na pravartate²⁹ – the semen is not secreted in sufficient quantity i.e. shukra apravartan.

G) Oja kshaya³⁰ – vital essence becomes depleted.

Manifestation Of Gramya Ahara³¹

- Glayati (Exhausted)

- Sidati (languid)

- Nidra (sleepiness)

- Tandra (Torpor)

- Aalasya (sluggishness)

- Nirutsaha (He gets dispirited)

- Swashiti (Dyspnoea, breathes hard)

- Asamartha chesta sharir manasinam – rendered incapable of any bodily or mental labour.

- Nasta smriti, budhi – deprived of memory & intelligence.

- Nasta chaya – Loss of lusture

- Roganam adhistanabhutam –Turned in to home of diseases and fails to enjoy full majors of life.

DISCUSSION

On the basis of above information it is revealed that gramya aahara is the prime mode for the vitiation of dosha and dhatu.³² The gramya aahara includes almost all kind of

irrational and unlogistic food, food habits, method of preparation and various conducts etc. which in turns causes the vitiation of various dhatus in various stages of onward involvements. Hence a huge number of clinical manifestations covering almost all system of the body have been described as the outcome manifestation in Charak samhita. Not only has that it also caused the premature ageing of the body and act as a major barrier to fulfill the primary aim of Ayurveda.

The gramya aahara is described in the context of rasayana under the subheading of pranakaamiya. According to Ayurvedic principle nidana parivarjana³³ is considered as the first step of treatment so to prevent this dangerous progeriac nidana in the form of gramya aahra should be avoided. In the other words proper avoidance of the gramya aahara itself rejuvenates the body. It can also be inferred that the education of gramya aahara it's bad effects are to be properly given to the common people so that with avoiding the same we can achieve the aim of social health

CONCLUSION

As we know ahara is the sub pillar of body. Charakacarya has very rightly said that the food is the foremost of the articles that support the life. Ahara has beneficial effect if used wisely i.e. if it is wholesome in terms of quantity and quality. Conversely unwholesome diet as well as gramya ahara has an exciting effect on the production of disease. Which should be avoided to be healthy and rejuvenating the body.

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