



THE EFFECT OF RITUCHARYA ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT RITU'S – AN AYURVEDI PROSPECTIVE

Dr Shashank Nautiyal¹, Dr Saurabh Singh Yadav²,

1. Assistant Professor Dept of Kriya Sharir, Uttarakhand Ayurved University Gurukul Campus Haridwar
2. Assistant Professor Dept of Swasthavritta, Uttarakhand Ayurved University Gurukul Campus Haridwar

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR- Dr Shashank Nautiyal, Assistant Professor Dept of Kriya Sharir,
Uttarakhand Ayurved University Gurukul Campus Haridwar

ABSTRACT

Ritu, the season, is defined by a number of traits and has several effects on the environment and the organism. In order to assist individuals, adjust to seasonal changes without upsetting their body's equilibrium, Ayurveda has detailed a number of rules and routines (Charya) on nutrition and behavior. Ayurvedic medicine's main objective is prevention, which may be achieved by adjusting a person's diet and way of life in response to climate changes. Writings from the Ayurvedic tradition state that this is an essential component of treatment that is preventive. The primary factor contributing to modern-day lifestyle issues is a disregard for seasonal characteristics, which results in a disregard for seasonal patterns. Strong scientific research that is still applicable today serves as the foundation. This review article examines the many dietary and lifestyle recommendations found in Ayurvedic classics and their impact on lifestyle issues.

KEYWORDS: Ritucharya, Doshas, Tridosha, Guna, etc.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, Ayurveda, the ancient study of life, has given greater weight to preserving health and avoiding sickness than it has to treating and curing disease. Swasthyashya Swasthya Rakshanam, or "maintaining the health of the healthy" rather than "curing the illnesses of the afflicted" (Aturrashya Vikara Prashamanancha), is the central idea of Ayurvedic medicine.¹ For this reason, the Ritucharya (seasonal regimen) and Dinacharya (daily regimen) have been mentioned in the Ayurvedic writings.

The changing of the seasons has caused a substantial change in the environment we live in.² The bio-life surrounding us undergoes many changes, including plants that blossom in the spring and lose their leaves in the fall, a large number of animals that hibernate as winter draws near, and so on. Since the body is a part of the same ecosystem as humans, the outside world affects it greatly.³ Due to their particular phase link, many

endogenous and exogenous rhythms interact and synchronize with one another. If the body cannot adjust to stress due to changes in specific seasonal aspects, Dosha Vaishamya may ensue.⁴

A good deal of Ritucharya is included in the first few chapters of the Ayurvedic Samhitas. Preventing sickness is the main objective of Ayurveda, the holistic science, in order to maintain health.⁵ "Tasya Shitadiya Ahaarbalam Varnascha Vardhate." Tasyartusatmayam Vaditam Chestaharvyapasrayam" (Tasyashitya chapter of the Charaka Samhita) literally means "the strength and complexion of the individual understanding the right food and regimen for every season, and exercising accordingly."⁶ This chapter's major goal is to raise people's awareness of how to live sustainably. This article reviews the Ritucharyas included in the traditional Ayurvedic writings, focusing on how they could affect diseases related to lifestyle choices.⁷

THE CONCEPT OF AYURVEDA

In-depth research prevents unnecessary medical issues by providing individuals with information on their body kinds and functions, much like a 24-hour hotline. Because it gives us total awareness of our bodies and makes it possible for us to know what foods to eat and when, what kind of lifestyle we should lead, how to get ready for sleep and relaxation, how to fall asleep, what to stop doing to lower the risk factor related to our wellbeing, and other things, it is also known as the art of healthy living.⁸ And that's all it takes to keep the body's hormone balance intact. Even today, a large portion of our hard-earned money is wasted on prescription drugs, long-term health conditions, and relatively little problems like acid reflux, internal stress, and restlessness that, if ignored, might become major problems.⁹

METHOD AND MATERIAL:

The Ritucharya material was gathered from a variety of publications, Ayurvedic and Modern Text Books, Reputable Newspapers, Authoritative Websites, Authoritative Literatures, Manuscripts, Sanskrit Dictionary, and other sources.

IMPORTANCE OF RITUCHARYA

While Ritu stands for season, Charya is associated with continuity or order. Ritucharya refers to daily activity, a style of life, and a food that should be paired with a certain periodic need in order to maintain hormonal balance in our bodies, be healthy, and be strong. Ayurveda splits the year into two Kaals according on the sun's position:¹⁰

- a. Aadaan Kaal (Uttarayan)
- b. Visarga Kaal (Dakshinayaan).

The tremendous sun and wind during Uttarayan damage the unique properties and cooling abilities of the earth. The sun's force is unleashed all around Dakshinayaan, the moon intensifies its power, and cool breezes, mists, and downpours restore the planet's natural equilibrium.¹¹ Furthermore, the Uttrayan Kaal is influenced by the summer, spring, and cold seasons, whilst the Dakshinayaan Kaal is influenced by the rainy, fall, and winter seasons. The effects of these two kaals on the Doshas within and outside of our bodies are comparable.¹²

TABLE 1: SEASONAL REGIMEN

RITU¹⁰⁻¹⁶	INDICATIONS REGARDING DIET AND LIFESTYLE	CONTRAINDICATION
Hemant	Milk products and its derivatives, cane juice products and their derivatives, marshland animal flesh, cereals such as black lentils (<i>Phaseolus radiatus</i>), sweet, sour, and salty meals, fats, butter, and warm water for drinking. Using aguru lepa (<i>Aquilaria agallocha</i>), abhayanga (oil massage), and jentaka sweda (hot sweating) are all part of a healthy lifestyle. Bring heavy, wet clothes.	Avoid laghu (light) and ruksha (dry) meals and drinks, as well as strong breezes, since they vitiate vata.
Shishira	Regimen as advised in Hemant ritu	Pungent, bitter and vata provoking food and drinks
Vasanta	Yava (<i>Hordeum vulgare</i>) is a meal that is easy to digest. Godhuma, a very recent dietary supplement (<i>Tritium vulgare</i>). Shashaka's Body (the rabbit). Boiling water with mustak, vijayasara, or shunthi (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>) is advised (<i>Cyperus rotandus</i>). In addition to dhoompana (smoking medicinal cigarettes), other recommended practices include kesara (<i>Crocus sativus</i>), udvartana (massage) with chandana (<i>Santalum album</i>), kavala (gargle), anjana (collyrium), and vamana andnasya.	It's crucial to avoid napping all day and to skip the traditional madhura rasa meal.
Grishma	It is recommended to have leaf mantha and jaggery, along with ghee and milk with Sali rice, as well as foods and beverages that are madhura (sweet), sheeta (cold), and snigdha (unctuous). It is suggested that you stay in calm places, apply sandalwood polish, wear comfortable clothing, and decorate with flowers.	Avoid alcohol and the sour foods amla, katu, and ushana from your diet (warm). Overindulging in sexual activities and excessive exercise would be forbidden.

Varsha	In addition to vegetables (<i>Oryza sativa</i>), they also consume salt rice, old yava (<i>Hordeum vulgare</i>), godhuma (<i>Triticum aestivum</i>), and meat from desert animals. Eating dietary components such as amla, lavana, and snigdha is advised. Use honey when cooking; this is recommended.	Manta and sources of open water Overexertion and river bathing are to be avoided.
Sharad	It is recommended that you consume meals and beverages that are sweet, sour, spicy, salty, and bitter. Yava, Godhuma is a smart choice for you. Treatment suggestions include purgation (virechana) and bloodletting (raktamokshana).	Curd and meat of marsh and marine animals should be evitated. Avoid disturbing animals that are sleeping in the afternoon and cease laboring in the sun.

HEMANT RITU:

Hemanta in the late fall Ritu is defined as the middle of November to the middle of January. It feels cold when a chilly breeze blows in. During this season, Madhura is the predominant Rasa while Prithivi and Apa are the predominant Mahabhutas. One maintains maximum strength and calms a vitiated Pitta Dosha. Agni has been more active.¹³

FOOD REGIMEN

Make use of filling, sour, sweet, and salty foods whenever you can. Among the items mentioned as being used are new rice, flour preparations, green gramme, Masha, and other cereals and pulses. A range of meats, fats, dairy products, sugarcane products, Shidhu (fermented preparations), Tila (sesame), and other foods should also be included in the diet.

SISIRA RITU:

Shishira Ritu is observed during the winter months, from around mid-January to mid-March. This time of year is characterized by cold temperatures and wind. This season's predominant Rasa and Mahabhuta are, respectively, Tikta (bitter) and Akasha. The individual has a decrease in strength, accumulation of Kapha Dosha, and persistently heightened Agni (catabolism).¹⁴

FOOD REGIMEN

It is advised to eat foods having a strong amla (sour) flavor. It is advised to eat new rice, corn, pulses, wheat or gramme flour products, and other foods. Milk and milk products, garlic, ginger, Haritaki (fruits of *Terminalia chebula*), and Pippali (fruits of *Piper longum*) should all be included in the diet.

VASANTA RITU

It usually happens around the middle of March and the middle of May. It is believed that this is the season for leaf production and blossoming. The major Rasa and Mahabhuta of this season are Prithvi and Vayu,

respectively, and the astringent Kashaya. The individual maintains a modest level of strength, vitiates the Kapha Dosha, and Agni stays in the Manda state.¹⁵

FOOD REGIMEN

Consume foods that are easy to digest. Favorites include old barley, wheat, rice, and other grains. You can eat lentils, mugda, and other pulses. Foods with tikta (bitter), katu (pungent), and kashaya (astringent) tastes are recommended. Besides that, you should also eat honey. You can eat meats like shahsa (rabbit) that are easy to digest. Foods that are hard to digest have to be stayed away from. Anything that is Sheeta (cold), Snigdha (viscous), Guru (heavy), Amla (sour), or Madhura (sweet) should not be consumed. Fresh cereals, curd, cold drinks, and similar goods are also prohibited.

GRISHMA RITUCHARYA:

We consider the period from mid-May to mid-July to be the Grishma (summer) season. There's intense heat and lots of dangerous wind. The greenery seems lifeless, and the riverbeds have dried up. The Mahabhuta is composed of Agni and Vayu, but the predominant Rasa is the pungent Katu. This is the season of reduced vigor, Vata Dosha deposits, and a calming of the vitiated Kapha Dosha. The individual will still have a moderate agni.¹⁶

FOOD REGIMEN

Rice, lentils, and other foods with the Gunas Madhura (sweet), Snigdha (unctuous), Sheeta (cool), and Drava (liquid) should be consumed as they are simple to digest. Drinking plenty of water and other liquids is crucial. Some examples of these are cold water, buttermilk, fruit juices, meat soups, mango juice, and pepper-crust churning curd. You should have milk and sugar-filled sweets before bed.

NIGHT REGIMEN:

While it's ideal to sleep in a cool, comfortable environment at night, staying in air conditioning is not advised since it poses health risks. To relax and have a good night's sleep, people should avoid having sex and dress in extremely light, fluffy attire.¹⁷

VARSHA RITU:

Varsha Ritu occurs roughly from mid-July until mid-September. This time of year brings clouds in the sky and rain instead of thunderstorms. The rivers, ponds, etc. are filled with water. The predominant Rasa and Mahabhuta of this season are Amla (sour), Prithvi, and Agni, in that order. Once again, the person's ability decreases due to the vitiation of Agni, deposition of Pitta Dosha, and vitiation of Vata Dosha.¹⁸

FOOD REGIMEN

Foods having the flavors of Amla (sour), Lavana (salty), and Sneha (unctuous) are what you should consume. It is advised to use old barley, rice, wheat, and other grains. You should also have Yusha (soup), etc., in addition to

beef soup. It is recommended to consume hot water or medicinal water.

AVOID:

It is recommended to have rain tea, brew coffee with ghee and maize flour, sleep all day, have romantic interactions, work out, and spend time in the sun.

SHARAD RITU:

The autumnal season, from mid-September to mid-November, is known as Sharat Ritu. During this time, the Sun becomes brighter, the sky is clear with sporadic white clouds, and the ground is covered with damp mud. Apa and Agni are the primary Mahabhutas; Lavana (salty) is the dominant Rasa. Agni activity rises in this season, vitiated Vata and Pitta doshas are pacified, and the individual maintains a moderate level of strength.¹⁹

FOOD REGIMEN

Eating meals with the flavours of Madhura (sweet) or Tikta (bitter) along with those that are cold and easy to digest is advised. Foods that can soothe vitiated Pitta are recommended. Wheat, green gramme, sweets, honey, Patola (*Trichosanthes dioica*), and meat from dry-land animals should all be included in the diet (Jangala Mamsa).

DISCUSSION

Environmental factors include the properties of the land, the water, and other atmospheric phenomena including temperature, humidity, wind, rain, clouds, and air pressure. Because of the constant changes in all of these environmental factors, no two times in a particular area are exactly the same. As a result, the temperature rises with the rising Sun and finally drops at night. Summer and winter are the hottest and coldest seasons, respectively, despite the fact that daily maximum and minimum temperatures fluctuate. Season describes these changes over a certain time period, just as all these elements show both diurnal and seasonal variations.²⁰

Research on animals with seasonal changes has revealed the effects of photoperiod on immune function and hormone secretion, which impact the development of opportunistic disease. Another study discovered that free-living creatures from different geographical areas could be in charge of controlling seasonal glucocorticoid secretion. Put another way, the magnitudes of both stressed and unstressed glucocorticoid concentrations are influenced by seasonal fluctuations.²¹

A human clinical study by Mallika et al. assessed the biophysical and biochemical changes caused by Ritusandhi. Clinical evidence indicates that the triggering of Tridosha is primarily a Vata and Kapha phenomenon. Jwara, Pratishyaya, and Alasya Lakshnas were often observed during Ritusandhi, according to this study. Agnibala also shows significant changes, although they do not meet pathologic criteria. The biochemical changes follow a variety of patterns; they may occasionally be increasing or decreasing, but they are all common variants. There is a little variation in biochemical levels.²²

Hemanta Ritu had the highest overall effect on the Bala of healthy volunteers, followed by Vasanta Ritu's moderate effect and Varsha Ritu's least significant effect, per a research by Jangid et al. on the notion of Ritus

and their influence on Bala. According to the study, Varsha is the Ritu of Madhyama Bala, Hemanta is the Ritu of Pravara Bala, and Vasanta is the Ritu of Madhyama Bala. The study's conclusions give Ayurvedic ideas legitimacy.²³

Given climate change and seasonal fluctuations, one may certainly question Ritucharya's relevance in the contemporary context. It is critical to understand the Dosha and Panchamahabhuta ideas, which form the foundation of Ritucharya. Even if modern Ritus do not adhere to consistency, the amount of Dosha and Panchamahabhuta may be accurately analyzed to define the regimen, to which this knowledge of Ayurveda holds as a pathfinder. To be clear, these concepts definitely require more examination.²⁴

CONCLUSION

Ritu, the season, is defined by a number of traits and has several effects on the environment and the organism. In order to assist individuals, adjust to seasonal changes without upsetting their body's equilibrium, Ayurveda has detailed a number of rules and routines (Charya) on nutrition and behavior. Ayurvedic medicine's main objective is prevention, which may be achieved by adjusting a person's diet and way of life in response to climate changes. Writings from the Ayurvedic tradition state that this is an essential component of treatment that is preventive. The primary factor contributing to modern-day lifestyle issues is a disregard for seasonal characteristics, which results in a disregard for seasonal patterns. Strong scientific research that is still applicable today serves as the foundation. This technical assessment will point future research in the proper path.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST – NONE

SOURCE OF FINANCE -NIL

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