



PREVENTIVE AND SOCIAL MEDICINE IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has great contribution in treatment of diseases as well as prevention of diseases. It not only provides palliative and curative medicine but also plays an effective role in the prevention of recurring diseases. *Ayurveda* gives equal importance to *Ahara* and *Vihara*. *Vihara* is defined as the second most important pillar of the *Ayurveda*. The modern world is currently facing an epidemic of lifestyle related diseases like diabetes, obesity, heart diseases, etc., as a result of stress, improper diet and irregular or sedentary lifestyle. Hence the person becomes psychological and physical illness and unable to enjoy full life span. Here treatment of ailment is personalized and depends on the psychophysiological makeup of the body. *Ayurveda* believes that in order to achieve and maintain healthy living (*Arogya*), it is essential to practice a healthy *Vihara* like *Dinacharya* (day regimen), *Ratricharya* (night regimen), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), *Ahara Vidhi* (diet rules), *Sadavritta* (code of conducts) etc. are described in detail in *Ayurveda*. There are therapeutic procedures also used as preventive medicine like *Panchakarma*, *Rasayana* therapy. *Ayurveda* believes that every human being is a replica of this cosmos. So there is a relation between a person and its environment. In *ayurveda*, there is an elaborate description of different regimens according to seasonal and diurnal variation to stay healthy. Prevention is better than cure, keeping this philosophy in mind here are some lifestyle management and regimens for a person to live happy and healthy life. Present article aims to elaborate the concept of Lifestyle in *Ayurveda* classics.

KEY WORDS: *Ayurveda*, *Ahara*, *Vihara*, *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the age old science of life, has always emphasized to maintain the health and prevent the diseases by following proper diet and lifestyle regimen rather than treatment and cure of the diseases. The basic principle followed in the Ayurvedic system of medicine is *Swasthyashya Swasthya Rakshanam*, which means to maintain the health of the healthy, rather than *Aturashya Vikara Prashamanancha*, means to cure the diseases of the diseased. For this purpose the *Dinacharya* (daily regimen) and *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen) have been mentioned in the classics of Ayurveda.

In this review article, *Dinacharya* (day regimen), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), *Ahara Vidhi* (diet rules), *Sadavritta* (code of conducts) as mentioned in the classics of *Ayurveda* and their importance has been discussed.

DINCHARYA

Ayurvedic Daily routine helps in maintaining balance and harmony in your body and nature by regulating your biological clock and advocating a healthy lifestyle. It also helps in proper digestion, absorption, and assimilation of food. The discipline that you adopt in daily routine also improves self-esteem, brings happiness and promotes longevity.

Brahma Muhurta

Ayurveda recommends waking up early in the morning. According to ayurveda, you should wake up 96 minutes (around 1.5 hours) before sunrise.

Evacuation

After waking up, you will feel the urge for urination and bowel evacuation. Follow your urge and rush to the toilet for evacuating your bowel and urinary bladder.

Cleaning the Teeth

Use plant twigs or herbal tooth powder. Do not use any toothpaste.

Gum massage

After cleaning teeth, you should also do massage of gums with the fine herbal powder made of Kuth (*Saussurea Lappa*), *Triphala*, *Trikatu* and *Trijataka*.

Cleaning Tongue

You should clean your tongue using tongue scraper made of copper, silver or gold. You can also use tongue cleaner made of wood or plant twig.

Nasya

Charak Samhita recommends putting a few drops of *Anu Thailam* in each nostril every day in the morning.

Gandusha

After nasya, *Vagbhata* recommends *Gandusha*. *Gandusha* is an ayurvedic mouth wash. According to condition we can use oil, decoction & warm water for *gandusha*.

Abhayanga

Morning massage helps to delay aging, reduces tiredness, prevents *Vata* disorders, improves eyesight, nourishes the body, increases lifespan and improves sleep quality.

Exercise

You must do the exercise according to your physical capacity. Normally, 45 minutes of daily exercise helps in the prevention of lifestyle diseases.

Udvartana Massage

Massage with a fine powder of astringent herbs is helpful for liquefying fats underneath the skin. It also mitigates the *Kapha Dosha*. It is highly recommendable for over-weight and obese people.

Bath(Snana)

It improves appetite, vigor, lifespan and strength. It alleviates itching and removes dirt and sweat.

RITUCHARYA

Ritucharya is prominently discussed in the first few chapters of most of the *Samhitas* of Ayurveda. Prevention of disease to maintain health is being the first and foremost aim of the holistic science of Ayurveda. The year according to *Ayurveda* is divided into two periods *Ayana* (solstice) depending on the direction of movement of sun that is *Uttarayana* (northern solstice) and *Dakshinayana* (southern solstice). Each is formed of three *Ritus* (seasons). A year consists of six seasons, namely, *Shishira* (winter), *Vasanta* (spring), and *Grishma* (summer) in *Uttarayan* and *Varsha* (monsoon), *Sharata* (autumn), and *Hemanta* (late autumn) in *Dakshinayana*.

Shishira (winter) : (Mid-January to mid-March (approximately))

In this *ritu* the environment remains cold, along with cold wind. The predominant *Rasa* and *Mahabhuta* during this season are *Tikta* (bitter) and *Akasha*, respectively. The strength of the person becomes less, deposition of the *Kapha Dosh*a occurs and *Agni* (catabolism) remains in a higher state. Use routine like daily massage with oil/powder/paste, bathing with lukewarm water, exposure to sunlight, wearing warm clothes. *Vata* aggravating lifestyle like exposure to cold wind, excessive walking, sleep at late night, are to be avoided.

Vasanta (spring): (mid-March to mid-May)

Predominant *Rasa* and *Mahabhuta* during this season are *Kashaya* (astringent), and *Prithvi* and *Vayu*, respectively. Strength of the person remains in medium degree, vitiation of *Kapha Dosh*a occurs and *Agni* remains in *Manda* state. One should use warm water for bathing purpose, may do exercise during *Vasant Ritu*. *Udvardana* (massage) with powder of *Chandana* (*Santalum album*), *Kesara* (*Crocus sativus*), *Agaru*, and others, *Kavala* (gargle), *Dhooma* (smoking), *Anjana* (collyrium), and evacuative measures, such as *Vamana* and *Nasya* are advised.

Day-sleep is strictly contraindicated during this season.

Grishma (summer) Mid-May to mid-July (approximately)

The predominant *Rasa* is *Katu* (pungent) and *Mahabhuta* are *Agni* and *Vayu*. The strength of the person become less, deposition of *Vata Dosh*a occurs, but the vitiated *Kapha Dosh*a is pacified during this season. *Agni* of the person will remain in mild state. Staying in cool places, applying sandal wood and other aromatic pastes over the body, adorning with flowers, wearing light dresses and sleeping at day time are helpful. During night one can enjoy the cooled moonrays with breeze. Excessive exercise or hardwork is to be avoided; too much sexual indulgence and alcoholic preparations are prohibited.

Varsha (monsoon) Mid-July to mid-September (approximately)

The predominant *Rasa* and *Mahabhuta* during this season are *Amla* (sour), and *Prithvi* and *Agni*, respectively. Use of boiled water for bath and rubbing the body with oil properly after bath is advised. Medicated *Basti* (enema) is prescribed as an evacuative measure to expel vitiated *Dosh*as. Getting wet in rain, day-sleep, exercise, hard work, sexual indulgence, wind, staying at river-bank, etc., are to be prohibited.

Sharat (autumn) mid-September to mid-November

The predominant *Rasa* is *Lavana* (salty) and predominant *Mahabhutas* are *Apa* and *Agni*. The strength of the person remains medium, pacification of vitiated *Vata Dosh*a and vitiation of *Pitta Dosh*a occur, and activity of *Agni* increases during this season. Habit of eating food, only when there is a feeling of hunger is recommended. One should take water purified by the rays of sun in day time and rays of moon at night time for drinking, bathing, etc. It is advised to wear flower garlands, and to apply paste of *Chandana* (*Santalum album*) on the body. It is said that moon rays in the first 3 h of night is conducive for health. Medical procedures, such as *Virechana* (purging), *Rakta-Mokshana* (blood letting), etc, should be done during this season.

Day-sleep, excessive eating, excessive exposure to sunlight, etc., are to be avoided.

Hemanta (late autumn) Mid-November to mid-January

Predominant *Rasa* during this season is *Madhura* and the predominant *Mahabhutas* are *Prithivi* and *Apa*. The strength of a person remains on highest grade and vitiated *Pitta Dosh*a gets pacified. Activity of *Agni* is increased.

Exercise, body and head massage, use of warm water, *Atapa-sevana* (sunbath), application of *Agaru* on body, heavy clothing, sexual indulgence with one partner, residing in warm places is recommended. Exposure to strong and cold wind, habit of day sleep, etc., are mentioned to be avoided.

SADVRTTA

It is a code of good conduct put forward by Ayurveda Acharyas for maintaining personal as well as social health. Sadvrta provides guidelines on various day-to-day activities and throws light on their role in various aspects of health. Sadvrittas are regarded as one of the measures to prevent diseases. The role of Sadvrta is more of preventive in nature. It also plays a great stress on personal cleanness of body and mind. It acts as shield and strains of life under which we are constantly put in this world.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda is based on the principle that to achieve and maintain health over the course of your life, you must re-balancing emotions, improve diet, practice yoga and “pranayama” (breathing exercises), and make lifestyle adjustments. Ayurveda blends our modern lifestyle and health-oriented habits with the ancient wisdom of using natural substances, medicines and herbs to help us lead a healthy, happy, stress-free and disease-free life. ... The cardinal aim of Ayurveda is to restore the individual balance between mind, body and spirit.

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