



# AN CRITICAL REVIEW ON CONCEPT OF AHARA, NIDRA, BRAHMACHARYA -A BASIC FUNDAMNETAL OF LIFE

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## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a science that seeks to cure illnesses and promote wellness. The prevalence of numerous diseases is rising in the current day due to factors including pollution, high job pressure, poor eating habits, and unsuitable lifestyle choices. Our Swasthya is dependent upon three Upstambha, namely Ahara, Nidra, and Brahmacharya, according to Ayurveda. Ayurveda places a strong emphasis on Ahara and holds that although Nidra affects both the physical and mental states, adequate nourishment nurtures the mind and soul. Physical and mental stamina as well as resistance to illness are maintained by Brahmacharya. Three pillars determine our health and life expectancy: Brahmacharya (restrained sex), Nidra (sleep), and Ahara (food). The ancient Ayurvedic scripture Charaka Samhita, which is considered authentic, highlights their significance. Taking good care of them is necessary for a healthy existence. A person's inner journey that leads them to uncover the essence of themselves, an ultimate or purported immaterial reality, or the core principles and values that guide their lives can all be referred to as spirituality. Many people view spirituality as a source of guidance or inspiration in life. People have more chances than ever before to live better lives, yet things are not as easy as they were in the past. This article makes the case for how these ideas might improve spirituality in order to live longer and with higher quality.

**KEYWORDS-** Ahara, Nidra, Brahmacharya, fundamental pillars etc.

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is distinct in that it places importance on one's bodily, mental, social, and spiritual well-being ii. It is a science that explains what is good and bad for life, what makes a happy and miserable existence, and also what is

the right path in life. It provides guidelines for a lifestyle that will enable one to attain and preserve the highest level of mental, physical, social, and spiritual well-being. The definition that follows is taken from the ancient Vedic writings. The unity and conjunction of the body (Sharira), senses (Indriya), intellect (Satva), and soul (Atma) is life (Ayu).<sup>1</sup>

## “स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्य रक्षण आतुरस्य विकार प्रक्षमनम्”

The goal is to treat those who are afflicted with illness and to preserve the physical and mental well-being of the healthy. Ayurveda defines a healthy individual as one who is in good bodily health as well as mental, social, and spiritual well. A person is considered physically healthy if their Doshas (the three essential humors, Vata, Pitta, and Kapha), Agni (digestive power), and Dhatus (the seven essential tissues) are all in balance. These tissues include Rasa (body fluid), Rakta (blood), Mamsa (muscles), Meda (fat), Asthi (bones), Majja (bone marrow), Shukra (generative tissue), and whose Malas (waste products, such as urine, stool, and sweat) are excreted in the appropriate amounts.<sup>2</sup>

A person who possesses a balanced and well-informed Atma (soul), Indriya (senses), and Manas (mind) is considered mentally well. The renowned surgeon and healer Acharya Sushruta provided this concept of health. Ayurvedic literature have also said that those who follow a moral code of behavior, classify things into good and evil categories, and consume a balanced diet and lifestyle are immune to sickness. Ayurveda constantly addresses the body and mind as a whole when treating a person. Therefore, an Ayurvedic doctor carefully considers the patient's strength and constitution, environmental effects, psychological aspects, damaged tissues, and Dosha aggravation while treating a patient.<sup>3</sup>

It is recommended that individuals adhere to both daily and seasonal routines, known as Dinacharya and Rutucharya, which include seasonal Panchakarma, a well-balanced diet, controlling natural desires at the appropriate time, adhering to sleep and celibacy regulations, and regularly using rejuvenation and aphrodisiac treatments. By adhering to Sadvrutta (ethical behavior) and Dharaniya Vega Dharana (limiting emotional drives like wrath, fear, and greed), Ayurveda preserves our mental health.<sup>4</sup>

To be full and linked to something more than yourself is what it means to be spiritual. The phrase "Traya Upastambha" (Essential Triads of Health) combines the terms "Upa," which means support, and "Stambha," which denotes base. It is commonly known that human body is made up of five elements: Prithvi (Earth), Jala (Water), Agni (Fire), Vayu (Air), and Aakash (Space). These five factors must be in balance for the body to operate physiologically. These three individuals, Ahara (balanced nutrition), Swapna or Nidra (sleep), and Bramhacharya (celibacy), essentially aid in the upkeep of the Panchamahabhoota.<sup>5</sup>

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The classics of Conceptual Ayurveda and related literature have been closely studied to shed light on the significance and practical applications of the Trayopastambha and spiritual arrangement. This paper's conceptual framework is derived from a reanalysis and critical evaluation of the collected literary material.

## CONCEPT OF AHARA

The five fundamental components, or Panchamahabhutas, comprise the entire universe. The outcome of Panchabhautic connection is every ingredient or somatic component, whether it is known to us or not. Consuming Panchabhautic substances is necessary to maintain the status of Panchabhautic components of the body in accordance with nature's rule of equilibrium. These materials are applied as dietary supplements.<sup>6</sup>

It simply implies that you should follow a daily diet. Put another way, a person's ahara is his or her daily meal. The nutrients that are taken in from this eaten ahara include protein, carbs, minerals, and other things that the body needs for growth and development. According to Ayurveda, health encompasses not only bodily fitness but also mental, spiritual, and sensory well-being. Each of these food groups has a particular influence on mood and sensation; for example, the Satvika bhojana promotes happiness and santosha (contentment), the Rajasika bhojana heightens ego and fury, and the Tamsika bhojana depresses and induces sleepiness.<sup>7</sup>

The human body is made of entirely of these five components. Ayurveda also recommends a code of behavior for eating, which includes not talking while eating, chewing food thoroughly rather than gulping it down, and consuming food in accordance with one's constitution rather than just taste. Expanding on this, we may say that a healthy body is one where the flames of digestion, pitta, kapha, and kapha are all in harmony.<sup>8</sup>

A person is only deemed healthy when their spirit, senses, and mind are all content and joyful. The food that is consumed provides energy to the physical body. The basic goal of Ayurveda is to preserve equilibrium in the body, which is greatly aided by these three doshas.<sup>9</sup> The excretory system separates the trash (mala), which is expelled from the body, from the nutrients (prasada), which are necessary for the body to operate. Seven tissue elements, also known as dhatus, are created from the nutrients. These seven dhatus are likewise in a state of balance in a healthy organism.<sup>10</sup>

These seven dhatus are likewise in a state of balance in a healthy organism. Additionally, the excretory system's normal operation is crucial to maintaining the body's equilibrium because, if waste that has to be ejected from the body is not removed on time, it will rot in the colon and produce ama, which will upset the system as a whole.<sup>11</sup> Thus, in accordance with Ayurveda, an individual is deemed healthy if their senses and mind are fulfilled, their excretory system, dhatus, and doshas are all operating normally. The two ways to attain a state of health are to save energy and keep the body stable.<sup>12</sup>

Ayurveda discusses in great length both beneficial and harmful behaviours, routines, and foods for health. Food is the main source of energy used in our everyday activities, as well as a means of repairing the tissues that are worn down. The three primary sources of prana in the body—food, water, and air—come under the category of Ahara.

In addition to providing us with life, brightness, memory, and Ojas, food is also largely in charge of our system's digestion and metabolism.<sup>13</sup>

Lord Krishna defines Sattvika bhojana in Shreemad Bhagvad Gita as food that has rasa, or is juicy and delicious, unctuous (having some fat), which promotes stability, is a heart tonic, is readily digested, and that the person enjoys.<sup>14</sup>

One may refer to this kind of Ahara as a balanced diet. Ayurvedic diets are founded on the "सामान्य वृद्धि कारणम्" theory, which states that similar-quality items improve tissue components (dhatus) in the body. For example, rasa promotes rasa dhatu. Foods like ghee (from cow's milk), butter, oil, and others that nourish the body and help preserve Ojas Foods such as water and other liquids, enzymes, and spices that support or facilitate digestion, absorption, and elimination. Overeating is the root cause of the majority of ailments. Adhere to a moderate diet. Steer clear of late dinners. Eat your evening meal before 6 or 7 p.m. and try to keep it light. Consume fruits and milk only at night, if at all feasible.<sup>15</sup>

#### **AYURVEDIC DIETETICS CONSIDERS FOLLOWING FACTORS: -**

1. Nature (Prakriti) of the Consumer.
2. Environmental considerations.
3. Time.
4. Combination of food articles.
5. Emotional effect.
6. Quantity.
7. Taste of food articles.
8. Doshika status of food articles.
9. Method of preparation.

#### **RULES TO INTAKE THE FOOD REGIMEN: -**

1. Take warm food.
2. Take unctuous food.
3. Not eat too slowly.
4. Avoid talking and laughing during meal.
5. Take in proper quantity.
6. Take food in relaxed condition.
7. Take food in prescribed manner.
8. Take only when the previous meal is digested.
9. Take the food not having any contradictory potency.
10. Take Food In proper place equipped with all the accessories.

## **NIDRA (SLEEP) AND SWAPNA (DREAMS)**

Ayurveda states that the living body is in a condition of slumber when both the mind and body are at rest. Natural slumber is induced and the kapha dosha rises when Tamoguna attacks the mind throughout the night. The kapha dosha boosts immunity to stave off illness and is linked to the growth and development of bodily tissues. A pleasant, peaceful sleep is impossible when despair, rage, or sensuality are present because they enhance Vata (rajasika gunayukta), which has the opposite impact of tamoguna. Sleeping late at night or for extended periods of time disrupts daily schedules and is detrimental to health.<sup>16</sup>

Usually, there is a distinct pattern at each time of day. While the night is set aside for relaxation and sleep, the day is dedicated to a variety of activities. The Sun is what determines whether it is day or night. Our bodies are affected differently by day and night. There are differences in Doshas, physical function efficiency, and the ability to sharpen the intellect.<sup>17</sup>

Doshas are impacted when sleep patterns are disrupted. Sleeping during the day raises kapha, which causes the body to become very sensual and heavy. Being up late at night raises Vata, which dries up the body. Health issues connected to vitiation are caused by these doshas. Because modern life is so fast-paced and cutthroat, the majority of people are always anxious. Vata and Pitta are vitiated by anxiety. Heat is raised when Pitta increases, which decreases sleep. Maintaining wakefulness intensifies Vata vitiation, which has a cumulative effect on the body. Related disorders result from this. In order to overcome this, one should follow the diet but make certain adjustments to balance the Pitta and Vata.<sup>18</sup>

In general, night pollution happens during the fourth part of the night. People who get up between three and four in the morning and do Japa and Dhyana will never be affected by nighttime pollution. Make it a point to consistently rise by at least 4 a.m. Take a nap on a hard bed. Turn over to the left side to sleep. Permit Pingala, the Solar Nadi, to operate via the right nostril all night long. Until you recuperate, sleep on your back in acute situations. As soon as you wake up in the morning, spend an hour or two practicing Japa and meditation. Also, finish this before 10 p.m. before going to bed. This is an excellent cleanser. The intellect and nerves will get stronger as a result.<sup>19</sup>

## **BRAMHACHARYA (ABSTINENCE)XIX**

It describes the condition of existence that exists when any living thing abstains from excessive sensuality. This condition does not imply total sexual abstinence, but rather engaging in sexual activity in a way that minimizes risks to one's health. It is among the most noticeable, significant, and fundamentally necessary facets of human existence. It is essential to human existence. Although this part of life is dictated by nature in humans, it is up to reason, intelligence, and common sense to govern and control it. In this regard, human civilization is provided with certain norms and regulations by the world's extensive and ancient scriptures.<sup>21</sup>

Ayurveda is characterized as a Bramhacharya ashram and stresses abstaining from sexual activity during school years. After marriage, Ayurveda encourages sexual activity in the form of gruhastha ashrams, but even here, overindulgence is discouraged because it causes the three doshas to become out of balance, which disrupts normal physiological functions and causes physical weakness, memory loss, and debility. It views sexual relations not just as enjoyable but also as a method of propagation, or purushartha chatushtaya. "The objects of the senses turn away from the abstinent man leaving the longing behind, but this longing also turns away after he attains Self-realization," as the Shreemad Bhagvad Gita correctly notes. The impulse to be sexual is creative.<sup>22</sup>

It's going to be elevated. It will change into energy that is magnificent. Nonetheless, one cannot completely eradicate lust on their own. It is only possible by God's favor. Yama is the first stage of Patanjali Maharshi's Raja Yoga as well. Yama is the practice of Brahmacharya, Aparigraha, Ahimsa, Satya, and Asteya. Brahmacharya is the most significant of them. Dama, or self-control, is the cornerstone of Jnana Yoga as well. When the Rajo-Guna is dominant, a Vrutti, or modification, emerges from the lake of consciousness.<sup>23</sup>

## DEHA BRAHMACHARYA AND MANAS BRAHMACHARYA

To be a Brahmachari, one must be a pure person in all respects. Brahmacharya in the mind is more significant. It must also be successful in the mental realm in order for it to be successful in the physical realm. Mental Brahmacharya is the state of mind in which not a single sexual idea occurs to the mind. An impure thinking will make the sex drive very powerful. Brahmacharya is reliant on controlling life as a whole.<sup>24</sup>

स्मरणं कीर्तनं कैलेह प्रेषणं गुह्यभाषणम्। समकल्पो अध्यावसायश्च क्रियानिर्वेरितिरेव च।

एतन्मैथुनश्शथंगं प्रवदन्ति मनेषिणम्।” (याज्ञवल्क्य स्मृति)

The eight types of enjoyment—Darshana, which is gazing at women with intense resolve; Sparshana, which is touching them; Keli, which is playing; Kirtana, which is praising the qualities of the other sex; Guhya-Bhashan, which is talking in private; Adhyavasaya, which is approaching the other sex with the desire for gratification; and Kriyanivritti, which is engaging in sexual activity—should be carefully avoided. In the context of Akhanda Brahmacharya practice, these eight forms of pleasure might be thought of as eight different types of breaks. It must proceed cautiously, sincerely, and with extreme caution to prevent these eight disruptions. As a Prana xx, Ahara, Nidra, and Bramhacharya.<sup>25</sup>

The three pieces of a single chain are Ahara, Nidra, and Bramhacharya. These are the three supporting pillars of the Jivatma structure. If you destroy any of the associate supports, the entire structure will collapse. One may command Bramhacharya and Nidra by dominating the Ahara. Everybody was impacted in the Prana. They are all part of the same circuit, link, or Sambandha. These three are naturally under control if the mind is. Anybody who hinders or suspends Prana also hinders the mind's function and the movement of the Ahara, Nidra, and Bramhacharya. Two factors, the vibration of Prana and the Vasanas, or subtle wants, are what activate or set the mind in action.<sup>26</sup>

When these are gone, Prana becomes shaky. Prana is not happy. The man starts to feel uneasy. The intellect is then likewise unable to function correctly. The guy develops mental weakness and indecisiveness. Prana and the mind become steady if they are stable. Thus, maintaining equilibrium between Ahara, Nidra, and Bramhacharya as a Prana.<sup>27</sup>

It is not this flesh-and-bones perishable body. It is the Sat-Chit-Ananda Atman, eternal and all-pervading. It is only via living a life of pure Ahara, Nidra, and Brahmacharya that it may reach this ultimate condition. All activities and one's entire life must be infused with these values. It is exceedingly uncommon to know these three highly important, but practical people.<sup>28</sup>

However, for a man with iron will, endurance, and patience, the road becomes smooth. It seeks real, knowledgeable guys with powerful bodies who can astonish others with their impeccable lifestyles, moral integrity, and spiritual fortitude. A few sensible guys step forward and guide the children with their moral example and enlightened aura.<sup>29</sup>

No language could exist without vowels. Without a wall or a canvas, you cannot draw an image. Without paper, you cannot write anything. Nevertheless, without Ahara, Nidra, and Brahmacharya, it is impossible to have a healthy and spiritual existence. Both spiritual and material improvement are brought about by it. It serves as morality's foundation. It forms the cornerstone of eternal existence. It's a flower in spring that breathes eternity.<sup>30</sup>

It is the foundation of an at manically peaceful life. What Sages, Aspirants, and Yogika students desire for is the steadfast support for Brahma-Nishtha. It serves as a shield against the desire, rage, and greed that are the internal Asuras. It is a doorway to the happiness that lies beyond. It unlocks Moksha's door. It adds to the eternal happiness, to the unbroken, unflinching enjoyment. The Sushumna can only be unlocked and Kundalini awakened with their help. It bestows virtue, renown, splendor, and Mana-Pratishtha. A real spiritual person has the nine Riddhis and the eight Siddhis rolling beneath their feet. They are always prepared to follow his orders.<sup>31</sup>

### **THE FUNDAMENTAL OF LIFE- AHARA, NIDRA AND BRAHMACHARYA—**

The spiritual life is impossible without them. It is highly desirable. It is quite important. Nidra and Brahmacharya cannot make significant spiritual advancements without flawless Ahara. The cornerstones of diet, sleep, and abstinence or continence form the base of the Moksha pedestal. When it rains a lot, the superstructure will collapse if the cornerstone is weak. Nevertheless, if Ahara, Nidra, and Brahmacharya are not formed, the mind, aroused by bad ideas, would collapse. It is unable to go to the greatest Nirvikalpa Samadhi or the top of the yoga ladder. This is quite important. Through yoga practice, they are transformed into Ojas Shakti. The Yogi's physique will be flawless. His motions will be charming and graceful. It has as much life as he desires. This is sometimes referred to as death at will, or Iccha Mrityu. The most crucial prerequisite for a person seeking spiritual enlightenment is Trayopastambha practice. There can be no spiritual advancement without these.<sup>32</sup>

**DISCUSSION**

The standards of behavior established by the scriptures are disregarded with such impunity in the modern world, especially among the educated elite, across all societal sectors and age groups, that the number of morally bankrupt, physically ill, and mentally unstable people grows daily. Modern man's ignorance of his own scripture treasures is one explanation for this depressing condition of affairs. All around the world, passion is king. Ahara (diet), Nidra (sleep), and Brahmacharya (sexual) ideas are all that individuals have on their minds. A man is endowed with a thousand wants. However, food, sleep, and sexual desire are the three main strong desires.<sup>33</sup>

The need for a partner is the basic need. Everything rests on this fundamental need. It is later in life that other wants such as the desire for money, a son, property, homes, animals, and so on arise. God has endowed the food, sleep, and sexual desire with great strength since the entire cosmos is meant to be maintained. These are the strongest human desires. They completely occupy the senses, the intellect, the mind, Prana, and the body. It is the most ancient component that makes up a person's constitution.<sup>34</sup>

A man is no man without Ahara, Nidra, and Brahmacharya, just as a king is no king without a treasury, people, and an army, just as a flower is no flower without scent, and a river is no river without water. Animals and man have the same emotions: Ahara (eating), Nidra (sleep), Bhaya (fear), and Maithuna (corruption). Dharma, Viveka, and Vichara Shakti are what set a man apart from a beast. The only way to safeguard Jnana and Vichara is to maintain the sub-pillars. A man truly ought to be considered an animal alone if he lacks these qualifications. Satisfying one's worldly cravings is immoral; the body ought to serve as the subservient tool of the soul, bent on heavenly purposes.<sup>35</sup>

Man was meant to live in spiritual contact with God, but he succumbed to the devils' temptation, who took use of his sensual side to lure him away from contemplating the divine and toward this world. Therefore, moral righteousness involves giving up all sensual pleasures, isolating oneself from the outside world by dispassion and discriminating, living only in accordance with the spirit, and the holiness and perfection of God. Sensefulness is incompatible with purity and knowledge. Staying away from impurities is the main task in life.<sup>36</sup>

**CONCLUSION**

They are impacted in their physical, mental, ethical, social, and spiritual well-being by Ahara, Nidra, and Brahmacharya. It is widely known that in addition to his spiritual writings, the great Master—whose unwavering compassion for humanity—wrote several volumes on medicine, cleanliness, and health. According to Ayurveda, "

अति सर्वत्र वर्जयेत् " refers to excess in all spheres of life, including food, sleep, and sexual relations. The controlled functioning of the three triads is emphasized by all of this. Longevity, glory, strength, vigor, knowledge, money, unwavering fame, virtues, commitment to the truth, and spirituality all rise with the application of these three sub-pillars. A comprehensive and holistic knowledge of the impact of food on our physical and emotional well-being may be found in Ayurveda. You will master the fundamentals of Ayurvedic dietetics in this subject, including how to choose foods based on your constitution (Prakriti). The body's natural

process is sleep. According to Ayurveda, having a good night's sleep promotes physical well-being, virility, strength, enhanced senses, and long life. Insufficient and delayed sleep leads to a host of issues, including drowsiness, weakness, dulled senses, sterility, and a host of other ailments. A very important part of our existence is sex. It is equally crucial to food. By bearing children and providing exciting and enjoyable events, it gives our lives a sense of fulfilment and completion. The secret to happiness there is balance.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST -NIL**

### **SOURCE OF SUPPORT- NONE**

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