



‘आहारसंभव वस्तु रोगाश्चाहारसंभव।’ Aharsmbha vstu rogashchahaarsambhavh|

Dr.Anagha H.Ghodke

Assistant Professor,

Samhita Siddhant evam Sanskrit dept,
Government Ayurvedic college,
Dharashiv.

dranaghghodke@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:-

Ahara is the most important factor in life. Health as well as disease is dependent on ahara. Àhàra, Swapna (Nidra) and Brahmacharya are three upstambh of life , play an important role in the maintenance of “Swasthya”. Ahara i.e. diet is believed to be one of the Upastambha of life. Ahara taken in proper manner can lead to better health or else can lead to diseases.

Faulty diet results in disturbed functions of the body. That is the reason why while describing causative factors of diseases, dietary articles (apathya) have been given prime importance. Acharya Charak has stated that diet sustains life if taken with discipline in a proper manner. Ahara has a prime role in maintaining health and also in treating various disorders. All living beings in the universe require food. The food is said to be cause of stability for all living beings. There is nothing else except diet for sustaining the life of living beings.

KEYWORDS: Ahara, Upastambha , apathya

INTRODUCTION:-

“ आरोग्यं भोजनायतनं ।” का. सं. ख. ५/९

Health is completely dependent on “Food”.

Food is the source of life, strength, complexion and Oja of living beings. Food in turn, derives its properties from six primary tastes which are inherent in the substances that comprise food. The substances, their specific tastes, qualities, potencies and digestive transformations are responsible for equilibrium of the Dosha and Dhatu. As growth, strength, good health, complexion and the alertness of senses are traceable to food and its inequality causes illness. Diet therapy is a broad term for the practical application of the concept of nutrition as a preventive or corrective treatment of broad term for the practical application of the concept of nutrition as a preventive or corrective treatment of diseases. It comprises food prescribed, regulated or restricted in kind and amount for therapeutic and other purposes. This usually involves the modification of an existing dietary lifestyle to promote optimum health. Ayurvedic principles are concerned about every part of the body, mentally and physically through diet.

India is known for its traditional medicinal systems—Ayurveda, Siddha, and Unani. Medical systems are found mentioned even in the ancient Vedas and other scriptures. The Ayurvedic concept appeared and developed between 2500 and 500 BC in India [1]. The literal meaning of Ayurveda is “science of life,” because ancient Indian system of health care focused on views of man and his illness. It has been pointed out that the positive health means metabolically well-balanced human beings. Ayurveda is also called the “science of longevity”

because it offers a complete system to live a long healthy life. It offers programs to rejuvenate the body through diet and nutrition.

Diet supports the body constantly just like the house (is supported) by the pillars. Complete nutritional diet or the wholesome food is responsible for the growth of the living beings while unwholesome food for the growth of diseases. Proper growth and maintenance of the body depends on the balanced diet. *Ahara* and the dietetic rules are basic functioning of the body, the *Jatharagni* is must be conserved. In charaka sutrasthana (27/342), *Agni* is said to be an important constituent of the body. Which is helpful to preserve the *Prana, Oja, Aayu, Bala, Varna, Utsaha, Upachaya, Prabha* and complete healthy status.

Eight Factors - Ashta aahar vidhi-visheshayatana

These eight factors determine whether food will be beneficial or harmful to the body:

1. Prakriti (Nature) Prakriti refers to the inherent nature or quality of the food, whether it is naturally heavy (guru) or light (laghu).

Examples: Guru Prakriti Food: Takes longer to digest, e.g., urad dal (black gram).

Laghu

Prakriti Food: Digests quickly, e.g., moong dal (green gram).

2. Karan (Processing)- The method of preparation is crucial. How the food is processed affects its digestion and health benefits.

Examples: Boiled food is light and easy to digest. Fried food is heavy and takes longer to digest.

3. Sanyog (Combination) The combination of two or more substances is called sanyog.

4. Rashi (Quantity)- Rashi refers to the quantity of food consumed. Eating the right amount is essential for proper digestion and health.

5. Desh (Place) -Where the food comes from and where it is consumed is important. The region or environment affects the suitability of the food. **Examples:** In cold regions, warm and energy providing foods are more suitable. In hot regions, light and cooling foods are recommended.

6. Kal (Time/Season)- The time or season in which food is consumed also affects the body. Eating according to the season is beneficial for health. **Examples:** In summer, consuming cold drinks and fruits like watermelon is good for the body. In winter, warm drinks and oily foods are more appropriate.

7. Upayog Sanstha (Rules of Eating) This relates to the guidelines for eating food. Following proper rules while eating aids digestion and health. **Examples:** Chewing food properly helps in better digestion.

8. Upayokta (Consumer)- The condition of the individual, such as their health, age, and capacity, should determine the type of food consumed.

A young and healthy person should consume energy-giving foods like grains and proteins in larger quantities. An elderly person should eat light and easily digestible food

हिताशी स्यान्मिताशी स्यात्कालभोजी जितेन्द्रियः।

पश्यन् रोगान् बहून् कष्टान् बुद्धिमान् विषमाशानात्”||

Principles of Ayurveda, one should follow for good health.....

1.The Right Time- One should take food only when previous meal is digested. If one takes food before the digestion of the previous meal, the digestive product of previous food, i.e immature *rasa* gets mixed up with the product of food taken afterwards, resulting in the provocation of all the *doshas* instantaneously.

- To improve taste perceptions and
- Proper digestion of ingested food through Gut Brain Axis connections.
- Thus it is essential to eat with concentration.

2.The Right Quantity- When the food is taken properly and according to rules of food taking, then only the benefits of *Ahara* can be achieved.

Laghu ahara includes both quantity & quality of food. As per quality, meaning of word Laghu here means easy to digest. i.e which takes less time to digest. Laghu Ahara does not cause vitiation of Doshas and increase the Agni, undergoes digestion without causing any difficulty. Even the food slightly Apathya in nature do not aggravate Doshas.

3. The Right Quality- Eat Freshly Prepared Food .

“उष्णमश्नीयात्”

Food should always be eaten warm. According to Ayurveda, warm food is beneficial for digestion and has a positive impact on the body.

❖ . Improves Digestion

Warm food is easier to digest and enhances Agni (digestive fire).

❖ . Health Benefits

Warm food allows for better absorption of nutrients in the body.

❖ . Taste and Satisfaction

Warm food is more flavorful and satisfying.

It calms hunger and provides a feeling of fullness.

❖ . Protection from Infections

Warm food reduces the risk of bacteria and other infectious agents.

If one follows this rule and eats warm food; it tastes well, also the eaten food stimulates the digestive fire and gets digested quickly. Intake of warm food helps in *vatanuloman*, stimulates and secretes pitta thereby increasing agni. Extreme hot food is also not advised as it may cause *mada*, *daha*, *trushna*, *bhrama* etc. Another the food that is again made hot, after preparation which can be categorized under *Paryushita Anna*. The food is strictly contraindicated according to *Ayurveda*.

4. The Right Methods - The most important statement is that the food should be eaten with enough concentration towards it as well as towards the eating process.

- Avoid watching T.V. & Talking while eating.
- Ingest food calmly, neither too slow nor too fast.

5. The Right Place- This term refers to eating in a hygienic place provided with all the necessary things for sound psychological condition during meals. One should take food in proper equipped with all the accessories and should not produce disturbing emotions like kama, krodha, chinta, bhaya etc. By following this person does not get afflicted with such of the factors that would result to the disturbed mind.

DISCUSSION:- The main aim of *Ayurveda* is to preserve the health of a healthy person and to treat the disease . Ahaara which is beneficial to the body and gives happiness to the mind. Lots of importance is given to the diet with regard to its processing, quality, quantity and so on. Ahara plays an important role in healthy, diseased and convalescent states. It is more important than the medicine itself. Wholesome diet is prime cause for the growth and development of the body.

Acharya Charaka stated that the ideal diet is that, which rebuilds the worn-out systems, nourishes dhatus and maintains equilibrium of the body constituents.

One should eat food, which is hot, unctuous, in due measure, after the digestion of previous food, and nonantagonistic in potency. It should be eaten in a hygienic place, provided with all accessories, neither too hurriedly, nor too leisurely, without talking or laughing with full concentration and having proper regard to oneself.

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