



## “The significance of Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana in our Healthy life”

Dr. Dimple<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Sandeep Kumar<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Ritesh<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ayurvedic Medical Officer, Ayush department, Haryana.

<sup>2</sup>Ayurvedic Medical Officer, Ayush department, Haryana.

<sup>3</sup>Ayurvedic Medical Officer, Ayush department, Haryana.

**\*Corresponding Author:** Dr. Dimple

\*Ayurvedic Medical Officer, Dept. of Ayush, Haryana.

### Abstract-

Ayurveda is a life science. It is not only a healthcare system. Everybody is a part of nature. Therefore, Ayurveda maintains health by restoring an individual's balance with their actual self through the use of nature's fundamental principles. Since the dawn of time, Ayurveda has been practiced. Owing to its scientific basis and simplicity, Ayurveda has gained popularity throughout the world. It is widely recognized for its function in the treatment of degenerative, chronic, and incurable iatrogenic illnesses. People have far more options than ever before to live better lives nowadays. Even so, it is evident that they must develop new tactics in order to adhere to the timeless principles that have been validated for millennia in every aspect of human existence. Among these most significant areas of life is the field of dietetics. Ahara is essential to both the treatment and prevention of illness. It is crucial in determining the phenomena of deterioration, the growth and healing process, the energy source for all physical activity, etc. An attempt has been made to emphasize and realistically infer the Asta Ahara Vidhi Viseshayatana components in the current essay. Karana is highlighted more in this context due to its practical necessity, significance, and usefulness.

**Keywords-** Ayurveda, Samhita, Asta Ahara Vidhi Viseshayatana.

### Introduction-

The science of a healthy lifestyle is Ayurveda. The goal of Ayurvedic medicine is to maintain a person's health throughout their life in addition to preventing illness. According to Ayurveda, there are three pillars of life: Brahmcharch, Nidra, and Ahar. Ahar is in the lead here. The most crucial element in life is Ahar, which determines both health and disease. When followed correctly, a healthy diet can either promote greater health or cause sickness.<sup>1</sup> An improper diet causes the body's functioning to become disrupted. This is the reason dietary articles (pathya-apathya) have been given special attention when discussing the causes of sickness. Ayurveda holds that all diseases stem from disruptions in our Agni, or digestive system. Every meal we eat either has a unique effect on our doshas, which influences our bodies. Most ailments are caused by poisons (Ama) produced by incorrect digestion (mandagni).<sup>2</sup> In the present era, a lack of information about improper eating habits, irregular timing, improper cooking techniques, imbalanced diets, and disregarding the right dietary guidelines can result in a number of problems or diseases. Acharya According to Charak, if followed correctly and with dedication, a diet can maintain life. He has presented the eight key components of the ashta ahar vidhi visheshayatana diet plan in a very systematic and scientific way. Ahar is mostly useful in treating a variety of illnesses and preserving health.<sup>3</sup>

While Aahar is as necessary to the gods as nectar is, it is only possible to attain the attributes listed above when one eats a healthy diet, which in turn promotes the growth of the organism. On the other hand, diseases are the result of unhealthful diets. As a result, diets that are pleasant to the senses in terms of color, smell, touch, and taste alone should be consumed.<sup>4</sup> When these diet plans are followed religiously, they truly do reflect a human life. The diet plan consists of eight components.

1. *Prakruti/ swabhava*- nature of food/ quality of food.

2. *Karan*- processing of food.

3. *Samyoga*- combination of food.

4. *Rashi*- quantity of food.

5. *Desha* – habitat of food.

6. *Kala*- time and seasonal variation.

7. *Upayoga Samstha* – Rules for dieting

8. *Upayokta* – the person who consumes the food.

### Prakriti (Nature of food)-

Every person is born with a fundamental prakriti, or constitution, that determines their basic physiological, psychological, and physical characteristics. In the same way, each food item has a unique prakriti. As a natural property or trait of a substance that is inherited, like guru (heaviness) or Laghu (lightness), prakriti is a Swabhava. For instance, the Prakriti of green gram or deer meat is light, but the Prakriti of black gram or pork is heavy.<sup>5</sup> The main causes of

illness are self-discipline and lack of awareness. Ignorance about one's own bodily constitution, improper diet, and unhealthy lifestyle throw off the natural balance of the five components and impair the functioning of the vata, pitta, and kapha. It is important for everyone to eat with awareness of both their own and food's prakriti. Eating food that corresponds to one's opposite prakriti will keep one healthy.

### **KARANA (Processing of food)-**

Karana is also known as Sanskara. Food processing, or samskara, is referred to as karan. Certain foods might not be fit for ingestion straight away; in such cases, they need be modified in form before being consumed. Giving natural items additional qualities is the process of creating or refining them. The factor karan comprises a number of techniques. It describes the processing of materials that modifies their inherent properties. This alteration is caused by dilution, the use of heat (vaporization, distillation, and sublimation), clarifying, emulsification, age, flavoring, impregnation, preservation, and the composition of the container. Roasted grain flour becomes heavier when boiled into bolus, much as processed, hard-to-digest Vrihi lightens when changed to Laja after frying.<sup>6</sup> Gunantardhana, or a shift in character and food quality, is brought about by Samskara. Certain foods have the Prakruti of vitiation of Doshas; however, this attribute can be altered by applying a different processing method, such as Karan. The following Sanskara is included in it.

### **Agni Samskara (contact of fire)**

Boiling, roasting, and heating are distinct Agni Samskar methods. Different types of Agni alter food properties in different ways. For example, food prepared using coal or natural wood tastes better than food prepared using electricity.

### **Jal Sanikarsh and Shauch (cleaning) Samskara**

Cleaning of materials, such as contact with water, is included. The goal is to get rid of contaminants. For example, rice cooked from dusk-picked paddy is called laghu, and rice cooked from unboiled paddy is called guru.

### **Manthan (churning) Samskara**

Food's characteristics are altered by churning or grinding. Dadhi, for instance, is Shothakrut and a Guru. Dadhi becomes Takra when it is churned.<sup>7</sup> which is the nature of Laghu. It is regarded as a Shothaghna as well. The concept of micronutrient bioavailability is used to describe it. A variety of cooking techniques, such as fermentation and thermal processing, are employed to boost the bioavailability of micronutrients. These procedures reduce the amount of anti-nutrients and improve the physiochemical accessibility of micronutrients. For instance, fermentation results in the production of organic acids like lactic and citric acid, which enhances the absorption of zinc and iron.

### **SAMGOYA (Combination of Food)**

Combination, also known as samyoga, is the coming together of two or more materials. This shows irregularities missing from particular drug cases. There are occasions when it is seen that combining different diets has different effects than consuming each diet on its own. When two or more substances are mixed, unique qualities arise that are not achievable with the identical material used alone. It is important to keep in mind that components should be fully blended and compatible with one another when cooking meals, since the combination of two or more substances may lead to the emergence of new qualities.<sup>8</sup> Ex: Honey and ghee are beneficial to the body when ingested separately, but they are toxic when combined in the same amount and should not be used together. Furthermore, combining milk and fish (Ushnavirya) is not recommended. Both of them have excellent flavors, but due to a contraindication in their efficacy, they vitiate the blood and inhibit the strotas. These days, people choose their meals more on taste than on nutritional content. They combine several types of ingredients using a range of culinary products. They don't know how strong the food is, so they mix ingredients that could not work well together.<sup>9</sup>

These days, people choose their meals more on taste than on nutritional content. They combine several types of ingredients using a range of culinary products. Because they don't know the dish's nutritional value, they mix ingredients that could not work well together and could be harmful to the body. Therefore, it's time to retrain your mind to mix foods so that they enhance one another. Ayurveda makes specific reference to the idea of viruddha ahara, which explains incompatible foods and their negative consequences on the body.<sup>10</sup>

### **Rashi (Quantity Of Food)-**

Rasi is a measurement of the overall mass and each component used to assess the impact of different dosages. Sarvagraha is the total amount of food consumed, while Parigrha is the amount of each of its constituents. A person should eat in moderation, which translates to eating in accordance with their capacity for digestion (Agni). Sarvagraha and Parigraha, which determine the effects of food consumed in an appropriate or inappropriate quantity, make up rashi (quantity).<sup>11</sup> Sarvagraha and parigraha, two forms of matra, are equally important in Ayurveda. Another facet of matra is also explained by Ayurveda. When eating, the stomach should be filled with two parts solid food, one part liquid, and one part empty to allow vayu, or free flowing air, to pass through. Another facet of matra is also explained by Ayurveda. When eating, the stomach should be filled with two parts solid food, one part liquid, and one part empty to allow vayu, or free flowing air, to pass through.

**Desha (Habitat) –**

“*Punhasthana Dravyanamutpattipracharau Deshsatyam*” It denotes the food's original location. Desha also represents the part of the body that eats. According to traditional wisdom, one should fundamentally know the country or region from which a certain food item originated before consuming it. For instance, the therapeutic qualities of the plant that grows in the Himalayas are distinct from those of other medications. Furthermore, this relates to the location where the community resides.<sup>12</sup> Similar to Sadharana Desha, Jangam, etc., disease pathology and bodily strength vary by region, and for that reason appropriate dietary practices need to be followed. for a long, healthy life. The crop is impacted by the soil in its own way. Contemporary science presents Desha in its own way rather than adopting a different perspective. It also asserts that studying illness is essentially studying people and their surroundings. The environment in which they live is the source of preventable diseases that impact hundreds of millions of people. In Ayurveda, the concept of the human host is clearly established by Acharya's description of Vyadhita Desha Pariksha. Thus, before beginning chikitsa, one of the most important things to do is to comprehend the patient—Vyadhita Desha Pariksha. prior to consuming the meal, as well. As a result, one should always take Aahara in accordance with both Atura and Bhoomi Deshas.<sup>13</sup>

**Kala (time)-**

In both healthy and sick conditions, adherence to the seasonal regimen is necessary to maintain optimal health. Is Kala conditional and everlasting in motion (time)? Two varieties of kala are Avasthika and Nityaga. It is believed that Kala is Nitayaga. Ahara should be taken in accordance with Dincharya and Rituwharya, Avasthika, in this condition. Considered by Vyadhi Avastha is Kala. For example, if Jwara is Jeerna, then Glzrirapana 15 is advised, but Langhana should be done for 7 days in Naveen Jwara. The Samstha upyoga (Dietary Rules): It simply refers to the dietary guidelines. It includes all the information about diet, including when, how, and what to consume. Ahara should be "easily digestible," ushna (warm), pleasant, and qualitative. It should be snigdha, the food. A person's prakriti and agni should determine the appropriate amount of food to consume. Eat the food only after it has had time to digest after the previous meal. Foods that are weakly hostile or act in opposition to one another shouldn't be consumed. A diet that is either too quick or too slow should be avoided. All six rasas (madhura, amla, lavana, katu, tikta, and kashaya) should be included in the diet. Excessive or prolonged use of any one rasa should be avoided.<sup>14</sup>

**Upyoga Samstha - (rule for use)**

Food with a special function is occasionally necessary to consume under certain circumstances. Dietary guidelines, or Upayog Sanstha, rely entirely on Jeerna Aahar Lakshanas, or signs of healthy digestion.

**Jeerna Aahar Lakshanas** -Uddgar Shudhi- i.e., no taste in blech

**Utsaha**-Enthusiasm

**Veg Utsarga**- proper evacuation of Mala

**Laghuta**-lightness of the body

**Kshut** -manifestation of hunger

**Pipassa**- manifestation of thirst.<sup>15</sup>

**Upayokta: consumer -the person who take the food**

Upayokta considerations are essential for obtaining the health benefits of food consumption. The person in charge of the regular food intake is Upayokta. that is, "Okasatmya." Food intake should be based on a person's location, digestive capacity, season, Kaal, and Jeerna Aahar Lakshana. One can experience good health from eating by adhering to all of these Ashtavidha Aahar Vidhi Visheshayatana guidelines. and discover the food's nutritional value. and the human body can be protected against some diseases by the aforementioned specific guidelines, especially noncommunicable diseases like diabetes, cardiovascular disease, etc. It is crucial to understand Aahar Vidhi Vishesh Ayatane in order to treat any kind of unwell individual.<sup>16</sup>

**Significance of dietary rules -**

Applying dietary rules correctly helps to soothe vitiated Pitta, Vata, and Kapha. diet that harmonizes with a person's Prakriti As a result, Pitta helps with the treatment of hyperacidity, indigestion, and diarrhea. Diet alleviates symptoms of cough and cold, prevents heaviness, and soothes anorexia symptoms by balancing Kapha. It is crucial to take Kala into account in order to preserve the Dosha balance. For instance, individuals with Madhyam Awastha should balance their Pitta, those with Vriddha Awastha should balance their Vata Dosha, and those with Balya Awastha should balance their Kapha.<sup>17</sup>

**Importance of Asta Ahara Vidhi Vishayatana**

Ahara is part of our everyday routine. If we put a little attention into eating correctly and following the Ayurvedic Ahara regimens, we may easily achieve good health in addition to the quality, quantity, and flavor of the food. A variety of metabolic illnesses can arise from unhealthy dietary habits. It has also been observed that this bad dietary pattern is the only reason why a number of ailments are only now becoming apparent. In this case, the Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana idea makes the most sense for contemporary existence. The phrase "ashta hara videhi visheshayatana" refers to the elements that cause both the wholesome and unwholesome effects of the hara and the techniques used for hara sevana, or customary diet consumption. Prior to eating, one needs to calculate their Prakriti, Karana, Samyoga,

Rashi, Desha, Kala, Upyoga-sansatha, and Upyokta. Based on the previously mentioned concerns, it is recommended that the ahara be ingested in line with the eating habits prescribed by Acharyas in the form of Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana, which has been shown to be very scientific. Therefore, we may both prevent and treat a variety of diseases as well as health difficulties by developing these behaviors.<sup>18</sup>

#### **Discussion-**

The amount of food that is consumed in a way that maintains equilibrium, is digested and metabolized in a timely manner, and is considered the proper quantity to maintain health. The amount of food that is consumed depends on the individual's digestion and varies depending on the food's properties, the season, and their age. This means that eating in a healthy manner requires careful consideration of food selection, preparation, and cooking methods. Now is the perfect moment to comprehend the insightful advice included in our Ayurvedic text. By adhering to these basic guidelines, we can achieve a healthy life and take action against illness. Of these eight aspects, Prakrti is the most significant because it affects all of them. For example, while using Karana and Samyoga, it must be taken into account to prevent antagonistic effects. Prakrti also plays a significant role in determining Ahara Rasi. Additionally, prakrti varies according to Kala and Desa. As for Upayoga Samstha, it should also be regarded as "Viryaviruddhamasniyat" and "Atmanamabhisamiksyat." Finally, when it comes to Upayoktr, the Prakrti of a particular individual is also important.

It is best to apply and think optimistically when it comes to all of the dietary requirements. Usna, for instance, is the first Ahara Vidhi Vidhana rule. Food shouldn't be very Usna or Sita. It's not advisable to do Atiyoga or Hina Yoga, either extreme. Mithya Yoga refers to the modification of food temperatures, such as heating things that are typically cold and vice versa. Ayurveda usually recommends a balanced viewpoint, which is necessary in the current situation as well. The same holds true for the claims made by Snigdha, Matra, Jirne, and regarding eating speed. Every phrase used in Ahara Vidhi Vidhana has a relative meaning that varies from person to person. Each person receives a different amount of food. The meaning of "Snigdha" varies based on an individual's Prakrti, season, and Desa. A person with Mandagni should refrain from consuming excessive amounts of Snigdha, whereas a person with Tiksnagni should not consume less food.

#### **Conclusion-**

Ahar, Nidra, and Brahmcharya were cited by Acharya Charakhas as the three upastambha. In today's modern world, adequate nutrition is essential for a healthy existence. However, because we are ignorant of proper eating practices, we blindly adopt unhealthy eating habits, which lead to digestive distress (agni vaishamyat) and a host of other lifestyle problems with unclear etiologies. Ashta Ahar vidhi visheshyatana has been defined by Acharya Charak in a very methodical and scientific way. It provides fundamental nutritional rules for selecting suitable food, food quality and quantity, food combination and cooking technique, etc. An appropriate, balanced diet and a reduction in disease are made possible by having a thorough understanding of this Ahar Vidhi Visheshayatana. Based on the aforementioned explanation and conversation, we must conclude that each person taking an Aahar Dravya in his daily routine should abide by the norms and restrictions. According to the Prakruti food taken, some people have Vataj Prakruti, Pittaj, and Kafaj Prakruti, while some people are more susceptible to Vataj Vyadhi, Pittaj, and Kafaj Vyadhi. This aids in preventing the illness. Therefore, they should abide with Prakruti's dietary guidelines. Acharya Charaka prescribes diets that follow the aforementioned guidelines in order to sustain the states of Dosha, Dhātu, and Agni. When someone eats healthful food, they are not sick. Eating healthily does not, however, guarantee against illness or operate as a preventive measure.

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