



## CONCEPT OF RITUSANDHI (SEASONAL JUNCTION) IN AYURVEDA

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## ABSTRACT

*Ayurveda* is one of the ancient traditional life science and medical science of Indian traditional property. *Ayurveda* is the most sacred science beneficial to a human being not only for this life but also for the life beyond. *Ayurveda* postulates various theories to maintain the health of an individual such as *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Ratricharya* etc. In *Ayurvedic* literature, the year is divided into *Uttarayana* and *Dakshinayana*. Each *Ayana* is divided into three *Ritu*. There are 6 seasons according to the Indian calendar hence there are 6 seasonal junctions. At the end of *Ritucharya*, *Vagbhatta* has described *Ritusandhi*. *Ritu Sandhi* is a time when seasons meet. One week of the former season and one week of later season forms the time of *Ritusandhi*. The *Ritusandhi Charya* is to be followed based on the seasons felt on places because seasons are not equally felt in all places. The health of the individual is dependent upon a healthy environment so the protection of the environment during seasonal junction is also important. *Ayurveda* described *Dinacharya*, *ritucharya*, *Sadvritta*, *ratricharya*. In *ritucharya* described *ritu sandhi* (seasonal junction) lowers down the immune system of the body and makes the conditions favourable for the spread of the disease. The preventive aspect needs knowledge of *ritu sandhi* to change our food habits and daily regimen and protect of *sandhi kaalgat* disease (some example swine flu, viral fever, cough and cold etc). In this article, the concept of *ritusandhicharya* is highlighted rather than *Ritucharya*.

**Keywords:** *Ayurveda*, *Ayana*, *Ritusandhi*, *Ritusandhicharya*.

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda aims to prevent disease and maintain health. The theory of maintenance of health in Ayurveda stands for all times and only we need to update the theory and apply it according to the circumstances. In Sanskrit, Ritu means season and Sandhi means the junction of two things. This implies Ritusandhi is the junction between two Ritu. During this season it is advised to refrain from all activities. And the reduction is to be done gradually. A sudden change of habit may lead to the occurrence of *asatmyaja roga*. Hemadri, the commentator of Ashtanga hridaya gives a detailed explanation of this gradual reduction. Acharya Charaka mentions *Ritu Satmya* instead of *ritusandhi*, which means that to maintain proper health and to prevent the *kalala vyadhi* (seasonal disorders). In *Charaka Samhita*, before describing regimens for various Ritu, Acharya said that the one who knows *Ritusatmya* and follows *Ahaar-Vihaar* accordingly remains healthy.<sup>1</sup> According to *Lok-Purushsamyaa Siddhanta*<sup>2</sup> each element in the environment is also present in the human body. Change in the environment directly affects the basic elements of the human body. Human is unable to control environmental changes as we cannot control the motion of celestial bodies like the Sun, Moon etc. They make a tremendous impact on human physiology. Considering this, our *Acharyas* has a prescribed

regimen for every season. Whatever we eat/consume is digested by digestive fire and assimilated accordingly to give strength to the body. In *Adaan* and *Visharga kala* digestive fire gets affected<sup>3</sup> by external environment hence our food and activities should change according to our *Jatharagni*. *Ayurveda* dictates that imbalance of *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala* leads to the disease and their equilibrium maintain the health.<sup>4</sup> This equilibrium of *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala* is maintained by following proper *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Sadvritta* and *Ratricharya*.

### CLASSIFICATION OF SEASON-

The year according to *Ayurveda* is divided into two periods *Ayana* (solstice) depending on the direction of movement of the sun is *Uttarayana* (northern solstice) and *Dakshinayana* (southern solstice). Each is formed of three *Ritus* (seasons). The word *Ritu* means "to go." It is the form in which nature expresses itself in a sequence in particular in present forms, in short, the seasons.<sup>5</sup> A year consists of six seasons, namely, *Sisira* (winter), *Vasanta* (spring), and *Grishma* (summer) in *Uttarayan* and *Varsha* (monsoon), *Sharada* (autumn), and *Hemanta* (late autumn) in *Dakshinayana*. As *Ayurveda* has its origin in India, the above seasonal changes are observed predominantly in the Indian sub-continent.

**Table 1:** Characteristics of *Uttarayana* and *Dakshinayana*.

UTTARAYANA <sup>6</sup>	DAKSHINAYANA <sup>7</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Ritu- Sisira, Vasanta, Grishma</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sun and air –<i>Teekshana, Ushana, Ruksha</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Earth's <i>Saumyansh</i> decreases</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tikta Kashaya, Katu Rasa</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Aagneya</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Jathharagni-Mand</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Varsha, Sharada, Hemanta</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Moon is strong, Sun weaker, air colder</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Due to clouds and rain earth cools down</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Amla, Lavana, Madhur rasa</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Saumya</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Jathharagni-Teekshana</i></li> </ul>

**Table 2:** Considering the characteristics of these *Ritu* is as follows according to *Ashatang hridayam*.<sup>8</sup>

RITU	RUKSHA	SNEHA	BALA	RASA
SISIRA	+	–	+++	TIKTA
VASANSTA	++	--	++	KASAYA
GRISHMA	+++	---	+	KATU
VERSHA	–	+	+	AMLA
SHARADA	--	++	++	LAVANA
HEMANTA	---	+++	+++	MADHURA

To maintain proper health and to tolerate *Kalaja* disorders. It is essential to follow *Ritusatmya*. *Ritusatmya* is the regimen told for the specific *Ritu* for a specific duration. The strength and lustre of a human being who knows the suitable diet and regimen for every season and practices accordingly remains healthy. Regimen and diet of one season are to be withdrawn slowly

and gradually otherwise it may lead to *Asatmyaja roga*. Therefore, in *Ritusandhi* the regimen of the preceding season should be discontinued gradually and that of the succeeding season should be adopted gradually. A particular sequence is to be adopted, to avoid the disease during *Ritusandhi*.

**Table 3:** The following table represents *Ahaarkrama* for 14 days of *Ritusandhi* according to *Acharya Hemadri*.<sup>9</sup>

Days Of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	<i>Ahaar</i> Of Preceding Season	<i>Ahaar</i> Of Succeeding Season
1st day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	3 parts	1 part
2 <sup>nd</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	4 parts	-
3 <sup>rd</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	2 parts	2 parts
4 <sup>th</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	2 parts	2 parts
5 <sup>th</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	3 parts	1 part
6 <sup>th</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	1 part	3 parts
7 <sup>th</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	1 part	3 parts
8 <sup>th</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	1 part	3 parts
9 <sup>th</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	2 parts	2 parts
10 <sup>th</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	2 parts	2 parts
11 <sup>th</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	2 parts	2 parts
12 <sup>th</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	2 parts	2 parts
13 <sup>th</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	2 parts	2 parts
14th day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	2 parts	3 parts
15 <sup>th</sup> day of <i>Ritusandhi</i>	-	4 parts

In *Ritusandhi kala*, if the Doshic state is extremely different, a sudden change of regimen will cause the production of *asatmyaja roga*. So, it should be gradually reduced. Doshic state of each *Ritu sandhi* can be-<sup>10</sup>

1. *Sisira-Vasantha Ritusandhi* - *Kapha dosha* is tending to aggravate
2. *Vasantha-Greeshma Ritusandhi* - *Kapha dosha* gets decreased by the strong rays of Sun

3. *Greeshma-Varsha Ritusandhi* - *Vata dosha* is tending to aggravate
4. *Varsha-Sharada Ritusandhi* - *Pitha dosha* is tending to aggravate
5. *Sharada-Hemantha Ritusandhi* - *Pitha dosha* gets decreased.
6. *Hemantha-Sisira Ritusandhi* - *Kapha dosha* in *kshaya avastha*

<i>Ritu</i>	<i>Kshaya</i>	<i>Prakopa</i>	<i>Prasama</i>
<i>Sishira</i>	<i>Kapha</i>	-	-
<i>Vasanta</i>	<i>Vata</i>	<i>Kapha</i>	--
<i>Grisama</i>	-	<i>Vata</i>	<i>Kapha</i>
<i>Versha</i>	<i>Pitta</i>	-	<i>Vata</i>
<i>Sharada</i>	-	<i>Pitta</i>	-
<i>Hemanta</i>	<i>Kapha</i>	-	<i>Pitta</i>

In *Sisira Vasantha Ritu sandhi* already there is a kapha kshaya one should gradually adopt the kapha aahara such as Yava (Barley), Godhoom (Wheat) and activities like exercise, therapeutic procedures like emesis,

udwarthana are advised. Because kapha is having a positive tendency to get aggravated in Vasantha ritu. And in other *Ritu sandhis* one can follow regimens like-

<b>RITU SANDHI</b>	<b>GRADUALLY INCREASE</b>		<b>GRADUALLY DECREASE</b>	
	<b>AHARA</b>	<b>VIHARA</b>	<b>AHARA</b>	<b>VIHARA</b>
<b>VASANTHA-GREESHMA</b>	<i>Madhura Laghu Snigdha Hima Drava</i>	<i>Divaswapnam</i>	<i>Purana Yava Godhuma Kshoudra Jangala Rasa Shoolyahara</i>	<i>Vyayaama Udwarthana Maidhuna</i>
<b>GRRESHMA-VARSHA</b>	<i>Madhura Amla Lavana Snigdha Drava Purana Yava</i>	Walk with Footwear Smear Body with Perfumes Keep Warmth	<i>Madhu Sheetha Nadi Jala Ghrta Sali Dhanya</i>	<i>Divaswapna Chandana Lepa Sheetala Pushpa Dharana</i>
<b>VARSHA-SHARADA</b>	<i>Madhura, Tiktha Laghu, Sheetha Jangala Mamsa Tiktha Ghrta Pana Sali, Yava</i>	<i>Sugandhi Malya Dharana Chandana Lepana Virechana</i>	<i>Amla Lavana Snigdha Purana Yava</i>	<i>Divaswapna Atapa Seva</i>
<b>SHARADA-HEMANTHA</b>	<i>Madhura Amla Lavana, Ushna Snigdha Guru, Anupa, Navadhanya</i>	<i>Abhyanga Udwarthana Vyayaama</i>	<i>Alpa Laghu Aahara</i>	<i>Divaswapnam</i>
<b>HEMANTHA-SISIRA</b>	CAN FOLLOW THE SAME AS SHARADA HEMANTHA RITU SANDHI CHARYA			
<b>SISIRA-VASANTHA</b>	<i>Purana Yava Godhuma Kshoudra Jangala Shoolyahara</i>	<i>Vyayaama Udwarthana Vamana</i>	<i>Madhura Laghu Snigdha Drava Hima</i>	<i>Divaswapnam</i>

## DISCUSSION

Ayurveda is the science of life that gives importance to maintaining the health of healthy individuals. And for that our sages postulate various theories like *Dinacharya, Ritucharya, Ratricharya* etc. Here the regimens during seasonal junctions are highlighted. Because kala (seasons/time) is considered as the supreme etiological factor of diseases. Acharya had mentioned specific regimens that should be followed during each season. So, understanding *rasoushadhi charya* is important. By understanding *Ritusandhi*

*charya* one can easily get adapt to different seasons and it teaches the ways of letting go of the habits of the previous season related to food, lifestyle and activities of the upcoming season. It will be helpful in the prevention of seasonal disorders. This present study elaborates on the importance of *Ritusandhi* in a healthy life. The characteristics of *Ritusandhi* decide the regimen to be followed to maintain health and prevent seasonal disorders. *Ritusandhi* is the transition between two seasons, the duration is fourteen days. During this period, it is advised to follow *Ritusatmya* with specific

*Krama*. Charaka and Sushruta have not mentioned *Rituandhi*. Charaka mentioned the do and don't in *Sandhis in Indriyopkramaniya*. So, it may indicate for all types of *Sandhis*. Maybe it was very popular in society as *Bhesaja Yojana* is advised during that period. So, they explained the methods/regimen to be followed during that period without direct mentioning of *Rituandhi*. In *Susruta Samhita* two chapters are devoted to *Ritu* explanation but no mentioning of *Rituandhi*. *Vagbhata* and later authors explained *Rituandhi*.

## CONCLUSION

The main aim of Ayurveda is to maintain the health of healthy persons and to cure the disease of the diseased. To maintain health, various theories are put forward by our Acharya. Among them *Ritucharya* is important. Any derangement of *kala* (time) is considered the supreme etiological factor of disease. *Ritusandhi charya* is important because even if one follows the proper regimen during seasons, one may be prone to get the disease during the transition period. During this period, it is advised to reduce the regimen of the current season and gradually adopt the new regimen. Also, all the seasons are not equally felt in all places so the generalized *ritusandhi charya* may not be applicable all time. But according to the seasons experienced places it can be modified. This is helpful to understand the concept of "*Ritu Sandhi*" and this helps to prevent the *sandhikalgat vyadhi*.

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