



ROLE OF AAHARA AND VIHARA IN MANAGEMENT OF HYPERTENSION – A REVIEW STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda as a preventive system of medicine has a very important role in many lifestyle disorders. Due to rapid modernization, people are more stressful life by virtue of lifestyle disorders striking individuals at early ages Diabetes, Cardiovascular diseases, Hypertension, etc. The present study is an attempt to verify the correlation between the practice of Ayurvedic principles in Hypertension. Hypertension is not mentioned in Ayurvedic compendia, but in Ayurveda, *dosha* imbalance is the major factor for the development of *rogas*. The pattern of healthy *Aahara* and *Vihara* (*Pathya*) and unhealthy *Aahara* and *Vihara* (*Apathya*) were mentioned in Ayurvedic texts. It is seen that *Aahara* and *Vihara* play an important role in the development of Hypertension and hence for the purpose of prevention and treatment, the *Aahara* and *Vihara* are mentioned as per Ayurveda for controlling Hypertension, the current paper reviews study made.

Keywords: *Aahara*, *Vihara*, Hypertension.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a holistic system of Indian medicine that prominence on the conservation of health rather than its management. Ayurveda is helping to maintain the

health of a healthy individual and treat the disease of a patient ^[1]. In Ayurveda healthy life depends on *Dinacharya*, *Rutucharya*, *Sadvrutta palan*, *Aahara*,

and *Vihara*. According to Acharya Vagbhata, who always takes *hitkar Aahara* and *Vihara*, who discriminates between *Hita* and *Ahita* and acts accordingly, who is not attached too much to the worldly affairs, who develops the habit of charity and keeping company of good persons becomes *Swastha* [2]. According to Acharya Charaka, the distinction between happiness and sorrow results from the distinction between a wholesome and unwholesome diet. Healthy bodies as well as diseases are nothing but the outcome of all the factors for the maintenance of positive health [3]. Rapid urbanization, changing lifestyles, lack of physical exercise, and dietary patterns are leading to health problems all over the world. According to WHO, Hypertension is the major factor for cardiovascular diseases and its complication leads to nephropathy, cardiomyopathy, and neurological changes hence according to Ayurveda, one must follow the principle of health conservation. The most important among them are *Aahara* and *Vihara*. According to a survey about the role of food/food habits in disease production, it has been reported that 80% of the top ten killing diseases of the world are due to wrong food habits [4].

Among many greaves conditions of modern life, Hypertension is one of the most common lifestyle diseases in today's era and is a silent killer as it poses a major risk to multiple important organs like the Brain, Liver, Kidney, and Heart. According to WHO health statistics, the estimates suggest that 31.1% of adults (1.39 billion) worldwide had Hypertension in 2010 [5]. The number of adults with Hypertension in 2025 was predicted to increase by 60% to a total of 1.56 billion [6]. In India Hypertension is directly responsible for 57% of all stroke deaths and also 24% of all coronary heart disease death [7]. Hypertension is a multi-factorial disease. The causes of Primary Hypertension are still unknown. According to Ayurveda *mithya Aahara* and *Vihara* are said to be the common causative factor for all the rogas. The present study is an attempt to provide comprehensive and effective management of Hypertension through the principles and practice of Ayurveda which will help to reduce the economic burden and early morbidity.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE: To evaluate the role of *Aahara* and *Vihara* in the prevention of Hypertension.

MATERIALS AND METHODS: The study is conducted using a variant of classical ayurvedic compendia with their commentaries as well as these works, scientific papers, journals, research articles, and websites have been thoroughly searched related to the topic.

Hypertension: Hypertension or high blood pressure is the pressure or force exerted by circulating blood against the wall of the body's arteries [8]. It is defined as an asymptomatic medical condition in which systemic arterial blood pressure is persistently elevated more than normal. Normal blood pressure is 120/80 mmHg, but elevated blood pressure of more than 140/90 mmHg is termed Hypertension. Hypertension is of two type Primary Hypertension and Secondary hypertension. Primary Hypertension is also called Essential Hypertension or Idiopathic Hypertension. There is no satisfactory underlying pathology described until now for Primary Hypertension. This type of Hypertension may be due to age-related factors, smoking, alcohol consumption, stress, anxiety, etc. About 90% of cases are categorized as Primary Hypertension. Secondary Hypertension is also called Malignant Hypertension. It results from other diseases like acute nephritic syndrome, diabetes mellitus, atherosclerosis, etc. pretension 10% of patients have Secondary Hypertension. Most patients with Hypertension have no specific symptoms rather than elevated blood pressure. Symptoms of Hypertension are usually variable, and the popular symptoms are headache, giddiness, fatigue, vertigo, mental irritability, excessive sweating and loss of appetite, nausea, breathlessness, feeling of tiredness, restlessness, discomfort, numbness, burning sensation in hand and feet and chest pain. In the Ayurveda text, there is no disease name Hypertension. Some Ayurveda scholars correlate Hypertension with the *Raktagata Vata*, and it is considered *Tridoshaja Vyadhi*. According to Acharya Charaka, it is not important to give a specific name to every disease rather than its removal.

Chikitsa should be done according to the dosha, dooshya, and samprapti present in the Vyadhi.

Aahara and Vihara change required in Hypertension: “Pathye sati gadaarthasya kimoushadha nishevanaih Pathye asati gadaarthasya kimoushadha nishevanaih” means if a patient consumes wholesome food, then there is no need for medicine and if a patient continuously consumes unwholesome food, then also there is no need for medicine, in that case, medicine will not be effective [9].

Aahara and Vihara can be improved by following Dinacharya, Rutucharya, and Aachar Rasayan. Nidan Parivarjan is the first step in the management of any disease which means avoiding those entire causative factors which are responsible for the disease. Pathya is classified into Pathya Aahara (healthy food habits) and Pathya Vihara (healthy lifestyle), the same classification follows Apathya also. Pathya and Apathya Aahara and Vihara related to Hypertension are as follows –

Aahara in Hypertension –

Pathya Aahara (Dos)	Apathya Aahara (Don'ts)
Ushnodaka (lukewarm water) Narikenoldak (coconut water) Dugdha (Cow milk)	Surapana (Alcohol consumption)
Matravat Aahara (quantity of food that does not harm the body) Take meal at fixed timing	Adhyashan or Atimatravat Aahara (over quantity of food or overeating) Virudhashan (unhealthy food)
Vegetables: Karela, Laukee, Karaunda, Gajar, Muli, Sunthi, Adraka, Rasona, Dalchini, Marich, Methika, Jeeraka, Cucumber Cereals: Gehu (Wheat), Jav (Barley), Mung dal, Hara Chana (Green gram), Kulathi (Horse gram), jawari (Sorghum), and whole grains Fruits: Dadimba, Draksha, Papaya, Apple, Pineapple, Banana, Dates, Apricot.	Excessive intake of Amla, Lavan, and Katu Rasatmak Aahara. Excessive intake of Drava, Guru, Tikshna, Ushna, Snigdha Gunatmak Aahara. Ati Mansaahara (excessive intake of meat) Cheese and other dairy products Oily food Fast food and junk food Tobacco chewing and Smoking

Vihara in hypertension –

Pathya Vihara (Dos)	Apathya Vihara (Don'ts)
Vyayam (Daily exercise, brick walking for half an hour)	Aalasya (less physical activity)
Samyak Nidra (Well-timed sleeping)	Ratrijagaran (avoid night awake) Diwaswapna (avoid day sleep)
Yoga like Vajrasana, Shavasana, Dhanurasana, Makarasana etc. Pranayama (breathing exercise) Meditation	Shoka, Krodha, Chinta, Bhaya etc. Avoid psychological stress
Should follow Dinacharya and Rutucharya according to Ayurveda.	Avegadharan (avoid suppression of natural urges like urination etc)

DISCUSSION

Apathya is the main cause of all Vyadhi; however, Pathya is a holistic approach to the treatment of Vyadhi. Therefore, Aahara and Vihara management is the basic factor for any therapy. Aacharya has also mentioned a specific Aahara and Vihara for specific

Vyadhi. Because, if something is beneficial to someone it does not mean that the same will be beneficial in another situation also. Aahara and Vihara's indifference also depends on nature and other factors. Therefore, the doctor or dietician needs to be very careful about food habits with lifestyle. So, the Pathya-Apathya mentioned above is for Hyperten-

sion, which helps in healing and removes the cause of the recurrences of the *Vyadhi* and reduces the recurrence rate.

CONCLUSION

Hypertension is a lifestyle disorder. Adopting *Dinacharya*, *Rutucharya*, *Aahara*, and *Vihara* according to Ayurveda can give disease-free life. *Pathya* is the key for *Swastha*; it can help to keep *Sharir* and *Mana* in a balanced state. Therefore *Pathya-Apathya* works as additional therapy in the management of Hypertension which helps in early cure and prevention. The etiological factors like *Apathya Aahara* and *Vihara* can be easily modified so as to be free from not only Hypertension but also other non-communicable diseases.

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