

CRITICAL VIEW ON PREVENTIVE ASPECTS OF RITHUCHARYA AND JANAPADODHWAMSA AGAINST PANDEMICS

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, the science of life, deals the organism in a holistic way gives importance in maintaining health than the treatment of diseases. It gives more weight age to the prevention than the cure. So, our ancient acharyas explained *Ritucharya* which means methods for adapting with the changing environment which is not in our control. Natural calamities including epidemics and pandemic diseases are described in *Ayurveda* under the heading of *Janapadodhwamsa*. Such diseases having similar signs and symptoms affecting many people of a town or state at a time can destroy the whole town, so they are called *Janapadodhwamsa*. This paper attempts to throw light on the dietics and regimen told in *Rithucharya and janapadodhwamsa for control of epidemics*

Keywords: *Janapadodhwamsa, Rithucharya, Epidemic*

INTRODUCTION

Universe is a system which is changing in each fraction of seconds. Solar system is a part of universe which also has the same fashion. Earth is the one planet among the solar system in which the evidence of life is proven. Life originated 3.5billion yrs. before in earth. Scientists believe that living organism is a replica of the whole universe i.e., Microsome in a macrosome. So, the change in nature has its impact on the living body. Living organism can exist only when it has harmony with the nature. Otherwise every living organism may be extinct as a part of evolution.

The term homeostasis in the modern science defines that it is the maintenance of constant internal environment of the body. Here it is not a static equilibrium. It is a dynamic equilibrium. As the change in external environment has its influence in the living organism, the importance of maintaining equilibrium with the nature is inevitable. *Ayurveda*, the science of life, deals the organism in a holistic way gives importance in maintaining health than the treatment of diseases. It gives more weight age to the prevention than the cure. So, our ancient *Acharyas*

explain *Ritucharya* which means methods for adapting with the changing environment which is not in our control. *Rithu* or season appear in nature due to the movement of sun, the prime energy source of the nature. As part of the movement of sun 6 *Rithus* manifest with diverse characteristics. *Charya* means the *Anushtana* or modifications which can make us in harmony with the environment. *Acharyas* explain modifications in every aspect of life such as *Ahara*, *Viharas*– bath, dress, sexual life, sleep etc. which help them to cope up with the environment thus help to lead a qualitative life. Ultimately help us achieve all the aims of life.

Natural calamities including epidemics and pandemic diseases are described in *Ayurveda* under the heading *Janapadodhwamsa*. Diseases having similar signs and symptoms affecting many people of town, state and country at a time and can destroy the whole province is named as *Janapadodhwamsa*. According to *Charakasamhitha* factors involved in *Janapadodhwamsa* which inturn lead to vitiation of environmental factors are air, water, place and climate. War and other man-made calamities are also the causative factors for *Janapadodhwamsa*. According to *Chakrapani* there are two kind of causes for diseases, *Sadharana* (typical) and *Asadharana* (atypical). Atypical is subjective cause that varies from human to human like food, habits etc., which vitiates *Dosha*. Typical is common to many people like air, water, place and climate. Diseases due to such common causes are called *Janapadodhwamsa*. Among four factors *Kala* is considered as supreme among other three factors since *Kala Dushti* may lead

to vitiation of other three factors. *Kala* has direct relation with *Rithu* if *Rithucharya* is followed properly we can tackle *Kala Dushti* effectively¹.

Classification of season according to *Ayurveda*

The year according to *Ayurveda* is divided into two periods

Ayana (solstice) depends on direction of movement of sun. *Uttarayana* (northern solstice) and *Dakshinayana* (southern solstice). Each *Ayana* is formed of three *Ritus* (seasons). The word *Rithu* means “to go.” It is the form in which the nature expresses itself and present form in short, the seasons.

A year consists of six seasons, namely, *Shishira* (winter), *Vasanta* (spring), and *Grishma* (summer) in *Uttarayana* and *Varsha* (monsoon), *Sharata* (autumn), and *Hemanta* (late autumn) in *Dakshinayana*. As *Ayurveda* has its origin in India, the above seasonal changes are observed predominantly in Indian subcontinent².

Cause of vitiation of health according to *Janapadodhwamsa*

The primary cause for vitiation of these factors is *Adharma*. *Adharma* will lead to *Prajnaparadha*, which will vitiate the external environment and internal *doshas*. *Prajnaparadha* according to *Charakasamhithais* caused by the people indulging in unwholesome activities due to ignorance, lack of understanding and loss of memory it will vitiate all *doshas*. It is clear from above that this will again leads to *Adharma* and cause diseases again. Sins of the present life and misdeeds of the past life are the root cause of the vitiation of air, water, climate and season. Intellectual profanity constitutes the origin of sins³.

Do's and Dont's In Rithucharya⁴

Season	Indicated Diet	Contraindicated Diet
1.Hemanta	Wheat flour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black gram products • Products of sugar cane • Milk products • Food prepared from freshly harvested corn • Muscles- fats- edible oils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat soup mixed with fats • Meat of well-nourished animals • Wine prepared with jaggery • Supernatant part of wine(sura)
2.Sisira	Same as <i>Hemanta</i>	Same as <i>Hemanta</i>
3.Vasanta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food should be: Kaphagna-easily digestible-dry (moisture free- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foods that are hard to digest and

	<p>fat free)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-year old Barley • Wheat • Honey • Meat of animals of desert like land • Meat roasted in fire • Juice of mango fruit: - mixed with fragrant substances- in the company of friends-getting it served by the beloved-thereby producing satisfaction • Beverages such as <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Asava</i> (fermented infusion) 2. <i>Arista</i> (fermented decoction) 3. <i>Sidhu</i> (fermented infusion) 4. <i>Mardvika</i> (fermented grape juice) 5. <i>Sarambu</i> (extract of trees such as asana, candana etc) 6. Water mixed with honey 7. Water boiled with <i>Jalada</i> (musta-nutgrass) 	<p>cold</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatty foods • Sour foods • Sweet foods <p>(All are <i>Kaphakara</i>)</p>
4. Greeshma	<p>Foods which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light (easy to digest) • Fatty • Cold • Liquid <p>* Corn flour mixed with cold water * Sugar, after taking bath in cold water * Boiled rice which is white in colour (like full moon) along with animals of desert * <i>Mamsa rasa</i> which is not very thick * <i>Rasala</i> (curds churned and mixed with pepper powder and sugar) * <i>Raga</i> (syrup, which is sweet, sour and salty) * <i>Khandava</i> (syrup which has all the tastes, prepared with many substances) * <i>Panakapanchasara</i> (Syrup prepared with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grapes • <i>Madhuka</i> (Indian liquorice) • <i>Kharjura</i> (dates) • <i>Kasmarya</i> (<i>gmelinaarborea</i>) </p> <p>* Very cool water kept in mud pot along with flowers of <i>Patala</i> (<i>Stereospermumsuaveolens</i>) and <i>Karpura</i> (Camphor) for drinking * Food articles like <i>Sasankakirana</i> (hollow - finger like- fried pastry made of corn flour) should be taken at night * Buffalow milk mixed with sugar and cooled by moonlight and stars for drinking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Madya</i> (Alcohol)
5. Varsha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foods should be predominately: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. sour 2. Salty 3. Unctuous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River water • <i>Udamantha</i> (beverage prepared with flour of corns mixed with ghee)

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Dry 5. Mixed with honey 6. Easily digestible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old grains • Meat juice processed with spices • Meat of animals of desert like lands • Soup of pulses • Wine prepared from grapes • Fermented decoctions which are old • <i>Mastu</i> (Whey-thin water or curds) processed with more of Sochal salt and powder of panchakola • Rain water or water from deep wells, well boiled for drinking 	
6. Sarat	<p>Foods which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bitter • Sweet • Astringent • Easily digestible such as <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rice 2. Green gram 3. Sugar 4. Gooseberry 5. Point gourd 6. Honey 7. Meat of animals of desert like lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alkaline foods • Satiation with hearty meal • Curds • Oil • Muscle fat • Strong liquors

Importance of RithuShodhana

One should undergo regular *Rithushodhana* (bio purification procedures) which are mentioned in classics in order to maintain proper nourishment of *Dhathu*, healthiness of *Dosha*, proper evacuation of *Mala* from the body according to respective *Rithus*. Vasantarithu-evacuative measures, such as *Vamana* and *Nasyaare* advised along with *Kavala* (gargle), *Dhooma* (smoking), *Anjana* (collyrium) Varsha *Rithushodhana*- Medicated *Basti* (enema) is prescribed as an evacuative measure to expel vitiated *Doshas*. *Sharatrithushodhana*- Medical procedures, such as *Virechana* (purging), *Rakta-Mokshana* (bloodletting), etc., should be done during this season. *Rithushodhana* will help in eradicating wastes in our body and keeps the body healthy.

Characteristics of vitiated factors of Janapadodhwamsa

Land having following characteristics is considered to be harmful- abnormal color, smell, and touch,

excessive stickiness, abundance of serpents, pests and wild animals, mosquitoes, Having excess of grass, weeds and creepers, with abundance of smoke in the wind, presence of wild cries of birds and dogs, bewilderment and pain in animals and birds⁵. Time and water having following characteristics is considered to be harmful- perversion or absence of religion, truth, modesty, conducts and other qualities of the inhabitants of land, constant agitation and overflow of water reservoirs, frequent occurrence of meteorites, and earthquakes in the nature. Appearance of roughness and coppery, red and white colored stars, their appearance as if they are covered with a net of clouds. Confusion, excitement, apprehension, lamentation and darkness in the atmosphere and presence of excessive crying noise as if the country is seized by demons. Manifestation of these characteristics contrary to the normal conditions of the various seasons is harmful⁶. The above mentioned four factors along with their respective features of vitiation are considered by the wise to be responsible

for the destruction by epidemic diseases. When these factors are having qualities opposite to above, they are useful for human beings⁷. Impairment of *Vata, Jala, Desa & Kala* are more lethal in their increasing order. That means impairment of *Kala* is most dangerous. Specialist should know that, it is easier to correct the vitiation of air, water and land, than those of *Kala*⁸.

Line of treatment of epidemic diseases:
Panchakarma – Panchakarma is the best treatment for vitiation of four factors *Rasayana* therapy – *Rasayana* therapy done with medicines that are collected before onset of epidemic diseases restores physical health and adoption of *Sadvrutta and Brahmacharya* is told as remedy⁹.

DISCUSSION

In order to conclude one who desires for healthy and happy life, one has to follow regular preventive principle told in *Rithucharya Adhyaya* mentioned in *Ayurveda* for the prevention of diseases. Following *Rithucharya* is vital in maintaining health of an individual. One has to take care of disease in its initial stages itself to prevent further propagation of disease to a limit. *Asatmyaidriyarthasamyoga, Prajnaparadha, Parinama* is mentioned as a root cause disease. Adopting diet and regimen according to *Rithu* and doing *RithuShodhana* properly will surely help to preserve health and remove toxins from the body. Proper diets with proper *Shodhana* and avoiding *Prajnaparadha* as mentioned in *Ayurveda* will help to maintain physical and mental health which in turn will help to maintain health of society and as to prevent epidemics as mentioned in *Janapadodhwamsa*. So, adopting the *Rithucharya* and preventive measures of *Janapadodhwamsa* will help to tackle epidemics and health.

CONCLUSION

According to *Ayurveda Janapadodhwamsa* is the cause of epidemics and pandemics. Avoiding *Prajnaparadha* and following proper *Rithucharya* will prevent *Janapadodhwamsa* which in turn help to maintain health of the society.

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