

## CONCEPT OF UPAYOGSAMSTHA (DIETARY RULES) AND ITS EFFECTS ON DIFFERENT FACTORS OF HUMAN BODY TO MAINTAIN HEALTH.

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of *Ayurveda* is *Dhatusamyā*, i.e. harmony of body systems. This depends mainly on equilibrium of *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala* as mentioned in *AstangHridaya*.<sup>1</sup> Health of human beings depends upon proper condition of *Trayopastambha* (three pillars for maintaining health), i.e. *Ahar* (diet), *Swapna* (sleep) and *Brahmacharya* (celibacy). Among these, *Ahar* is the foremost main component of health. Nowadays, people have moved towards more consumption of hotel foods, junk foods forgetting *AharVidhi* (method of diet consumption) due to busy life-style. The real knowledge about proper diet and nutrition has been deprived which is responsible factor for each curable or non-curable disease.<sup>2</sup> To achieve proper nutrition for the body, *Ayurveda* has mentioned the conduct regarding diet, i.e. *UpayogSamstha*. It describes the method of taking food, the environment while taking food and attributes of food for ingestion. Considering this concept helps achieve a normal state of factors *Agni* (digestive fire), *Dosha* (functional entities of body systems), *Dhatu* (body tissues), *ManovahSrotas* (Channels for function of mind), and *AnnavahSrotas* (gastrointestinal tract) in the body. It helps to achieve *JirnaLakshana*, i.e. symptoms of proper digestion and assimilation of food in body tissues.

**Key words:** *Ahar*, *UpayogSamstha*, *Trayopastambha*.

### INTRODUCTION

In *Ayurveda*, *Ahar*, *Swapna*, and *Brahmacharya* are *Trayopastambha*.<sup>3</sup> i.e. three pillars of healthy life.

Among them, *Ahar* is foremost. *Ahar* is *Prana*, while *Agni*- the converging media is also essential. Without

proper Agni, RasadiDhatus (body tissues) cannot be appropriately formed. But Ahar only provides its nutritional values if appropriately consumed. And the code and conducts of ingestion of food is given in CharakSamhitaRasVimanaAdhyaya under heading of UpayogSamstha. Upayog means utility, and Samstha means rules. As mentioned by AcharyaCharak they are described to achieve JirnaLakshana of Ahar. In this way, UpayogSamstha denotes the rules of eating diet. AcharyaCharak has given Ahar as a tool for Apavarg means Moksha or salvation too.<sup>4</sup> It is cause for Bala, Varna, Sukh, and Ayush. Another two Upastambha, i.e. Swapna and Brahmacharya, follow Ahar, the first Upastambha. Hence, Jathragni is of prime importance to all Agni.<sup>5</sup> If Ahar is not taken correctly, then it will become a cause for creating disease in the body. So, not only the type or nutritional values of food matters but also the power of Agni; the way of eating food are other factors equally important for health maintenance and disease cure. AcharyaCharak gives example of poison and weapon to give importance of use. The effect of poison or a weapon depends on how they are used. The wisdom of the user alters the effect of poison or weapon<sup>6</sup>. Likewise, Ahar should be consumed using its proper ingestion method to achieve health. So, it is essential to know the rules for eating a diet. They are-

1. UshnamAshniyaat – one should eat a hot meal.
2. SnigdhamAshniyaat- one should eat food with unctuous properties.
3. MatravatAshniyaat- one should eat food in proper quantity.
4. JeerneAshniyaat – one should eat food after complete digestion the previous food.
5. VeeyaAviruddhamAshniyaat- one should eat a diet devoid of Viruddha (incompatible food items).
6. Ishte Deshe IshtSarovapakaranamAshniyaat: One should eat in a congenial space provided with all the necessary appurtenances.
7. NaAtidrutamAshniyaat. - Do not eat hurriedly.
8. NaAtiVilambitamAshniyaat- Do not eat too leisurely.

9. AjalpannAhasan Tanmanaa Bhunjita: Do not talk or laugh while eating with full concentration on eating only.

10. AatmanamAbhisamikshya Bhunjit Samyak - one should have a diet after considering its suitability to oneself.

## DISCUSSION

### CONCEPT OF RULES OF TAKING DIET:

AcharyaCharak has described 10 rules of taking diet with their effects on the body.<sup>7</sup> These 10 factors should be essentially considered before taking food.

1. UshnamAshniyaat—a meal should be consumed while it is hot. Due to its hot attribute, it enhances taste, increases digestive fire, facilitates digestion, and facilitates the analogue movement of Vata, decreasing Shleshma. Therefore, one should take a diet when served hot. Thus, the Ushma factor of diet maintains the health of factors like Agni and Vata Dosha, i.e., peristalsis movement.
2. SnigdhamAshniyaat- meal should be taken with unctuous substance in it. Due to its unctuousness, it spreads all over taste buds, hence enhancing taste. Moreover, its DeepanKarma helps stimulate digestive fire and increase appetite. It helps to digest food quickly because it decreases the surface tension of food particles and facilitates digestion. Unctuous substances help build body tissues and a mass of the body. It strengthens the senses. It gives strength to the body. It improves complexion. To avail of these benefits, one should take an unctuous diet.

Thus, Snigdhata (unctuousness) of diet maintains health through factors like Agni and Bala (strength).

3. MatravatAshniyaat: One should take a proper diet in proper quantity. A proper diet keeps Vayu, Pitt, and Kapha in equilibrium, hence maintaining the process of Ayu (life). It reaches unobstructed until excretion. It maintains the sustainability of the heat of digestive fire. It facilitates the transformation of food without any abnormality.

Thus, *Matra* (quantity of food) is the factor in maintaining the functions of all three *Doshas* in healthy condition.

4. *JeerneAshniyaat*- Eat after the digestion of a previous meal. The food eaten while the last meal is lying undigested in the stomach, mixed with the semi-digested chyme of the previous meal, immediately provokes all the *Doshas*. The food taken when the previous meal has been fully digested the *Doshas* have returned to their usual places, the gastric fire is kindled, hunger is born, the channels are transparent and open, the eructation from mouth is healthy, the stomach is clear, the peristaltic movement is expected and when the urge for evacuation of flatus, urine and faeces are well attended to - that food, not vitiating any of the body elements, serves the sole purpose of promoting life. Therefore, one should eat on an empty stomach after the digestion of the previous meal.

Thus, *Jeernata* (complete digestion of the previous meal) is the factor keeping *Agni*, *Dosha*, and *Mala* in a normal state.

5. *VeeryaAviruddhamAshniyaat*—Eat what is not antagonistic in potency. Eating food without antagonistic potency means one is not affected by disorders born from incompatible dietary habits. Therefore, one should eat what is not adversarial in potency. Thus, *AviruddhaAshana* helps to maintain Dhatus in a normal state.

6. *Ishte Deshe IshtSarvopakaranamAshniyaat* -Eat in a friendly space with all amenities. One in a pleasant place does not get depressed in the mind by depressing emotions produced in an unpleasant environment, similarly with the appurtenances. Therefore, one should eat in a friendly place and under certain circumstances. Thus, *Isht Desh* and *IshtSarvopakaran* help maintain the health of *ManovahSrotas*, which affects the secretion of enzymes during digestion. *Man* is stated as controller of whole body by *AcharyaCharak*.<sup>8</sup>

7. *NaAtidrutamAshniyaat* - Do not eat too hurriedly. By eating hurriedly, the food is liable to go the

wrong way or hamper the health, or it needs to be placed appropriately, and there needs to be appreciation of the food's good or bad qualities. Therefore, one should eat on time. Thus, the speed of taking diet is also essential for food movement in the digestive tract. Eating with more speed creates unnecessary pressure on food in the digestive tract.

8. *NaAtiVilambitamAshniyaat*— Do not eat too leisurely. Eating too leisurely does not satisfy, even if it's too much. The food gets cold and is digested irregularly. Therefore, why should one eat less leisurely? Eating too slowly prolongs digestive enzyme secretion, which in turn causes impairment of enzyme secretions and irregularities in food digestion.

9. *Ajalpan Ahasan Tanmanaa Bhunjit*- Do not talk or laugh while eating. One who speaks, laughs, and is preoccupied while eating is liable to suffer the same disorders as the one who eats too hastily. Therefore, one should not talk or laugh while eating but should eat with due attention to oneself. Talking or laughing while eating causes an increase in abdominal pressure and muscle activities; hence, it creates pressure on food in the digestive tract. Taking diet with full concentration helps to follow the rules of diet consumption in proper way.

10. *AatmanamAbhisamikshya Bhunjit Samyak*—Eat rightly, considering your constitution. 'This food will be suitable with me, and this food will not be suitable with Me.' this knowledge determines what is wholesome for each individual. Therefore, one should eat rightly, considering one's constitution. Eating after considering the constitution and suitability of food helps to maintain the health of the digestive tract, which in turn helps to maintain the health of the body.

Thus, *NaAtidrut*, *NaAtivilambit*, *Ajalpan*, *Ahasan*, *Tanmana*, and *AatmanamAbhisamikshya Samyak* describe the attributes of self while eating. These factors keep the integrity of the digestive system, i.e. *AnnavahSrotas*.

Here we can understand these rules with their effect on the body as follow: *Usna, Snigdha, and Veerya Aviruddha* describe the quality of food to be taken. Improve *Jatharagni* and *Dosha*. *Matrvat* again describes the quantity of food to be taken. Improve the functioning of *Doshas*. *Jeerne* describes the time of food to be taken. Improve nutrition to *Dhatus*. *Isht Desh* describes a place where food to be taken. It keeps *ManovahSrotas* in healthy condition. *Na Atidrut, NaAtivilambit, Ajalpan, Ahasan, Tanmana, AatmanamAbhisamikshya Samyak* describes attributes of self while eating. All these factors maintain the integrity of the digestive system, i.e., *Annava-hSrotas*.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the description and discussion above, everybody should follow the diet rules to maintain health. *UpayogSamstha* helps to keep factors like *Agni, Doshas, Dhatus, ManovahSrotas* and *AnnvahSrotas* in healthy condition and thereby to achieve proper nutrition to the body to form an appropriate quality of *RasaDhatu*. If *RasaDhatu* is properly formed then other *Dhatus* can be adequately nourished as mentioned by *AcharyaCharak* that *RasaDhatu* is root cause of *Vridhhi* (increase) and *Kshay* (decrease) of other *Dhatus*.<sup>9</sup> One can achieve *JirnaLakshana*, i.e. symptoms of proper digestion and assimilation of food in body tissues, by following these rules because it enhances digestive fire and keeps *Dosha* in appropriate places without disturbing their functions. The smooth functioning of *Doshas* helps achieve *Bala* and maintain *Hitayu* and *Sukhayu*. Proper nutrition for all *Dhatus* helps to achieve *Varn* (complexion). Thus, *UpayogSamstha* helps one to get *Bala, Varna, Sukh* and *Ayu* in the true sense. As men-

tioned by *AcharyaCharak, Shubh* and *AshubhPhala* (good and bad results of food) depend on many factors which include *UpayogSamstha* as one.<sup>10</sup>

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