AHARA VIDHI VIDHAN AYURVEDIC PRINCIPLES OF HEALTHY EATING HABITS

Santosh Kumar Singh*1, Ashok Kumar Sinha2, Dr. Banshidhar Behera3

1Associate Professor, Department of Kriya sharira.
2Associate Professor, Department of Kayachikitsa.
3Associate Professor, Department of Dravyaguna.

ABSTRACT

Ahara or food is a basic need of any organism for its survival. It is the method of food-intake which makes living being to remain healthy. Our rich Ayurvedic literature provides Ahara Vidhi Vidhan (method/way of eating food). Ahara Vidhi Vidhan is a group of ten properties of intake of food. Food should be warm, unctuous, adequate quantity for particular age group, Avirudha Virya Ahara (food combination should be non-antagonistic in potency). Individual should eat after previous meal has been completely digested. Place of eating should be favourable. Eating very fast, very slow, talking and laughing during eating should be avoided. One should eat food after assessing its suitability. Practicing of Ahara Vidhi Vidhan makes healthy person to remain healthy and sick one to become healthy. Consistent following of Ahara Vidhi Vidhan by an individual will definitely minimises the disturbances in equilibrium of dosha and ultimately prevent the formation of diseases.

KEYWORDS: Ahara, Ayurveda, Agni, Srotos.

INTRODUCTION

Ahara, Nidra and Brahmacarya are three sub-pillars, which supports the body.[1] Ahara[2] (diet) is one of the most important aspects of life. Ahara plays a determinant role in development, sustenance, reproduction and termination of life. Ayurveda has recognized Ahara as an important factor, in both health and diseased state. The practice of Ahara Vidhi Vidhan (dietetics) is an ancient art and it is only in the last 3-4 decades that nutrition and dietetics have come to take the status of distinct discipline. We know nutrition is a science of...
food and its relationship to health. It is concerned with the role showed by nutrients in body growth, development. A set of ten dietetic rules has been prescribed by Ayurveda called Ahara Vidhi Vidhan. When the Ahara is taken judiciously and as per Ahara Vidhi Vidhan then only the benefits of Ahara can be achieved.

MATERIAL AND METHODS
Charaka Samhita & its commentaries have been referred for this literary work. The present study aims to focus the concept Ahara Vidhi Vidhan.

Conceptual review
Charak has mentioned Ahara Vidhi Vidhan in chapter one of Vimana Sthana. He has dictated ten rules of eating.

1. Usnnam asaniyata (proper warm) individual should eat warm food. Warmness of food gives good taste. It enhances the digestive fire (Agni). Food is quickly digested. It has carminative action on flatus. It reduces the production of mucus.

2. Snigdham asaniyata (proper unctuousness) individual should eat unctuous food as it gives good taste to food. The unctuous food stimulates the unstimulated digestive fire and food is promptly digested. This carminates the flatus. It develops the body, makes sense organs firm and enhances strength. It increases the clarity of complexion.

3. Matravata asaniyata (proper quantity) - food eaten in proper quantity without changing the equilibrium of Vata, Pitta, Kapha enhances the life-span of individual. Food easily let down to anus, does not influence/disturb the digestive fire (Agni) and easily digested without any discomfort.

4. Jirne asaniyata (eating after digestion of previous meal) - dosha gets vitiated quickly if food is taken during indigestion because of mixing of undigested food with next one. If one eats after previous meal is well digested, the dosha remains in their own respective locations, Agni gets stimulated, appetite is increased, mouth of entrances of srotosa are open, normal eructation, flatus passes down, urges of flatus, urine, and faeces are attended to, the food eaten

5. Virya Avirudha asaniyata (non-antagonist food items to be eaten) for example combination of milk and fish in same meal. If used may lead to disorder of rakta, kustha, napunskata (impotency).

6. Ista desha ista upkarana (eating at favourable place and with favourable accessories).
7. \textit{Na atidruta asaniyata}[^4] (not to eat too fast) one should not eat food very fast if done may lead entry of food to different passage (i.e. respiratory passage). Food gets depressed and do not retain in stomach for sufficient duration.

8. \textit{Na ativlambita asaniyata}[^4] (not to eat too slow) one should not eat food very slowly if done may lead to non-satisfaction, increased quantity of food intake. Food becomes cold due to long duration of eating and food is not digested properly called \textit{visama paka}.

9. \textit{Na jalpanhasantanmana bhunjita}[^4] (during eating one should not talk and laugh. One should concentrate on eating only) one should not talk and laugh while eating if done may lead to formation of complication that said in \textit{atidruta asaniyata} (caused due to very eating habits)

10. \textit{Atmanamsamiskhya bhunjita}[^4] (one should eat after self-assessment) one should eat food after proper self-analysis. One should examine the suitability or unsuitability of food for self-wells.

These are ten universal thumb rules of eating-habits dictated in ancient Ayurvedic philosophy. It should be followed by healthy person and sick.

**DISCUSSION**

In our day to day activities we can easily find that starting from morning and till late evening, how many times we have violated these healthy eating pattern. This happens regularly and routinely by most of us without an exception. I mean most of people do so. Let us briefly examine a daily routine of a working person living in Indian metro city.

Working hour 8 to 10 hours
Morning wake up at 6-7am
Office hour 8-9am to 4-6pm
Average time taken to reach office is 45 minutes to 1.30 hours

**Breakfast**—he takes it either in bus/ train/car or if at home in hurriedness (fast eating) or skips it.

**Lunch** – lunch box he carried with him is cold. Coldness disrupts the digestive fire \textit{(Agni)} of body.

**Evening** – light junk food taken. (Unhealthy)

**Dinner** – one eats food while watching television, he itself do not know how much quantity he has swallowed. (Very slow eating and large quantity of food taken)

**Sleep** – on average 10-11pm.
CONCLUSION
From above discussion an easy conclusion can be derived that most of the people in metro society is practising the unhealthy food habits. This leads to nutritional deficiency, GIT disturbances, stress. We can change this scenario by propagating the ancient Ayurvedic principles of *Ahara Vidhi Vidhan*. By adopting these principles in our daily routine one can easily be free from diseases and maintain health.

REFERENCES