Role of Ahara in prevention of Life Style Disorders w.s.r. to Ashtavidha Ahara Visheshayatana

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the foremost life science and describes ways to prevent lifestyle disorders. Ayurveda is the world’s ancient health care system. Lifestyle disorders are due to Poor life-style which includes; poor diet, poor eating habits, lack of exercise, Smoking, excess alcohol, poor sleep, stress due to heavy workload and increased consumption of unhealthy food. Ahara Dravyas can be considered under the category Dravyabhuta Aushadhi. So, the dietetic rules can be considered as Upaya or Dravyabhuta Aushadhi for Vikaraprasama. The eight factors of diet responsible for health and diseases are described as “Ahara Vidhi Vishesha Ayatanani”. Ahara is considered as Mahabhaishajya (the superior medicine). Various life style disorders and numerous diseases occur due to faulty dietary habits which may be prevented by proper Ahara and eating habits. Ayurveda insists that Ahara should be chosen in accordance to the Prakriti or constitution of individual. The diet is regarded as Brahman as it holds such supreme importance. “Annam Brahmeti Vyajaanat”. In general terms food includes all the edible substances. The original source of living beings and their strength, complexion and vitality depends on substances. Hence the Ahara is considered as Mahabhaishajya (the superior medicine). Ahara is the main source of strength, complexion, and vitality. Ahara is the most important factor in life “Health as well as disease is depends upon Ahara”. Proper diet, taken in proper manner can lead to better health or else can lead to disease. Faulty diet results in disturbed functions of the body. That is the reason why while describing causative factors of disease, dietary articles (Pathya-Apathya) have been given prime importance.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the world’s ancient health care system. The main objective of Ayurveda is “Swasthya Swatha Rakshnam Aturasya Vikara Prashmnam Cha” Which means to maintain the health of healthy individual and to cure the disease of diseased Person. Ahara, Nidra and Brahmacarya are Trayaupastambbah mentioned in Ayurveda, which plays a very important role in Healthy life. Among all these three Ahara has been given prime importance for healthy life of individual. Hence the Ahara is considered as Mahabhaishajya (the superior medicine). Ahara is the main source of strength, complexion, and vitality. Ahara is the most important factor in life “Health as well as disease is depends upon Ahara”. Proper diet, taken in proper manner can lead to better health or else can lead to disease.
imbalance diet and not following the proper rules of eating leads various problem or disease. Acharya Charak has stated that diet sustain life if taken with discipline in a proper manner. He has described eight specific factors of method of dieting in a very systemic and scientific manner which is known as Ashta Ahar Vidhi Visheshayatana. Ahara has important role in maintaining health and also in treating various disorders.

**Materials and Methods**

Literature review from various Samhita such as Charak Samhita, Sushrut Samhita, Ashtang Sangrah, Ashtang Hridya etc. various literature and articles have been reviewed.

**Review of Literature**

In Vimansthan Rasvimana Adhyaya, Acharya Charak has explained Ashta Ahar Vidhi Visheshayatana and its importance by following these eight rules one will definitely obtain healthy life and can be free from the diseased state.

**Lifestyle Disorders**

The diseases which are associated with the people those who adopt unhealthy and inappropriate lifestyle are called lifestyles disorders. In India, rapid urbanization and globalization mainly contribute towards increased number of people suffering from life-style disorders.

**Causes**

Junk food is the main cause of all these disorders which ultimately results in improper digestion and becomes the primary cause of these lifestyle disorders. Some other causes are as follows -

- Sedentary Lifestyle
- Stress
- Smoking and Alcohol consumption
- Regular Intake of Processes food
- Poor or Irregular Sleeping habits

Lifestyle disorders are group of disease. most common lifestyle disorders are diseases of cardiovascular system such as hypertension, heart attack and stroke. So according to Ayurveda, following diurnal and Seasonal behaviour is very important for preventing disease.

**Ahara**

The Ahara (diet) is regarded as Brahman as it holds such supreme importance. “Annam Brahmeti Vyajaanat” (Taittariyopanishad).

The original source of living beings and their strength, complexion and Ojas is diet which consists of Six rasas and those again depend on substances.[4]

**Importance of Ahara**

Health and diseases both are dependent on various factors among these, Ahara is the most important one.[5] Ahara is also necessary for Bala, Varna, Upachaya etc.[6] According to Acharya Charaka, all the Dravyas are Aushadhis (Nanausadhibhutam)[7] and these are of two types depending on the nature of composition.

- Dravyabhuta Aushadhi
- Adravyabhuta Aushadhi

Ahara dravyas can be considered under the category Dravyabhuta Aushadhi. So, the dietetic rules can be considered as Upaya or Adravyabhuta Aushadhi for Vikaraprasamana. The eight factors of diet responsible for health and diseases are described as “Ahara Vidhi Vishesha Ayatanani.”

**Dietetics Principles for the prevention of Lifestyle Disorders**

**Principle of Balanced Diet**

According to Ayurveda, the diet which nourishes both the mental and physical health is called balanced diet.

**Ahara Matra:** Acharya Charaka defines Matra of Ahara.[8] The amount of food which gets digested as well as metabolized in proper time without disturbing the equilibrium (of Dhatus and Doshas of the body) is to be regarded as the proper quantity.

**Shadarastra Yukta Ahara:** Acharya Charaka while describing the types of Rasa, said that the appropriate
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ISSN: 2456-3110

REVIEW ARTICLE
May 2023

use of all the six Rasa maintains the equilibrium of (Dosa, Dhatu and Mala) body. These six Rasas, when used in proper quantity, are beneficial for all human beings, otherwise become harmful. Hence the wise should use these properly in proper quantity in order to derive benefit (from them).[9]

Ashta Ahar Vidhi Visheshayatana[10]

1. Prakruti (nature of food)
2. Karan (methods of preparation of food)
3. Samyoga (combination of food substances)
4. Rashi (quantity of food)
5. Desha (place where food items are grown)
6. Kala (time of consumption of food)
7. Upyogasamstha (rules of consumption of food)
8. Upabhokta/Upyokta- (the person who consumes food)

DISCUSSION

Ahara is a part of our daily routine. along with the quality, quantity, and taste of food, if we concentrate a little on the right way of taking food and the regimens related to Ahara described in Ayurveda, positive health can be achieved easily. Faulty dietary habits lead to the manifestation of different metabolic diseases. It is also observed that many diseases are arising merely due to this faulty dietary habit. In this context, the concept of Ashta Ahar Vidhi Visheshayatana is most ideal in today lifestyle. Ashta Ahar Vidhi Visheshayatana means the factors responsible for wholesome and unwholesome effects of the Ahara and methods of Ahara Sevana (special rule for diet intake). These eight dynamics must be measured before taking food Prakriti, Karana, Samyoga, Rashi, Desha, Kala, Upayogasamstha, Upyokta).

Ahara Vidhi: A system, method, manner, way, arrangement, rule, law, command, conduct, condition or statement for diet intake (V.S. Apte).

Vishesha: Speciality, special property, distinguished effect (of Ahara Vidhi).

Ayatana: Cause, support, Hetu etc.

Thus, Ashta Ahara Vidhi Vishesha Ayatana means, the causative factors responsible for the wholesome and unwholesome effect of the methods for diet intake. They are as follows: Prakriti, Karana, Samyoga, Rashi, Desha, Kala, Upayogasamstha, Upyokta.[11]

CONCLUSION

Ahara is not only needed for the continuity of life, but also Bala, Varna, Upacaya etc. In today’s modern era, we are neglecting the digestive capacity nutritional value of food products, ready to eat food material. Lack of knowledge about correct eating habits is the primary region for the increasing trend of health disorders like diarrhoea, indigestion, hyperacidity, and anorexia etc.

So, for preventing these disorders, the best way is to understand Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana explains the various dietary habits. It helps to know about choosing appropriate food, a combination of food, cooking method, quality, and quantity of food. Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana is one of the most beneficial for achieving the noble goal of maintaining health. By proper understanding and following these, we can easily achieve both the Prayojana of Ayurveda. Therefore, there’s a requirement to illuminate this concept of Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana as described in ancient Ayurveda classics.

REFERENCES


How to cite this article: Anil Kumar Sen, Lajwanti Keswani, Rajesh Kumar Malviya, Salil Kumar Jain, Parvati Kharadi, Poonam Nagle. Role of Ahara in prevention of Life Style Disorders w.s.r. to Ashtavidha Ahara Visheshayatana. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2023;05:189-192. http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.8.5.31

Source of Support: Nil, Conflict of Interest: None declared.

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