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Rutucharya - A brief postulation of Grishma Rutucharya (Summer Regimen)

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ABSTRACT

Ritu, the season, classified by different features expresses different effects on the body as well as the environment. *Ayurveda* has depicted various rules and regimens (*Charya*), regarding diet and behaviour to acclimatize seasonal enforcement easily without altering body homeostasis. The prime principle of *Ayurvedic* system of medicine is preventive aspect, can be achieved by the change in diet and practices in response to change in climatic condition. This is a very important aspect of preventive medicine as mentioned in *Ayurvedic* texts. The basic principle followed in the *Ayurvedic* system of medicine is *Swasthyashya Swasthya Rakshanam*, which means to maintain the health of the healthy, rather than *Aturashya Vikara Prashamanancha*, means to cure the diseases of the diseased. For this purpose the *Dinacharya* (daily regimen) and *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen) have been mentioned in the classics of *Ayurveda*.

Key words: Grishma Ritu, Seasonal Regimens, Ritu, Rutucharya, Dinacharya

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the age old science of life, has always emphasized to maintain the health and prevent the diseases by following proper diet and lifestyle regimen rather than treatment and cure of the diseases.

With the change in season, the change is very evident in the environment we live in. We see various changes in bio-life around us, such as flowering in spring and leaf-shedding in autumn in the plants, hibernation of many animals with the coming of winter, and so on. As

human being is also part of the same ecology, the body is greatly influenced by external environment. Many of the exogenous and endogenous rhythm have specific phase relationship with each other; which means that they interact and synchronize each other. If body is unable to adopt itself to stressors due to changes in specific traits of seasons, it may lead to *Dosha Vaishamy* (disturbed equilibrium), which in turn may render the body highly susceptible to one or other kinds of disorders.^[1] As adaptations according to the changes, is the key for survival, the knowledge of *Ritucharya* (regimen for various seasons) is thus important. *Kala* (Time) referred to *Ritu* (season) in *Ayurveda* with the change in season, the difference in the environment is undeniable.^[2] Thus, *Ritucharya* talks about *Ahara* and *Vihara* according to seasons to maintain the equilibrium state of health.

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AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Aim

To highlight *Grishma Rutucharya* (Summer Seasonal Regimen) according to *Ayurveda*

Objectives

1. To make awareness to the readers regarding importance of following *Ayurvedic Rutucharya*.
2. To create awareness to readers about different seasonal regimens mentioned in *Ayurveda*

METHODOLOGY**Classification of Ritu (Seasons)**

The environmental factors include the nature of the land, water and various atmospheric phenomena, including temperature, humidity, wind, rain, clouds, and atmospheric pressure. All these environmental factors undergo a continuous change and at a time, no two moments are exactly alike in a given place. Thus, with the rising Sun the temperature keeps on rising and gradually drops at night. The maximum and minimum temperature fluctuates daily but it is highest in summer and lowest in winter. Similarly, all these factors show diurnal as well as seasonal variations and these variations for a particular time are known as season.^[3]

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

The year is divided into two *Ayana* (Part) according to *Ayurveda* depending on the direction of movement of Sun that is *Uttarayana* (North direction) and *Dakshinayana* (South direction). Each *Ayana* (Part) is formed of three *Ritus* (seasons). *Uttarayana* (North direction) is also called as *Adanakala*. *Adanakala* consists of 3 *Ritus* that is *Shishira* (Winter), *Vasanta* (Spring), *Greeshma* (Summer). In this *Ritu* (season) Sun and Wind become very strong and dry, due to this it will take the *Soumya Guna* (Softness) of earth and strength of the person also becomes significantly less.^[4] *Dakshinayana* (South direction) is also called *Visargakala*, and it consists of *Varsha* (monsoon), *Sharad* (autumn), and *Hemantha Ritu* (late autumn). In this *Ritu* (season) moon is more powerful than Sun, and the Earth is cooled off because of the influence of the

Ritu (season). In *Dakshinayana* (South direction) strength of the person gradually increases.

As per modern science, the four seasons occur because of the tilt of the Earth's axis. Different parts of Earth receive the Sun's direct rays throughout the year. So, when the North Pole tilts toward the Sun, it's summer in the Northern Hemisphere and when the South Pole tilts toward the Sun, it's winter in the Northern Hemisphere.

Grishma Rutucharya (Summer Regimen)**Characteristics of the Ritu (Season)**

In General, Mid-May to mid-July (approximately) is considered as *Grishma* (summer) season. Environment is prevalent with intense heat and unhealthy wind. The river-bodies dried and the plants appear lifeless. The predominant *Rasa* is *Katu* (pungent) and *Mahabhuta* (elements) are *Agni* (fire) and *Vayu* (wind). The strength of the person become less, deposition of *Vata Dosh*a (humour) occurs, but the vitiated *Kapha Dosh*a (humour) is pacified during this season. *Agni* (fire) of the person remains in mild state. Sun appears like *Atasi Pushpa* (red) and dries up the water reservoir. Trees shed their leaves, and there is no greenery around. All living creatures search for water bodies to quench their thirst.

Changes in the Body

Because of excessive heat from the Sun, it will dry up the moisture present in the environment. It dries up the *Jaleeya Tatva* in the body, which leads to depletion of the *Kapha* (moistness) and an increase of *Vata* (dryness) in the body. As *Shleshma* (*Kapha*) is considered *Bala* (strength) 6, lack of *Kapha* leads to the decrease in the *Deha Bala* (strength). *Agni* (fire) of the person will remain in mild state.^[5]

Hitakar Ahar (Compatible diet)

Diet regimen Foods which are light to digest - those having *Madhura* (sweet), *Snigdha* (unctuous), *Sheeta* (cold), and *Drava* (liquid) *Guna*, such as rice, lentil, etc, are to be taken. There is a loss of *Jaleeya Amsha* (body fluids) in the body, so in this *Ritu*, more *Drava Yukta* (liquid) *Ahara* (diet) should be consumed. Drinking

plenty of water and other liquids, such as cold water, buttermilk, fruit juices, meat soups, mango juice, churned curd with pepper, is to be practiced. At bedtime milk with sugar candy is to be taken.

Ahitkara Ahar (Non compatible diet)

Do not consume the food which is having *Katu* (spicy), *Lavana* (salt) and *Amla* (sour) *Rasa*. Even though *Ayurveda* explains the consumption of *Shadrasayukta* (all the 6 *Rasa*) *Ahara*, but according to *Ritu* (season), we have to balance the intake of *Rasa*. The intake of sour curd is to be avoided as it is *Guru* (heavy) and *Abhishyandi*; it will delay the digestion process and block the *Rasavaha Strotas*.^[6]

Hitakar Vihar (Compatible routine)

As, in this *Ritu* (season) as strength is significantly less *Vyayama* (exercise) is not indicated, but it can be done occasionally and one should not expose much to the sunlight.^[7] *Divaswapna* (day sleep) is indicated in *Greeshma Ritu* (summer season) as the day is long and night is short and one should sleep in a house cooled by a water fountain. At night one should rest on the terrace having good moonlight. The body should be anointed with *Lepa* (paste) of *Chandana* (sandalwood).^[7]

DISCUSSION

In *Ayurveda*, the knowledge of *Ritucharya* is a firsthand guide to the concept of *Kriya-Kala*, which describes the modes and stages of the development of diseases, with regard to the state of different *Doshas* - *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* in accordance with the changes of time. A good understanding of it is very much essential for early diagnosis and prognosis for adopting preventive and curative measures. It is to be known that disharmony in the *Doshas* - *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* results in *Roga* (disease). With changes in diet and lifestyle, there are changes in the state of *Tridosha*, which is bound to affect us, resulting disharmony, causing lifestyle diseases. *Ritu* acts as *Vyanjaka* or *Nimittakarana* in the aggravation and manifestation of disease.

Madhura Rasa, and *Snigdha Pradhana Ahara Sevana* is mentioned as it is *Vatahara*, and it enhances the *Kapha*

Dosa. *Sheeta Guna Ahara Sevana* helps combat the extreme heat, as in this *Ritu Jataragni* (digestive fire) is mild *Laghu Ahara* (light for digestion) should be consumed. Even though *Ayurveda* talks about *Shadrasa Yukta Ahara Sevana* but by *Yukti*, we must balance the *Dosha* by consuming suitable *Rasa*.

It is mentioned that *Vyayama* (exercise) is to be done half of the strength, as *Bala* (strength) of person is significantly less; *Vyayama* is not indicated in this *Ritu*. *Divaswapna* (day sleep) is indicated in *Greeshma Ritu* as it helps to retain the *Bala* in this *Ritu*. *Manidharana* or *Ratnadharana* helps to give a coolant effect to the body due to its *Prabhava* (effect). Fragrant flowers and *Chandanadi Lepa* will avoid the foul odour due to sweat and benefits skin ailment during this season.

Peoples' diet changed substantially in the second half of 20th century, generally with increased consumption of meat, dairy products, vegetable oils, fruit juice, and alcoholic beverages, and decreased consumption of starchy staple foods, such as bread, potatoes, rice, and maize flour. Already considered the diabetes capital of the world, India now appears headed towards gaining another dubious distinction of becoming the lifestyle-related disease capital as well. With global warming and variation in the advent of season, it can surely be a query, of the importance of *Ritucharya* in the present scenario.

CONCLUSION

Acharya mentions that following *Pathya Aharas* under the *Ritus* is easy to attain *Swasthya Avastha*. The diseases which will occur in the future will be due to the *Apathya Aharas*. These will result in disharmony among *dosha* and ultimately produce conditions that can become tough to cure. Thus, for preventing this understanding, *Ritucharya* and diet play a crucial role. Therefore, one should analyze their *Prakriti* and adopt a regimen under *Ritu*. As changes occurring within the atmosphere affect our body conjointly successively, resulting in diseases, our body needs to urge accustomed to these changes. Thus, it becomes vital to adopt these regimens mentioned under each *Ritucharya*. We can simply attain our primary and most

significant goal, *Swasthasya Rakshanam*. To be *Swasthya* both physically and mentally.

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