Role of Ahara-Vihara and Rasayana in prevention of disease and maintenance of health

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ABSTRACT

Ahara and Vihara play very important role in getting these Prayojana. The crucial role of Ahara and Vihara is maintenance of Dhatu i.e., Dhatusamyam, by which all physiological activity remain proper e.g. Dahana, Pachana, Chaya-Upachaya Kriya, etc. By Vihara the fitness and constitutional arrangement of body remain well, Jatharagni gets improved and Bala as well Vyadhikshamatva also gets improved. Acharya Charaka says ”Aharah Praninam Pranah” and Acharya Sushruta says ”Praninam Punarmoolam Aharo Balavarna Ojasam Cha” that is the Ahara is the life of all the Pranis as well as base of Bala, Varna and Oja i.e., life is impossible without Ahara. Thus, Ahara and Vihara are useful for prevention of diseases. Ayurveda also frequently referred as ‘Ashtanga Ayurveda’ and Rasayana Chikitsa are the part of the Ashtanga Ayurveda. It helps a person to maintain good health or to establish impaired or lost physical or mental health. Rasayana Chikitsa are said to revitalize all the Sapta Dhatus (body elements), therefore, restores equilibrium and health.

Key words: Mahaushadhi, Vyadhikshamatva, Upashaya, Sadvritta, Achara Rasayana.

INTRODUCTION

The term immunity may be correlated with Vyadhikshamatva. The Vyadhikshamatva explained by Acharya Chakrapani i.e., The power of body which decrease the effect of disease termed as Vyadhi Bala Virodhitvam and the strength of body which prevent from disease known as Vyadhi Utpad Pratibandhaktvam. Vyadhikshamatva depends mainly on two factors i.e. Oja and Bala.[1] According to Acharya Charaka, Oja originates first of all in our body which have Sarpi Varna, Madhura Rasa and Lajagandhi.[2]

The Oja are of two types i.e., Para Oja which is 8 Bindu in Pramana and situated in Hridaya and Apara Oja which Ardhanjali in Pramana and present in whole body. According to Acharaya Charaka, Dasha Guna of Ojas are Guru, Sheeta, Mridu, Shlakshana, Bahala, Madhura, Sthira, Prasanna, Pichhila and Snigdha.[3] According to Charaka Samhita, Oja is nourished by Ahara Rasa as Dhatu. The Oja is the Sara of all Dhatus so it can be said that its nourishment started from Ahara Rasa via Rasa, Raktadi Dhatu. Acharya says that, Oja is one of the Prana which is situated in Hridaya and if Para Oja is lost then life will be destroyed.

The disease preventing power of body is known as Bala.[4] The natural Shleshma is known as Bala and Oja whereas the vitiated Shleshma is known as Mala and Papma.[5] Acharya says that the Bala are of three types i.e., Sahaja, Kalaja and Yukti krita. The Sahaja Bala is the physical and mental power which is naturally present by birth and it may correlate with innate immunity. The Kalaja Bala depends on Vaya and Ritus that is maximum in Madhyamavastha and Hemanta Ritu. The Yukti krita Bala is the power increased by
healthy Ahara and Cheshta i.e., exercise.\[6\] Use of Shad Rasa in foods also improves immunity i.e., Bala.\[7\]

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The term Vyadhikshamatva is define in Charaka Samhita 28 chapter and explained by Acharya Chakrapani in his Teeka Ayurvedadeepika. The concept of Vyadhikshamatva is similar to concept of immunity in modern medical sciences. The Oja and Bala are important factors for improving Vyadhikshamatva. Trividh Bala are explain by Acharaya Charaka in Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana 11 chapter. The origin, types and properties of Oja is given in Sutrasthana 17 chapter of Charaka Smhita. Explanation of Rasayana is given in all the Ayurvedic Samhitas. In Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana chapter 1 is divided in four part and each part is dedicated to Rasayana in detail. There are many types of Rasayana explained as- Kamya Rasayana, Naimittika Rasayana, Ajasrika Rasayana, Medhya Rasayan, Achara Rasayan, Kutipraveshika Rasayana, etc.

**Immunity boosting factors**

Balavridhikara Bhava and Shariravridhikara Bhava mentioned are the main immunity improving factors. Use of all the Shadraasa in Ahara, proper follow up of Dinacharya, Ritucharya, Sadvritta and Achara Rasayana etc. The regular use of Rasayana Dravays like - Triphala Rasayana, Shilajatu Rasayana Haritakyadi Rasayana, Amalakyadi Rasayana, Bramha Rasayana, Nagbala Rasayana, Baladi Rasayana, Medhya Rasayana, Pippali Vardhamana Rasayana, Chyavanaprash Rasayana, etc. improves immunity.

**Balanced diet and sleep**

Atimatra Bhojana leads to Tridosha Prakopa while Alpa Matra Bhojana leads to Vata Prakopa. Many lifestyle disorders are a result of inadequate food intake and sedentary lifestyle. Hence, an individual should always consume a balanced diet in Matra and Rasa.

In Charaka Samhita, it is mentioned that Ahara Parinamkara Bhava, Ahara Vidhivisheshayatana, and Ahara Vidhividhana are play very important in digestion, absorption and assimilation of food. So, one should follow these for better health.

**Suppression of natural urges**

In Charaka Samhita, there is a description of Adharaniya Vegas and many diseases caused by their suppression. So, one should not suppress the Adharaniya Vegas for prevention of disease and maintenance of healthy life.\[9\]

**Sadvritta and Achara Rasayana**

The root ‘Sad’ means good and ‘Vritta’ means regimen. Person who follows Sadvritta and Achara Rasayana remains free from disease due to control of sensory organs and improves mental development. Sadvritta and Achara Rasayana are best in balancing of Manasika Dosha (Raja & Tama). Thus, Sadvritta and Achara Rasayana prevents diseases (hypertension, diabetes, psychological disorders etc.) by maintaining Manasika and Sharirika Dosha and play a major role in healthy social life.

**Benefits of Godugdha and Goghrita**

Godugdha possesses Gunas like Madhura, Sheeta, Mridu, Snigdha, Guru etc. which are similar to Guna of Oja. Hence, it acts as Ojo Vardhaka and Balya.\[10\] Use of Goghrita on regular basis increases Smriti, Buddhi, Agni, Shukra Dhatu, Oja and is Rasayana.\[11\]

**DISCUSSION**

It is said for Ahara that “Pareekshya Hitam Ashniyaad Deho Hi Ahara Sambhava”\[112\] i.e., possibility of life only with food. Dietary consideration is an important component of every prescription in Ayurvedic therapy. Sometimes dietary management in itself is a complete for prevention of disease. So, Ahara has been specified in the first place in Trayah Upasthambha (Ahara, Nidra, Bramhacharya). Acharya Kashyapa says that Ahara is Mahauushadhi and Acharya Harita says that Ahara is Mahabheshaja. Vihara is second most important factor for healthy life. It is inclusive of habit, behavior, living pattern, social relation and adjustment with the environment in which we grow. Acharya Charaka has stated that all the Bhavas i.e., Ahara and Vihara which boost our immunity and promote our health should be taken in proper quantity. Rasayana improves the metabolic activities and results in best possible bio-transformation. Jara Chikitsa or Rasayana therapy
promotes rejuvenation in a healthy person and cures the disease of an unhealthy person. **Rasayana** is not a drug therapy but is a specialized procedure practiced in the form of rejuvenation recipes, dietary regimen and special health promoting conduct and behavior i.e., **Achara Rasayan**. Most of these **Rasayanas** can be used regularly as a food for maintaining mental and physical health. They may be used either alone or along with other modalities of treatment as an adjuvant.

**CONCLUSION**

The concept of **Pathya, Apathya** and **Nitya Sevaneeya Ahara Dravya** is given in Ayurvedic science. These are very essential for maintenance of health and prevention of disease. The concept of **Dincharya, Ritucharya** and following of **Ahara** and **Vihara** are essential for healthy life. **Sadwritta** and **Achara Rasayana** are essential tool in modern era as it helps an individual to not only obtain and maintain their health but also help to build a most civilized society and nation, worthy of emulation.

**REFERENCES**


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