

Viruddhahara in Ayurveda: A Classical and Contemporary Perspective on Incompatible Food Combinations

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Viruddhahara is a term specific to Ayurveda, and it means food habits that interfere with the equilibrium between the elements of the body. Acharya Charaka says that eating Viruddhahara makes a person prone to Dosha imbalances and these results in different disorders. This article critically discusses Viruddhahara in food-food interactions and food processing interactions. Ayurveda precisely indicates that some food combinations, processing techniques, dosage, time, and seasonality can hinder tissue metabolism and suppress tissue formation, resulting in an incompatible diet or Viruddha Anna. This discrimination between wholesome and unwholesome diet lies at the core of upholding good health and avoiding disease. The article discusses contemporary views on different types of Viruddhahara and lists a range of incompatible dietary habits common in today's lifestyle, along with their negative impacts on health.

Keywords: Viruddhahara, Ayurveda, Incompatible Diet, Dosha Imbalance, Food-Food Interaction, Food Processing, Dietary Habits, Seasonal Diet Compatibility

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Introduction

Ayurveda, the traditional Indian system of life sciences, focuses on the fact that food is not only required for nourishment but also has medicinal properties. *Acharya Kashyapa* eloquently summarizes this concept:

आहारो महाभेषजं उच्यते। (*Kashyapa Samhita*)

This can be translated as: "Food is the greatest medicine." This insightful concept reflects that when eaten in the proper manner, food can avoid and even cure ailments. Yet, of late, globalization's impact, along with the mass following of western eating patterns, has totally revamped our age-old dining habits.

Therefore, today we are struggling with an eruption of lifestyle diseases. In accordance with Ayurvedic texts, food is categorized as wholesome (*hitakara*) or unwholesome (*Ahitakara*) considering multiple conditions like season, constitution, digestibility, and surroundings.

Acharya Charaka discusses it at length: In addition, incompatible food in the sense of properties, combination, processing, or timing is referred to as *Viruddhahara* - a primary cause of disease. The *Charaka Samhita* provides a clear definition:

देहधातुप्रत्यनीकभूतानिद्रव्याणिदेहधातुभिर्विरोधमापद्यन्ते;
परस्परगुणविरुद्धानिकानिचित्, कानिचित् संयोगात्, संस्कारादपराणि,
देशकालमात्रादिभिश्चापराणि, तथा स्वभावादपराणि॥ (*Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26,81*)

Viruddhahara can disrupt the healthy functioning of the tissues, throw *dosha* out of balance, and cause metabolic imbalances. The harmful effects of such eating habits are not hypothetical; they present as chronic diseases like obesity, diabetes, autoimmune diseases, cardiovascular disease, and so on. *Acharya Acharya Vagbhata* also warns against the extreme consequences of continued intake of incompatible food:

विषोटशोफमदविद्रधिराजयक्ष्माष्टमाहगदांश्चापिजनयेत् विरुद्धसेवनात्। (*Astanga Samgraha*) Lastly, the principle guiding Ayurveda reminds us of its twofold objective:

स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्यं रक्षणं आतुरस्य विकारं प्रशमनं च। (*Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 30.26*)

This means, "To safeguard the health of the healthy and to treat the disease of the diseased."

Thus, identification and shunning of *Viruddhahara* are essential not just in prevention but also in the treatment of lifestyle disorders of the modern age.

Types of *Viruddhahar*

यच्चापिदेशकालाग्निमात्रासात्त्यानिनादिभिः। संस्कारतो वीर्यतश्च कोष्ठावस्थाक्रमैरपि॥

परिहारोपचाराभ्यां पाकात् संयोगतोऽपिच। विरुद्धं तच्च न हितं हृत्सम्पद्धिभिश्च यत्॥ (*Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.86,87*)

1. *Desha Viruddha* (Region-based Incompatibility)

विरुद्धं देशतस्तावद्रूक्षतीक्ष्णादिधन्वनि। आनूपे स्निग्धशीतादिभेषजं यन्निषेव्यते॥ (*Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.88*)

If in a desert area, sharp and harsh objects, and in a swamp area, oily and cold ones are employed, those would be seen to be place-antagonistic.

Example: Consuming dry pulses in *Vata*-dominant areas such as deserts. Eating ice cream in very cold weather might weaken the immune system and exacerbate breathing problems.

2. *Kala Viruddha* (Season-based Incompatibility)

कालतोऽपि विरुद्धं यच्छीतरूक्षादिसेवनम्। शीते काले, तथोष्णे च कटुकोष्णादिसेवनम्॥ (*Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.89*)

Food incompatible with seasonal *Doshic* dominance upsets equilibrium. For instance, sweet and oily foods during *Hemanta* (early winter) can cause *Kapha* accumulation.

Example: Taking oily, cold foods during *Shishira Ritu* (end of winter) augments *Kapha* dosha. Consumption of cold beverages or smoothies during winter may cause congestion and sinus problems.

3. *Agni Viruddha* (Digestive Fire Incompatibility)

विरुद्धमनले तद्वदन्नपानं चतुर्विधे। (*Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.90*)

When the food is not equal to the strength or nature of digestive fire (*Agni*) - *Mandagni* (slow), *Teekshnagni* (sharp), *Vishamagni* (irregular), *Samagni* (balanced).

Example: Greasy foods such as curd or fried foods when *Agni* is low (*Mandagni*).

Consuming cheese pizza or fried fast food during slow digestion (e.g., during sickness or after eating too much).

4. Matra Viruddha (Quantity-based Incompatibility)

मधुसर्पिः समधृतं मात्रया तद्विरुध्यते॥ (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.90)

Using incompatible amounts or ratios, e.g., equal amounts of ghee and honey.

Example: Equal amounts of ghee and honey, though individually beneficial, act like poison when mixed equally. Large carbohydrate intakes with high protein loads (such as steak and mashed potatoes) may strain digestion.

5. Satmya Viruddha (Habitual Incompatibility)

कटुकोष्णादिसात्म्यस्य स्वादुशीतादिसेवनम्। यत्तत् सात्म्यविरुद्धं तु (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.91)

Unnecessary sudden alteration in one's habituated diet, resulting in pain or health disturbances.

Example: Individual accustomed to consuming non-vegetarian food abruptly changes to raw vegan with going through transition. Abruptly taking keto or intermittent fasting without progressive adaptation.

6. Dosha Viruddha (Constitutional Incompatibility)

विरुद्धं त्वनिलादिभिः॥ या समानगुणाभ्यासविरुद्धान्नौषधक्रिया। (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.92)

Food that worsens one's fundamental Dosha (Prakriti).

Example: Vata Prakriti people consume dry, harsh foods such as popcorn and experience bloating. Pitta constitution individuals eating spicy, fried foods can develop acidity or skin outbursts.

7. Samskara Viruddha (Processing-based Incompatibility)

संस्कारतो विरुद्धं तद्यद्भोज्यं विषवद्भवेत्॥ एरण्डीसीकासकं शिखिमांसं यथैव हि। (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.93)

Food processed wrongly becomes incompatible, such as heating honey changes its chemical composition and becomes poisonous.

Example: Warm honey (particularly in tea or cooking) is toxic.

Deep-frying oils continually yield carcinogenic compounds such as acrylamides.

8. Veerya Viruddha (Potency-based Incompatibility)

विरुद्धं वीर्यतो ज्ञेयं वीर्यतः शीतलात्मकम्॥ तत् संयोज्योष्णवीर्येण द्रव्येण सह सेव्यते। (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.94)

Mixing hot and cold potency drugs upsets dosha and digestion.

Example: Fish (hot potency) with milk (cold potency). Consuming citrus fruits shortly after dairy products can lead to skin problems or indigestion.

9. Koshtha Viruddha (Bowel Nature Incompatibility)

क्रूरकोष्ठस्य चात्यल्पं मन्दवीर्यमभेदनम्॥ मृदकोष्ठस्य गुरु च भेदनीयं तथा बहु। एतत् कोष्ठविरुद्धं तु (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.95)

Foods that are incompatible with the bowel constitution (Mridu, Madhyama, or Krura Koshtha).

Example: Strong purgatives in an individual with Mridu Koshtha can lead to over-purgation. Fibrous diet in an individual with already loose stools can produce diarrhea.

10. Avastha Viruddha (State-based Incompatibility)

विरुद्धं स्यादवस्थया॥ श्रमव्यवायव्यायामसक्तस्यानिलकोपनम्। निद्रालसस्यालसस्य भोजनं श्लेष्मकोपनम्॥ (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.96)

Food inappropriate to one's physical or emotional condition.

Example: Consumption of heavy food right after intense physical activity or during fever. Eating hot food when upset emotionally can worsen acidity or irritable bowel complaints.

11. Krama Viruddha (Order-based Incompatibility)

यच्चानुत्सृज्य विष्णूत्रं भुङ्क्ते यश्चाबुभुक्षितः। तच्च क्रमविरुद्धं स्याद्यच्चातिक्षुद्रशानुगः॥ (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.97)

Incorrect order of food consumption or consuming without cleansing rites.

Example: Consume dessert prior to a main course to impede digestion. Missing breakfast and consuming heavy meals at night disrupts metabolism.

12. *Parihara Viruddha* (Avoidance-based Incompatibility)

परिहारविरुद्धं तु वराहादीन्निषेव्य यत्। (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.98)

Eating foods which are not supposed to go together because of their natural contradiction.

Example: Consuming pork after eating ghee which is difficult to digest. Drinking cold beverages soon after consuming fried foods may cause indigestion.

13. *Upachara Viruddha* (Treatment-based Incompatibility)

सेवेतोष्णं घृतादींश्च पीत्वा शीतं निषेवते॥ (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.98)

Foods contrary to therapeutic regimen or body therapy.

Example: Cold or heavy foods during oleation (*Snehana*) or fomentation (*Swedana*) therapies. Cold beverages during antibiotic treatment may reduce efficacy.

14. *Paka Viruddha* (Cooking Incompatibility)

विरुद्धं पाकतश्चापिदुष्टदुर्दुर्साधितम्। अपक्वतण्डुलात्पक्वदग्धं च यद्भवेत्। (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.99)

Improper cooking methods may result in harmful effects.

Example: Cooked or overcooked foods lose their positive properties. Plastic-wrapped food microwaved can release endocrine disruptors.

15. *Samyoga Viruddha* (Combination-based Incompatibility)

संयोगतो विरुद्धं तद्यथाऽम्लं पयसा सह॥ (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.99)

Destructive mix of specific foods.

Example: Sour fruits such as banana or citrus fruits taken with milk. Mentos and cola - while extreme, it is a contemporary mismatch metaphor.

16. *Hridaya Viruddha* (Psychological Incompatibility)

अमनोरुचितं यच्च हृद्विरुद्धं तदुच्यते। (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.100)

Food which is not liked or consumed forcibly disrupts mental and digestive balance.

Example: Consuming bitter gourd when not like it mentally. Forced dieting using unpalatable food can lead to anxiety and poor nutrient uptake.

17. *Sampat Viruddha* (Quality-based Incompatibility)

सम्पद्विरुद्धं तद्विद्यादसञ्जातरसं तु यत्॥ अतिक्रान्तरसं वाऽपि विपन्नरसमेव वा (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.101)

Food that is overripe, underripe, stale, or not harvested in a proper way.

Example: Fruits that are overripe or infested with worms. Canned foods well beyond their expiry date or have added preservatives.

18. *Vidhi Viruddha* (Rule-based Incompatibility)

विधिविरुद्धं तु भुज्यते निभृते न यत्। तदेवंविधमन्नं स्याद्विरुद्धमुपयोजितम्॥ (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26.101)

Breaking of proper dietary regulations, such as emotional intake, wrong timing, posture, or environment.

Example: Consuming food while walking, chatting, or under stress. Screen eating mindlessly results in overeating and poor digestion.

Pathophysiology of Viruddhahara

Consumption of *Viruddhahara* (incompatible food) derails the primal physiological equilibrium by first weakening the digestive fire (*Agni*), a state known as *Agni Mandya*. The weakened digestion results in *Ama*, a toxic, undigested metabolic waste product, which is the primal cause of most systemic and metabolic pathologies. As explained in the classical text:

अग्नौ बलं संश्रित्य देहो बलवन्त्यपि। न हीनाग्निः प्रसीदत्यामेन स शतक्रतुः॥ (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 28.7)

Agni is the key to health, and its weakening sets the door ajar to disease. The disease process can be schematically outlined as:

Viruddhahara → Agni Mandya → Ama Utpatti → Vyadhi (Disease)

In addition, ongoing consumption of incompatible food (*Nidana Sevana*) worsens the *Tridoshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*), which then mingle predominantly with vitiated *Pitta*.

This interaction causes *Dosha-Dushya Sammurchana* (*Dosha*-bodily tissue interaction), which brings about obstruction of bodily channels (*Srotodushti*) and subsequently leads to expression of disorders internally (*Antah*) as well as externally (*Bahir*) such as *Sheetapitta*, *Udarada*, *Kotha*, and *Utkotha* (forms of inflammatory skin and allergic diseases).

न चात्र दोषाः प्रकुप्यन्ति चाग्निर्दुष्यते पृथक्। न च दुष्पाः प्रकुप्यन्ति च व्याधिः प्रवर्तते॥ सन्निपातो यदा सर्वतदा व्याधिः प्रवर्तते॥ (*Madhava Nidana*, 1.4-5)

This verse emphasizes the need for collective derangement of *doshas*, *agni*, and *dhatus* for disease manifestation. On the molecular level, the chronic ingestion of *Viruddhahara* causes subclinical inflammation through the modification of the eicosanoid cascade, which results in enhanced production of pro-inflammatory mediators like prostaglandin-2 and thromboxane A2 from arachidonic acid.

This biochemical sequence replicates the Ayurvedic process of *Ama* production, a pathogenic waste product that gets dispersed in the body, impedes *Srotas* (transmission channels), and localizes in tissues with *Khavaigunya* (structural or functional weakness), eventually culminating in disease.

स्रोतसां च प्रवृत्तीनां प्रधाना मलोरोधतः। मलसङ्गः स दोषाणां कुर्वति प्रतिघातनम्। (*Charaka Samhita*, *Chikitsasthana* 15.44)

The heating of oils or some foods is *Viruddha* and creates *Ama*, resulting in toxicity and disease, according to *Ashtanga Hridaya*. Therefore, the pathology is now spread from gut-based dysfunctions to systemic manifestations with the involvement of various *Dhatus* and *Srotas*.

The clinical effects of *Viruddhahara* are divided into *Aashukari* (acute) and *Chirakari* (chronic) manifestations. Acute effects are allergic responses, indigestion, or rashes on the skin, while chronic consumption develops metabolic syndromes like obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular conditions, and autoimmune diseases based on individual *Prakriti* (constitution), *Agni* strength, and intensity of incompatibility.

Diseases due to Viruddhahara

Chronic consumption of *Viruddhahara* (incompatible food) leads to a myriad of pathological conditions in many systems of the body.

According to *Acharya Charaka*, such food combinations that are not compatible are responsible for causing a disturbance in the normal process of *Agni* (digestive fire), causing *Ama* formation (metabolic toxins), and vitiating *Doshas*, ultimately causing *Dhatu Dushti* (tissue-level pathology). The long-term consequence can cause severe systemic disorders, even *Mrityu* (death), as said:

षाण्ड्यान्धवीसर्पदकोदराणां विस्फोटकोन्मादभगन्दराणाम्
मूर्च्छामदध्मानगलग्रहणां पाण्डुवामयस्यामविषस्य चैव॥ (*Charaka Samhita*, *Sutrasthana* 26,102)

किलासकुष्ठग्रहणीगदानां शोथाम्लपित्तज्वरपीनसानाम्। सन्तानदोषस्य
तथैव मृत्योर्विरुद्धमन्नं प्रवदन्तिहेतुम्। (*Charaka Samhita*, *Sutrasthana* 26,103)

Charaka has listed several disorders that occur due to such incompatible dietary habits, such as: *Shandhya* (impotency), *Andhya* (blindness), *Visarpa* (erysipelas), *Jalodara* (ascites), *Visphota* (boils), *Unmada* (mental disorder), *Bhagandara* (fistula in ano), *Murcha* (syncope), *Mada* (drunkenness), *Aadhma* (abdominal distension), *Galagraha* (obstruction of the throat), *Pandu* (anemia), *Ama*, *Kilasa* (leucoderma), *Kushta* (various skin diseases), *Grahani* (malabsorption syndrome), *Shotha* (swelling), *Amlapitta* (gastritis), *Jwara* (fever), *Pinasa* (rhinitis), *Santana Dosha* (barrenness), and finally, *Mrityu* (death).

These conditions demonstrate the varied system-wide action of *Viruddhahara* on:

Reproductive system: *Shukra Dhatu Dushti*, causing impotence and infertility.

Digestive system: *Grahani*, *Amlapitta*, and *Ama* formation, causing malabsorption and metabolic syndromes.

Nervous system: *Unmada*, *Murcha*, and *Mada*.

Circulatory and immune systems: *Pandu* (anemia), *Shotha* (inflammation), and *Kushta* (chronic skin diseases).

Contemporary equivalents of these diseases are inflammatory bowel disease, skin allergies, autoimmune diseases, metabolic syndrome, infertility, neurological imbalances, and even endocrine-related hormonal dysfunctions. Experimental evidence is present to indicate that long-term consumption of such incompatible foods can lead to inflammation at the molecular level,

Disrupt eicosanoid pathways, and enhance excess prostaglandin and thromboxane production, again confirming the ancient Ayurvedic principle of systemic disruption by *Ama*.

Thus, *Viruddhahara* is a slow and stealthy cause of chronic diseases, compromising the body's balance (homeostasis) and affecting all the major body systems - digestive, nervous, immune, circulatory, and reproductive.

Management of *Viruddhahara*

वमनं विरेचनं च, तद्विरोधिनां च द्रव्याणां संशमनार्थमुपयोगः, तथाविधैश्च द्रव्यैः पूर्वमभिसंस्कारः शरीरस्येति॥ (*Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26,104*)

Viruddhahara management entails an integrated approach which targets both removal of the built-up toxins (*Ama*) and *Doshic* balance restoration by detoxification, palliative therapy, and lifestyle management. The root principles of Ayurveda support two chief lines of treatment for the unfavorable effects of incompatible food: *Shodhana* (bio-purification) and *Shamana* (palliative therapy). According to the ancient texts:

विरुद्धाशनजान् रोगान् प्रतिहन्तिविवेचनम्. वमनं शमनं चैव पूर्वा हितसेवनम्॥

सात्म्यतोऽल्पतया वाऽपि दीप्ताग्नेस्तरुणस्य च। स्निग्धव्यायामबलिनां विरुद्धं वितथं भवेत्॥ (*Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26,105, 106*)

Shodhana treatments like *Vamana* (therapeutic emesis), *Virechana* (purgation), and *Basti* (medicated enema) are used to remove the vitiated *Doshas* and *Ama* accumulated due to long-term consumption of incompatible food. These treatments not only detoxify the body but also strengthen the gastrointestinal tract by improving metabolic efficiency. After detoxification has been done, *Shamana* therapy is initiated through the implementation of herbs that possess *Deepana* (appetite-stimulating) and *Pachana* (digestive) action. Traditional herbs such as *Trikatu* (a mixture of *Pippali*, *Maricha*, and *Shunthi*) and *Haritaki* are widely used for stimulating the digestive fire (*Agni*) and *Ama Pachana*. Their effectiveness is based on their capacity to balance the vitiated *Doshas* without causing the excessive system clearing of *Shodhana*.

The corrective aspect of diet and lifestyle, *Pathya-Apathya*, is crucial. Awareness of food combinations suitable to one another, meals at the right times,

And mode of food preparation ensures long-term prevention. The scriptures emphasize the aspect of proper food behavior:

नातिस्निग्धं नातिरूक्षं नात्युष्णं नातिशीतलम्। नातिद्रवमवश्यायिनात्यल्पं नातिभोजनम्॥ (*Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 5.6*)

For the rejuvenation of tissues and the restoration of homeostasis, treatment with *Rasayana* is advised. Rejuvenation medicines such as *Chyawanprasha*, *Amalaki Rasayana*, and other *Rasayana Dravyas* contribute to tissue integrity (*Dhatu Poshana*), boost immunity (*Ojas*), and neutralize the harmful action of *Viruddhahara* at the cellular level.

Integrated management of *Viruddhahara*, therefore, not only targets the elimination of existing toxins and *Doshic* disturbances but places special stress on preventive and promotive interventions to ensure long-term well-being.

Discussion

The shift from wholesome traditional living to the fast modern lifestyle has drastically changed eating habits and health conditions. In the past, food was according to one's *Prakriti*, *Desha*, *Kala*, and *Satmya*, resulting in increased longevity and reduced disease incidence. Home-cooked, easily digestible food, eaten with careful practices such as proper *asana* (posture) and peaceful surroundings, helped in perfect digestion and overall health. As *Acharya Charaka* say:

हिताहितं सुखं दुःखं आयुः तस्य हिताहितम् मानं च तच्च यत्रोक्तं आयुर्वेदः स उच्यते। (*Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 1.41*)

Ayurveda is the science which informs us regarding wholesome and unwholesome, happy and unhappy, and good and bad for life.

Contrastingly, today's society faces the ill effects of modernization, where fast food, preserved meals, and carbonated drinks have replaced nutritious, cooked meals. The appeal of junk food is amplified by media influence, particularly celebrity endorsements, and the convenience it offers working individuals. This rising consumption of *Viruddhahara*, foods incompatible in combination, preparation, or digestion has led to a surge in lifestyle disorders like diabetes mellitus, obesity, hypertension, and even autoimmune and degenerative diseases.

Ayurvedic literature has cautioned against such consequences long ago. Prolonged consumption of *Viruddhahara* is known to trigger a series of pathological processes from the beginning of *Agni Mandya* (reduced digestive fire), followed by *Ama Utpatti* (formation of toxins), and ultimately resulting in dosha vitiation and systemic illness. Thus, it has been explained:

अजीर्णभोजनं यातिविषत्वं पुनरप्यतः। नातिप्रसक्तं तस्मात् भुङ्जीत हितभोजनम्। (Charaka Samhita, Chikitsa Sthana 15.245)

If one eats in indigestion, the food turns into poison and is toxic; therefore, always eat light and appropriate food. Also, such incompatible food has been said to create severe diseases such as *Shandhya* (impotency), *Unmada* (insanity), *Visarpa* (erysipelas), *Grahani* (IBS), and even *Mrityu* (death).

All these afflictions affect not just the gastrointestinal system alone but even the nervous, circulatory, immune, and reproductive systems. Moreover, long-term exposure to such a diet could result in genetic mutations and teratogenic effects, resulting in congenital anomalies. The increasing prevalence of metabolic and autoimmune diseases in the present era justifies the Ayurvedic belief that *Viruddhahara* is a silent killer.

Therefore, raising public awareness is the key. Individuals need to be educated about the health benefits of natural foods like *takra* (buttermilk) and *phala rasa* (fresh juices) and the dangers of modern eating habits. Preventive measures should also be highlighted with the avoidance of mutually incompatible foods and supplemented by *Rasayana* therapies for rejuvenation of tissues and strengthening immunity.

Finally, the ancient wisdom of Ayurveda provides tried-and-tested approaches not only for disease management but also prevention. Through blending of traditional knowledge with contemporary awareness, society can be taken towards a healthier and sustainable way of living. As appropriately quoted:

सात्म्यं युक्तिकृतं चात्रं मात्राकालकृतं च यत्। शरीरस्योपचित्रानां तदत्रं पथं उच्यते। (Astanga Hridaya, Sutrasthana 8.46)

That food is wholesome which is according to the body, eaten in due proportion and time, and prepared with care.

Conclusion

With the present times of globalization and modernization, people are quickly adopting eating patterns that are quite distant from conventional, natural practices. This has caused an increased consumption of soft drinks and junk foods—individually categorized under *Viruddhahara* in Ayurveda - and has silently caused several lifestyle and systemic disorders. The people, unaware of the long-term consequences, consume these incompatible combinations, which endangers them physically, mentally, and at their reproductive health. As rightly mentioned in the Ayurvedic classics:

आहारसम्पत्तिः बलवर्णसुखप्रदः। सर्वेषां आयुषां हेतुः सुखस्यान्यश्च शोभनः॥ (Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 27.349)

Wholesome food is the cause of strength, complexion, and happiness. It is the foundation of a healthy life. It is therefore crucial to spot and discard *Viruddhahara* from our foods and raise awareness among the populace of its ill effects. Widespread consumption of such inharmonious foods, particularly through packaged drinks and processed foods - should be seen as a significant public health issue. Ongoing tracking and assessment at community and policy levels must be done to stem this trend and encourage improved food habits. This review not only emphasizes the diseases induced by *Viruddhahara* but also paves the way for a deeper investigation of the physiological principles and preventive practices based on Ayurvedic dietetics. It is crucial to promote innovative and evidence-based measures based on the ancient principles of Ayurveda, including *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen) and *Pathya-Apathya* (wholesome vs unwholesome food), to assist in aligning current dietary patterns with nature's rhythm. As *Acharya Sushruta* suggests:

तस्मात्सर्वात्मनाऽत्रं परीक्ष्य हितं आहारयेत्। आहारशुद्धौ सत्त्वशुद्धिः सत्त्वशुद्धौ ध्रुवा स्मृतिः॥ (Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthana 46.497)

Therefore, one should always examine food and consume that which is wholesome. Purity of food leads to mental clarity, and clarity ensures lasting memory and wisdom.

In conclusion, counteracting the peril of *Viruddhahara* starts with the awareness, proof through science, and revival of Ayurveda wisdom.

Getting back to time-tested principles of ancient dietary art can help to open the gateway to a better society and an ailment-free future.

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