

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON *PATHYA*

Dr. Mangalagowri V Rao*

Assistant Professor Department of Swasthavritta and Yoga, Faculty of Ayurveda, Institute of Medical Sciences Banaras Hindu University.

Article Received on
18 Jan 2015,

Revised on 13 Feb 2015,
Accepted on 09 Mar 2015

*Correspondence for
Author

Dr. Mangalagowri V
Rao

Assistant Professor
Department of
Swasthavritta and Yoga,
Faculty of Ayurveda,
Institute of Medical
Sciences Banaras Hindu
University.

ABSTRACT

Pathyas or the conducive food and lifestyle form most important component of *Ayurvedic* management. The drugs and regimen that are not harmful to the channels and please the mind are *Pathya*. Sada *Pathyas* are such foods that are always conducive for most of the healthy individuals. They also enhance lifespan, lusture, enthusiasm, memory, *Ojas* and *Agni*. Sada *Pathya Viharas* are mainly based on the state of health and environment around. They are for the maintenance of hygiene, excellence of *Indriyas* (sense organs), enhancement of *Bala*, promotion of health and peace and harmony of Mind. Proper *Agni* helps in proper digestion of ingested food along with assimilation. Further it also aids in proper metabolism, so that body gets adequate energy for performing various kinds of activities. This also leads to the excellence of all *Dhatus* which inturn results in formation of adequate quantity of *Ojas*. Regular consumption of foods

rich in antioxidants help to reduce oxidative stress by scavenging the free radicals. Thus help in prevention and cure of many diseases.

KEYWORDS: *Pathya*, *Ahara*, *Vihara*, Prevention.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a time tested medical science; the history can be traced back to the Vedic lore. The most important aspect of *Ayurvedic* management is its specific management encompassing the *Pathyas* or the conducive food and lifestyle. A great emphasis is also given to daily regimen, healthy lifestyle and wholesome diet for health promotion and disease prevention. Especially diet and regimen form most important part in the management as *Ahara* is considered as *Mahabhaishajya* or great medicine by *Acharya Kashyapa*.

Food is life (*Prana*) for all the beings and food having 63 *Rasas* is like Brahma (supreme), so the best food devoid of 8 *Doshas* like *Asrita* (rice that has become sour due to non removal of liquid from it), *Picchila* (slimy), unclean, *Kvathita* (excessively boiled), *Ruksha* (dry), *Dagdha* (over burnt), *Virupa* (abnormal in appearance) and *Rituviparita* (non-conducive to a particular season) should be consumed.^[1]

The root cause for occurrence of any disease is derangement in the micro-channels called *Srotases*. It has been described in Sushruta Samhita 24th chapter very clearly that the aggravated *Doshas* are thrown from their normal seat to different parts of the body and they produce disease at a place where there is derangement of *Srotas*.^[2] Hence food and regimen conducive to *Srotas* should be followed for the prevention and cure of diseases. It is said that which is conducive to the micro-channels is *Pathya*. *Pathyapathya vinirnaya* emphasizes the importance of *Pathya* in the following way. A disease can be cured even without medicine only through conducive diet and lifestyle, but without proper *Pathya* even hundreds of medicines cannot cure a disease.^[3] The body is outcome of the food. The wholesome and unwholesome use of the food leads to healthy and ill-health.

DEFINITIONS OF PATHYA

पथ्यं पथोनपेतं यद्वच्चोक्तं मनसः प्रियम् । यच्चाप्रियमपथ्यं च नियतं तन्न लक्षयेत्॥

The drugs and regimen that are not harmful to the channels and please the mind are *Pathya*; those which adversely affect them are *Apathya*. But this cannot be accepted as general rule. The drugs and regimen change their qualities according to dose, age, time, processing, habitat, body constitution and combination with other drugs.^[4]

शरीरं गृहीतं भवति ततश्च शरीरानुपघाति पथ्यमिति भवति ॥

That which gets absorbed and subsequently does not harm the body is *Pathya*.^[5]

स्वस्थस्यस्वास्थ्यरक्षणमातुरव्याधिपरिमोक्षश्चेति पन्थाः, तस्मादनपेतं पथ्यम् मनः शरीरानुपघाति पथ्यम्॥

The channels help in the health protection and cure of disease, that which does not harm the channels are *Pathya*.^[6]

हितकरमाहार विहारौषधादि ॥

Pathya refers food, lifestyle and medicine.^[7]

देशकालप्रमाणानां सात्त्यासात्त्यश्च चैव हि सम्यग्योगोन्यथा ह्येषां पथ्यमप्यन्यथा भवेत् ।।

The medicine administered after considering place, time, and wholesomeness etc. factors is *Pathya*, contrary is *Apathya*.^[8]

वैद्योक्तं क. क. ज. BAA

Among *Pathyas*, *Ahara* one among the *Triopastambhas* (three pillars) is most important, as it helps in maintenance of the body nourishment.^[9]

हिताशी स्यान्मिताशी स्यात् कालभोजी जितेन्द्रियः । पश्यन् रोगोन् बहून् कष्टान् बुद्धिमान् विषमाशनात् ।।

Many of the diseases are produced due to improper, unhealthy food intake, so if one consumes conducive food, in appropriate quantity at proper time, in a proper way as said in *Ashtavidha ahara ayatana* and one who has control over his senses can prevent many diseases.^[10]

वैद्योक्तं; अ. ह. क. स्त. उ. क. न. हु. का. ह. क. स्त. ; अ. फ. / के. ओ. / क. र. अ. फ. / के. ओ. / द. य. अ. ह. क. त. र. स. फ. द. य. ल. र. ग. इ. ष. ; र. अ. A

The health is dependent on the food, and procedures of intake of food. The way in which the food is consumed depends on various preparations of food.^[11]

Types of *Pathya*

1. *Sada pathya*

Sada Pathyas are such foods that are always conducive for most of the healthy individuals. Examples: **Ahara:** *Rakta Shali* (rice), *Yava* (barley), *Godhuma* (wheat), *Mudga* (green gram), Rain water, *Saindhava* (rock salt), *Amalaka* (Indian gooseberry), *Godugdha* (cow's milk), *Sarpi* (cow's ghee), *Madhu* (honey), sugar, *Jivanti* (*Leptidenia reticulate* Linn.), *Bala mulaka* (tender radish), *Vastuka* (bathua), *Patola* (snake gourd), *Dadima* (pomegranate), grapes, ginger, *Jangala mamsa rasa* (meat of terrestrial animals), Meat of *Ena* (antelope), *Lava*, *Godha*, *Rohita*, *tila taila* (sesame oil), fat of pig, fat of *chuluki* fish, fat of white swan, fat of hen, meat of goat,^[12]

Vihara: *Vyayama* (exercise), *Nidra* (Sleep) etc.

2. Disease specific *Pathya*

The food and regimens that are conducive to any specific disease are disease specific *Pathyas*. They are mainly based on the *Dosha* and the *Srotas* involved. Some are specific for that disease mostly by the *Prabhava*.

DISCUSSION

The *Sadapathya Aharas* are generally nourishing, strength promoting, help in sustenance of the body. They also enhance lifespan, lusture, enthusiasm, memory, *Ojas* and *Agni*.^[13] Proper Agni helps in proper digestion of ingested food along with assimilation. Further it also aids in proper metabolism so that body gets adequate energy for performing various kinds of activities. This also leads to the excellence of all *Dhatus* which inturn results in formation of adequate quantity of *Ojas*. The state of excellence of *Bala* helps in health promotion and disease prevention. Sada pathyas mentioned in Ayurveda can be categorised in to carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins and minerals on the nutritional stand point of modern. These dietary items should be consumed by everyone daily; these are nothing but the components of balanced diet as per modern. Hence it can be inferred that the concept of balanced diet was present since ancient period. Regular consumption of foods rich in antioxidants help to reduce oxidative stress by scavenging the free radicals. Thus help in prevention and cure of many diseases. It has been advocated to consume ginger with rock salt before food, mainly to improve the digestion and absorption of nutrients. The cereals like rice, wheat, barley categorised under Shuka dhanya in Ayurveda provide energy and nourishment, while pulses like green gram and non vegetarian food like meat furnish the required protein supply for the body. Ghee provides essential fatty acids and vegetables like Bathua, snake gourd etc. and fruits like Amla, grapes, pomegranate provide required vitamins and minerals along with good amount of antioxidants which help in prevention and cure of diseases. The fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin C like *Amla*, pomegranates are rich in vitamin C and anti oxidants thus help in prevention of diseases.^[14]

Sada Pathya Viharas are mainly based on the state of health and environment around. They are for the maintenance of hygiene, excellence of *Indriyas* (sense organs), enhancement of *Bala*, promotion of health and peace and harmony of Mind¹⁵. The hygiene can be **oral hygiene** (*Achamana*- Sippling of water, *Danta Dhavan*- teeth brushing, *Kavala*- mouth wash, *Gandusha*-gargling, *Jihva Nirlekhana*- tongue cleaning), **body hygiene** (*Snana*- bath, *Anulepana*- anointments, *Rakshoghna*- protective measures, *Padaprakshalana*- washing of feet, *Mukha Prakshalana*- washing of face, wearing of cloth, wearing of garlands, *Padatra Dharana*- wearing of foot wear, wearing of head turban and umbrella), enhancement of *Bala* (*Vyayama*- exercise, *Chankramana*- walking, *Abhyanga*-Massage, *Udvartana*- hard massage), excellence of *Indriyas* (**Eyes**- *Anjana*- collyrium, *Nasya*- Nasal instillation, *Shirobhyanga*- Head massage with oil, *Padabhyanga*- feet massage, **Ear**- *Karnapurana*-

instillation of oil in the ear, *Nasya*- Nasal instillation, **Skin**- *Abhyanga*- massage, *Udvartana*- hard massage, *Nasya*-nasal instillation, *Anulepa*- anointments, *Snana*-bath, **Nose**- *Nasya*- Nasal instillation, *Dhumapana*- medicated smoking, **Tongue**- *Achamana*- Sipping of water, *Danta Dhavan*- teeth brushing, *Kavala*- mouth wash, *Gandusha*-gargling, *Jihva Nirlekhana*-tongue cleaning). For peace and harmony of mind with holding of *Manasika Vega* like desire, anger, greediness, attachment, hatred etc, and following of proper codes of conduct as mentioned in *Sadvritta*.

CONCLUSION

Pathya is a holistic principle and contribution of Ayurveda. Pathya in the form of diet and regimen should be adopted in daily life for health promotion and disease prevention. Pathya aharas provide energy, nutrition and strength to rejuvenate the body, while the regimen help in maintenance of body hygiene and mental calm so as to lead a stress free and disease free long healthy life.

REFERENCES

1. Brhmananda Tripathi, Pathyapathyavinirnaya, 1/38, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishthana, Varanasi, II Edition, Reprint 2008.
2. Sushruta, Sushruta samhita, Nibandha Sangraha vyakhya, Sutra Sthana 24/19, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, 2007.
3. Brhmananda Tripathi, Pathyapathyavinirnaya, 1/6, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishthana, Varanasi, II Edition, Reprint 2008.
4. Vd. H. S. Khushvaha, Agniveshakrita Charaka Samhita, Sutra sthana. 25/45, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, 2009.
5. Agniveshakrita Charaka Samhita, Chakrapani tika, on Sutra sthana 25/45 chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, 5th Edition, 2001.
6. Ibid
7. Vd. H. S. Khushvaha, Agniveshakrita Charaka Samhita, Sutra sthana. 1/100, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, 2009.
8. Ibid Chikista sthana 30/293.
9. Ibid Sutra sthana 25/40.
10. Ibid Nidana sthana 6/11.
11. Prof. P. V. Tiwari, Kashyapa, Kashyapa Samhita, Khila sthana, 5/9, Chaukhambha Vishvabharati, Varanasi, 2008.

12. Dr. Mangalagowri V Rao, A textbook of Svasthavritta, I Edition, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, 2007.
13. Sushruta, Sushruta samhita, Nibandha Sangraha vyakhya, Chikitsa Sthana 24/68 Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, 2007.
14. Nutrition Facts of Pomegranate. <http://www.med-health.net/Benefits-Of-Pomegranate.html>.
15. Vagbhatakrita, Ashtanga Hridaya Arunadutta and Hemadri commentary, Sarvanga sundari tika on Sutra sthana 2/1, Chaukhambha Surabharati Prakashan, 1997.