

"HOLISTIC AYURVEDIC APPROACH TO LIFESTYLE DISORDERS: PREVENTIVE AND THERAPEUTIC INSIGHTS"

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ABSTRACT

Lifestyle disorders, caused primarily by inappropriate dietary habits (*Ahara*) and irregular daily activities (*Vihara*), are emerging as significant health concerns globally. Ayurveda provides a holistic approach to understanding, preventing, and managing these disorders through proper dietary principles (*Ashta Vidha Ahara Visheshayatan*), daily and seasonal regimens (*Dinacharya* and *Ritucharya*), and ethical conduct (*Sadvritta*). This review highlights the Ayurvedic perspective on the etiology, prevention, and management of common lifestyle disorders such as obesity, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, and behavioral issues. Integration of Ayurvedic principles into daily life may significantly reduce the burden of lifestyle disorders.

KEYWORDS: Lifestyle, Lifestyle Disorders, *Ahara*, *Vihara*, *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Ayurveda*.

INTRODUCTION

Lifestyle is defined as the overall pattern of an individual's daily habits, diet, physical activities, and mental attitude.^[3] Unhealthy lifestyles, characterized by irregular eating patterns, sedentary behavior, and psychological stress, contribute to the increasing incidence of chronic lifestyle disorders worldwide.^[7] According to the World Health Organization (WHO), lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, chronic respiratory diseases, and obesity account for approximately 30% of all deaths globally.^[8]

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, views health as a dynamic balance of *Doshas*, *Dhatus*, and *Agni* (digestive fire).^[1] The root cause of most lifestyle disorders

is *Mandagni* (low digestive fire), which leads to metabolic disturbances.^[2] Ayurvedic classics provide preventive guidelines such as *Ahara Vidhi* (rules of eating), *Dinacharya* (daily routine), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), and *Sadvritta* (ethical conduct) to maintain health and prevent disease.^[1,2]

This review evaluates Ayurvedic concepts related to lifestyle disorders, their etiology, and their management strategies, correlating them with modern scientific understanding.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data Sources

Information was collected from classical Ayurvedic texts (Charaka Samhita,^[1] Sushruta Samhita,^[2] Ashtanga Hridaya^[3]) and modern medical literature from databases such as PubMed, Scopus, and WHO reports.^[7]

Inclusion Criteria

- Ayurvedic principles related to *Ahara*, *Vihara*, *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, and *Sadvritta*.
- Evidence-based modern studies on lifestyle disorders.

Exclusion Criteria

- Non-Ayurvedic traditional systems and unrelated animal studies.

METHODOLOGY

Ayurvedic concepts were systematically reviewed and interpreted in the context of modern lifestyle disorders. Sanskrit/Hindi Ayurvedic terms were italicized as per academic standards, and references were cited in Vancouver style.

DISCUSSION

1. Etiology of Lifestyle Disorders

Ayurveda attributes most lifestyle disorders to *Mandagni*, which causes impaired digestion and tissue metabolism (*Rasadhatwagni Mandya*).^[1] Major causative factors (*Nidanas*) include.

Aharaja Nidana (Dietary Causes)

Atiruksha (excessively dry food), *Atisnigdha* (excessively oily food), *Guru Bhojana* (heavy-to-digest food), *Ajeerna Ashana* (eating before digestion), *Vishama Ashana* (irregular meals), *Asatmya Bhojana* (incompatible diet).^[1]

Viharaja Nidana (Behavioral Causes)

Vega (suppression of natural urges), *Ratrijagarana* (night awakening), *Diwaswapna* (excessive daytime sleep), *Langhana* (prolonged fasting).^[2]

Mansika Nidana (Psychological Causes)

Krodha (anger), *Bhaya* (fear), *Shoka* (grief), *Chinta* (stress).^[4]

Modern studies link these factors to obesity, hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases.^[7,8]

2. Preventive Measures in Ayurveda**A. Dietary Guidelines – Ahara Vidhi**

Ayurveda regards diet (*Ahara*) as *Mahabhaishajya* (the greatest medicine).^[2] Key rules include:

Ushnam Ashniyat: Consume warm, freshly cooked food to enhance *Agni*.^[2]

Matravat Ashniyat: Eat in proper quantity based on digestive strength.^[1]

Jirne Ashniyat: Eat only after digestion of the previous meal.^[2] Avoid *Viruddha Ahara* (e.g., milk with fish, honey with ghee in equal proportion).^[2]

The *Ashta Vidha Ahara Visheshayatan* (eight factors of diet) emphasize food nature (*Prakriti*), processing (*Karan*), combination (*Samyoga*), quantity (*Rashi*), place of origin (*Desha*), timing (*Kala*), consumption rules (*Upayoga Samstha*), and individual suitability (*Upayokta*).^[1]

B. Lifestyle Guidelines – Vihara

Dinacharya (Daily Routine): Wake up at *Brahma Muhurta*, perform *Abhyanga* (oil massage), *Vyayama* (exercise), and take regular *Snana* (bath).^[6]

Ritucharya (Seasonal Regimen): Adjust diet and routine according to seasons to balance *Doshas*.^[6]

Sadvritta (Ethical Conduct): Follow moral discipline, mental control, truthfulness, and avoid suppression of natural urges (*Vega Dharana*).^[1]

3. Ayurvedic Management of Lifestyle Disorders

Disorder	Causative Factors	Ayurvedic Management
Obesity (<i>Sthaulya</i>)	Overeating, sedentary lifestyle. ^[7]	Light <i>Laghu</i> diet, <i>Agni Deepana</i> (digestive stimulants), yoga, meditation. ^[2]
Hypertension	Stress, high salt intake, alcohol. ^[7]	Yoga, meditation, <i>Dhoompana</i> (medicated smoking for respiratory strengthening), individualized diet based on <i>Prakriti</i> . ^[6]
Cardiovascular Disorders	Hypertension, stress, high-fat diet. ^[7]	<i>Pathya-Apathya Ahara</i> (wholesome diet), <i>Panchakarma</i> (<i>Snehana</i> , <i>Swedana</i> , <i>Basti</i> , <i>Raktamokshana</i> , <i>Shirodhara</i>). ^[6]
Behavioral Problems	Malnutrition, stress, poor discipline. ^[7]	<i>Sadvritta</i> (mental discipline), early management of psychological disturbances. ^[6]

This review reveals that Ayurvedic principles align with modern preventive medicine. The concept of *Agni* as the root of health parallels current understanding of metabolism and gut microbiota^[1] Dietary guidelines (*Ahara Vidhi*) emphasize individualized nutrition, which is consistent with personalized dietary recommendations in modern medicine.^[8]

Dinacharya and *Ritucharya* can be compared to modern chronobiology, which stresses the importance of circadian rhythm for metabolic health.^[6] *Panchakarma* therapies, such as *Shirodhara* and *Raktamokshana*, have shown positive effects on stress reduction, detoxification, and cardiovascular health, which are supported by emerging clinical evidence.

The Ayurvedic concept of *Sadvritta* for mental discipline is similar to cognitive behavioral therapy and mindfulness practices used in managing psychological disorders today.^[4]

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda offers a comprehensive and preventive approach to lifestyle disorders. By adopting *Ahara Vidhi*, *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, and *Sadvritta*, the risk of chronic disorders such as obesity, hypertension, and cardiovascular diseases can be significantly reduced. Integrating Ayurvedic guidelines into modern lifestyle programs may provide an effective holistic solution for improving health and longevity.

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