

**A REVIEW ON – *MATRASHITIYA ADHYAYA OF ASTANGA HRIDAYA*****Dr. Gaurav Jain\*<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Ved Maithani<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>Pg Scholar, Uttarakhand Ayurvedic College, Dehradun.<sup>2</sup>Assistant Prof, Dept. of Basic Principles, Uttarakhand Ayurvedic College, Dehradun.Article Received on  
29 May 2021,Revised on 19 June 2021,  
Accepted on 09 July 2021

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20219-21034

**\*Corresponding Author****Dr. Gaurav Jain**

Pg Scholar, Uttarakhand

Ayurvedic College,

Dehradun.

**ABSTRACT**

Ahara (food) is one among the important factor for sustenance of life. It is told as foremost pillar among the three Upasthambha (pillars) of life (Trayopstambha i.e. Ahara, Nidra and Bhramcharya) in Ayurveda. When body is supported by the Trayopstambhas, it is endowed by growth, strength and complexion. In all Ayurveda classics Ahara is given due importance, as in detail we find concept of Ahara (food), Pathya Apathya in various diseases, various rules & regulations for food consumption. Similarly, Acharya Vagbhat in sutra sthana has dedicated one whole chapter (Matra shitiya adhyaya) in which he has mentioned about the importance of Ahara Matra, various diseases

caused due to not following the rules of Ahara sevana.

**KEYWORDS:** Ahara, Upasthambha, Pathya-apathya, Matra.**INTRODUCTION**

The word "AHARA" is very much familiar since time immemorial. The etymology of Ahara is described in various classics / dictionaries as under.

In Sabda kalpadrma, the meaning of word Ahara is a substance which is swallowed through throat after eating. Similar type of description is given in Halayudhakosa. In Vacaspatyam the word Ahara is stated as food. It is derived as follows. In Amara kosa Ahara word is derived as. Any substance which is taken in via the mouth and swallowed through throat. As per Acharya Dalhana, Ahara is one which is swallowed through Annanatika (oesophagus).

Collins dictionary defined the word food as "Any substance that can be ingested by a living organism and metabolized into energy and body tissue is known as food".

According to TABER's dictionary food is defined as "any material that provides the nutritive requirements of an organism to maintain growth and physical well being. In all Ayurveda classics the description of Ahara is extensively mentioned.

Acharya Vagbhat, author of Astanga hridaya has mentioned in detail about Ahara in Matrashitiya Adhyaya<sup>[1]</sup>, where in he has highlighted about importance of Matra Vat Ahara Sevana, diseases caused due to neglecting concept of Matra & it's treatment and Bhojana vidhi.<sup>[2]</sup>

### **Description of Ahara matra and it's importance<sup>[3]</sup>**

Acharya vagbhat quotes that a person should always consume - right amount of food, proper quantity essential in respect of food. Proper quantity of food is that activates agni – digestion power (which is compared to fire, in ayurveda). He further says that food that are light to digest (laghu) and those that are hard to digest (guru) both require a specified quantity for proper digestion.

As a general rule, Guru(Heavy) ahara dravya should be consumed till half of satiation level is achieved and Laghu (Light) ahara dravya should be consumed till one is not overly satiated.

### **Effect of Taking More or Less Amount of Quantity of Food**

Consuming quantity of food less than of required does not increase strength and ojus. Body of the person will not get nourished properly, and ultimately it leads to vata imbalance disorders.

Eating excess quantity of food is again not desirable as it provokes all three Doshas quickly and associating with the undigested and vitiated food (ama), produce diseases. it causes Alasaka disease by blocking the movement of food inside the alimentary tract and visuchika (gastro enteritis) by expelling out the undigested food in both downward and upward directions (diarrhoea and vomiting) simultaneously.

### **Alasaka – Indigestion + Constipation**

Indigested food neither comes out in the upper route by vomiting nor from the downward route by purgation. Even it doesn't undergo digestion in the stomach. it stays in the stomach lazily (=alasya) such condition is known as Alasaka.

### Visuchika ~ Gastro Enteritis

Due to sudden and profound aggravation of vata dosha, along with other doshas, the person experiences pain in entire body, as though being pricked by needles, hence it is called visuchika. (suchi means needle).

### Influence of Different Doshas in Alasaka and Visuchika

**Table no. 1: Influence of different dosha in alasaka and visuchika.**

Vata	Pitta	Kapha
Shoola – adominal pain	Jvara – fever	Chardi – vomiting
Bhrama – delusion	Atisara– diarrhoea	Angaguruta - heaviness of the body
Anaha – bloating, fullness	Antardaha – internal burning sensation	Vak sangha – difficulty to speak
Kampa – tremors	Trut – excessive thirst	Shteevana – excessive salivation
Stambha – stiffness etc	Pralaya – panic	---

### Manifestation of Alasaka Symptoms

Alasaka occurs usually in those who are weak, who have mandagni and who suppress urges of the body, Habitually. in them, vata gets increased, gets associated with kapha to obstruct the movement of undigested food in the stomach. It causes the food to stay inside the stomach, as a foreign body. It leads to abdominal colic and such other symptoms, but without vomiting and diarrhoea.

### Dandalasaka

When dosha get highly vitiated, move into vitiated and obstructed channels by accumulation of undigested food. thus doshas get obstructed in the GI tract, and begin to move in other unnatural channels and doshas spread throughout the body and make it stiff like a log of wood. This disease is called dandakalasaka, which should be rejected for treatment as it is quick in causing death.

**Treatment of Alasaka** - Ama undigested food stagnating inside the gastro- intestinal tract should be removed quickly after deciding the conditions of easy management.

1. The person is made to drink warm water mixed with powder of Ugra (vacha), Patu (saindhava) and Phala (madanaphala); this will cause vomiting.
2. This therapy is followed up with swedana (sudation therapy)

3. Next, phalavarti (rectal suppositories) prepared from fruits which help downward movement of faeces and flatus should be administered, the parts of the body which are rigid should be well fomented and then wrapped with cloth.

### **Treatment of Vishuchika**

When the disease advances to later stages, following treatment should be done -

1. Branding by fire over the heel, is recommended.
2. The patient should be made to fast on that day and
3. Taken care of as the one who has undergone purgation therapy.
4. All the post virechana procedure and treatment should be given to the patient.

### **Amadosha Treatment**

If person suffering from indigestion and having severe abdominal pain should not take pain killing drugs; as the agni – digestive fire which is associated with ama – improperly processed metabolites will not be able to digest the doshas, drugs and food. The severe troubles arising from these three will soon kill the patient.

After the food is found digested, if stiffness and heaviness of the abdomen persisting, Then the medicines should be given to digest the residue doshas and to stimulate the agni – digestive power.

Diseases produced by ama – undigested food, become relieved by apatarpana (non-nourishment), three kinds of apatarpana, appropriate to the three doshas should be adopted after careful consideration of all aspects.

If ama is little, only langhana (fasting) will be suitable, If it is moderate langhana (fasting) and pachana – digestive drugs are needed and If it is severe, Then shodhana (purification panchakarma therapy) is necessary; for these will expel out the dosha and ama from the very root.

### **Treatment Principle For Diseases**

Even the other diseases should be treated by adopting treatments which are opposite of their causative factors. It is called as hetu viparyaya chikitsa. Hetu means causative factors. If, however, the diseases reoccur or persist for long time then the hetu viparyaya should be given up and disease specific treatment should be adopted. it is called as vyadhi viparyaya chikitsa.

Tadarthakari chikitsa (therapies which, though not actually opposite of either the cause or the diseases still produce the desired result) should be adopted;

- When the doshas have returned to normal,
- when the ama is completely relieved,
- when digestion activity is completely restored to normalcy,

a) Then oil-bath,

b) Drinking of oil (oleation therapies) and

c) Enema therapy, etc.

should be administered to give strength in the patient.

### **AJIRNA BHEDA**

#### **Ama Ajeerna**

Vitiation of kapha causes 'Ama Ajeerna', It is characterized with

- Swelling of the eyes socket and cheeks,
- Belching similar to those which come up immediately after meals,
- Excess salivation,
- Nausea and
- Heaviness of the body.

#### **Vishthabdha Ajirna**

This type of indigestion is caused due to vitiated Vata, is characterized by

- Pain in the abdomen,
- Constipation,
- Flatulence and
- Debility

#### **Vidagdha Ajirna**

This type of indigestion is due to vitiated pitta and has

- Thirst,
- Fainting,
- Dizziness,
- Giddiness,
- Sour belching and
- Burning sensation as its symptoms.

**Ajirna Cikitsa / Treatment of Indigestion**

- In case of Ama ajirna, Langhana – fasting should be done.
- In Vishtabdha ajirna - Swedana (sudation therapy) should be done.
- In vidagdha ajirna - Vamana (emesis therapy) should be done, or any therapy appropriate to the stage of the disease can be done.

**Vilambika**

Vilambika – another kind of indigestion

- Occurs due to excessive accumulation of ama.
- It is caused due to vitiation of kapha and vata dosha.
- And has all the symptoms of ama;
- Its treatment also is similar to that of ama.

**Rasashesha Ajeerna**

In Rasashesha Ajeerna – following symptoms are seen

- Lack of enthusiasm,
- Discomfort in the region of the heart in spite of pure belching

Such a person should sleep for some time during day without eating anything. Patient of indigestion of any type should sleep during day without taking any food, later, when he develops hunger, he should eat little quantity of easily digestible food.

**Ajirna Samanya Laksana**

- Diarrhea or constipation,
- Exhaustion,
- Inactivity of vata,
- Distension of the abdomen,
- Feeling of heaviness
- And dizziness are the general symptoms of ajirna (indigestion).

**Ajirna Anyakaranani**

- Consuming large quantity of food is not the only cause for production of ama
- Foods which are disliked,
- Which cause flatulence,
- Which are over-cooked or uncooked,

- Which are not easily digestible,
- Which are dry,
- Very cold,
- Dirty (contaminated),
- Which cause burning sensation during digestion,
- Which are dried up or soaked in more water,
- Do not undergo proper digestion;
- Also the food consumed by persons afflicted with
  - Grief,
  - Anger,
  - Excess hunger etc.

### **Dushta Ashana – Bad Food Habits**

Following eating habits are considered improper -

- Consuming suitable and unsuitable foods mixed together is known as Samashana,
  - Consuming large quantity of food even before the previous meal is digested constitutes Adhyasana,
  - Consuming less or more quantity at improper time is Vishamashana,
- All these three either cause death or dreaded diseases.

### **AHARA VIDHI – Rules & Regulations for food consumption**

- Kale satmyam - food should be consumed at the proper time,
- Shuchi hitam – it should be the accustomed, clean, suited to health,
- Snigdha, ushna, laghu – unctuous, hot and easily digestible;
- Tanmanaa – consuming food with due attention
- Shadrasa, madhurapraayam – should contain all the six tastes with predominance of sweet taste,
- Na atidruta, vilambitam – partaken neither very quickly nor very slowly;
- Snataha – after taking bath,
- Kshut vaan – after having good hunger,
- Viviktastha -sitting in solitude,
- Dhauta pada kara aananaha – after washing the feet, hands and face,

- Tarpayitva pitrun, devan, atitheen, balakaan, guroon – after satisfying the pitrus (manes), gods, guests, children and guru.
- After satisfying even the dependents maintained in the house (such as servants, horses and other animals for receiving service, parrots and other pets etc.),
- After carefully considering one's own constitution, likes and dislikes,
- Without scolding / abusing the food,
- Without too much of talk;
- Should partake more of liquid food,
- That which is liked,
- In the company of the liked persons, and
- Served by those who are clean and faithful to him.

#### **Food That Should Not Be Consumed Habitually**

- Kilata (dairy product – sweet in taste),
- Dadhi – curds,
- Kuchika (solid part of curds),
- Kshara (alkalies),
- Sukta (fermented gruel),
- Ama mulaka – uncooked radish,
- Meat of animals which are emaciated,
- dry meat, meat of the - boar, sheep, cow, fish and buffalo.
- masha (black gram), nishpava; saluka, bisa, pista (powdery, starchy),
- germinated grains,
- dried vegetables,
- yavaka (small barley),
- phanita (half cooked molasses) – those should not be consumed habitually.

#### **Pathya – Food That Can Be Consumed Habitually (On Daily Basis, For A Long Time)**

- Shali (rice), godhuma (wheat), yava – barley, shashtika (, mudga – green gram,
- Jangala mamsa,
- Sunisannaka, jivanti, balamulaka,
- Pathya (haritaki), amalaki, mridwika – dry grapes, dadima – pomegranate.
- Patola – pointed gourd



- Sarkara (sugar), kshoudra (honey),
- Divyodaka (rain water or pure water),
- Ksheera (milk), ghrita (ghee),
- And saindhava – rock salt (salt) can be consumed habitually
- Triphala along with honey and ghee should be consumed at nights daily for strengthening of eye sight.
- Any other things which is good for promoting/maintaining health and dispelling diseases can also be consumed habitually.

### **ANUPANA – (AFTER – DRINK)**

- Cold water is the ideal after-drink (anupana) – After meals containing/ prepared from
  - Yava, Godhuma
  - After consuming dadhi – curds / yoghurt, wine, poison and honey
- Warm water is ideal after-drink for foods which are
  - Starchy, mastu, takra
  - Amla kanjika (fermented gruel);
  - Dishes prepared from vegetables and mudga and other legumes
- Sura (beer) is the ideal after drink for lean person.
- Honey mixed water is the ideal after drink for obese person.
- Meat soup is good after drink for the emaciated,
- Wines are ideal after a meal of meat and to those who have poor digestive capacity.
- Milk is best suited just as nector for those who are debilitated by diseases, medicines (and therapies), walking long distances, speaking, sexual intercourse, fasting, exposure to sun and such other tiresome activities, for the emaciated, the aged, and children.

### **Qualities of ANUPANA**

It invigorates, gives contentment, helps proper movement of food inside, provides stability of the body parts, helps in loosening of hard masses of food, and their proper liquification (moistening) and digestion.

### **Ahara Kala – (Proper Time of Meals)**

The ideal time for taking meals is

- After the elimination of feces and urine,
- When the mind is clean (devoid of emotions),

- When the Doshas are moving in their natural paths (functioning normally),
- When belching are pure without and foul smell or taste,
- When hunger is well manifest,
- When the flatus is moving downward easily,
- When the digestive activity is keen,
- When the sense organs are clear functioning,
- When the body is light
- Food should be consumed observing the rules and procedures of taking food.

## DISCUSSION

Ayurveda classics always suggest to consume food in a correct amount, at proper time with proper methodology. Matrashitiya Adhyaya of Astanga Hridaya is one such chapter where Acharya Vagbhat has devoted whole chapter explaining importance of Matratvat Ahara Sevana. He has also explained about the consequences arises due to not following these rules and regulation. If a person does not follow Matratvat Ahara concept he may land up in state of Ama and Ajeerna. Acharya vagbhata has extensively quoted various disease conditions and many symptomatology like Amlodgar (sour belching) to even death. Further he mentions it's treatment depending upon which Doshic involvement in various stages. Further Acharya has quoted concept of Nitya Sevaniya & Asevaniya dravya, and concept of Anupana in detail.

## CONCLUSION

As the name suggests this chapter is dedicated for rules for food consumption, one should follow these rules and regulation in order to maintain health and prevent diseases. As food alone be cause of happiness, health and misery, disease so a person should always follow the rules mentioned in Ayurveda classics.

## REFERENCES

1. Vagbhata. 'Astang Hridayam': 'Sarvangsundara Vyakhya' of Arundutta and 'Ayurvedarasayana' of Hemadri, edited by Pt. Bhisgacharya Harishastri paradkar Vaidya, Chaukhamba Orientalia, Varanasi, 2014; 147: 956.
2. Vagbhata. 'Astang Hridayam': 'Sarvangsundara Vyakhya' of Arundutta and 'Ayurvedarasayana' of Hemadri, edited by Pt. Bhisgacharya Harishastri paradkar Vaidya, Chaukhamba Orientalia, Varanasi, 2014; 147: 956.

3. Vagbhata. 'Astang Hridayam': 'Sarvangsundara Vyakhya' of Arundutta and 'Ayurvedarasayana' of Hemadri, edited by Pt. Bhisgacharya Harishastri paradkar Vaidya, Chaukhamba Orientalia, Varanasi, 2014; 148: 956.
4. Vagbhata. 'Astang Hridayam': 'Sarvangsundara Vyakhya' of Arundutta and 'Ayurvedarasayana' of Hemadri, edited by Pt. Bhisgacharya Harishastri paradkar Vaidya, Chaukhamba Orientalia, Varanasi, 2014; 148: 956.