

AN AYURVEDIC LITERARY REVIEW OF SHARAD RITU - DIET AND LIFESTYLE REGIMEN

Dr. Sumit*¹ and Dr. M. B. Gaur²

PG Scholar*¹, Professor and HOD²

PG Department of Kriya Sharir, Ch. Brahm Prakash Ayurved Charak Sansthan, Khera Dabar,
New Delhi, India.

Article Received on
12 July 2022,

Revised on 02 August 2022,
Accepted on 23 August 2022

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr202212-25411

*Corresponding Author

Dr. Sumit

PG Scholar, PG Department
of Kriya Sharir, Ch. Brahm
Prakash Ayurved Charak
Sansthan, Khera Dabar,
New Delhi, India.

ABSTRACT

The intensity of cold and warmth alter in consonance with the movement of earth dividing the year in to various seasons. This cause changes not only in the outer atmosphere but also it disturbs the equilibrium of *dosha* in the human body. The seasonal alteration of *dosha* is contemplated ordinary and they will show their effect on body if they are not handled properly. *Ayurveda*, the holistic healing science proclaims health for mankind with the motto of prevention is better than cure. For a more expected quality of life for healthy persons, *dincharya*, *ritucharya*, *sadvrutta* are explained in *swastha chatushka* in *charak Samhita*. *Ritucharya* being related to seasonal regimen and this specific regimen and diet is peculiar for every season. In *varsha*,

sharad and *hemanta* ritus *pitta dosha chaya*, *prakopa* and *prashama* occur respectively. In present era, nobody pays attention to changing environment hence decreased immunity which leads to mostly *pittaj- pradhan vyadhi* in *sharad ritu*. One's diet of various kind leads to upgradation of strength and complexion only if he knows the wholesomeness according to different seasons dependent on behaviour and diet. This review article highlights the wisdom of ancient ayurvedic literature and some historical view of the regimen and dietary habits in *sharad ritu*.

KEYWORDS: *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Sadvrutta*, *sharad ritu*, autumn season, daily regimen, dietary regimen, health, *swastha*.

INTRODUCTION

Binary basic cores of *ayurveda* are i.e., to maintain the health of a healthy person and to cure the illness of unwell.^[1] Intended for the first entity different *Acharya* explained one of the important unit is *ritucharya*. Vast literature is available on seasonal regimen, and it is essential component for a physician for therapeutic purpose like health promotion, precautionary and healing aspects.

Ritu is season & *charya* explains routine followed. Hence, *Ritucharya* defines seasonal routine, the lifestyle & diet that essential to be tailed according to the specific season, and compulsory to maintain physiological function in our body. In *ayurveda* a year is divided into two *kalas* or *Ayana* on the basis of position of the sun:^[2]

- a. *Aadaan Kaal (Uttarayan)* &
- b. *Visarga Kaal (Dakshinayaan)*.

Aadaan Kaal includes of *Shishir*, *vasant* and *grishma*, sun & wind are strong which release the strength of individuals & cold qualities of earth.^[3] *Visarga Kaal* includes *varsha*, *sharad* and *Hemant*, moon is more dominant & earth regains its chilliness and vigour through clouds, rain & cold winds.^[4]

Sharad ritu is a part of *visarga kaal*. The two important *hindu* months of *Ashwin* and *Kartik* fall during this season. It is the festival time in india including most of the *hindu* festivals of *Navratri*, *Vijayadashmi*, and *Sharad Purnima etc.* In present time it is compared with autumn season. The season starts around september and approximately lasts till november. Autumn is the season after the rainy season and before the pre-winter season. The average temperature in this period settles at 33°C. During autumn, the persons having adjusted to rains and cold are suddenly subjected to the heat due to the reduction of clouds and increased intensity of sunrays which leads to aggravation (*prakopa*) of *pitta* which is accumulated in *varsha ritu*.^[5] Therefore, measures during this season should be taken to pacify *pitta dosha* and to increase digestive power.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To highlight the structure of *Sharad Ritu* along with dietetic and customary regimen explained in various classical texts of *Ayurveda*.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

To review the principal Ayurvedic classics in the context of *Ritucharya* elucidated by the *Acharyas*. The appropriate websites and journals providing evidence regarding the *sharad ritucharya* will also be reviewed.

A LITERARY VIEW OF SHARAD RITU

The sunrays appear to be as warm golden hue in *sharad ritu* (autumn). Bunches of silver clouds are seen to sail the dark deep blue of heaven. Ponds are festooned with lotus flowers, agitated by the wings of the diving swans. Grounds at high level turn out to be dry, while the low one still remains muddy. The plains are covered with shrubs, undergrowth, plants and trees such as, *Bana*, *Saptahava*, *Bandhuk*, *Kasa* and *Asana* flower in abundance.^[6]

Consequences of Sharad Ritu on Dosha

During this time period, *pitta dosha* gets aggravated but *kapha* also remains in *anubandh* with *pitta*. As properties of *rakta* is similar to *pitta* so depravity of *rakta* is also found.

Table 1: Doshika awastha of different ritu as per acharya Charak^[7], Sushrut^[8] and Sharangdhar.^[9]

	SANCHAYA	PRAKOPA	SHAMAN
VATA	GRISHMA	VARSHA (su. & sha.-Pravrut)	SHARAD
PITTA	VARSHA	SHARAD	HEMANT (sha. - Vasant)
KAPHA	HEMANT	VASANT	GRISHMA (sha.- Pravrut)

Consequences of Sharad Ritu on dehabala

The higher animals experience weakness in beginning of *dakshinayaan i.e., varsha* and end of *uttarayan i.e., grishma*, medium strength in mid-term i.e., *sharad and vasant* and maximum strength in end of *dakshinayaan i.e., hemant* and beginning of *uttarayan i.e., shishir*.^[10]

As *acharya charak* has explained *bala* during different *ritus* and in *sharad ritu bala* is of medium quantity. *Bala* is said to be the immunity in modern times, of our body and if *bala* of body is less then different type of diseases may occur. Therefore, for enhancement of *bala* or *dehabala sharad ritu* diet and *dincharya* should be sought to fulfil desire of obtaining good health.

Consequences of *Sharat Ritu* on *Agni*

As in *varsha ritu* it is articulated that as body *bala* is weak hence digestive power becomes also weak.^[11] In *sharad ritu*, *bala* is said to be of medium so digestive power is also of medium quantity. Hence, during this time only light food is to be consumed. The lighter the food, the better is the digestion power. Although, *pitta* is acknowledged with the digestive fire itself, it brings about loss of appetite due to an upsurge in its liquid fraction.^[12] As it has been said, "As even hot water extinguishes fire, so does *pitta* suppress the digestive power."^[13] Intake of unproportionate diets is always harmful, but it is all the more so during this season because it brings about many severe types of ailments; hence is the emphasis on proper quantity.

DIET AND HABITS OF AUTUMN SEASON

Diet and habits that should be seen in time period of *sharad ritu* described below.

Diet

1. Sweet, light, cold, slightly bitter and *pitta*-pacifying food and drinks should be taken in proper quantity and with good appetite.^[14]
2. Meat of *Jangala* animals^[15] or *lava* (common quail), *kapinjala* (grey partridge), *ena* (antelope), *urabhra* (sheep), *Sarabha* (wapiti) and *sashak* (rabbit) should be preferred.^[16]
3. *Sushruta* mentions preparations of milk and of sugar-cane-juice as well as honey, *sali*-rice, *mudag*-pulse, oil should be used in the Autumn (*Sharad*) season. Sweet and cold water and purified wine as transparent as crystals are also recommended. The *Sidhu* class of wine should be judiciously taken.^[17]
4. *Vagbhata* has also mentioned food substances containing *tikta*, *madhura* and *kasaya* rasas and also *laghu guna dravyas* and *amalaki*, *patola*, *madhu* (honey), *janghala mansa rasa* etc. are good for those who are hungry.^[18]
5. As in *sharad dusti* of *pitta* and *rakta* is to be found, one should prescribe use of bitter ghee (ghee medicated with bitter drugs), purgatives and bloodletting and avoidance of the sun during the autumn.^[19]
6. For purpose of bath, drink and plunging, *hansodak* water i.e., water heated with sunrays during day and cooled with moonrays during night, cooked by time, free from defects and detoxicated by *Agastya* star is used.^[20]

Habits

Swimming and immersion in ponds full of lotus and water lily, enjoying the moon's rays at dusk and the use of sandal-pastes are recommended.^[21]

Fresh and shrill clothes along sandal-pastes or camphor as well as ornaments of autumnal flowers should be used.^[22]

Bhavprakash also gave description of coitus rules that is in *sharad ritu* coitus should be used once every three days but according to *Sushrut*, one should participate once in every three days in all seasons except during summer when only once in fifteen days is allowed.^[23]

Prohibited diet and habits of autumn season

1. Fat, oil, dews, meat of aquatic and marshy animals, alkaline food, curd, day-sleep and easterly wind.^[24]
2. *Tikshna* (sharp pungent) acid, hot and alkaline articles (of food) as well as the sun's rays, excess sexual activity, sleep at day-time and keeping late hours should be avoided.^[25]
3. Oversatiation is also prohibited in this time period.^[26]

DO'S AND DON'TS OF AUTUMN SEASON AS PER MODERN ERA

With the change in season, the change is very evident in the environment we live in. We see various changes in bio-life around us, as human being is also part of the same ecology, the body as well as mind is greatly influenced by external environment. Several exogenic and endogenic rhythm have specific phase relationship with each other; which means that they interact and coordinate with each other. If body is refusing itself to stressors due to modifications in specific traits of seasons, it may lead to *dosha vaishamya*, which may render the body highly susceptible kinds of disorders. People do not know or ignore the suitable types of food stuffs, and others regimen to be followed in *sharad ritu*, therefore, the incidence of diabetes, obesity, hypertension and heart disease is increasing at an alarming rate, especially in the young, urban population.

Do's

1. *Ghee* – It is highly beneficial to reduce pitta dosha and also helps improve *agni* (digestive fire) and brings smoothness in skin.
2. Foods that are cold in potency, easily digestible, sweet, astringent taste are recommended.

3. Intake of milk and milk products except curd, sweets, black grapes, raisins are recommended.
4. Eat in moderation as the digestive fire would be weak during this season.
5. *Abhyang* (Body massage) with oils made of *Chandan*, coconut oil, *Ushira*, etc is recommended.
6. Stay relaxed and good sleep is advised.
7. Wear pearl necklace which acts as a coolant on the body.
8. Use of *sheetali* and *sheetkari* pranayama is beneficial.

Don'ts

1. Avoid use of spicy, sour, oily food substances that aggravate *pitta dosha*.
2. Avoid too much intake of tea and coffee.
3. Avoid anger.
4. Avoid exposure to sun light and eastern winds.
5. Avoid eating at roadside stalls.
6. Chilled drinks and refrigerated items should not be consumed in one go as they can trigger respiratory allergies.

DISCUSSION

In our country the condition is moderately alarming due to quick altering of disease profile. The WHO has recognized India as one of the nations that is going to have most of the lifestyle disorders in the near future. Currently, not only lifestyle disorders becoming more common, but they are also affecting younger population. Hence, the population at risk shifts from 40+ to maybe 30+ or even younger. To fulfil the motto of ayurveda one out of two aims of ayurveda is 'Swasthyarakshana' i.e. maintenance of health. For this exclusive purpose in ayurvedic literature include – daily regimen, seasonal regimen, night regimen, *sadvritta* and *achararasayana* -ethical and moral activities and the trio *ahara*, *nidra*, *brahmacharya*. In spite of mentioning all these important aspects, in present study *ritucharya* is elaborated. These characteristics of *ritu* decide the regimen to be followed to maintain health and to prevent *kalaja vyadhi* (disorders). The accumulated *pitta* in *varsha ritu* acts as *viprakrusta hetu* for future disease going to happen in *sharad ritu*. The *pitta prakopak rasa* intake during *varsha ritu* is *utapadak hetu* for aggravation of *pitta dosha* in *sharad ritu*. The predominance of *pitta* in its *prakopa avastha* in *sharad ritu*, *pitta sambadhit vyadhi* and *raktaja vyadhi* – *visarpa*, *chardi* etc may occur. Throughout this phase, it is recommended to follow specific

krama to escape from *kalaj vyadhi*. The *agni* is also suppressed in this season, but all these are within the range of normal variations. So, mostly *pitta shamak* diet and behavioral regimen in nature should be followed. The food articles which have *tikta*, *madhura*, *kashaya rasa* should be consumed, because they have the *pitta shamak* properties, so it will help in balancing the exaggerated *pitta dosha*. The consumption of *dravyas* having cold potency is indicated as it works contrary to the *ushna guna*, consumption of *laghu gunatmak* diet kindles up the diminished digestive fire. On the concept of *ritus* and their effect on *bala* explained that the *bala* in *sharad ritu* is moderate with respect to other *ritus*. The information of *ritucharya* is very much reliable to the concept of *kriya-kala*, that is explaining the modes and stages of the progression of diseases, the disharmony in the *doshas*—*vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha* results in *roga* (disease) with the changes of time. A good understanding of it is very much essential for initial diagnosis and prognosis for adopting preventive and curative measures. The concept of *hansodaka* is also very much appropriate, as the water which gets purified with the rays of sun and the influence of *saumya guna* of moon governs in this season and looks like panacea for life. The *sharad purnima* during *sharad ritu* is one of the significant days as the moon is closest to the earth on that day and its rays are said to have certain nourishing properties that heal body and soul. The strong rays of sun are prohibited for prolonged exposure that make the body dehydrated soon in this season, and drinking of *sharkara mishrit jal* is advised which maintains the electrolyte balance of the body. The *virechan* is the prominent *panchkarma* procedure and has the impeccable effect on the exaggerated *pitta dosha* to achieve the homeostasis of the *pitta dosha* (*samya avastha*) and also enhances appetite, power of digestion and absorption of food. The exaggerated *pitta* often depraves the blood humour, so the *raktamokshan* is another powerful *panchkarma* technique which is very effective for various kinds of *raktaj* disorders. therefore, maintaining the harmony of the *tridosha* which continue healthy life. However, in contemporary science, regular exercise and a scrupulous diet along with medications can go a long way in checking lifestyle diseases. But with the knowledge of *ritucharya* we can definitely escape the patients to medicines.

CONCLUSIONS

This review summarizes, various significant aspects of *sharad ritucharya* explained by the *acharyas* and its positive approach towards health. *Ritucharya* and *dincharya* described is not less than a boon for humanity. The external atmosphere has a sturdy influence on our body and its compulsory to modification of diet and behavior according to changing seasons.

Samya Awastha (State of equilibrium) of all the three *doshas* is the definitive objective to stay healthy and the changing seasons brings about the changes in the concentration of the *doshas* giving rise to their various stages like *sanchaya*, *prakopa* and *shamana*, which is responsible for declining of health status. Hence, wise man should adopt strict seasonal regimen to attain perfect and sound health and to gain virtuous immunity. The *sharad ritu* is one the most dynamic period as the weather doesn't remains the same where there are sharp sunrays on one side and on other side there is beginning of winters. So, in order to deal with this transition, the *sharad ritucharya* must be carefully followed, for a desired healthy life. As seasonal changes not only affect body but also mind so by following these regimen as told by *ayurvedic* physicians, weight of seasonal diseases will be reduced from world's shoulder.

REFERENCES

1. Sharma P.V.; editor; Charaka Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2017; 240.
2. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 38.
3. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 38.
4. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 38.
5. Sharma P.V.; editor; Charaka Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2017; 46.
6. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 44.
7. Sharma P.V.; editor; Charaka Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2017; 418.
8. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 41.
9. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sarngadhara Samhita, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2012; 13.
10. Sharma P.V.; editor; Charaka Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2017; 43.
11. Sharma P.V.; editor; Charaka Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2017; 45.

12. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-III, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 424.
13. Sharma P.V.; editor; Charaka Samhita, Vol-II, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2011; 255.
14. Sharma P.V.; editor; Charaka Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2017; 46.
15. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-III, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 424.
16. Sharma P.V.; editor; Charaka Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2017; 46.
17. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-III, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 424.
18. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Astanga samgraha, Vol-1, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2018; 67.
19. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-III, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 424.
20. Sharma P.V.; editor; Charaka Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2017; 46.
21. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-III, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 424.
22. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-III, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 424.
23. Sitaram Bulusu, editor; Bhavaprakasa, Vol-1, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2012; 93.
24. Sharma P.V.; editor; Charaka Samhita, Vol-1, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2017; 46.
25. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Sushruta Samhita, Vol-III, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint edition, 2017; 424.
26. Murthy K.R. Srikantha, editor; Astanga samgraha, Vol-1, Varanasi Chaukhambha Orientalia, reprint, 2018; 67.