



A Review article on Importance of basic *Ayurvedic* principles in prevention and management of lifestyle disorders

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Abstract -

Lifestyle disorders are the disorders linked with the way of people live their life. These are commonly caused by unhealthy eating habits, lack of physical activity, alcohol, drugs, smoking, unhealthy daily routine. Diet and lifestyle are major factors that influence such diseases. In India, Lifestyle disorders that appear to be increased in frequency include Cardiovascular diseases, Type 2 Diabetes, Obesity, Cancer, Osteoporosis, Gastrointestinal issues, Chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, Hypertension, Depression.

The basic principle of *Ayurveda* is focusing on '*Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam*', meaning maintaining the health of the healthy, more than '*Aturasya*

Vikara Prashamanam' meaning to treat the disease of a person. *Ayurveda* has approach of intervention that is targeted towards complete physical psychological and spiritual well-being which makes this science a potential option for prevention and treatment of lifestyle disorders.

Keywords:

Basic principles of *ayurveda*, Lifestyle disorders, *Ahar vidhi visheshayatana*, *Viruddha ahara*, *Sadvrutta*, *Dinacharya*, *Rutucharya*.

Introduction -

Basic principles of *Ayurveda* - *Ayurveda* believes that everything in this universe is made up of basic elements called as *pancha mahabhutas* namely Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Space/Ether. Our individual

bodies, minds, world around us is made up of these elements.

Prakriti is composed of three prime qualities i.e. *gunas* namely *Satva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Five sense organs arise from *Satva*, Organs of actions arise from *Rajas* and five elements arise from *Tamas*. Different combination of these three *gunas* composes everything in this universe. Earth – *tamas*, Water – *Satva* + *tamas*, Fire – *Satva* + *rajas*, Air – *Rajas*, Ether – *Satva*.

According to *Ayurveda*, human body is comprised of *Doshas*, *Dhatus* and *Malas* simultaneously. Its equilibrium helps keep healthy human being. *Tridoshas* - *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* which comprise the body are made up of *pancha mahabhutas* i.e. *Vata* – Air + Ether, *Pitta* – Fire + Water, *Kapha* – Earth + Water. Seven *Dhatus* gives physical appearance, shape and features to body namely *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Asthi*, *Majja*, *Shukra*. Three *Malas* deals with excretory system of body namely *Purisha*, *Mutra*, *Sweda*. If not properly eliminated it can have impact on *doshas* and *dhatus* hence causing diseases.

Materials and methods –

Review of literature regarding Basic principles of *Ayurveda* in *ayurvedic* texts and lifestyle disorders in modern text.

Discussion –

In *Ayurveda*, *Lokapurusha samya siddhant* (World-human being similarity theory) describes that human body replicates the world around us and *Samanya-vishesh Siddhant* describes *Samanya* causes *vridhhi*

(increase), *vishesha* causes *rhasa* (decrease), these are some of basic principles. *Ayurveda* uses these principles to understand disease causative factors, *vyadhi samprapti* (pathogenesis) and treatment by causing *sampraptibheda*

A) Concept of Ahara in ayurveda-

Ahara is described under title of *Trayopastambha* i.e. *Ahara*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*. It is very important for nourishment, development of body. Each dietary item is considered to have action on body, it could be *dosha* aggravating, pacifying or balancing. Food is comprised of 6 rasas that are combination of *pancha mahabhutas* namely *Madhura* – Earth+Water, *Amla* – Earth+Fire, *Lavana* – Fire+Water, *Katu* – Fire+Air, *Tikta* – Ether+Air. *Kashaya* – Earth+Air. These rasas can have impact on body by *vruddhi* or *rhasa* of *doshas*.

1) **Ahar Matra-** The requirements of food and nutrition depends upon the *agni*, *koshtha*, *prakriti*, age and hence it differs from person to person. Imaginary division of stomach's capacity of intake in four parts, one should take two parts of solid food, one part of liquid and one part should be left empty for movement.

2) **Ahar sevan kram-** Food that is *guru*, *madhura*, *snighdha* should be taken initially, then *amla lavana ahara* and at the end *ruksha, katu, tikta, Kashaya ahara* should be taken. This sequence is described to have proper activation of *agni*, digestion, absorption and metabolism of food.

3) Viruddha ahara- 18 types are described in text viz. *Desha*, *Kala*- cold substances in winter, *Matra*- honey+cows ghee in equal quantity, *Satmya*, *Dosha*, *Sanskar* (mode of preparation)- heating honey, *Veerya*- Fish+milk, *Koshtha*, *Avastha* (state of health), *Kram*- taking hot water after honey, *Parihar*- taking cold water after taking hot drink, *Upchar* (treatment), *Paak*(cooking), *Samyoga* (combination)- Fruits+ milk, *Hridya*, *Sampad*, *Vidhi* (rules of eating). Consumption of this *viruddha ahara* works as a slow poison, causing vitiation of *dosha* finally causing various diseases such as skin disorders, *Gulma*.

4) Ahara-vidhi visheshayatana- these are described to achieve complete benefits of consumed food. *Prakruti*- the qualities of food is the *prakriti* of food such as *laghu*, *guru*, *sheeta*, *ushna*, etc, *Karana*- modification of the food with help of *agni*, water etc, *Samyoga*- combination of food items that amplify or nullify actions of individual components, *Rashi*- quantity of food as per individual person, *Desha*- properties of food consumed depends on habitat of the consumer and where the food was originated, *Kala*- suggests time of food consumption, phase of digestion, *avastha* of disease, *Upyog sanstha*- rules of food consumption, *Upayokta*- consumer of food, their preferences and habits.

B) Concept of Vihara in Ayurveda-

Ayurveda focuses on preservation of health, this daily regimen is called as *Swasthavritta* which can be described as *Dinacharya* *Ratricharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Sadvrutta*, *Dharaniya*- *Adharaniya* veg.

1) Dinacharya (Daily regimen)-

Brahma muhurta – Ideal time to wakeup is approximately 2 *muhurtas* i.e. 96 minutes before sunrise in respective region. For proper oral hygiene *Danta dhawana* by plant twig having *Kashaya*, *katu*, *tikta* *rasas*, *Jivha nirlekhana* by instrument made of gold, silver, iron or soft, smooth twig of plant, *Kavala*- Medicated fluid is filled in mouth so that it can freely move in mouth, *Nasya*- putting drops of medicated oil in nostrils in *Urdhvjatrugata vikara*, *Anjana*- medicinal preparation applied to eye, *Gandusha*- Mouth completely filled with medicated fluid, retained till *netra* and *nasasrava* and then spitted out, *Dhumapana*- taking smoke through nostrils or mouth and releasing from mouth only, *Vyayam*- *Ardhashakti* *vyayama* i.e half of one's capacity, *Abhyanga*- Massage with medicated oil, *Tambulasevana*- chewing of betel leaves, *Snana*- Taking bath using hot water below neck region and cold water for head region, *Aharsevana*- Taking balanced diet to improve immunity and prevention of diseases is advised by *Ayurveda*.

2) Ritucharya (Seasonal regimen)

In most of the *samhitas* in *Ayurveda*, *Ritucharya* is prominently described. *Ritu* meaning the season has different features and has different effects on body and environment around us. There are different recommendations for diet and lifestyle for each season throughout the year. The preventive aspect of basic principle of *Ayurveda* can be achieved by change in diet and lifestyle according to changes in climatic condition. And as the key to survival, knowledge of *Ritucharya* (Seasonal

regimen) is of very important value. With the change in every season, we can view an evident change in the environment around us. Being a part of this same environment, human body is greatly influenced by external environment.

The whole year is divided into six seasons and regimen according to every season is explained. *Kapha prakopak ahara-vihara* is to be prevented in *Vasant*, sleeping during daytime is allowed in *Grishma*, Prevention of *amla rasa* and contaminated water should be done in *Varsha*, *pitashamak ahara-vihara* should be done in *Sharad*, Avoid daytime sleep and eat heavy food in *Hemant* and in *Shishir*. regimen as explained in *Hemant* should be followed.

3) *Sadvritta* (Ideal routines) and *Aachara rasayana* (Code of conduct)

Definition of health according to *ayurveda* includes cheerful soul, unimpaired senses and well-being of mind. For this be respectful to elderly people, always speak truth, do not harm anyone, always speak pleasant and positive words, be patient, have self-control, do not indulge anti-social activities, never disrespect those who are inferior by experience, money, status, strength and knowledge, follow the path of righteousness, Host guest and show hospitality, take shower daily, trim nails, hair, mustache regularly, always cover your mouth while yawning, sneezing, laughing, be dressed with clean and well fitted clothes, avoid suppressing natural urges etc are the rules prescribed for maintaining healthy, balanced and peaceful mind. Control over mind is meant to control impulses of emotions which may cause mental illness.

4) *Dharaniya* and *Adharaniya vega* –

The expressions generated by systems of body in the form of urges or reflexes are called as *vega*. In the ayurvedic texts, concept of *Dharaniya* and *Adharaniya vega* have been described. *Dharaniya vega* means urges that should be suppressed or controlled, these are *Kayik*, *Vachik*, *Manasik*. *Kayik- Parastreebhoga* (prostitution), *Asteya* (stealing), *Hinsa* (physical violence), *Vachik- Parushya* (talking to make someone feel bad), *Atimatra* (talking too much), *Suchak* (sharing someones secret), *Anruta*(speaking a lie), *Akalyukta* (untimely talk), *Manasik-Lobha* (greed), *Shoka* (grief), *Bhaya* (fear), *Krodha* (anger), *Irshya* (envy), *Ahamkara* (ego), *Sahasa* (unnecessary daring), *Nirlajjata* (shamelessness), *Abhyasuya* (jealousy), *Abhidhyay* (stealing).

These *vegas*, if not controlled can cause vitiation of *tridoshas* resulting into various psycho-somatic disorders. Some subtypes of ayurvedic diseases are named over these *vegas* as *Bhayaj atisara*, *Shokaj atisara*, *Dvishtartha samyogaj chhardi* etc. In a diseased individual these *dharaniya vegas* can be used in management.

Adharaniya vega means urges that should be relieved, if not it can be disease causative. These are Burping and flatulence, Defecation, Urination, Sneezing, Thirst, Appetite, Sleep, Coughing, Exertional breathing, Yawning, Tears, Emesis, Ejaculation.

These *adharaniya vegas* are body's natural detoxification mechanism to keep it clean and healthy, if they are suppressed or

forcefully controlled, it can cause serious harm to body and eventually mind too. Habitual suppression of these *vegās* causes accumulation of toxins that may cause damage to cells, channels, organs of body hence leading to various diseases.

Conclusion — *Ahara* and *vihara* are the foundation of a person's life. And lifestyle disorders are caused by unhealthy diet and behavioural habits. The preventive aspect of basic principle of Ayurveda can be achieved by change in diet and lifestyle according to changes in climatic condition. Adhering to suppression of *dharaniya vega* is essential for *sadvrutta* and *achara rasayana*. In order to achieve healthy state of mind and body, wrong diet and behavioural habits should be given up. The utilization of all above modalities has a great effect on lifestyle disorders. Ayurveda concentrates on achieving the objective of Ayurveda for maintenance of health, prevention and management of diseases for a healthy and happy life. As the quotation says "Prevention is better than cure", We can maintain health and prevent these diseases by making healthy lifestyle changes by following diet, exercise and positivity.

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