PREVENTIVE AND CURATIVE ASPECTS OF AYURVEDA IN LIFESTYLE DISORDERS

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Abstract - Lifestyle diseases characterize those diseases whose occurrence is primarily based on the daily habits of people and are a result of an inappropriate relationship of people with their environment. Ayurveda is recognized as foremost life science and describes ways to prevent and manage lifestyle disorders. The world is being attracted towards its potential. Ayurveda texts play an important role in promoting the health and prolonging the Life span by establishing homeostasis between Dosha, Dhatu & Mala. Ahara, Nidra and Brahmacharya form the pillars of health as per Ayurveda. Healthy lifestyle methods are now easily achievable with nutritional counseling, exercise training, de-addiction programmes, regular medical check-ups and stress management techniques. Ayurveda provides better solution in the guidelines of proper dietary management & lifestyle advises. In this revolutionized era, we cannot stop doing the developmental work, but we can certainly reduce our ailments with simple and effective measures in our lives as suggested in Ayurveda, the science of life.

Keywords - Lifestyle Disorders, Dosha, Dhatu, Ahara, Nidra, Brahmcharya .

INTRODUCTION

"Where there is health, there is hope and where there is hope there is everything". Good health should be highest priority but researches imply that health is pushed to a secondary position on several occasions. Lifestyle disorder is an umbrella term given to all the diseases which arise because of unhealthy lifestyle such as hypertension, diabetes mellitus, PCOD, Infertility, depression, anxiety, sexual disorders, menstrual irregularities, dyslipidemia, and overweight/obesity associated with cardiovascular diseases is high on the rise. Lifestyle diseases lead to reduction in productivity and development of the country. Therefore, there is an increasing concern for their prevention. The main factors contributing to lifestyle diseases include bad food habits, physical inactivity, wrong body posture, and disturbed biological clock, over eating, over dependence on processed foods, energy drinks, artificial sweeteners and fast foods, drug abuse, tobacco smoking and alcohol drinking, stress, poor sleeping habits which are all attributed mainly to the so called modern living habits and urbanization. There is one another important problem of the modern world that is poor exposure to sun light and fresh air. Not only are these diseases thwarting, but these are also interfering with natural comfort of wellbeing.

Ayurveda is recognized as foremost life science and describes ways to prevent and manage lifestyle disorders; the world is being attracted towards its potential. Ayurveda is a Sanskrit word derived from ayuh (life) and veda (knowledge), and is also known as the "science of life". It gives directions for the lifestyle about how to achieve and maintain a supreme quality of physical, mental, social and spiritual health. Ayurveda texts play an important role in promoting the health and prolonging the Life span by establishing homeostasis between Dosha, Dhatu & Mala. Ayurveda has two objects: preservation of the health in the healthy and treatment of disorders in the diseased. "Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshana Aaturasya Vikara Prakshamanam" According to Sushrut, Health is defined as the state of equilibrium of dosha (humours), agni (digestive juices, enzymes and hormones), dhatu (tissues) and the normal excretion of mala (waste materials), along with a happy state of atma (soul), indriya (sensory and motor organs), and manas (mind). The Ayurvedic system understands the functioning of human body as a whole and any disease is understood to be due to imbalance of Tridoshas – Vata, Pitta and Kapha. Ayurveda has equated tridoshas with the building pillars (Sthambha) required to make the building stable. Similarly the need of three supporting pillars (Upastambha) have been emphasized for human body. The three supporting pillars are Aahar (Diet), Nindra (Sleep), and Bhrahmacharya (Celibacy). It has been mentioned in Ayurvedic texts that those who take healthy nourishment and balanced activities in their daily life, which categorize the good and bad aspect of everything and abide by a moral conduct, become free from disease.

1. Ahara (Balanced Diet) - Acharya Gangadhara says that anything which is ingested by the tongue down to the throat is called Ahara. Therefore, drugs are also included in Ahara. The food is said to be cause of stability for all living beings. There is nothing else except diet for sustaining the life of living beings. In other words, one is capable to make man disease free only with the food (congenial diet). Diet is said to be basis of life, strength, complexion, Ojas, growth and development, functioning of Indriyas, happiness, clarity of voice, luster, pleasure, increase of Dhatus, intellect, health etc. The person desirous of long life should eat the diet which is congenial, appropriate in quantity and time having six

Rasas. Food is abode for six tastes and these tastes decrease and normalcy of the Doshas. A balanced diet is one which provides all the nutrients in required amounts and proper proportions. The quantities of foods needed to meet the nutrient requirements vary with age, gender, physical activity and physiological status. Most of the lifestyle disorders prevalent these days are mainly due to the faulty dietery habits. According to Ayurveda the reasons for all the diseases lies within our Agni i.e. digestive process. Each food we take either has Dosha prakopaka or Dosha shamaka action on human body. The improper digestion (Mandagni) produces toxins (Ama) which leads to majority of diseases. These lifestyle disorders are avoidable by following various regimen described in the Ayurvedic samhitas. Ayurveda texts have described the day, night and seasonal regimen which are essential for our healthiness through our lifestyle. Acharya charak has described 8 specific factors of method of dieting in a very systematic and scientific manner which is known as Ashta ahara vidhi visheshayatana. These are 8 major aspects of food convention that includes compatibility of food articles which are determinant factors for the maintenance of Health.

are a cause for increase, **Ahara Vidhi Vishesa Ayatanani** means the causative factors which are responsible for the wholesome and unwholesome effect of the food or of the method for the diet intake. These are the special factors in the science of diet and dietetics. Ashta Ahara vidhi visheshayatana explains various factors that influence Ahara such as origin, season, prepration, biological properties, environmental factors, freshness and provides a logical explanation of how to balance food according to one‟s Dosha and physical needs. Ayurvedic classical texts give due regards to these eight factors which determine the utility of various types of food. Ahara Vidhi Vishesa Ayatanani consist three different words.

1. Ahara Vishesa: It means specialty, special property, and distinguished effect of Ahara.
2. Vidhi Vishesa: It means a special system, special method, special manner, special way, special arrangement, special rule, special command or special statement for diet intake.
3. Ayatana: It means cause, support, Hetu etc.

Name of The Factor	Description	Explanation with Example
Prakrti	Nature of the food substances. Prakrti indicates the nature of the substance, i.e. inherent attributes of diets and drugs.	Masha is heavy and Mudga is light and meat of Sukara is heavy and that of Ena is light.
Karana	Processing of food substances. Processing results in the transformation of the inherent attributes of substances.	Transformation of the food quality is effected by dilution, application of heat, cleansing, churning, etc.
Samyoga	Combination of two or more food substances.	Combination of honey & ghee or honey, fish and milk.
Rashi	Quantity of substances to be taken	Quantity of all things involved is Sarvagraha and that of each and everything individually is Parigraha.
Desha	Desha denotes the habitat of food substances.	It determines the variations of the qualities of the substances according to their geographic region, due to different soil etc
Kala	Time as age, seasons and conditions	Time factor is described in dual context; one pertains with daily and seasonal variations while other deals with individual's conditions of age and disease.
Upayoga Samstha	It consists of dietetic rules	----------
Upayokta	Habit and state of individual	It means the person who takes food.

Ahara Vidhi Vishesa Ayatanani. Following Table shows the concept of Diet to be taken.

A. Prakriti / swabhava - Nature of food / Qualitative characterstic of food Prakriti is Swabhava (nature) which is the natural existence of properties like Laghu, Guru etc.For example Masha is Guru (heavy) and Mudga is Laghu (light), meat of Shukar is Guru(heavy) and Ena (deer) meat is Laghu (light) in nature. Prakriti is the natural qualities of Ahara dravya, while consuming any food article one must keep in mind the Virya (potency), Sheeta or Ushna, the food is heavy or light in digestion and the effect of food on dosha either its migrate or aggravate the Dosha etc. For example the individual having symptoms of Kaphavriddhi should avoid the Guru and Abhishyandi ahara. Thus the prakriti of food must be considered in diet.

B. Karana (Processing of Substances) - Karana is also known as Sanskara. It means processing of

substances which leads to alteration in the inherent properties of substances. This modification is brought about by dilution, application of heat (vaporization, distillation and sublimation), clarification, emulsification, storing, maturing, flavoring, impregnation, preservation and the material of receptacle. As by processing, Vrihi which is heavy to digest, becomes light when transformed in to Laja after frying, on the other hand, flour of roasted grains becomes heavy when processed in to cooked bolus.

C. Samyoga (combination/ mixing) - Samyoga (combination) is aggregation of two or more substance. Combination of two or more substances results in the manifestation of special qualities, which cannot be achieved using the same article separately. The combination of 2 or more substance altogether may produce new qualities so while preparing the food it should be considered that the ingredient must be compatible to each other and should be properly mixed together. For example honey and ghee taken alone is wholesome to body but when combined in equal quantity they become toxic so their combination in equal quantity is not advised. Sheet virya) and fish (Ushnavirya) should not be taken altogether though both of them have sweet taste but due to the contraindication in their potency they vitiate the blood and obstruct the strotas. In modern era people don‟t choose food by their nutritional properties but by the taste. They combine various types of ingredients by using various food materials. Due to lack of knowledge of potency of food they mix the ingredients which may incompatible to each other and may produce harmful effect to the body. So its time to rediscover the art of food combination in such a way that the ingredients may compatible to each other . The concept of viruddha ahara is well explained in Ayurveda which tells about the incompatible food and their harmful effect to the body.

D. Rasi (Quantity) - Rasi is the measure of the total mass and of each constituent in order to determine the effects of the right and wrong doses. Quantity of food taken in its entirety is Sarvagrha and the Quantity of each of its ingredients is Parigrha. A person should have his diet in proper amount; it means thata person should have diet according to his digestive power(Agni). The appropriate amount of food is that itshould be digested in proper time without causing any problem in the natural Prakriti of the person.

E. Desha (Habitat) - Desha denotes place relating to growth as well as distribution of the substances and also the suitability in respect of place. It is a geographic region. Food substances differs in quality due to difference in soil and climate. Ahara should be taken according to Desha. The food substance grown in same Bhoomidesh which is native desha for the person suits him. Deshapariksha is one of the vital aspect in understanding patient regarding dietary habits of patients probability of diseases related to the diet and accordingly treatment and Pathyapathya aspect.

F. Kala (Time) - Time is used in two senses, time in the general sense and time in the sense of stage. The sence of stage is used in relation to disease. In Swastha-avastha, Kala is considered as Nitayaga. In this condition Ahara should be taken according to Dincharya and Ritucharya, which help the body function to acclimatize with the external environment. In Rugnavastha, Avasthika Kala is considered by Vyadhi Avastha. E.g. in Naveen Jwara, Langhana should be done for 7 days, but if Jwara is Jeerna Ghritapana is indicated.

G. Upayoga samstha (Classical ayurveda rules of dieting) - It denotes the rules for dieting .One should consume only that in proper quantity which is – 1. Ushna. 2. Snigdha. 3. Matravat. 4. After the digestion of previous eaten food. 5. Avoiding Viruddha Ahara. 6. Too fast or too slow eating habits should be avoided. 7. The food should include all the 6 Rasas (Madhura, Amla, Lavana, Katu, Tikta, Kashaya) . 8. long term and too much use of any one of the six Rasas should be avoided. This description given by the Acharya Charak is both for the healthy and unhealthy persons.

H. Upyokta (The User) - The user is he who makes use of food, habituation depends on him. Creating wholesomeness by habitual intake of things comes under Upyokta and known as Satmya which differs person to person. As the Prkriti of Ahara Dravyas is considerable factors, the Prakriti of Upyokta is also considered for wholesomeness of diet.

2. Swapna or Nidra (sleep)- According to Ayurveda, the state when the mind and body both go to rest it is said that the living body is asleep. When the mind is afflicted by Tamoguna in the night, the kapha dosha increases and natural sleep is inflicted. Kapha dosha is related to growth and development of our body tissues and increases the immunity to fight against diseases. In the presence of depression, anger or sensuality a good, calm sleep is not possible because these increase Vata (rajasika gunayukta) which has an effect opposite to that of tamoguna. Sleeping for long or sleeping beyond the night at odd hours disturbs the whole day routine and have a bad effect on health. Also lack of proper sleep gives a dull feel all day, laziness, burning sensation in eyes in eyes, headache, and body ache. Bad sleep affects the routine, timely urge to eat along with regular bowel movements. Acharya Charka has described seven types of Nidra. Normally there is a set pattern for day and night. The day is earmarked for various activities while night is for sleep and rest. The Sun is responsible for determination of day and night. Day and night affect

our body in different ways. There is variation in Doshas, efficiency of the body functions, effect on mind to make it sharper. When don't follow the usual pattern of sleep it affect doshas. Day time sleep increases kapha and make the body excessive unctuous with feeling of heaviness. Staying awaken at night increases Vata, making body dry. These doshas on vitiation causes related health problems. Today's life is so fast and competitive that most of the people always remain in a state of anxiety. Anxiety vitiates Vata and Pitta. When Pitta grows, heat is increased which reduces the sleep. Staying awaken further enhances vitiation of Vata which develops cumulative effect on the body. This leads to related disorders. To overcome with this situation one should consume the diet with certain modifications to pacify Pitta and Vata. Make it a point to get up at least at 4 a.m. regularly. Sleep on a coarse bed. Sleep on the left side. Allow the Solar Nadi, Pingala, to work throughout the night through the right nostril. In acute cases, sleep on the back until recovery. Practice meditation and yoga in the morning, as soon as you get up This is a great purifier. This will strengthen the mind and the nerves. This is the best remedy to overcome stress, anxiety and depression.

3. Bramhacharya (abstinence)- It refers to the state of life when any living being refrains from excessive sensuality. This state does not mean a complete sexual abstinence but to indulge in sex such away so as not to have any adverse effect on health. The depth and quality of the relationships we have in life is something that affects us so deeply, but its importance is something that most of us fail to realize, but Ayurveda considers it to be as important as Nutrition and Sleep for our health. The vast and ancient scriptures of the world offer human society specific rules and regulations in this respect. Ayurveda insists on refraining oneself form sexual activities during academic years and is defined as Bramhacharya ashram. Ayurveda advocates sexual intercourse after marriage in the form of grihastha ashram but here also excessive indulgence is prohibited as it leads to loss of physical strength, memory, lack of vitality, increases irritability and disturbs the normal physiological functions of the body by causing disequilibrium of the three doshas. As per Ayurveda, in certain stages of our life, sex can be distracting. For example, if a student abstains from sex, he/she will be able to concentrate on studies and learn better. Broadly speaking, Brahmacharya is considered by Ayurveda as the 'path to enlightenment'.

Here are some guidelines that Ayurveda has as far as sex is concerned:

- Sex is preferable during the night time.
- As per Ayurveda, it is recommended to have sex with only one partner.
- One should indulge in sex without any discomfort to the body - to either of the Partners.
- Sex should be avoided if even one of the partners is unwilling.
- Sex should be avoided if even one of the partners is unwell.
- Sex should be avoided right after a meal.
- The natural urges should not be suppressed. They should be addressed.
- Ayurveda recommends having a bath after the act.
- Right after sex, one should eat or drink something refreshing.
- It is preferable to take rest after sex. That is the reason why Ayurveda suggests having sex at night.

What happens when one over-indulges in sex? Ayurveda says that it could lead to pain, weakness, cough, fever, anemia, emaciation as well as weakened senses. It is the Shukra Dhatu which takes care of the male and female genitals. Lifestyle diseases can be prevented by following ethics and code of ahara, nidra and brahmcharya. But once disease occurs, it can be cured by Shodhana and Shamana therapy. Shodhana treatment aims at removal of somatic and psychosomatic diseases. Shodhana involves internal and external purification. The usual practices involved are panchkarma (medically indused emesis,Purgation, oil enema, nasal administration of medicines. This treatment is especially helpful in obesity, sleep disorders, neurological disorders, musculo skeletal disease conditions, respiratory diseases, metabolic and degenerative disorders. Shamana therapy involves suppression of vitiated doshas. The process by which disturbed doshas subsides or return to normal without creating imbalance of others is known as shaman. Shamana is curative action by proper use of medicine.

To contribute in this field, a research was carried out on 100 patients in the age group of 30 to 65 suffering from various lifestyle disorders like hypertension, diabetes mellitus, PCOD, Infertility, depression, anxiety, sexual disorders, menstrual irregularities, dyslipidemia, and Obesity. Patients were counseled about Ahara Vidhi Vishesa Ayatanan (According to the disease). Pathya vyavastha comprising indications and contraindications in respect of diet, sleep, activity, habits and emotional status. This was done with a view to enhance the effects of therapeutic measures and to impede the pathogenic process to balanceb tridosha (Vata, Pitta, Kapha). Along with the counseling procedure patients were given Shodhana and Shamana treatment according to the disease. Ayurvedic medicines were prescribed along with changes in life style and following changes were noticed:

1. There was significant relief in stress and anxiety of the patients by adopting proper sleep cycle, meditation along with medication and yoga.
2. Patients suffering from Hypertension showed significant relief in both systolic and dystolic blood pressure by change in diet, taking meals on time according to mentioned quality and quantity, restraining salt intake, replacing normal salt with rock salt (saindha), exercise, deep breathing exercises, yoga and ayurvedic medicine.
3. Patients suffering from Type 1 Diabeties showed significant reduction in high blood sugar levels .
4. Female patients suffering from PCOD, irregular menstrual cycles and other hormonal imbalance disorders were relieved by adopting changes in diet, regular exercise, along with taking ayurvedic medicine.

CONCLUSION

A healthy lifestyle must be adopted to combat these diseases with a proper balanced diet, physical activity and by giving due respect to biological clock. In this revolutionized era we cannot stop doing the developmental work, but we can certainly reduce our ailments by incorporating these simple and effective measures mentioned in ayurvedic texts in our lives.

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