

Practical Applicability of Dwadashashana Pravicharana

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ABSTRACT

Ahara is one among the *Trayopasthambha*. It is the primary need of every individual which helps him to sustain his life. *Ayurveda* has different concepts of food and nutrition for promotion of health, prevention of disease and as a part of therapy. One such unique concept of dietetic prescription is given under the heading *Dwadashashana Pravicharana* (the twelve kinds of food administration). This concept gives different ways of food administration based on quality and quantity of food in relation to the condition of the individual, whether healthy or diseased. Here, an attempt is made to analyze the practical application of this concept. Understanding and application of these 12 administrations will help the individuals to either promote their health or to treat diseases with the help of food.

KEY WORDS: *Ayurveda, Ahara, Dwadashashana Pravicharana, Agni*

INTRODUCTION

Food is any substance consumed to provide nutritional support for an organism. In nutrition, diet is the sum of food consumed by a person. The word diet often implies the use of specific intake of nutrition for health. A diet that contains the proper proportions of carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals and water necessary to maintain good health is called balanced diet.

Ayurveda too has the concept of food, nutrition and balanced diet in a broad way but the difference and uniqueness lies in individualistic approach to each individual based on their *Prakriti* (body constitution), *Agni* (digestive capacity) and *Avastha* (health status). Various concepts of food and nutrition like *Nitya sevaniya ahara* ⁽¹⁾ (foods for daily consumption), *Ashtahara vidhi visheshayatana* ⁽²⁾ (eight factors to be considered while planning diet), *Aharavidhi* (rules of dietetics), *Dwadashashana pravicharana* (twelve types of food administrations) are given in the form of principles, where the understanding and application of them depends on the intelligence of physician.

Dwadasha Ashana Pravicharana

This unique concept is given in *Sushruta Samhita*. The twelve different forms of diets are,

- I. *Sheeta ahara* (cold food)
- II. *Ushna ahara* (hot food)
- III. *Snigdha ahara* (food with fat)
- IV. *Ruksha ahara* (food without fat)
- V. *Drava ahara* (liquid food)
- VI. *Shushka ahara* (food without moisture)
- VII. *Ekakalika ahara* (single time food)
- VIII. *Dwikalika ahara* (two-time food)
- IX. *Aoushadhayukta ahara* (food with medicine)
- X. *Matraheena ahara* (less quantity of food)
- XI. *Doshaprashamana ahara* (food pacifying the vitiated dosha)
- XII. *Vrittyartha ahara* (food to maintain health) ⁽³⁾

Sheeta ahara:

Foods with cold potency and in cold condition are recommended in conditions like *Trishna* (Excessive thirst), *Ushna* (Excessive heat), *Daha* (Burning sensation), *Raktapitta* (Bleeding disorders), *Visha* (Poisoned), *Murcha* (Unconsciousness) and *Iyavaya upahata* (Emaciated due to excessive copulation) ⁽⁴⁾. Such foods are *Shali* (Rice), *Yava* (Long wheat), *Mudga* (Green gram), *Ksheera* (Milk), *Dhanyaka* (Coriander), *Dadima* (Pomegranate), *Amalaki* (Indian gooseberry) and *Sharkara* (Sugar).

The following can be some of the recipes:

i. Trishnarthā and Ushnarthā: As there will be *Udakavaha srotodushti*, this leads to *Talushosha* and *Rasa Kshaya*. Hence one can consume *Dhanyaka Hima* with *sharkara* (Cold infusion of coriander seeds with sugar) ⁽⁵⁾ *Laja* and *Mridvika sidda yavagu* (Thick gruel prepared with popped rice and raisins) ⁽⁶⁾, *Laja Manda* (Thin gruel prepared with popped rice) ⁽⁷⁾, *Yashtimadhu ksheerapaka* (Milk cooked with *Glycyrrhiza glabra*), *Yava Saktu mantha* (Cold infusion prepared with roasted long wheat powder) ⁽⁸⁾, *Dadima swarasa* (Pomegranate juice)

ii. Mada: *Kharjuradi mantha* (Cold infusion prepared with dates, dry grapes etc.) ⁽⁹⁾, *Upodika* and *Dadhi sidda Yavagu* (Thick gruel prepared with creeping spinach and curds) ⁽¹⁰⁾, *Lajamanda* with *Dadima swarasa* (Thin gruel of popped rice added with pomegranate juice).

iii. Raktapitta: As there will be *Rakta* and *Pitta dushti*, one can consume *Mudga Yusha* (Green gram soup) ⁽¹¹⁾, *Mudgoudana* (Rice cooked with green gram soup) ⁽¹²⁾, *Mridvikadi sidda yavagu* (Thick gruel prepared with Raisins, popped rice, long pepper, honey, ginger and *Hemidesmus indicus*) ⁽¹³⁾ and *Navanna* (Freshly harvested rice)

iv. Murcha: As there will be *Pitta dushti*, one can consume *Mardvikambu* (Dry grape juice) ⁽¹⁴⁾, *Panaka* of *Ushira*, *Chandana* (Juices prepared with khus khus grass, sandal wood).

As per the principle of *Agnisomeeyatatva*

- *Soma* has a role in growth and development
- Substances with *Sheeta guna* increases *Bala*, *Kapha*, *Vata* and are *Guru* for digestion.
- *Sheeta guna* has,
 1. *Hladana*
 2. *Jeevana*
 3. *Stambhana*
 4. *Prasadana* of *Rakta* and *Pitta*

Ushna ahara:

Foods with hot potency and serving hot are recommended in conditions like, *Kapha-Vatamaya* (Diseases predominant of *Kapha* and *Vata dosha*) as it is predominant in *Sheeta guna*, *Viriktaan* (After purgation therapy) as there will be *Agnimandhya*, *Snehapayi* (After oleation therapy) for *Sneha jeernarthā*, *Aklinna kaya* (Less *kapha* and *dravarooopi pitta* predominant condition) as it induces *Sneha-Kleda vidhrithi* ⁽¹⁵⁾. Such foods are *Kulattha* (Horse gram), *Shunti* (Ginger), *Haridra* (Turmeric), *Jeeraka* (Cumin seeds), *Hingu* (Asafetida).

The following can be some of the recipes,

- i. For *Jwara*: *Ashtaguna manda* (Thin gruel prepared with rice, green gram, pepper, long pepper, ginger, coriander seeds, rock salt and Asafetida) ⁽¹⁶⁾
- ii. For *Tamaka Shwasa*: *Kulattha Yusha* (Soup prepared with horse gram) ⁽¹⁷⁾, *Adaki Yusha* (Soup of Pigeon pea) ⁽¹⁸⁾, *Chanaka Yusha* (Soup of chick pea) ⁽¹⁹⁾, *Dashamoola yavagu* (Thick gruel prepared with 10 drugs like *Aegel mermelos*, *Premna mucronata*, *Oroxylum indicum*, *Stereospermum suaveolens*, *Gmelina arborea*, *Solanum indicum*, *Solanum xanthocarpum*, *Desmodium gangeticum*, *Uraria picta*, *Tribulus terrestris*), *Shunti sidda jala* (Ginger water) ⁽²⁰⁾.
- iii. For *Amavata*: *Saptamushti Yusha* (Soup prepared with horse gram, green gram, long wheat, ginger, pepper, coriander seeds and radish) ⁽²¹⁾, *Kwatitha jala* (Water boiled and reduced to 1/4th part) ⁽²²⁾.

Ushna is opposite to *Sheeta guna*, so it causes flow through passages. As per the principle of *Agnisomeeyatatva*, *Agni* is the reason for the transformations occurring in every substance.

- *Ushna* has ability to cure
 - *Stambhana*
 - *Gowrava*
 - *Sheetata*
- It causes *Swedana* (perspiration)
- It helps in easy digestion

Snigdha ahara:

Foods which are unctuous are recommended in conditions like, *Vatika* (Body constitution predominant of *Vata* /condition predominant of *Vata dosha*) as there will be predominant *Ruksha guna*, *Ruksha Deha* (Dryness of body), *Vyavaya upahata* (Emaciated due to excessive copulation) as there will be *Shukra Kshaya* and *rukshata*, *vyayamina* (one who performs regular physical activity) as there will be *rukshata* ⁽²³⁾. Such foods are *Ksheera* (milk), *Gritha* (Ghee), *Mamsa* (Meat).

Some of the preparations are *Ksheera-Gritha abhyasa* (Daily intake of milk with ghee), *Akrita Mamsa rasa* (meat soup without seasoning) ⁽²⁴⁾, *Dadhyanna* (curd rice), *Payasa* (Kheer) ⁽²⁵⁾, *Krishara* (Khichdi) ⁽²⁶⁾, *Masha Yusha* (soup of black gram) ⁽²⁷⁾, *Mamsarasa sidda yavagu* (thick gruel prepared with meat soup)

Ruksha ahara:

Foods which are dry (Which absorbs excess fluids from body and requires more digestive juices for their digestion) in nature are recommended in conditions like, *Medasaabhipareeta* (Covered with excessive fat) as there is *kapha* predominance, *Snigdha* (Excessive unctuousness), *Meha* (Diabetes with obesity) as there will be *Bahudrava Shlesma*,

Kaphaabhipanna (excessive *kapha*)⁽²⁸⁾. Such foods are, *Yava* (Long Wheat), *Godhuma* (Wheat), *Kudhanya* (Millets), *Madhu* (Honey). Some of the preparations are *Yava Rotika* (Long wheat roti)⁽²⁹⁾, *Godhuma Rotika* (Wheat roti)⁽³⁰⁾, *Madhudaka* (Honey water)⁽³¹⁾, *Trina dhanya Odana/ Kudhanya sidda Anna* (Rice prepare with millets)⁽³²⁾, *Shaka sidda Odana* (Vegetable pulav)⁽³³⁾, *Yava mantha* (Cold infusion of barley)⁽³⁴⁾, *Udrita Sneha Takra/ Ruksha Takra* (Butter milk)⁽³⁵⁾.

According to *Hemadri*, the *Guna* which is capable for *Shoshana* (of *dhatu*) in the body is *Ruksha*.

Drava ahara:

Liquid foods and various juices are recommended in conditions like, *Shushka deha* (Dehydrated), *Pipasartha* (Excessive thirst) as there is *Talushosha* and *Asyashosha* and in *Durbala* (Weakness due to dehydration) as there is *Rasakshaya*⁽³⁶⁾. Some of the preparations are *Shritha sheeta jala* (Boiled and cooled water)⁽³⁷⁾, *Ksheera with sita* (Milk with sugar), *Amra Panaka* (Raw mango juice)⁽³⁸⁾, *Rasala Panaka* (Mango juice)⁽³⁹⁾, *Nimbuka Panaka* (Fresh lime juice)⁽⁴⁰⁾, *Chincha Panaka* (Tamarind juice)⁽⁴¹⁾, *Kharjuradi mantha* (Cold infusion prepared with dates, dry grapes etc.)⁽⁴²⁾, *Laja manda* (Thin gruel prepared with popped rice)⁽⁴³⁾.

Drava Guna causes *Kledata*, so that substance easily spreads in the body. When body is deprived of moisture content due to any internal or external cause, it leads to dehydration. *Drava pradhana ahara* should be advised in these conditions.

Shushka ahara:

Foods which are dry (Devoid of liquid/moisture) are recommended in, *Praklinna kaya* (*Dravarooopi pitta* and *kaphayukta sharira*) as there is *Kleda Bahula*, *Vrani* (*Dushtavrana* – ulcers) for *ropanartha* and *Shushka mehi* (Diabetes mellitus with emaciation)⁽⁴⁴⁾. Some of the preparations are *Yava Saktu* (Roasted long wheat powder)⁽⁴⁵⁾, *Yava mantha* (Cold infusion of long wheat powder)⁽⁴⁶⁾, *Shushka Mulaka siddha Odana* (Rice prepared along with dried radish)

It decreases the *Kledata* in the body and takes *Dheergakala* to spread in the body. So, whenever there is increase part of *Kleda* in the body, *Shushka Ahara* should be prescribed. More liquid diet will increase *Kapha* and *Kleda* in the body.

Ekakalika ahara:

One meal a day is recommended in *Durbalagni* (Very less digestive capacity)⁽⁴⁷⁾. Having food before the previous meal gets digested, impairs the digestive functions. So, whenever there is impaired digestive function due to any cause, wise person should avoid meal until, one gets hunger. This is to facilitate easy digestion and to kindle the digestive fire slowly, just like a dying fire is gradually increased by putting in small quantities of fuel and not bulk of fuel at a time⁽⁴⁸⁾.

Dwikalika ahara:

Two meals a day and *Matravat* (proper quantity as per digestive capacity of a person) is recommended in *Samagni* (optimum digestive capacity) nothing but in healthy individuals⁽⁴⁹⁾. *Kala* is also one of the important Ahara parinamakarakabha described by *Acharya Charaka*. Time has the key role in the process of digestion.

Chakrapani commented that even in the presence of all other factors, digestion requires time for completion of the process; hence time is described to bring about maturity of the process. It is not instantaneous. Food takes its time for proper digestion and absorption in the body according to the strength of *Agni* of an individual.

Human beings are advised to take food two times a day- one in morning and other on evening. One should not eat in between and one should follow this as strictly as *Agnihotra* is followed.

Aoushadhayukta ahara:

Foods prepared or added with medicines are recommended in persons who are averted to take medicines⁽⁵⁰⁾. Some of the preparations are *Pravicharana Sneha*⁽⁵¹⁾, *Dashamoola yavagu* (thick gruel prepared with *Dashamoola*)⁽⁵²⁾ used mainly in *Kapha-vata roga*, *Panchakola yavagu* (thick gruel prepared with *Panchakola*)⁽⁵³⁾ used mainly in *Mandagni* (Less digestive power), *Mudgamalaka Yusha* (Thick gruel prepared with green gram and *Emblica officinalis*) is mainly indicated in *Vibandha* (Constipation), *Sthoulya* (Obesity)⁽⁵⁴⁾.

In *Aoushada kala*, there is mentioning of the same concept as *Sabhakta kala*. Conditions in which this type of administration of food is indicated are as follows,

1. Disease afflicted- *Annadwesha*, *Aruchi*
2. Type of patient → In women, old age, children, debilitated patients and patients who exhibit unpalatability to certain medicinal formulations are to be given *Bheshaja* at the *Sabhakta Kala*

Matraheena ahara:

Less quantity of food and once a day is recommended in *Mandagni* (Weak digestive capacity) and in *Rogi* (Suffering with diseases – as there is *Mandagni* always)⁽⁵⁵⁾.

Doshaprashamana ahara:

There is change in state of *Tridoshas* (*Vata* – *Pitta* – *Kapha*) according to change in seasons as *Chaya* (Abnormal increase) – *Prakopa* (Aggravation) – *Prashama* (Subside) of *Tridoshas*. To avoid the ill effects from this abnormal state of *doshas* and to bring them back to normalcy, specific diet has to be prescribed in specific seasons; this is called *Doshaprashamana ahara* ⁽⁵⁶⁾. For example, in *Vasanta Ritu* there will be *Kapha Prakopa* ⁽⁵⁷⁾. So, some of the preparations used are *Purana shastika shali Odana*, *Godhuma Rotika* (wheat roti), *Patola*, *Nimbadi tikta shaka sidda ahara* (Food prepared with bitter vegetables), *Krita Mudga Yusha* (Seasoned green gram soup), *Madhudaka* (Honey water), *Ushna jala* (Warm water) ⁽⁵⁸⁾. According to principle of *Ritucharya*, the aggravated *dosha* may be pacified and disease may be prevented by *Shodhana* and *Pathya Ahara* and *Vihara*. So, dietary advices for the healthy person to maintain their health has been given in *Ritucharya* and also in *Dwadashashana pravicharana* by *Acharya Sushruta*.

Vriyarthahara:

This is recommended for *Sharira dharanartha* (Maintaining the health of individual). This includes *ahara* with *Shadrasa* (*Madhura*, *Amla*, *Lavana*, *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya*) and consumed as per one's *Prakriti* (Body constitution), *Agni* (Digestive capacity), *Satmya* and *Asatmya* (Like – dislike and habituation) ⁽⁵⁹⁾.

DISCUSSION

Ahara is the cause for maintaining the health of healthy individuals and for getting disease also. Hence *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned *Ahara Vidhi* for healthy individuals to prevent the occurrence of diseases whereas *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned *Dwadashashana Pravicharana* for *Atura*.

Utpatti of *prakrutha dosha*, *dhatu* and *mala* depends upon *ahara*. *Ahara* is responsible for *dosha Prakopa* as well as for *aturavastha*. So, to boost up immunity we should implement good dietetics. The diet principles mentioned in *Ayurveda* are very appropriate. Though they are mentioned before thousands of years, we can adopt in present day diseases to revert them. In *Dwadashashana pravicharana*, *Samanya-Vishesha Siddhanta* is observed. This principle is applied by taking into consideration of *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya* and similar other factors of the drug or dietary articles being used to attain the disease-free status.

Due to varied work environments and varied lifestyles of people in the modern era, *Dwadashashana Pravicharana* is especially useful in providing tailor made dietetics for every individual. For example, in certain professions like software engineering, people spend a lot of time in A/C environments. Exposure to continuous A/C environment can lead to many diseases due to overaccumulation of *apdhatu* and *sheeta guna*. If we introduce *Ushna* and *Shushka Guna dravyas* in their diet, this will go a long mile in helping them to lead a healthy life.

The general understanding of diet prescription based on *dosha* dominance is as follows:

- Body constitution or condition dominant of *Vata* – *Drava* (Liquid), *Ushna* (Warm and freshly cooked), *Snigdha ahara* (Unctuous food)
- Body constitution or condition dominant of *Pitta* – *Sheetha* (cold), *Shushka Alpa Sneha sidda ahara* (dried and very less oil used foods)
- Body constitution or condition dominant of *Kapha* – *Ushna* (Freshly cooked and warm), *Ruksha* (Dry – without oil), *Shushka* (Dry –without adding liquid)

Based on the intelligence and common sense of the dietician/physician, one can also combine these prescriptions. In *Mandagni* (poor digestive/absorption power), two prescriptions are mentioned viz., *Matraheena* (Less quantity) and *Ekakalika* (Single meal). Based on the condition of the person under treatment, he can be prescribed with less amount of food only one time a day if *Agni* (Digestive capacity) is very poor or two time with less than his normal capacity if *Agni* (Digestive capacity) is moderate. Similarly, in *Pipasa* (Excessive thirst), *Drava* (Liquid) and *Sheeta* (Cold potency and cool form) are to be given.

CONCLUSION

This concept gives different ways of food administration based on the quality and quantity of food in relation to the condition of the individual, either healthy or diseased. Understanding and application of these twelve administrations will help the individuals to either promote their health or to treat diseases. One shouldn't eat food for the sake of taste, but should eat for maintaining the good health. To prevent the further complication, along with medications *Dwadashashana pravicharana* can be implemented as a secondary level of prevention. As classical concept of food will help in maintaining health, mass education regarding this is very much needed. Health professionals should throw light on these to get highest benefit for society.

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