Aayurveda -Aharavichar

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Abstract-
Ayurveda has been around for thousands of years, it is basically science of life1 and indicates to lead a healthy lifestyle in ancient India. Diet is most important hence mostly discussed topic, because everyone wants to be healthy and diet is the key to prevent and treat diseases (concept of pathyapathya)2. Abundant literature about food is available in many sciences like modern science, Homeopathy, Naturopathy etc. Each have their own concepts and there is sort of variation in between them. Dieticians keeps on changing their facts sometimes carbohydrates are boosters of weight sometimes they suggest to have only proteins in diet, so it decreases the rate of belief on them. We see Ayurveda is an ancient science of life, and it states that life originates from Aahara. Aahara is said to be one among three important pillars of life i.e. Trayopsthambha3 and the basic sutras mentioned in texts are proved correct time to time. In this study an attempt is made to recollect Aaharavichar from various Ayurvedic Samhitas.

Key words-Trayopasthambas,Ahara,Bahyaprana, Pathya - Apathya.

Aahara-

The substance which is to be taken in or swallowed through mouth is called ahara3,5. Anna is popular and widely used synonym of Ahara. It includes in itself both diet and drugs which is ingested by the tongue down to the throat is called Ahara. In Bhagavata Purana importance of Pathya is given that one should respect food every day and not criticize it. Ayurveda has stated some rules about food consumption like Food should not be taken without Ghrita(butter) and Taila(Oil) and one should not eat food before sunrise and after sunset and not even in Sandhikala(evening). If heavy food is consumed at noon then skip the night meal. In Bhagwat Geeta description of Satvika, Rajasika, Tamsika Aharais explained. Human body is born from food and diseases are also produced by food, happiness and unhappiness depend on the use of suitable and unsuitable foods respectively. Anna is best among things which help to do work, no medicine is equivalent to food. It is possible to make person diseases free just with proper diet. Health is dependent on food as food enhances vitality, strength and makes the body study, it increases enthusiasm, memory, life span, luster, Agni and Ojas. For all living beings food is sustainer of life, whole world of living beings craves for food only. Colour complexion, tranquility, good voice, social and vocational activities, Vedic rituals leading to heaven and salvation even these are dependent on food itself. Most of the incurable diseases are produced due to improper food. Food taken with desirable smell, taste, touch and according to prescribed method gives vital strength because the condition of internal fire depends upon the fuel. It produce energy in mind, constitution of Dhatus, strength, complexion and clarity of the sense organs, if properly taken, otherwise it become harmful.

Aahara Dravya Vargikaranam
In various Samhitas Aahara is differentiated into various Vargas according to their Guna or karma which is given below -

1) Bhavaparaksha –
Shaka, Mamsa, Krittanna, Vari, Dadhi, Takra, Navnitaka, Ghrita, Mutra, Taila, Sandhana, Ikshu
2) Ashtang Samgraha -
mentioned vargas are Jala, Ksheera, Ikshu, Madhu, Taila, Madya, Mutra varga
3) Ashtang Hrudaya -
Shuka, Shimbi, Kritanna, Mamsa, Shaka, Phala and Aousadhavarga.
4) Sushruta Samhita -
Paneeya, Ksheera, Dadhi, Takra, Ghrita, Taila, Madhu, Ikshu, Madya Mutra, Mudgadi, Mamsa, Phala.
AharaVidhi Vidhana

AcharyaCharaka has given brief description about what type of Aharaand how it should be consumed to maintain health – Food to be consumed mustbeUshna(warm),Snigdh(unctuous),Matravata(i n proper quantity), it must not be VirudhaGunatmak and to be takenJeeneahara i.e.after the digestion of the previous meal, it should be taken at IshaDesha and withIshtasarvopakaranar i.e.in proper place equipped with all the accessories. He says that one should take food with TanmanaBhunj i.e. with concentration and Atmanam Abhisamikshyam means with praying due regard to oneself and Ajalpan(without talking)Aahasana(without laughing).

Ideal Matra ofAahara for a person

There is no such fix quantity of food which will be an ideal quantity of food. Ayurveda believes that every human being is unique and different from others and Aharamatra of a person is dependent on his own Agnibala and nature of food he is taking. Therefore it vary from person to person. Imagine stomach divided in three equal parts – Half for solid food, one fourth for liquid and remaining one fourth part should be kept empty for Vata, food items should be taken accordingly.

Ideal time for AaharaSevan

Lunch - Between first and second Yama i.e. between 3-6 hrs after sunrise(beginning of day).
A) Dinner - After the end of first Prahara i.e. after 3 hrs after the beginning of night (after sunrise)

Satmya (conduciveness)

Satmya is the one which conductive or suitable to one. A substance conductive to an individual is called Satmya Aahara/upashaya. Satmya Aahara is can be consumed for long duration in diet.

Types of Satmya

SatmyaAahara means intakeof such Aahara which do not cause harm or injury to the body even though having opposite quality of ones Desha, Kala, roga, Rasa, etc.

According to Charaka, Satmyais of three types-Pravara,Madhya,Avara.

Use of all six rasa is PravaraSatmya, use of only one rasa is AvaraSatmya and use of 2 to 5 rasa is Madhyama. There is one more term called Okasatmya continuous intake of particular substances, even though it is not good for the health of body becomes non – injurious to body by habitual use is known as Okasatmya.

Dwadashashana Pravicharanas

These are the rule of diet which should be followed for proper digestion and ultimately achieving health. In certain conditions particular type of food is indicated.

AcharyaSushruta describes the twelve kinds of food Sheeta,Ushna, Snigdha, Ruksha, Drava,Shushka,Ekakala,Dvikala,Aushadhayukta,Matra Hine,Doshaprashamana and Vrtyarthar. In this he stated some specific conditions in which specific food must be given foreg.person suffering from thirst,heat,alcoholism, burning sensation, bleeding disorder, poisoning, fainting and emaciated from copulation should be treated by Sheeta Gunatmak Aahara.KaphaVataj diseases, who have had purgation, who had taken Sneha,Vataj Prakriti,dry skin, exhaustion by sexual intercourse, performing lot of physical exercise, Snigdha or Rukshaahara-people having Medoroga, Prameha, thirst,debility should be treated with Drava Aahara,person having lots of Kleda,suffering from wound and have Prameha, taking Shushka Aahara,having weak digestive fire-should eat once in a day or in small quantity,normal digestive power person can eat twice a day,if the patient has aversion for particular medicine, it should be mixed with food and given to them. Food consumed according to season and place is Doshaprashamak. Considering these twelve aspects ingestion of food should be planned to maintain health and life.
point to achieve the proper digestion, assimilation and nourishment to the body.

The AaharaVidhiVisheshayatana means the causative factors which are responsible for the wholesome and unwholesome effect of the food or of the methods for the diet intake for maintaining health. Every person should have only HitakarakaAahara. Charakacharyahas explained eight factors while vagbhatacharya has given seven factors regarding Aahar vidhi3. Prakriti/Swabhava(nature of the substance), Karana/Samskara (processing of food substance), Samayoga(combination), Rashi(quantities of food substance), Desha(relates to the habitat), Kalal(time), Upoyoga Samstha(rules for dieting), Upyokta(one who consumes the food)3.

Concept of ViruddhaAahara (contradictory or incompatible diet)

The foods, drinks or drugs which aggravates Doshas but do not expel out of the body called Viruddharaha (incompatible). Types of Viruddha Aahara are Deshaviruddha, Kalaviruddha, Agni, Matra, Satmya, Dosha, Samskara, Virya (potency), Koshtha (not according to power of digestion), Avastha (not following physical state of person), karma (not following specific chronologic order of taking food), Parihara (antagonism in its order), Upachara (not following rules regarding ideal protocol of food), Paka (wrong process of cooking of food), Samyoga (harmful combination of two substances), Hruda (not pleasant), Sampat (food in good form like maturity etc) and VidhiVirudha (rules of diet)3,5,8

Pathya - Apathy Aahara

Pathya word literally means way or channel. Pathyaahara means food which is beneficial for maintaining health and Apathy Aahara is food which causes disease pathogenesis. Pathya is also used as synonym of Chikitsa. Sharangdhara explained PathyaKalpanas like Peyu, Manda etc.

Conclusion-

- Ahara is cause as well as treatment of all diseases hence in basic literatures we find information of diet is provided before the treatment of diseases. CharakSamhita which is mainly known for Chikitsa in that Rasayana and Vajikarana are explained which is a sort of diet for longevity of life. Diet is reason for not merely disease free or for fitness or health it is even useful to stay young i.e. Rasayana.
- Every individual is unique, so understand basic food principles its Guna and act accordingly for healthy life.

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Abbreviations-

- Ch.su=charaksamhita sutra sthana
- Hru.su=ashtanghurdayasutarasthana
- Su.su=sushurutasamhitaturasthana
- Ka.khi=kashyapasmhitakhilasthana