A Review of Pathya Apathya in Ayurveda

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Abstract

Ayurveda is not merely a medical science. It is a complete life science. The first aim of Ayurveda is to maintain the health of a healthy person so that no diseases should manifest. Treatment of diseases is the second aim of Ayurveda. To maintain the health of a healthy person Acharyas had described various dos and don’ts such as Ritucharya (seasonal regime), Dinacharya (diurnal regime) etc. The concept of Pathya (wholesome)and Apathaya (unwholesome) is one such concept. Apart from being a part of regime of healthy living, Ācharyas had also extended the concept of Pathya (wholesome)and Apathaya (unwholesome) as a part of the treatment of the diseases. This indicates the importance of Pathya (wholesome)and Apathaya (unwholesome) in Ayurveda. The concept of Pathya (wholesome)and Apathaya (unwholesome) is the peculiarity of Ayurveda.

Keywords- Ayurveda, Pathya, Apathaya.

Introduction-

The aims and objectives of Ayurveda are to maintain the health of a healthy person and to cure the diseases of the patients¹. As evident the first and foremost aim of Ayurveda is preventive in nature rather than curative. It signifies that “prevention is better than cure”.² To maintain the health, Ayurveda laid many basic principles like Ritucharya (seasonal regime), Dinacharya (diurnal regime) etc. The concept of Pathya (wholesome) and Apathya (unwholesome) is the peculiarity of Ayurveda to fulfill its aims and objectives.

The word Pathya derives its origin from root word Patha which literally means a way or channel. Pathya (wholesome) and Apathya (unwholesome) are defined as the substance or regime which do not adversely affect the body and mind are regarded as Pathya (wholesome)³; those which adversely affect them are considered to be Apathya (unwholesome)². As evident from above definition, Pathya (wholesome) and Apathya (unwholesome) include both material substances and specific regimes but in general these words had been particularly used for food articles in the texts of Ayurveda.

Charak had stated that wholesome food is one of the causes for the growth and wellbeing of humans while unwholesome food is the root of all diseases³. Charak had counted food first in the series of three supporting pillars of life along with sleep and controlled sexual activity⁴. Sushrut had further supported the fact by stating that food is the cause of vitality, strength, complexion and Oja⁵.

2. Synonyms-

Pathya-
Satmya,S wasthhitakara,Upshaya,Svavasthap aripaalaka,HitaAhara,Swasthaaurjaskara,Sharmakara,Dhatua virdhi, Sukhaparinaamkara, DhatuSaamyakara⁶

Apathya-
Asatmya,S wasthaAhitkara,Anupashaya,Ahitkara,Asu khaParinaamakara, Ashrmakara, Dhatuasamyakara⁷.

3. Review of Pathya & Apathya-

1 Veda- Various references about Pathya & Apathya are present in Veda right from Rigveda Wholesome food acts as a medicine and it should be strictly followed ³⁷(Rigveda 8/73/17).

2. Yajurveda- Yajurveda explained many cereals and food ingredients and states that water, food, air etc. when purified by Yajna Karma acts as medicine.³⁸(Yajurveda 18/12).
3. Atharveda—Atharvaveda states that a person who maintains Agni (fire), Jala (water), Vayu (air) and Prithavi (earth) by wholesome food and celibacy becomes energetic and healthy.6 (Atharveda Dwitiyakanda 28/5).

5. Ramayana- Payasa (rice pudding) increases the power of reproduction and provides the wealth and health, thus is good and Pathya for human (Valmiki Ramayana 1/16/19).

4. BhagwadGeeta- Food has been classified as Saatvika, Rajasa and Tamasa in nature. Saatvika food increases life span, purifies the mind and soul and provides health, happiness and strength. This type of nourishing food is sweet, juicy, fatty and palatable.7 (Bhagwad geeta 177-10).

Hatha Yoga- Hatha Yoga Samhita described Pathya Ahara for Yoga Shishya (disciple of Yoga). Ahara (food) for Yoga Shishya (student) should include Godhuma (Triticum sativum Lam.10), Shali (oryza sativa Linn.),Yava (Hordeum vulgare Linn.), Shobhananna (Shyamak, Nivara, etc), Ksheera (milk), Aajya (clarified butter), Navneeta (freshly extracted butter), Sita (sugar), Madhu (honey), Shunthi (Zingiber officinale Rosc.), Patola (Trichosanthes dioica Roxb.), Panchashaka (Jeevanti (Leptadenia reticulate W. & R.), Vastuca (Chenopodium album Linn.), Matsyakshi (Enhydrafluctuans Lour.), Panarnaya (Boerhaavia diffusa Linn.), Muddha (Phaseolusradiatus Linn.), Aadhdaki (Cajanusindicus Sperng. jand Divyodaka Divyodaka) (Hathayoga Samhita 1/59-63)

Samhita Kala-
1. Charak samhita
   It had stated Pathya (wholesome) as a synonym for treatment. Charak had elaborately described the concept of Pathya (wholesome) and Apathya (unwholesome). He had given a general list of Pathya (wholesome) and Apathya Dravya (unwholesome) along with specific Pathya (wholesome) and Apathya Dravya (unwholesome) for patients 13.

2. Sushrut samhita
   In Sushrut Samhita it had specifically written a chapter named Hita-Ahitiya Sutra Sthan.14

3. Kashyap Samhita
   Acharya Kashyap explored the medicinal potential of Aahar (food) along with its prophylactic value of maintaining health. Acharya Kashyap stated that food is the best medicine. No drug can match the benefits of food in diseased state. Only wholesome food can keep a person healthy.45 Kashyapa described Pathya and Apathya to be followed in Amlapitta.

4. Harita Samhita
   Harita stated the importance of Pathya (wholesome) and Apathya (unwholesome) by stating that if a person ignores the concept of Pathya and Apathya are consume Apathya (unwholesome), disease will not get cured. Hence person should use Pathya (wholesome) according to his/her physical and pathological condition regularly. Even in the absence of medicine, if patient takes only Pathya (whole some) according to disease he will become healthy, but even if patient takes more and regular medicine and avoid Pathya Ahara prescribed by physician, he will never become healthy.46

5. Yogaratnakara
   It is said that for the treatment of diseases etiology, drug treatment and Pathya (wholesome) are three important factors which should be studied thoroughly before starting the treatment.17

6. Vaidya Lolimbraja
   indicated the importance of Pathya Aahar (wholesome food) by stating that if a patient intakes wholesome food then there is no need of medicine and if a patient continuously consumes unwholesome food then also there is no need of medicine. In the latter case, medicine will not be effective.18

Pathya Aahar in Amlapit

Table - Showing the Classical Pathya Ahar of Amlapitta.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Pathya</th>
<th>K.S</th>
<th>Y.R</th>
<th>B.P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Parashali</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mudga</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Masura</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Harenu</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Gau-ghrita</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Jangalamansa</td>
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<td>Kalaya</td>
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<td>9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Discussion And Conclusion

Pathya and apathy is used for prevention as well as a part of treatment of the diseases. Acharya Charak had stated Pathya (wholesome) as a synonym for treatment. This indicates the importance of Pathyapathy in Ayurveda. It emphasizes on diet and regimen along with medicine. Ayurveda describe the pathyavavastha (planning of diet-dietetics) in a very scientific way.

The diet beneficial to the body and mind are called as pathya (wholesome) aahar whereas which adversely affect mind and body are called as Aphyaaahar (unwholesome diet). Most of the disorders develop due to faulty eating habits and Amlapitta is one of them. The first and foremost group of the etiological factors of Amlapitta may be considered as the dietary factors.

In this group, the intake of food against the code of dietetics i.e. Aharavidhidhvana and Aharavidhiviseshayatana is included.

For Amlapitta aahar having properties like Laghu, snigdha, shitaguna, madhur rasa, madhurvipak, shatavirya is considered as Pathya. Ahar having above properties prevents aggravation of pitta, pacifies samanavaya, and causes agnidipana, amapachan and vatanulomana. Snigdhaahar decreases rukshata of intestinal mucosa and regulates the Vayu.

According to Kashyapa samhita, puranashaali, mudra, masura, harenu, milk and gogrita, jangalamamsa, kalayashaaka, pautika, flowers of Vasa and vasuka are considered as Pathya in Amlapitta.

Above Pathya ahar due to their properties helps in breaking samprapti of Amlapitta.

3. Kala(time) is the prime factor in dietary management which helps to bring normal stage of Agni and amapachan.

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Ashtavidha ahar a vidhi vesheayatana (eight lines for selection of food)

1. Prakriti - Natural Qualities
2. Karana -Preparation
3. Samyoga -Combination
4. Rashi -Quantum
5. Desha -Habitat
6. Kala -Time
7. Upayoga sansth -Rules of use
8. Upayokta- Means who consumes the food.

### Apathya

2. Vihara - Vegavidharana, Atapasevena, Chinta, Krodha, Shoka.

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