

CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF VIRUDDHAHARA AND ITS RELATION WITH VISHA SAMPRAPTI.

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Abstract

Ayurveda lays emphasis on different factors such as diet, seasonal, inappropriate routine and even the supernatural which make the body vulnerable and susceptible to attack by diseases. The *Acharyas* of *Ayurveda* closely observed their surroundings and detected the intimate relation between man and universe. A person who does not live according to the rules of nature brings calamity upon himself in the form of various upsets in his system. The human body is designed in such a way that it is perfectly in tune with the events occurring in the environment. *Ayurveda* gives prime importance to the prevention of diseases by elaborating the right lifestyle for a healthy today and healthier tomorrow. This is meant for strengthening the immune system of the body. Right diet and regimen are essential components of this right lifestyle.

Many kinds of wrong methods of food intake can thus lead to different kinds of diseases. A most important faulty food intake is *Viruddhahara*, which plays a major role in the production of diseases. Incompatibility among food items can result from the antagonism in properties like *rasa*, *guna* and *veerya* inherent in them. In some cases two compatible substances may become incompatible due to the processing techniques they are subjected to. The food articles are supposed to maintain the *Doshas*, *Dhatus*, and *Malas* in their equilibrium state. But those foods that possess qualities contradictory to the *Doshas*, *Dhatus* and *Malas* inherently or by Virtue of processing are the ones that are detrimental to health.

Keywords: - *Viruddhahara, Visha, Samprapti, Amavisha*

Introduction

Man is responsible for his state of health or disease by his right or wrong life style. A controlled life is very essential for health. It is necessary to adopt good habits and shed the wrong ones in this path. But the lack of discretion between the right and wrong is causing many breakdowns in life.

Ayurveda describes that the triple support of life are ingestion of right food, adequate sleep and observance of celibacy. *Ahara* has been enumerated first, which shows its importance. It is difficult to suggest the right food for all as it may vary from person to person depending on his nature. Therefore food is of supreme significance in the maintenance of healthy body and mind. *Charakacharya* says that both body and disease is the product of food and wholesomeness and unwholesomeness of food is special cause of health and disease.¹

The practice of *Aharavidhi* (dietetics)² is an ancient, empirical and elegant art and it is only in the early years of the last century that nutrition and dietetics

have come to acquire the status of distinct discipline. Nutrition may be defined as the science of food and its relationship to health. It is concerned primarily with the part played by nutrients in body growth, development and maintenance.

Dietetics is the practical application of the principle of nutrition. It includes the planning of meals for both the normal and sick persons. A set of fairly satisfactory dietetic codes has been identified and prescribed by *Ayurveda*. When food (*Ahara*) is taken judiciously and according to the codes of dietetics then only the benefits of *Ahara* can be achieved. Any aberration in diets and even in their preparation style leads to ill health.

Hardly few individuals in India follow these codes and rules of dietetics and in other countries also. There may be various factors responsible behind this non-observance of the dietetic codes. Various pathological entities identified as a result of food habits related. Food works as sensory stimuli, which is pleasure giving, or distress giving.

Man has a natural tendency towards

change in the life at every stage and the food and food habits are also covered by this tendency. But unfortunately he either by ignorance or by his carelessness never cares about the harmfulness or harmless of his food and food habits. As a result he may have to pay penalty for his non-judicious changes. According to *Ayurveda* the non-beneficial or the harmful food is termed as the *Ahita ahara*, which includes so many things. In *Ayurveda* a novel concept of *Viruddhahara*³ has been condensed. Since the effect of this *Viruddhaahara* is indifferent from the *Ahitaahara*, this *Viruddha ahara* may be included under the *Ahita ahara* group. *Charakacharya* has mentioned "whatever articles of food, which dislodged the morbid humors and do not eliminate them from the body, are to be regarded as unwholesome"⁴. Further he has said "Articles of diet that are inimical to the body-elements tend to disagree with the system (body)."⁵

This incompatibility may be due to contradictory qualities or by combination or by method of

preparation or by virtue of the place, time and dose or by nature. Intake of unwholesome food is responsible for impotency (*shandatwa*), anaemia (*pandu*), toxic condition (*Amavisha*), skin diseases like Vitiligo (*kilasa*), *kustha* etc.⁶ In practice it is found that *viruddh ahara* is one among the predisposing factors for skin disease

Viruddhahara is one potent causative factor for several diseases. Consumption of *Viruddhahara* gives rise to various disturbances of mild to violent nature and disease of acute to chronic nature including the eight *Maharogas*, genetic disturbances and even sometimes causes death of the person. This shows the potency and lethal effect of *Viruddha ahara*.

Seasonal purification of body is a must for a disease free life. The modern man hardly has any time left to follow his cleansing measure such as purging etc. This results in accumulation of unwanted chemicals in the body and cumulative effect is

manifested in the form of disease. According to *Ayurvedic* classics indulgence in incompatible diets also produces endotoxins in the body.⁷

Disease of skin makes a person much more handicap in society because with its presence nobody wants to touch them and forbidden by everyone. It involves beauty and personality loss, which leads to under stress.

Vicharchika is very old disease mentioned in ancient science among the *Kushtha*. *Vicharchika* (eczema) categorized in different way i.e. *kshudra kushtha*, *kshudra roga* and *sadhya kushtha*.

Bio science by its great advance particularly in dermatology have made availability of powerful antibiotics, antifungal, antihistaminic, steroids, etc. but so far better management could not be searched out. Few drugs are available for symptomatic relief only. Their indiscriminate use is most undesirable. Therefore it is necessary to search an alternate option for this.

Viruddhahara & Visha

Roga or disease is also known by the term *Amaya* meaning that which is formed from *Ama*. All disease is the result of *Ama* in the body, formed due to irresponsible eating habits - food fads, excess and untimely foods. *Viruddhahara* is a major factor in all systemic upsets. The main characteristic of the action of *Viruddhahara* is that it is often slow and deep rooted. The site of action of the *Viruddhaharas* lies in the *Dhatus* and affects the *dhatuparinaman* process.⁸

Utkleshya doshanna haret dravyam
yatsamasatah
Viruddham taddhi dhatunam
pratyaniktaya sthitam

The end product of *Dhatuparinaman* is the production of *Ojus* as the ultimate basis of the life. *Ojus* is the *sara* of all *Dhatus* combined together and supports the *prana* in the body. As long as *Ojus* is present in the body, it indicates that life is present. *Ojus* is said to be situated in the *Hridayam*. *Ojus* is necessary for maintaining state of physical, mental and social well-being.

The ability of the body to defend itself against disease is also called *Bala* ("Abhyantara Prana" by Dalhana and "Vyadhi kshamatwa" by Chakrapani). Since *Ojus* is formed from *Dhatu* and *Dhatu* from food, the proper maintenance of *Ojus* is dependent on food. Thus one of the important factors for a strong *bala* is *Aharasampat*. When a wrong food habit is followed, it ultimately affects *Ojus* or *bala* and makes the body vulnerable to disease. *Vyadhikshamatwa* derived from *bala* is not aimed at protecting the body from external factors alone but also needed to counter the pathology of internal factors like *dosha*, *dhatu*, *agni* etc. All elements in the body are maintained in their normal state by supplements derived from substances possessing similar qualities, while substances possessing opposite qualities degrade the same elements. Thus a wholesome diet will nourish the *Dhatu*s and support *Ojus* in the body.

***Visha Raktadushti* → *Tridoshaj kopa* along with *Ashayas*
→ *Hridayasthitam Ojokshaya* → *Dehocchedan***

All *Vishas* do not lead to this course of events. Due to their inherent

Visha is the most antagonistic substance to *Ojus*. While *Ojus* stands at one pole nurturing and maintaining the body at the other pole is *Visha* destroying and degrading the body. Both *Ojus* and *Visha* possess ten major qualities and a glance at them will reveal the differences that exist between them. The *Teekshna* nature of *Visha* completely nullifies the effect of *Ojus*.

Samprapthi of Visha in the body:

Teekshna Visha by virtue of its greater potency directly vitiates *Rakta Dhatu* and causes *Tridosha Dushti*. It attacks *Ojus* in the body - the *Hridaya* and proceeds to damage all the body units. It disintegrates all body functions and this leads to death. The action of *Teekshna Visha* in the body can be represented⁹

kapha pitta anilaschanu samam
doshan sahashayan
tato hrudayam asthay dehoccheday
kalpate

weakness some *Vishas* cause less disastrous effects. *Visha* is *apaki* in

nature. *Apakitwa* is the difficulty to digest, metabolize and assimilate a substance and excrete the waste products so formed completely. Because of this property the digestive system is unable to act properly on *Visha*. So a part of *Visha* remains undigested and unabsorbed, and remains dormant in a *Kaphavriitha* state, until favourable circumstances arise. This condition is called *Dooshivisha*. Then it causes diseases depending on the site of vitiation. But generally this vitiation is due to *Raktadushti*. The weakened *Visha*, which resides in the *Dhatu*s tampers with their functioning. In another way the action of *Dooshivisha* can also be explained, as being inherently a *Visha* itself, it slowly but steadily degrades the *Dhatu*s and causes very chronic *Dhatugata* diseases. The pathology of *Viruddhahara* can be studied based on the above mentioned actions of *Visha*. Both *Visha* and *Viruddhahara* share the property of being antagonistic to the body *Dhatu*s. They have the calibre

to cause immediate as well as long-term effects. *Visha* in its potent and impotent forms causes *Rakta Dushti*. *Viruddhahara* also causes *Raktadushti*. *Rakta* in its *dhatu* form is responsible for *bala*, *varnam* and *sukham*. It is the basis for life. Thus *Rakta* is very closely related to *Ojus* in its function. *Rakta* is the vehicle that carries nutrition to all *Dhatu*s as its main function is *jeevanam*. Thus *raktadushti* hamper nourishment of other *Dhatu*s and this leads to the development of abnormal *Dhatu*s. Since *Rakta* is the vehicle connecting all *Dhatu*s any substance that directly affects it causes a lot more damaging effects in all *Dhatu*s. The vitiated *Rakta* that carries the toxic material to the *Dhatu*s will allow them to remain there in a dormant state and cause diseases when some other factors precipitate it. Thus *Viruddhahara* will also become *Dhatugata* because of *Rakthadushti*. The nature of *Viruddhahara* is such that it is not fully assimilated into the body¹⁰. The partly digested and unabsorbed food causes the

formation of *Ama* and *Agnimandya*, this further leads to impaired *Dhatuparinaman* and abnormal *Dhatus*. The *Raktadushti* and impaired *Dhatuparinaman* along with *Ama* cause *Srotorodha* and *Srothodushti*.

*Viruddhamapi chaharam vidyat
vishagaropamam*

The *Srothorodha* further impairs *Dhatuparinaman* and as this vicious cycle continues-the *Ojus*, *Bala* or *Vyadhikshamatwa* of the body declines and various diseases affecting *Dhatus* and *Srotasas* emerge. *Viruddhaharas* lead to drastic catastrophe like death for e.g. *Bhasmapamsuparidhwastham* *Haritamamsam* along with honey causes instantaneous death.¹¹ This action is comparable to the action of *Teekshna Visha*. These of *Viruddhaharas* can be considered to have the *Agneya* qualities of *Teekshna Visha*, they are able to cause *Raktadushti*, and *Ojakshayam* in a very short span of time. Other *Viruddhaharas* which are not so *Agneya* are the causes of diseases

in the body like the weakly toxic *Gara* and *Dooshivisha*. This can occur by *Raktadushti* followed by *Dhatudushti* or it can cause *Ama*, lead to *Srotorodha* and reaches a stage of *Amavisha* or further *Dhatudushti*. Eg. Milk and Fish.

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