

IMPORTANCE OF UTTARAYANA AND DAKSHINAYANA FOR HEALTHY LIVING

¹Dr. Ajit B. Patil, ²*Dr. Amit H. Shinagare and ³Dr. Pratibha A. Shingare

¹Associate Professor and Head, Swasthviritta, Vasantdada Ayurved College, Sangli.

²Assistant Professor, G.S. Gune Ayurved College, Ahmednagar.

³Assistant Professor, Sanskrit Samhita; Matoshri Ayurved Hospital & Research Center, Karjule, Ahmednagar.

Article Received on
20 June 2023,

Revised on 10 July 2023,
Accepted on 31 July 2023

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr202313-29149

***Corresponding Author**

Dr. Amit H. Shinagare

Assistant Professor, G.S.

Gune Ayurved College,

Ahmednagar.

ABSTRACT

Rithucharya is one of the important concepts explained in Ayurveda. It deals with comprehensive management of diet pattern, behaviour and lifestyle modification in relation to change in the seasons. In short, *Ritucharya* is the seasonal regimen, rules and regulation to what to do and what not during season and seasonal changes. There are two *Ayana* or Solstices in one year or we can say that sun changes its position twice every year. These changes are known as summer solstice i.e. *Uttarayana* and winter solstice i.e. *Dakshinayana*. If one follow the regimens prescribed under each and every *ritu* such person is never inflicted with seasonal diseases or disorders and he always remains as

a healthy person.

KEYWORDS: *Rithucharya, Uttarayana, Dakshinayana.*

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, the concepts of Uttarayana and Dakshinayana are related to the movement of the sun and its effect on the human body and health. These terms are derived from the ancient Indian astronomical and astrological systems and are relevant in Ayurvedic principles and practices.^[1]

Uttarayana^[2]

Uttarayana refers to the period when the sun moves northwards in the sky. It begins on the winter solstice (around December 21st) and lasts for approximately six months until the

summer solstice (around June 21st). Uttarayana is considered a period of increased solar energy and is associated with positive attributes in Ayurveda. During this phase, the days gradually become longer, and the nights become shorter. According to Ayurveda, this period is considered favorable for various therapeutic measures, rejuvenation therapies, and enhancing vitality.

During Uttarayana, the sun's rays are relatively weak, and the Earth is tilted away from the sun. According to Ayurvedic principles, this period is believed to enhance strength, digestion, and overall vitality. It is considered an auspicious time for performing physical and spiritual practices to promote well-being.

The digestive fire (agni) is believed to be stronger, leading to improved digestion and absorption of nutrients. This period is considered ideal for nourishing the body, building strength, and undergoing rejuvenation therapies. It is also believed to be a suitable time for gaining weight, enhancing physical activities and toning the body.

Dakshinayana^[3]

Dakshinayana refers to the period when the sun moves southwards in the sky. It begins on the summer solstice (around June 21st) and lasts for approximately six months until the winter solstice (around December 21st). During this phase, the days gradually become shorter, and the nights become longer. In Ayurveda, Dakshinayana is associated with cooling and calming energies. It is considered an ideal time for therapies that focus on pacifying heat-related conditions and promoting relaxation.

During Dakshinayana, the sun's rays are relatively strong, and the Earth is tilted towards the sun. According to Ayurveda, this period is considered to be more conducive to practices that promote rest, rejuvenation, and healing. It is believed to be a suitable time for therapies, tonics, and treatments aimed at balancing excessive heat and Pitta dosha in the body.

The digestive fire is believed to be weaker compared to Uttarayana. As a result, digestion may be less efficient, and the body's energy may be lower. It is considered a suitable time for detoxification, purification, and rejuvenation therapies in Ayurveda. This period is also associated with introspection, spiritual practices, and conserving energy.

General Lifestyle Changes Recommended During Uttarayana (Winter to Summer Solstice)^[4]

- 1. Diet:** During Uttarayana, the digestive fire (agni) is believed to be stronger. It is advisable to consume warm, nourishing foods that are easily digestible. Include foods that are sweet, sour, and salty in taste. Warm soups, stews, cooked grains, root vegetables, and herbal teas are beneficial. Avoid heavy and hard-to-digest foods.
- 2. Exercise:** Engage in moderate physical activities that help build strength and stamina. It is a good time for weight training, resistance exercises, and outdoor activities. However, avoid excessive exertion to prevent imbalances.
- 3. Sleep:** The longer nights during Uttarayana allow for more restful sleep. Maintain a regular sleep schedule and ensure you get adequate restorative sleep.
- 4. Hydration:** Keep yourself hydrated even though the weather may not be as hot. Drink warm water or herbal teas to support digestion and detoxification.
- 5. Mental well-being:** Engage in activities that promote mental clarity and positivity. Practice meditation, pranayama (breathing exercises), and spend time in nature to uplift your mood.

General Lifestyle Changes Recommended During Dakshinayana (Summer to Winter Solstice)^[5]

- 1. Diet:** During Dakshinayana, when the digestive fire is relatively weaker, opt for lighter, cooling foods. Include foods that are bitter, astringent, and sweet in taste. Fresh fruits, vegetables, salads, herbal infusions, and lighter grains are recommended. Avoid heavy, oily, and spicy foods.
- 2. Exercise:** Engage in gentle exercises like yoga, swimming, and walking during the cooler parts of the day. Avoid excessive exertion and intense workouts, as the body's energy levels are lower.
- 3. Sleep:** The shorter nights during Dakshinayana call for adjusting your sleep routine. Maintain a consistent sleep schedule and ensure you get sufficient rest.
- 4. Skin care:** Protect your skin from excessive sun exposure and heat. Use natural sunscreens, wear protective clothing, and apply cooling and soothing skincare products.
- 5. Mental well-being:** Practice mindfulness, relaxation techniques, and meditation to stay calm and centered. Avoid excessive heat and direct sun exposure to maintain mental balance.

CONCLUSION^[6]

In Ayurvedic philosophy, the changing seasons and the movements of the sun are believed to influence the doshas (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha) and their balance in the body. The transition from Uttarayana to Dakshinayana or vice versa is considered an important time for adjusting lifestyle, diet, and therapies to maintain health and well-being.

Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of aligning our lifestyle, diet, and daily routine with the natural rhythms of nature. Understanding the influence of Uttarayana and Dakshinayana can help individuals make appropriate lifestyle choices and adapt their habits accordingly to support their health and well-being. It's worth noting that while these concepts are considered in Ayurveda, individual health conditions and constitutions should also be taken into account when making health-related decisions.

REFERENCES

1. Dr. Mangalagowri V Rao, Text book of Swasthavritta, Chaukhambha orientalia, Varanasi.
2. Vagbhata, Ashtanga Hridaya, Varanasi, Chaukhamba orientalia, 9th edition, 2005, sutra sthana, chapter 3.
3. Vagbhata, Ashtanga Hridaya, Varanasi, Chaukhamba orientalia, 9th edition, 2005, sutra sthana, chapter 3.
4. Dr. Bargale Sushanth sukumar, Dr. Shashirekha HK, text book of Swasthavritta, chaukhambha publication.
5. Dr. Bargale Sushanth sukumar, Dr. Shashirekha HK, text book of Swasthavritta, chaukhambha publication.
6. Mahajan and Gupta, Text book of preventive and social medicine, Jaypee 4th edition.