

IMPACT OF VIRUDDHA AAHAR ON HEALTH: A REVIEW ARTICLE

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Article Received on
20 December 2022,

Revised on 09 Jan. 2023,
Accepted on 29 Jan. 2023,

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20233-27173

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of Ayurveda is to maintain the health of the healthy person and to cure the illness of the diseased. Ayurveda has given prime importance to *Aahar* (diet) amongst three sub- pillars of life. Diet should be wholesome as well as in accordance with *Desh*, *Kala*, *Prakriti*, and *Vayah* It's significance should be understood as not following its rules may lead to numerous hazardous diseases unknowingly. *Viruddha Aahar* is a very unique concept described by *Ayurved*. it is a guide for diet, especially telling us what not to eat. *Acharya Charaka* says that consuming *Viruddha Aahara* on regular basis can lead to a hoard of disorders like *shandya*, *aandhya*, *visar mada*, *adhmana*, *gal- graha*, *pandu roga*, *aamvisha*, *kilasa*, *kushtha*, *grihani roga*, *shotha*, *amlapitta*, *jwara*, *pinasa*, *santaana* variety of diseases which covers physiologic, anatomic, neurologic, genetic disorders.

KEYWORDS: *Aahar*, diet, *virudh aaahar*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a vast and ancient medical science. Unlike other medical sciences, instead of focusing on treatment of any particular disease, Ayurveda focuses more on the healthy living and well-being of the person. For healthy living, Ayurveda emphasizes on consuming right kind of diet which is healthy and nutritious. The difference of proper health (Happiness) and unhealth (Unhappiness) is based on the difference between wholesome *aahara* and unwholesome *aahara*. *Aahara* is very much essential for the sustainment of life of all living beings. It is stated to be responsible for both *Arogya* (health) and *Vyadhi* (disease). *Hita Aahara* (wholesome food) if consumed according to rules, they provide fuel to the fire of

digestion; they promote mental as well as physical strength and complexion. Unwholesome *aahara* (*Viruddha Aahara*) is a unique and important concept described in Ayurveda. Explaining *viruddhaahara*, *Acharya Charaka* clearly says that certain diet and its combinations, which interrupts the metabolism of tissue, which inhibits the process of formation of tissue and which have the opposite property to the tissue are called as *viruddhanna* or incompatible diet. The food which is wrong in combination, has undergone wrong processing, consumed in incorrect dose, and/or consumed in incorrect time of the day and in wrong season can lead to *viruddhaahara* complications. *Viruddhanna* or incompatible diet is very important issue discussed in Ayurveda. It is said to be the cause of many systemic derangements. Persons who consume *viruddha aahara* are prone to many disorders like *shandya*, *aandhya*, *visar mada*, *adhmana*, *gal- graha*, *pandu roga*, *aamvisha*^[1] etc. It is vital to correlate the mechanism as to how *viruddha aahara* is a cause of many metabolic disorders to make it easy to understand. It is also essential to know how certain food combinations interact with each other and create a disease.

Importance of *aahara*

Diet has always been an integral part of our life. The dietary habits are influenced by economic, regional and personal factors. Ayurveda describes the effects of diet as *Varna*, *Prasada*, *Sukham*, *Santusti*, *Sausvaryam*, *Pushti*, *Pratibha*, *Medha*, and *Bala*.^[2] The *aahara* plays the role of *swasthya anuvartana* i.e., it maintains health and prevents diseases by providing nourishment to different systems of the body.^[3] Ayurveda recommends that we eat a balanced diet (with all six *rasa*) regularly. A balanced diet leads balance of *doshas*. Each *rasa* promotes nutritional factors that the body needs for proper functioning. However, only the presence of six *rasa* is also not sufficient, the factors like avoiding a rush during eating, use of appropriate utensils, sequence of eating different foods, season, time of day are also important. When the meals do not contain all six *rasas*, it can lead to experiences like in satiation even after having a large meal, feeling weak and tired in the late afternoon, or developing cravings for certain types foods.

Types of *Viruddha Aahar*^[4]

Acharya charak described 18 types of *viruddh aaahar* with examples and mode of action which can be summarized as follows.

1. ***Desha Viruddha*** - Consumption of those substances which are against place or land region, for example –To have *Ruksha* (Dry) and *Tikshna* (Acute) substances in arid region

(*Maru desha*) or Snigdha (Unctuous) and Sheet (Cold) substances in Marshy land or *Anoopa desha*.

2. **Kala Viruddha**: if a person takes cold, dry things in winter or excessive hot, spicy food in summer it is antagonist in term of *kala*. e.g., ice-cream, cold drink in winter or pickle *chatni* in summer. *Kala* is differentiated in our lifespan and nature, day and night. Age: One should consume food according to his / her age. *Kapha* dosha is predominant in young children, so less amount of nourishing food should be consumed.
3. **Agni Viruddha**^[4] - Consumption of those substances which are against digestive power, for example Intake of *Guru* food (foods which are heavy to digest) when there is *Mandagni* (low digestion power) or Intake of *Laghu* (light) food when the power of digestion is *Tikshnagni* (sharp) and intake of food at variance with irregular and normal power of digestion.
4. **Matra Viruddha**: Food combinations in definite proportion are not good for the body According to acharya honey and ghee in one and the same proportion is *matraviruddha* According to *agni matra* can also be define such as quantity of calories consumed in all food item should be in propositional for burning fat.
5. **Satmya Viruddha** - Consumption of those substances which are unwholesome, for example Intake of *Madhur* (sweet) and *Sheet* (Cold) substance by person accustomed to *Katu* (Pungent) and *Ushna* (hot) substance.
6. **Dosha Viruddha**: According to *ayurved* use of diet and behavior similar to *doshadhikya* in a person is called *doshaviruddha*. For example, to take *ruksha*, *shita*, *laghu gunatmak* doing much manual heavy work by a person in *vatadosha prakriti* cause *vataadhiya*.
7. **Sanskar Viruddha** - Consumption of those substances which are against mode of preparation. Drugs and diets which, when prepared in a particular way produced poisonous effects. For example, Heated *Madhu* (Honey) or Meat of peacock roasted on a castor spit.
8. **Veerya Viruddha** - Consumption of those substances which are against Potency Substances having *Ushna* (hot) potency in combination with those of *Sheet* (cold) potency substances. For example- Fish + Milk.
9. **Koshtha Viruddha**: *Koshtha* are of three type *mrudu*, *Madhya* and *kruru*. when food is not proper in terms of *koshtha* it is called *kashtaviruddha*. For example, Administration of less quantity with mild potency purgative drug to a person of *Krura koshta* (Constipated bowel) or administration of more quantity heavy purgative drug to a person having soft bowel.

10. **Avastha Viruddha** - Consumption of those substances which are against States or condition. For example, Intake of *Vata* aggravating food by a person after exertion, sexual act or physical exertion and Intake of *Kapha* aggravating food by a person after sleep or drowsiness.
11. **Karma Viruddha**: To hold or control natural urges like urination or defecation due to some reason when eating it called *kramaviruddha*. Even if we consume food before the earlier food is digested eating without feeling hungry or after excessive hunger is also *karmaviruddha*. For example, Consuming curd at night or Hot water after taking honey or Intake of food without clearance of his bowel and urination.
12. **Parihar Viruddha** - Consumption of those substances which are against things which relieve the symptoms. For example – Intake of hot potency food after taking meat of boar etc.
13. **Upachar Viruddha** - Consumption of those substances which are against treatment. For example – Intake of cold things after taking ghee.
14. **Paka viruddha** - Antagonism in cooking consists of cooking on improper fuel food with bad or rotten odor, rotten fuel, i: e defective wood etc. it also consists of food which is not properly cooked either less or overcooked. It may increase or decrease the total effects on the tissues and Doshas.
15. **Sanyoga Viruddha** - Consumption of those substances which are against combination. Or intake of two such substances which on combination have poisonous effects. For example, Intake of sour substances with milk.
16. **Hriday Viruddha** – Consumption of those substances which are not liked by the person. In short intake of unpleasant food.
17. **Sampata viruddha**- If immature, over mature, damaged, over damaged food which is not with all good properties is consumed is called *sampataviruddha* specially in hotel or in mess food quality is not too good now a days so many chemicals, coloring substance are used as to ripe the fruits artificially before time this is a best example of *sampatavirudha*.
18. **Vidhivirudha**- If the rules of eating are not followed is called as *vidhivirudha* Foods which are taken against the rules of diet as mentioned in Ayurveda are called *Vidhi viruddha*, e.g., taking meals in public, not eaten in privacy.

Food incompatibilities in today perspective

Viruddha Aahara can lead to derangement at a molecular level. There are a variety of food incompatibilities mentioned in Ayurveda literature, such as *charaka Samhita*. The type of

illustrations resorted to explain the various food combinations are not followed in today's times. To make the concept of food incompatibility understandable in modern lifestyle, which is seen precisely in eating habits of today's times, the illustrations are given in possible way which can be said to amalgamate the concept of Ayurveda and the modern dietetics. The examples of various *Viruddha* point towards a possible damaging effect on digestive system, and may be immune system, cellular metabolism, general body growth etc. There are many concepts relating to the dietetics. According to this science, a combination of protein and carbohydrates is not good as both need different digestion requirements. This is so because an alkali medium is required for digestion of starch. This alkalinity is provided by amylase, ptyalin of saliva, which splits starch into simpler molecules like maltose and then in the small intestine, where more amylase further breaks down the maltose into simple glucose, fructose, and galactose. These are absorbed into the bloodstream, and taken up by various cells to fulfill their energy requirements. But combining protein and starch for consumption together will result in absorption of one being impeded by the other.^[5] Similarly, we see that combining tea brew with milk can hamper the process of its digestions as the tannins in the tea brew precipitate the milk proteins making it harder to digest.^[6] Also, the pomegranate juice and grapefruit juice which are known to block the cytochrome P450 3A4 enzyme systems in the intestines, show synergistic effect when combined with many medicines.^[7]

Effects of *Viruddha Aahara* on the body

There are a lot of principals that Ayurveda has about consumption of food. Since the contraindications are more important practically, the concept of *Viruddha aahara* was created to give due stress on the topic. It is also mentioned in Ayurveda, that oil and food must not be reheated. We see by modern concepts also that reheating of oil releases more free radicals in the body causing oxidative stress.^[8] Furthermore, we see that, rancidity occurs when fatty acids are exposed to oxygen in the presence of heat or light, resulting in the formation of hydro- peroxide compounds. These hydro- peroxides in turn form aldehyde molecules. Oxygenated aldehydes are toxic compounds that increase the risk of atherosclerosis and degenerative changes in the body. Hydroperoxide compounds also have an unfavorable effect on the fat-soluble vitamins, which induce oxidative stress in animals.^[9] *Acharya Charaka*, in the definition of *Viruddha Aahara*, says that those food substances and combinations, which depreciate the Dhatus, can be called as *Viruddha Aahara*. Deducing this in the modern times, the fast foods act as calorie- rich but nutrient deficient.^[10] Zinc, an important micronutrient, is needed for anti- oxidation process. This was seen in an experimental study in which

oxidative damage related inflammation was induced in male rats, which could adversely affect testicular function. Zn and iron (in plasma and testicular tissue), plasma antioxidant vitamins (A, E, and C), as well as testicular Super-Oxide Dismutase (SOD) and reduced Glutathione (GSH), lipid peroxidation indexes [Thio-Barbituric Acid Reactive Substances (TBARS) and Lipoprotein Oxidation Susceptibility (LOS)], inflammatory markers (plasma C-Reactive Protein (CRP), and testicular Tumor Necrosis Factor - Alpha (TNF- α) were found out in the study. Serum testosterone and histological examination of the testes was also performed. A severe decrease in antioxidant vitamins and Zn, with associated iron accumulation was found. Zinc deficiency correlated positively with SOD, GSH, antioxidant vitamins, and testosterone, and negatively with TBARS, LOS, CRP, and TNF- α , demonstrating a state of oxidative stress and inflammation. It was concluded that micronutrient deficiency, especially Zn, enhanced oxidative stress and inflammation in testicular tissue leading to underdevelopment of testis and decreased testosterone levels.

Certain food combinations or the unwanted substance released by certain incompatible food in vivo which may pose a bad impact on immunity. Milk which contains lactogen and certain fruits, such as bananas, which also contain common allergen may aggravate an asthmatic attack. Eggs and milk, reheated milk, consuming too much sugar along with saturated fats, can lead to number of immunological disorders. It has been regularly observed in the clinics that rheumatoid arthritis patients who consume yoghurt or sour food at night complain of more morning stiffness. It must be studied that whether such type of Kala *Viruddha* diet would accelerate antigen and antibody reactions and exhibit an impact on WBCs. Also, some food combinations are capable of switching on or off little epigenetic tags on genes that tell other genes what to do to be healthy, repair, replicate, and fix anything that goes wrong with the gene's function. Epigenetic modifications are changes made to the genome without changing the nucleotide sequence. A common type of epigenetic modification is the addition of methyl groups to DNA, which causes alteration in the DNA structures. Nutrition experts believe that these epigenetic changes can affect the expression of certain genes. This could have implications for fetal development, cancer, aging, and other biological processes. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned *Shandhatva* as one of the effects of *Viruddha Aahara*. *Shandhatva* can be congenital, which may be associated to some genetic expressions in fetus if the parents consumed *Viruddha Aahara*.

We see that taking *viruddha aahara* has many ill- effects on the body. In this regard *Acharya Charaka* says that consuming *Viruddha Aahara* on regular basis can lead to a hoard of disorders like *shandya, aandhya, visarpa, udara roga, visphota, unmada, bhagandara, murchha, mada, adhmaana, gal- graha, pandu roga, aamvisha, kilasa, kushtha, grihani roga, shotha, amlapitta, jwara, pinasa, santaana-* dosha and even *mrityu*. We see that this illustration has a variety of diseases which covers physiologic, anatomic, neurologic, genetic disorders. The formation of *aama* is itself a root cause of almost all diseases. Apart from all the *Charaka* has also mentioned that those people who have strong digestive capabilities (Agni), who exercise regularly, who are young, who have grown have accustomed to the diet, if the consumed portions are small or if the person consumes ghee; then the effects of *Viruddha Aahara* will not bring ill- effects.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda provides a complete and systemic understanding about the effect of food on our physical and mental functioning. Food taken in proper manner helps in the proper growth of the body on contrary if taken in improper manner leads to various diseases. Thus, *Aahara* plays a significant role in causation and curing of the disease. Balanced diet provides natural disease prevention, weight control and proper sleep. A balanced diet is also important because it enables you to meet your daily nutritional needs and enjoy a higher overall quality of life. A balanced diet also enables you to live longer. Regarding the importance of food, Ayurveda quotes various references in each and every step. *Acharya Charaka* mentioned food is the root cause of both body as well as disease. *Aahara* is not only meant for maintenance of health but is also very important in the curative aspect while treating various diseases. The need of the day is to increase awareness and consciousness among the general public about hazards of Incompatible Food. From above discussion we can say that incompatible foods should be considers Similar to poison and artificial poisoning.

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