

AHARA PARINAMAKAR BHAVA: A REVIEW**Dr. Vandana Thakur*¹ and Dr. Neha Barua²**

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ABSTRACT

In *Ayurveda* much importance is given to the food we eat. Various instructions can be found about consuming a food item in favorable time or season, in proper quantity, in appropriate combinations etc. Likewise, some factors known as *Ahara Parinamkar Bhava* are also explained which are required for proper digestion and metabolism of food. Four types of food we consume are responsible for a healthy body as well as are cause of various diseases. So to get benefitted from food it must be digested properly and *Ahara Parinamakar Bhavas* are the factors which help in digestion. Each factor has its own function. One must take care of these factors to avoid diseases and attain a healthy body.

KEYWORD: *Ahara, Parinamakar, Bhava.*

INTRODUCTION

Ahara Parinamakar Bhavas are the factors responsible for the digestion and metabolism of ingested food. These are six in number namely; Ushma, Vayu, Kleda, Sneha, Kala and Samyog.^[1] Each one of them has a specific role in the process of digestion. Food which is digested and metabolized properly helps in nourishing the *Dhatus*.^[2] Absence or lack of any of these *Ahara Parinamakar Bhavas* leads to improper digestion. And improper digestion is quoted the root cause of all diseases in *Ayurveda*.^[3] Therefore, to be healthy one must keep in mind the importance of *Ahara Parinamakar Bhava*.

Acharya Charaka has described *Ahara Parinamakar Bhavas* in sixth chapter of *Sharir sthana*. Also, role of some of these factors in the process of digestion is well explained in

Grahani Dosh Chikitsa Adhyaay.^[4] Acharya Vagbhatta has also explained these *Bhava* in *Annapanavidhi Adhyaay of Sutra Sthana*.^[5]

The word *Ahara* is explained in *Shabdkaalpdruma* as a substance which is swallowed through throat after eating.^[6] The four types of food consumed is then worked upon by the *Jatharagni* and *Panch bhutagni*, undergoes *Paka* and replenishes the whole body as well as nourishes the *Dhatus*.^[7]

Parinama means the final product or stage after digestion of ingested food. Specific *Guna* of consumed food replenishes the same *Guna* of body. For example, *Guru guna* of *Ahara* replenishes the *Guru guna* inside body.^[8]

Bhava means the factors. Hence, *Ahara Parinamakar Bhava* are actually the factors responsible for the digestion, metabolism and nourishment of *Sharir* and *Saptadhatus*.

Acharya Charaka has described the *karma*^[9] of each *Ahara Parinamakar Bhava* individually as:

- 1.) Ushma- 'Ushma pachati' means heat is responsible for digestion.
- 2.) Vayu- 'Vayuh apkarshati' means Vayu helps move forward the food into Amashaya.
- 3.) Kleda- 'Kledah shaithilyama apadayati' means kleda helps in loosening the food.
- 4.) Sneha- 'Sneho mardwam janayati' means sneha softens the food consumed.
- 5.) Kala- 'Kalah paryaptim abhinirvartayati' means kala converts it into easily digestible form.
- 6.) Samyog- 'Samyogah tu esham parinama dhatusamyakarah sampadyate' means samyog establishes equilibrium in the formed *Dhatus*.

This article aims to explain the importance of *Ahara Parinamakar Bhava* and following guidelines of food intake as per *Ayurveda* so that these six *Bhavas* can work efficiently to build healthy *Dhatus*.

DISCUSSION

The four types of food is responsible for the formation and maintenance of our body. And also, food is the reason behind the origin of diseases in the body.^[7] So, we must take care that the food gets properly digested and nourishes our body and does not cause diseases. For this to achieve, *Ayurveda* mentions some rules to be followed, dietary habits to be adopted and

some factors to be taken care of; in the form of *Ashta Aharvidhi Visheshaayatana*, *Ahara Vidhividhana* and *Ahara Parinamakar Bhava*.

According to *Ashta Aharvidhi Visheshaayatana*^[10], we must think about the *Prakriti* (natural qualities), *Karana* (change in natural qualities due to some processes like cooking, grinding), *Sanyog* (combination of food items), *Rashi* (quantity consumed), *Desh* (original habitat and place where the food is being consumed), *Kala* (food intake as per the current health condition and season), *Upayog Sanstha* (rules of food intake) and *Upyokta* (user).

Ahara Vidhividhana^[11] are the guidelines to be followed by healthy individuals in general and may vary according to the diseased condition of the person. It says one must eat warm (*Ushna*), unctuous (*Snigdha*), appropriate quantity (*Matravat*), after the digestion of previous meal (*Jeerne*), which is not antagonistic due to potency (*Veeryaaviruddham*), at pleasant place (*Ishte deshe*), with all the desired instruments (*Ishta sarvopakarne*), not too fast (*Naatidrutam*), not too slow (*Naativilambitam*), without talking (*Ajalpan*), without laughing (*Ahasan*), thinking about our soul (*Aatmanamabhisameekshya*) and concentrating on the food (*Tanmana Bhunjeet*).

Now, keeping in mind the above mentioned guidelines we will see how *Ahara Parinamakar Bhava* can help us transform the ingested food into healthy *Dhatus* and attain a healthy body. We will discuss them one by one.

- 1.) *Ushma* – '*Ushma pachati*'. *Ushma* means heat. Here we can take it as *Ushna bhojan* and *Agni*. The *Jatharagni* or *Pachak Pitta* which resides in *Aamashaya* acts upon the ingested food and starts the process of digestion. In modern view also we talk about digestive enzymes which work more efficiently at a specified temperature. So one must not eat cold food or drink cold water which may cause *Mandagni* and improper working of enzymes by lowering down the temperature.
- 2.) *Vayu*- '*Vayu apkarshati*'. Commentator *Acharya Chakrapani* has explained it as to bring the distant situated food more in contact with *Agni*. *Praanvayu* helps drive the food down to the stomach.^[13] *Samaan Vayu* amplifies the *Jatharagni* which further boosts the process of digestion. As *Gati* is a *karma* of *Vayu*, food propulsion and peristaltic movements of intestines can be attributed to *Vayu*.
- 3.) *Kleda*- '*Kledah shaithilyamaapadayati*'. *Kledak kapha* which is present in *Aamashaya* disintegrates food into smaller particles. After loosening, food comes more in contact

with *Agni* and becomes easily digestible. *Kleda* is generated because of watery content. So one must not take too much or too low quantity of water.

- 4.) *Sneha*- '*Sneho mardawam janayati*'. *Snehansh* in *Aamashaya* softens the food.
- 5.) *Kala*- '*Kalah paryaptimabhinirvartayati*'. *Kala* means time. For these factors to work it requires adequate time. Considering the above stated *Ahara Vidhividhana*, it is important to have food only if the previous meal is well digested (*Jeerne*). *Atidruta* (too fast eating) can cause improper chewing. *Ativilambit* (too slow eating) may cause mixing of engulfed food with the partially digested food and hamper the digestion. *Kala* is also important for proper mixing of saliva with food and for enzymes to work upon it.
- 6.) *Samyog*- '*Samyogastwashaam parinaamdhatu saamyakarah*'. *Samyog* means appropriate administration of all the rules and guidelines we have discussed above under *Ashta Aharavidhi Visheshaayatan*, *Ahara Vidhividhan* and *Ahara Parinamakar Bhava*. All the remaining factors other than the five discussed (*Ushma*, *Vayu*, *Kleda*, *Sneha*, *Kala*) can be studied under the heading *Samyog*. *Matratvat ahara* is necessary as *Agni* can digest adequate amount of food. If taken in more quantity it can cause *Mandagni*. And if taken in less quantity it can result in *Dosha* vitiation. Likewise, we must not talk or laugh during eating or drinking. We may aspirate the food particles or fluids, it may also cause coughing or choking. *Tanmana bhunjeet* means we should concentrate on food only while eating. Engaging in other activities during eating like TV and social media deranges the process of digestion as one might take a lot of time to finish his meal, he might eat too fast or he might eat inappropriate quantity of food (*Atidruta/ Ativilambit/ Amatravat*). Also, one must give a thought to the *Prakriti* of oneself and also of the food items he consumes. He must eat what is suitable to him according to his *Prakriti* and *Desh*. So, in short *Samyog* is all about maintaining an equilibrium state among all these factors and following all the rules and guidelines whenever we eat or drink something.

CONCLUSION

Ushma, *Vayu*, *Kleda*, *Sneha*, *Kala* and *Samyog* are known as the *Ahara Parinamakar Bhava* because they are the factors which decide the final result of food intake; whether it will build and nourish the healthy *Dhatu*s and our body or it will cause vitiation of *Dosha* and result in manifestation of various diseases. Appropriate methods of food intake which is explained in detail in *Ayurved*, under headings *Ahara Vidhividhan*, *Ashta Aharavidhi Visheshayatan*, *Jalapana vidhi* etc.; which can be summed up under *Ahara Parinamakar Bhava*.

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