



Review Article

HEALTH GUARD MEASURES OF AYURVEDA AGAINST CLIMATIC VARIATION- A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Human body has a compact systemic organisation of different tissues and organs which is managed by well specified metabolic and homeostatic mechanisms having sensitivity regarding its surroundings microscopically as well as macroscopically. It gets affected by the things around it either inside or outside. Hence while discussing its lives the environment or the climate where it lives comprises great aspect to mention so that appropriate measures regarding maintenance of health conditions can be analysed accordingly. As it has to be seen that the persons following their health monitoring daily regimens also tends to attain several health discomfort or disorders while seen any change the climatic conditions where they live. So, the climatic variations measures to be great factor for human lives. That is why there are several rules and regimens regarding climatic variations are advised since very past time. In Ayurveda it is called as *Ritucharya*, the *Charya* or regimens mint for different *Ritus* or seasons. According to the Ayurveda, there are total six seasons (*Ritus*) in one year and the body needs to adapt itself according to the seasonal variation to remain healthy. But whenever fails to adopt or fails to attain the compulsory consequence results in deformities.

INTRODUCTION

Before the creation of the universe the self-born lord *Brahma* created the Ayurveda having two prime aims^[1] wings the "*Swasthasya swastha rakshanam*" and "*Aturasya vicar prasamnamch*", means health science for the maintenance of health of a healthy individual by its preventive and caring measures and treatment or cure of illness of ill person by its curative measures. *Ritucharya* comprises a major component in it. According to the Ayurveda, there are total six seasons (*Ritus*) in one year, each season has its specific climatic conditions and the climatic variations measures to be very challenging to maintain human health as they need to adapt themselves according to the seasonal variation to remain healthy^[2].

As they get affected by the things or phenomenon occurring around them either inside or outside or the environment where it lives, the things it touches, the food intake, the things it see and feels etc. Hence while discussing its lives the environment or the climate where it lives comprises great aspect to mention. As it has to be seen that the persons following their health monitoring daily regimens also tends to attain several health related discomfort or disorders while seen any change the climatic conditions where they live. It is all because human body have the compact systemic organisation of different tissues and organs so called *Deha prakriti* and is managed by well specified metabolic and homeostatic mechanisms. It has the sensitivity regarding its surroundings microscopically as well as macroscopically.

Ayurveda divides the whole year into two *Kaals*: *Aadaan Kaal (Uttarayan)* and the *Viserga Kaal (Dakshinayaan)* on the basis of position of the sun. During *Aadaan Kala*, sun and wind are powerful which takes away the people strength and cooling qualities of earth, because of the movement of the sun towards north direction it is also called as *Uttaraya*. It comprises first half of the year composing *Shishira*, *Basanta* and *Grishma ritus*. During *Dakshinayaan*, sun

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moves towards south side, sun releases the strength, moon is more powerful and earth regains its coolness through clouds, rain and cold winds so called *Visarga Kala*. It comprises rest half of year composing *Varsha*, *Sharad* and *Hemanta ritu*^[3].

DISCUSSION

Among all the six weathers that part to complete a year summer, spring and cold seasons

Table 1: General characteristics of Aadaan kaal (Uttrayan) and Viserga Kaal (Dakshinayan)

<i>Kaal</i>	<i>Aadaan Kala (Uttrayan)</i> ^[4]			<i>Viserga Kaal (Dakshinayaan)</i> ^[5]		
<i>Ritu (season)</i>	<i>Sishira</i>	<i>Vasanta</i>	<i>Grishma</i>	<i>Varsha</i>	<i>Sharad</i>	<i>Hemant</i>
<i>Maas (month)</i>	<i>Magha-Phalguna</i> (mid January to mid march)	<i>Chaitra-Baisakh</i> (mid March to mid May)	<i>Jyeshtha-Aashadha</i> (mid May to mid July)	<i>Shravan-Bhadrapada</i> (mid July to mid September)	<i>Aashvin-Kartika</i> (mid September to mid November)	<i>Margshirsha-Pausa</i> (mid November to mid January)
<i>Climatic conditions</i>	Cold and dewy season	Spring season	Summer season	Rainy season	Autumn season	Winter season
<i>Powered Rasa</i>	<i>Tikta</i> (bitter)	<i>Kashaya</i> (astringent)	<i>Kattu</i>	<i>Amala</i> (sour)	<i>Lavan</i> (salty)	<i>Madhura</i> (sweet)
<i>Prevalent Dosha</i>	<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Vata</i>	<i>Vata</i>	<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Pitta</i>

Vata dosha accumulates during the dry season or dehydrating heat of the summer. The characteristics of rainy season make it aggravated which causes indigestion. *Pitta dosha* accumulates during the rainy season due to indigestion and acidic atmosphere. Autumn makes it aggravated when heat returns after the cooling spell of the rainy season. *Kapha dosha* accumulates during the cold season due to winds, clouds and rain generated coolness. Spring season makes it aggravated when warm weather liquefies the accumulating *Kapha*. These all ultimately impaired with the body strength which also changes as the *Kala* changes. So called at the beginning of *Adana Kala* and at the end of *Visarga Kala*, that is during *Hemanta* and *Shishira*, maximum body strength is seen. In the middle of the solstices, that is, during *Sharata* and *Vasanta*, strength remains in moderate grade and in the beginning of *Visarga Kala* and ending of *Adana kala*, that is during *Varsha* and *Grishma*, least strength or weakness occurs^[6].

Shishira Ritu (Winter)

Diet regimen: Food having *Amla* (sour) are preferred. Cereals and pulses, wheat or gram flour products, new rice, corn etc. Ginger, garlic, *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula*), *Pippali* (*Piper longum*), sugarcane products, and milk products are to be included in the diet. But foods having *Katu* (pungent), *Tikta* (bitter), *Kashaya* (astringent) predominant *Rasa* are avoided similarly food characterised as *Laghu* (light) and *Shita* (cold) are avoided.

forms the *Uttrayan Kaal* and rainy, autumn and winter season forms the *Dakshinayaan Kaal*. In the physio-metabolic concern of our body, these two *Kaals* affects the natural *Doshas* in our body and hence directly influences the body physio-metabolic and homeostatic mechanisms. Its characteristics can be explained by following simple parameters:

Lifestyle: Advised to massage with oil or powder or several paste, bathing with lukewarm water, exposure to sunlight, wearing warm clothes. Avoid *Vata* aggravating lifestyle like exposure to cold water and wind, excessive walking, late night sleep^[7].

Vasanta Ritu (Spring)

Diet regimen: Advised to take easily digestible foods. Among cereals, old barley, wheat, rice, and others are preferred. Among pulses, lentil, *Mugda*, and others, can be taken. Food items tasting *Tikta* (bitter), *Katu* (pungent), and *Kashaya* (astringent) are to be taken. Besides those, honey is to be included in the diet. Foods which are characterised by *Sheeta* (cold), *Snigdha* (viscous), *Guru* (heavy), *Amla* (sour), *Madhura* (sweet) are not preferred and those which are hard to digest and new grains, curd, cold drinks, and so on, are also to be prohibited.

Lifestyle: Use warm water for bathing, may do exercise during *Vasant Ritu*. *Udvardana* (dry massage), *Kavala* (gargle), *Dhooma* (smoking), *Anjana* (collyrium), and evacuative measures, such as *Vamana* and *Nasya* are indicated. Day time sleeping is strictly prohibited^[8].

Grishma Ritu (Summer)

Diet regimen: Foods which are light to digest, having *Madhura* (sweet), *Snigdha* (unctuous), *Sheeta* (cold), and *Drava* (liquid) *Guna*, such as rice, lentil, etc, are advised to take. Intake plenty of water and other liquids, such as cold water, buttermilk, fruit juices, meat soups, mango juice, churned curd with pepper

etc. *Lavana*, *Katu* (pungent) and *Amla* (sour) taste and *Ushna* (warm) foods are to be avoided.

Lifestyle: Live in cool places, use sandalwood and other aromatic pastes over the body, wearing light dresses and day time sleeping are advisable. Pleasant mid-night moon rays. Excessive exercise or hard work or sexual indulgence and alcoholism is avoided^[9].

Varsha Ritu (Monsoon)

Diet regimen: Foods having *Amla* (sour) and *Lavana* (salty) taste and with *Sneha* (oleaginous) qualities and cereals like old barley, rice, wheat, etc., are advised to take. Besides meat soup, *Yusha* (soup), etc., are to be included in the diet. It is mentioned that one should take medicated water or boiled water. Intake of river water, churned preparations having more water, excessive liquid and wine are to be avoided. The foods, which are heavy and hard to digest, like meat are prohibited.

Lifestyle: Advise warm water for bath and rubbing the body with oil after bath. Medicated *Basti* (enema) is prescribed as an evacuative measure to expel vitiated *Doshas*. Rain water bath, staying at river bank or wind exposer, day time sleeping, exercise, hard work, sexual indulgence, etc are prohibited^[10].

Sharad Ritu (Autumn)

Diet regimen: Foods having *Madhura* (sweet) and *Tikta* (bitter) taste, and of *Laghu* (light to digest) and cold properties are advised. Foods having the properties to pacify vitiated *Pitta* are advised. Wheat, green gram, sugar candy, honey, *Patola* (*Trichosanthes dioica*), flesh of animals of dry land (*Jangala Mamsa*) are to be included in the diet. Hot, bitter, sweet, and astringent foods are to be avoided. The food items, such as fat, oils, meat of aquatic animals, curds, etc., are also to be not included in the diet during this season.

Lifestyle: Advice to eat food while get hunger, use water purified by the exposure sun rays and moon rays for drinking, bathing, etc. In this season, moon rays in the early of night for up to three hours seem to be conducive for health. Treatment procedures, such as *Virechana* (purging), *Rakta-Mokshana*, etc., should be more advisable during this season. But excessive exposure to sunlight or day time sleeping and excessive eating are avoided^[11].

Hemanta Ritu (Late Autumn)

Diet regimen: Advised to use oleaginous, sweet, salty and sour foods. New rice, spices, various meats, fatty edible substances, milk and milk products, jaggery and other sugarcane products, *Shidhu* (fermented preparations), *Tila* (sesame) etc are advised to include in diet. *Laghu* (light), cold, and dry foods are avoided. Intake of cold drinks is also contraindicated.

Lifestyle: Use of warm water, exercise, massage, *Atapasevana* (sunbath), application of *Agaru* on body, heavy clothing, sexual indulgence with one partner, live in warm places are advised. Day time sleeping, exposure to intense cold wind etc are advised to avoided^[12].

CONCLUSION

Ritu, the season, classified by different climatic features expresses different effects on the body homeostasis as well as the environment. Ayurveda has depicted various rules and regimens (*Charya*), regarding diet and behavior to acclimatize seasonal enforcement easily without altering body metabolic status or the homeostasis. The prime principle of Ayurvedic system of medicine is preventive aspect, can be achieved by the change in diet and practices in response to change in climatic condition. This is a very important aspect of preventive or caring modality as mentioned in Ayurvedic texts. Lifestyle disorders are very common in the present era, basically originating from lack of following seasonal regimens due to lack of concentration in climatic variations or seasonal characteristics. Hence it is very important to generalize the different measures regarding seasonal variations are concerned that must need to be carried out along with the general health measures.

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