



Review Article

## A REVIEW ON AYURVEDIC APPROACH TO ELECTRONIC MEDIA-DRIVEN LIFESTYLE DYSREGULATION

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### ABSTRACT

The pervasive use of social media in contemporary society has led to a rise in psychosomatic conditions including insomnia, anxiety, digital burnout, and emotional dysregulation. Ayurveda, an ancient holistic medical system, offers integrative lifestyle frameworks- *Dinacharya* (daily routine), *Sadvritta* (ethical living methods), and *Swasthviritta* (science of maintaining health and preventing disease) which includes Yoga, to mitigate such digital-age health challenges. **Methods:** This article reviews classical Ayurvedic texts alongside scientific research to explore how these practices align behavioural rhythms such as eating patterns, exercise, sleep, and socio-ethical practice with circadian biology to promote physiological and psychological homeostasis. **Results:** Implementing Ayurvedic regimens harmonizes the body's internal clock, supports mental equilibrium, and modulates epigenetic factors related to lifestyle-induced disorders. Regular observance of day and night routine demonstrates potential in preventing and alleviating digital overstimulation's adverse effects. **Discussion:** Integrating Ayurvedic principles into modern digital lifestyles presents a promising, holistic approach to restoring balance and resilience. By addressing lifestyle-induced epigenetic expression through circadian alignment and ethical conduct, Ayurveda offers sustainable strategies for health maintenance amidst the psychosocial stressors of the digital era.

### INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook have revolutionized our communication and expression. These media platforms enable instant connection, creative sharing, and global interaction. However, this digital revolution has come at a steep price- disruption of sleep cycles, decline in mental well-being, shortened attention spans, sedentary behaviour, and fragmented eating habits. As digital engagement grows, many individuals find themselves disconnected from their natural biological rhythms and inner stability.

Ayurveda which is a timeless science for modern balance, offers a time-tested framework for sustainable health and well-being. It defines health as a dynamic equilibrium between the *Sharira* (body), *Manas* (mind), and *Atma* (consciousness).<sup>[1]</sup> Ayurvedic method such as *Dinacharya*, *Sadvritta*, and Yoga serve as tools for resilience, especially in the overstimulated digital age.<sup>[2]</sup> *Dinacharya* is a structured daily routine that aligns the human body with circadian rhythms-the natural biological cycles governed by the rising and setting of the sun. It includes early waking, Hygiene, *Vyayama* (exercise), *Ahara* (mindful eating), *Karma* (work & study), and *Nidra* (sleep pattern). *Dinacharya* governs physical routines while *Sadvritta* guides to moral and mental hygiene. It includes ethical principles, emotional regulation, and respectful conduct to support emotional intelligence and social harmony. *Sadvritta* includes *Satya* (truthfulness in communication), *Ahimsa* (non-harming in speech and action), moderation in sensory indulgence, respect and control of desires. Yoga, as understood in Ayurveda, is

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not just physical postures but a comprehensive system for uniting body, mind, and spirit. It includes *Asana* (movement), *Pranayama* (breath control), *Dhyana* (meditation), and adherence to *Yamas* (ethical discipline) and *Niyamas* (Inner discipline).

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

This review involved a systematic and comprehensive evaluation of existing literature, integrating classical Ayurvedic canonical texts such as the *Brihatrayi* and *Laghutrayi* with contemporary scientific publications accessed through electronic databases including PubMed, Scopus, Medline, Google Scholar, and high-impact peer-reviewed journals. These sources were critically appraised to elucidate the intersection of traditional Ayurvedic principles, facilitating a robust synthesis of historical insights and perspectives.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Effects of Social Media on Lifestyle and Health

#### Disrupted Sleep Patterns

Excessive nocturnal exposure to blue light from digital screens, combined with habitual late-night engagement in social media or electronic devices, significantly disrupts the body's circadian rhythm by suppressing melatonin secretion- an essential neurohormone that governs the sleep-wake cycle. This disruption not only impairs sleep onset and quality but also dysregulates the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, resulting in elevated adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH) and sustained cortisol levels, which over time contribute to heightened sympathetic nervous system activity, metabolic dysfunction, immune suppression, and emotional instability.<sup>[3]</sup> From an Ayurvedic standpoint, such lifestyle patterns aggravate *Vata* and *Pitta doshas* and lead to the depletion of *Ojas*- the subtle essence responsible for immunity, vitality, and mental stability. The overstimulation of *Manovaha Srotas* (mental channels) during nighttime, when the body is biologically primed for rest and repair, further disrupts neurophysiological balance and undermines the body's inherent regenerative processes. The deviation from *Ratri Charya* (the prescribed Ayurvedic night regimen) exacerbates these imbalances, leading to chronic fatigue, cognitive fog, and hormonal irregularities. To restore homeostasis, both systems of thought advocate for aligning with natural circadian cues: minimizing sensory stimulation after sunset, prioritizing mental stillness, and maintaining a consistent sleep routine with early bedtime.<sup>[4]</sup> Ayurveda modalities such as *Abhyanga* (warm oil massage) particularly *pada and shiroabhyanga*, *Shirodhara* and *Dhyana* also serve as effective neuroendocrine regulators, promoting parasympathetic dominance, recalibrating the HPA

axis, and supporting the restoration of *Dosha* balance. This integrative approach- bridging chronobiology and Ayurvedic wisdom- underscores the necessity of reestablishing circadian harmony in the digital age to ensure long-term physiological resilience and psychological well-being.

#### Mental Health Challenges

Chronic exposure to social media is increasingly associated with a range of negative psychological outcomes, including social comparison, fear of missing out (FOMO), cyberbullying, and cognitive overload. These factors contribute to rising rates of anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and digital fatigue. Empirical research indicates a bidirectional relationship between mobile phone addiction and depressive symptoms, with excessive screen time linked to disrupted sleep architecture, reduced attention span, impaired interpersonal relationships, and greater susceptibility to online abuse and maladaptive digital behaviours.<sup>[5]</sup>

From an Ayurvedic perspective, these patterns reflect an aggravation of *Vata dosha* in the mind- responsible for neural activity, sensory processing, and mental adaptability. Persistent digital stimulation dysregulates the mental pathways, increasing *Rajas* (mental restlessness) and *Tamas* (inertia), which disturbs emotional and cognitive equilibrium.<sup>[6]</sup> This leads to a depletion psychological resilience and immune strength. To counter these effects, Ayurveda advocates the cultivation of *Sattva*- mental clarity, stability, and harmony through practices such as ethical living, breath regulation, *Mauna* (intentional silence), and mindful technology use.<sup>[7]</sup> These interventions support nervous system regulation and mitigate the neuropsychological strain of digital overexposure.

#### Reduced Physical Activity

Prolonged sedentary behaviour often driven by excessive screen time, binge-watching, and compulsive digital engagement is a significant risk factor for physical inactivity. This lifestyle pattern is strongly associated with increased incidence of obesity, musculoskeletal stiffness, metabolic syndrome, and cardiovascular disease. From a biomedical standpoint, sedentary behaviour disrupts metabolic homeostasis, reduces insulin sensitivity, and promotes chronic low-grade inflammation, contributing to the pathophysiology of various lifestyle-related disorders.<sup>[8]</sup> In Ayurvedic terms, physical stagnation is linked to an aggravation of *Kapha dosha*, which governs structure, stability, and anabolic functions. Excess *Kapha* may presents as weight gain, fatigue, fluid retention, and suppression of *Agni* (the metabolic and digestive fire) leading to reduced physiological

and cognitive efficiency. Additionally, inactivity fosters the accumulation of *Ama* (metabolic waste or toxins), which blocks the *Srotas* (bodily channels), impairing tissue nourishment and systemic function.

To address these imbalances, Ayurveda emphasizes *Vyayama* (structured physical activity), when natural sluggishness is most pronounced. Evidence-based movement practices such as brisk walking, *Asanas*, and *Surya Namaskar* (sun salutations) improve musculoskeletal mobility, enhance cardiovascular function, stimulate metabolism, and support systemic detoxification.<sup>[9]</sup> Integrating regular, intentional movement into daily routines is essential for mitigating the health impacts of digital sedentarism. When approached through both modern physiology and Ayurvedic principles, physical activity becomes a foundational strategy for maintaining metabolic integrity, preventing chronic disease, and sustaining long-term vitality.

### Dietary Irregularity

The habitual use of smartphones during meals has been shown to impair cognitive engagement with eating, leading to mindless consumption and reduced interoceptive awareness of hunger and satiety cues. This cognitive distraction diminishes dietary recall, increasing the risk of overeating and caloric underestimation.<sup>[10]</sup> Moreover, emotionally charged digital content or social media engagement during meals can dysregulate normal eating patterns by shifting attention from internal physiological signals to external stimuli. From a biomedical perspective, such behaviours disrupt the neurocognitive regulation of appetite, interfere with gut-brain signalling and compromise digestive efficiency. Irregular eating patterns such as skipping meals or consuming food while distracted are associated with impaired glucose metabolism, altered hormonal responses (e.g., ghrelin and leptin), and suboptimal nutrient absorption.

In Ayurvedic terms, these disruptions weaken *Agni*, promote *Agni Mandya* (digestive inefficiency). The sensory overstimulation during meals, especially from screens which aggravates *Vata dosha*, disturbs mental tranquillity, and obstructs the experience of *Trupti* (true satiety), which is critical for metabolic and emotional balance. Ayurveda emphasizes *Kala Bhojanam* (food intake timings) and *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* which describes a disciplined, mindful approach to eating that includes consuming meals at consistent times, in a calm environment, and with full sensory presence.<sup>[11]</sup> Ayurveda converge on the principle that attentive, distraction-free eating is essential for maintaining digestive health, preventing metabolic dysfunction, and promoting long-term physiological and psychological well-being.<sup>[12]</sup>

### Reduced Attention Span & Cognitive Overload

In the digital age, individuals are continuously exposed to high levels of sensory stimulation through constant notifications, rapid information consumption, and habitual multitasking across digital platforms. This persistent cognitive overload disrupts executive functioning, reduces attentional control, and impairs the brain's capacity for sustained focus and working memory.<sup>[13]</sup> Over time, such overstimulation contributes to mental fatigue, impaired memory consolidation, increased impulsivity, diminished productivity, and reduced emotional regulation. Neuroscientific research has shown that chronic multitasking and fragmented attention increase cognitive load, leading to decreased activation in prefrontal regions responsible for decision-making, attention regulation, and goal-directed behaviour. This state of attentional fragmentation is associated with elevated stress markers, reduced cognitive efficiency, and increased risk of burnout.

To address this imbalance, Ayurveda recommends *Medhya Rasayana* (neuro-rejuvenative herbs) such as *Brahmi* (*Bacopa monnieri*), *Shankhpushpi* (*Convolvulus pluricaulis*), and *Ashwagandha* (*Withania somnifera*), which have nootropic, adaptogenic, and neuroprotective properties.<sup>[14]</sup> Additionally, applying the principles of *Indriya Nigraha* (sense regulation) through digital hygiene strategies such as minimizing multitasking, disabling non-essential notifications, and implementing regular screen-free intervals which helps reduce neural overstimulation and supports a more focused, balanced cognitive state.

### Erosion of Social and Ethical Values in the Digital Age

The proliferation of electronic media and social platforms has profoundly altered human communication- enhancing connectivity while simultaneously fostering environments conducive to misinformation, online harassment, and emotionally reactive discourse. The immediacy and anonymity of digital interactions often bypass reflective thought, promoting impulsive responses, reducing empathy, and reinforcing social fragmentation.<sup>[15]</sup>

The violation of principles such as *Satya*, *Ahimsa*, and mindful restraint aggravates agitation and ignorance, further destabilizing psychological well-being. *Dhyana*, *Yama* and *Niyama* serve as a foundation for ethical living and inner peace, both in yoga practice and in everyday life. These interventions promote a more conscious, respectful, and psychologically sustainable digital culture.

## Strategies for Healthy Digital Engagement

In the context of social media, *Sadvritta* becomes highly relevant. This comprises avoiding comparison and envy triggered by curated content, practicing digital honesty and authenticity in expression, be mindful of consuming or spreading harmful or negative content, and using technology for upliftment, not exploitation or distraction. In the digital age, Yoga offers Relief from postural strain and physical stiffness from screen time, regulation of the nervous system through conscious breathing, tools for mental clarity, focus, and emotional balance, reduction in anxiety, insomnia, and digital addiction. Daily Yoga practice can bring individuals back to present-moment awareness, a state that is increasingly rare in fast-paced digital environments.

## Integrative Practices for Healthy Digital Habits

**Digital Detox Zones:** Avoid screens during the first and last hour of the day to protect natural circadian rhythms. This reduces blue light exposure at night, supporting melatonin production for better sleep, and allows a calm, focused start to the day.

**Morning Routine Apps:** Use apps that promote positive habits like yoga or meditation instead of engaging in distracting or negative content. This aligns a peaceful tone for the day.

**Digital Satvik Diet:** Curate digital intake to include only uplifting, educational, and inspiring content. Avoiding sensational or stressful material reduces agitation and supports mental tranquility and discernment.

**Practice Digital Ahimsa:** Communicate online with kindness and respect, avoiding conflicts and toxic debates. This minimizes emotional reactivity and the buildup personal peace and healthier digital communities.

**Mauna Practice:** Dedicate regular periods- an hour daily or a full day weekly- to silence and reflection. This quiets mental chatter, and rejuvenates emotional balance.

**Workplace Wellness:** Incorporate mindful, screen-free breaks during meals and short pauses throughout the day to reduce eye strain and mental fatigue. These practices sustain mental clarity amid digital demands.

## CONCLUSION

In an era dominated by digital connectivity, Ayurveda's enduring wisdom offers essential guidance for maintaining balance and well-being. By integrating *Dinacharya's* nature-aligned structure with *Sadvritta* and *Yoga*, individuals can effectively prevent and mitigate the adverse effects of digital overstimulation. Rather than rejecting technology, embrace mindful and disciplined use which is rooted in timeless principles for intentional living and holistic health in the digital age. Integrating Ayurvedic insights with contemporary

behavioural science offers a comprehensive framework for promoting long-term mental health.

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