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# RUTUCHARYA AN AYURVEDOKTA REGIMEN & ITS PRESENT-DAY IMPLICATION

Yuvaraj Patil<sup>1</sup>, Sachin S. Waghmare<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Final P.G. student, Dept. of Samhita & Siddhanta, YAMC, PGT&RC. Kodoli. Maharashtra, India

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Dept. of Samhita & Siddhanta, YAMC, PGT&RC. Kodoli. Maharashtra, India

Corresponding Author: yuvi1198@rediffmail.com

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#### **ABSTRACT**

World is suffering a huge crisis because of COVID 19 pandemic. Apart from this burden of noncommunicable diseases (NCD's) is also too high. We get very good comprehensive measures in *Ayurveda*, which will protect our body from both Infective diseases & NCD's. It is recently; Modern science has come to know about disturbance in circadian rhythms (biological clock) by means of faulty diet, untimely eating & performing tasks at wrong time's causes many diseases. *Ayurveda* already knew that environmental changes in whole day have effects on our body and to synchronize with them they mentioned *Dincharya*. Apart from this they were also aware of effects of seasonal changes on human body and to synchronize with them they have mentioned *Rutucharya*. Based on seasonal changes *Aacharyas* have classified six *Rutu's* namely *Shishira*, *Vasanta*, *Grishma*, *Varsha*, *Sharad and Hemant*. According to their effects on body different *Rutucharyas* are told. At present Indian calendar seems to be slightly out of phase with seasons but with help of tropical phenomena like solstices, equinoxes with respect *Uttarayan*, *Dakshinayan* & seasonal markers mentioned in Samhitas we can mark exact seasons. Based on *Ayurvedic Siddhantas* we can understand different *Rutucharyas* & can implicate them in our present routine.

**Keywords:** Rutucharya, Seasonal Regimen, Lifestyle, Diet, Dakshinayan, Uttarayan.

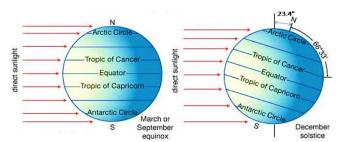
#### INTRODUCTION

The whole world is suffering a huge setback because of COVID 19 pandemic. Everyone is in rush of different modalities to increase the immunity and to maintain overall wellbeing of oneself. But because of increased use of social media people are following different diet plans (Keto diet, Vegan diet etc), drastic sudden weight loss measures, Vitamin supplements which are posted on social media without knowing their actions and side effects. Apart from this, burden of non-communicable diseases is also too high. According to WHO almost 71% of all deaths take place because of non-communicable diseases each year worldwide. Most NCD deaths occur because of cardiovascular diseases (17.9 million, major contributor), followed by cancers (9 million), respiratory diseases (3.9 million) and diabetes (1.6 million). Four metabolic changes that increase risk of NCD's are raised blood pressure, overweight, hyperlipidemia & hyperglycemia. These four changes are mainly attributed to faulty diet and lack of exercises.[1]

Ayurveda has most holistic answers to offer in both scenarios. Till recent past modern science had emphasized only on number of calories to keep in check on weight while few years back it came to light that timing of eating too have an effect on gaining weight. The whole phenomena reveled after discovery of molecular mechanism controlling circadian rhythm by Jeffrey C. Hall et al. Like our environment has 24 hours clock, cells too have their biological clock. This cycle closely mimics with 24 hrs cycle of environment. [2]

In following years scientists discovered biological clocks based on anatomical locations. The Central clock (Master clock) is situated in suprachiasmatic nucleus of hypothalamus. Second one is peripheral (slave) clocks situated in cells of body. This Central clock gets regularly reset and adjusts with environmental clock through daylight. Peripheral clocks are sensitive to Neurohumoral modulations. Ultimately central clock and peripheral clock work in synchronization with environmental clock responsible for phys-

iology and homeostasis of body. [3] If this circadian rhythm disrupted drastically and regularly by faulty lifestyles like eating at wrong time, unhealthy diet, sleeping in day & awakening in night leads to many diseases. [4] Aacharyas (sages) were well aware of the fact that physiology of human body works closely in relation with environment. While explaining "Purusho Ayam Lok Sammitta" they have told whatever entities are present there in our environment same entities are present in our body too. Keeping in mind the environmental changes in a whole day causing effect on body & physiology, they have described Dincharya (Day Regimen) & Ratricharya (Night Regimen). Ayurveda has already mentioned that seasonal changes in a year also have effects on body; to compensate these effects Ayurveda has mentioned Rutucharya (Seasonal Regimens). At present, dates of Hindu (Indian) calendar seems to be out of phase with actual tropical phenomena & Ayurvedokta Rutu's. Lastly diets which were told in ancient time are not used as it is, at present. In order to resolve these issues &to implicate Ayurvedokta Rutucharya in present day life this topic is undertaken.

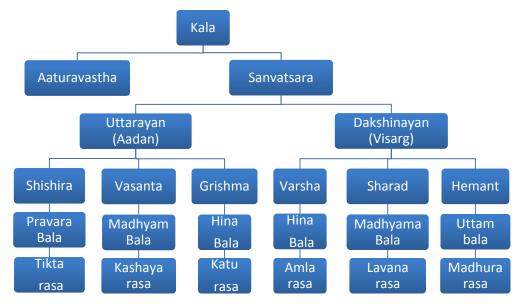


Seasons, Solstices & Equinoxes –

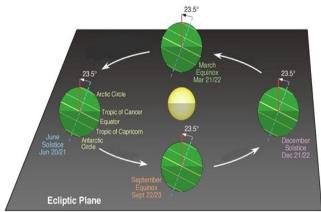
**Tilt of earth's axis** – earth's axis is inclined at an angle of 23.4° from perpendicular. This tilt of axis causes variation of sunlight exposure on earth over a year, while orbiting around the sun causes formation of seasons. <sup>[5]</sup>

There are two solstices (summer & winter), two equinoxes (vernal & autumn) for each pole.

India lies in north hemisphere of earth hence we shall discuss the solstices & equinoxes with respect to North Pole.



**Summer Solstice** – (on 20 or 21st June) in northern hemisphere, the sun rays directly fall over the Tropic of cancer; this is when North Pole is tilted closest to sun. At this time North Pole will have maximum sunlight exposure gives rise to longest day & shortest night of the year. <sup>[6]</sup>According to *Ayurveda* we can say this as start of *Dakshinayan*, but there is slight difference in date as per *Hindu* calendar & it is considered to be on July 15, when *Surya* enters in *Karka Rashi* (*Karkata Kranti*)



Winter Solstice – (on 21 or 22<sup>nd</sup>Dec) during this, the sunrays directly fall over the Tropic of Capricorn; this is when North Pole is tilted farthest from sun. At this time North Pole will have minimum sunlight exposure gives rise to longest night & shortest day of the year. [7] According to *Ayurveda* we can say this as start of *Uttarayan*, but there is slight difference in date as per *Hindu* calendar it is considered to be on Jan 15,

when Surya enters in Makara Rashi (Makara Sankranti).

**Vernal equinox** – (21st march) this is the day when sun is exactly above the equator, which makes day and night of equal lengths. It is spring or *Vasanta*.

**Autumnal equinox**—(23rdSep) this is the day when sun is exactly above the equator, which makes day and night of equal lengths. It is autumn or *Sharad*.

*Kala* classification in *Ayurveda-Kala* (*Time*) is divided in two main components as *Sanvatsara* & *Aaturavastha*. Wherein *Sanvatsara* is a year, which is further divided in 2, 3, 6 & 12 subtypes. [8]

- 1. 2 = (Uttarayan & Dakshinayan)
- 2. 3 = (Sheet, Grishma & Varsha)
- 3. 6 = (Shishira, Vasanta, Grishma, Varsha, Sharad & Hemant)
- 4. 12 = (Chaitra, Vaishakha, Jeshtha, Aashadha, Shravan, Bhadrapada, Ashwin, Kartik, Margashirsha, Pausha, Magha & Falgun)

A year comprises of 2 Ayana's Uttarayan & Dakshinayan; they are further divided in 6 Rutu's namely Shishira, Vasanta, Grishma, Varsha, Sharad and Hemant. This classification of 6 Rutu's called by names as Swasthavrittartha or Balavridhyartha or Samanya Rutu's or Rutu's according to Rasotpatti. When it comes to administration of Shodhan or consideration of Dosha Chaya, Prakop & Prashaman Avastha there is a slight difference in classification. Hemanta, Grishma & Varsha have peculiar features of winter, summer & rainy seasons respectively. In

between of these we observe *Rutu's* which have normal features called as *Sadharana Rutu's*, they are *Pravrut*, *Sharad & Vasanta*. By this there will be 6 *Rutu's* as *Vasanta*, *Grishma*, *Pravrut*, *Varsha*, *Sharad* and *Hemanta*. [9] *Sadharana* means that don't have too much of rain, cold or heat, hence *Sadharana Kala* is ideal for administration of *Shodhan* per se. In *Rogavastha*, when we must have to administer *Shodhan* in *Hemant*, *Varsha & Grishma*, we will have to do specific *Sanskaras* on *Shareera & Aushadhi's* which will facilitate *Samyak Yoga* of *Shodhan*.

Uttarayan (Aadana) - Journey of sun in northern (Uttara) direction. Makara Sankranti to Karkata Kranti is considered as Uttarayan (15 Jan to 14 July) or (21 Dec to 20 June by astrology) Aadana is Aagneya (Hot) in nature. [10] Because of it Bala will be decreased gradually from Shishira to Grishma. It consists of 3 Rutu's as Shishira, Vasanta & Grishma. Starting of Uttarayan can be taken as Winter solstice which is observed on 21 Dec. In India during winter solstice there will be already peak of winter & after it gradually summer will increase till the end of Uttarayan.

Dakshinayan (Visarga) - Journey of sun in southern (Dakshina) direction is called Dakshinayan. Karkata Kranti to Makara Sankranti is considered as Dakshinayan (15 July to 14 Jan) or (21 June to 20 Dec by astrology). Visarga is Saumya (cold) in nature. It consists of Varsha, Sharad & Hemant. Gradually Bala will be increase from Varsha to Hemant. [11] Starting of Dakshinayan can be taken as Summer solstice which is observed on 21st June. In India during summer solstice there will be about to end of summer & monsoon kicks in, after its winter will increase gradually till the end of Dakshinayan

\*Sadharana Rutu's - Pravrut, Sharad & Vasanta Rutucharya in different Rutu's - Person who consumes food & changes his lifestyle according to Rutu his Bala & Varna will be increased with that Aahara.

#### Hemant Rutucharya

Markers – Northern cold wind with, all directions surrounded by dust & smoke can be seen. Sun will be covered with *Tushar*, water stores will be covered with condensed ice. There will be sexual arousal in animals like *Kunjara*, *Khadgavha*, *Dhwanksha*,

Mahish and Urabhra. Flowering will be seen in Lodhra, Priyangu & Punnag. [12]

Effect of *Rutu* – *Sheetal Sparsha* of *Vata* will prevent emission of heat from body, which will cause increase in *Jatharagni*. This can digest *Guru Aahara & Adhik Matra* of *Aahara*. If we don't provide adequate food, it will start digesting *Rasa Dhatu* of *Shareera* which may lead to *Vata Prakop*.

Ideal food- *Snigdha*, *Aamla* and *Lavan rasa's should* be consumed. Madhu for *Anupana*, *Gorasa*, *Ikshurasa* vikrutis, *Vasa*, *Taila* and *Navatandul* should be taken. *Audak*, *Aanup*, *Medaswi*,

*Bileshaya & Prasaha* animal's meat are consumed. <sup>[13]</sup> *Peya – Madira, Sidhu & Panartha Ushna Jala* should be used which will prevent Ayukshaya.

Vihara- Abhyanga, Utsadana, Shirotaila, Jenatak Sweda, Aatapsevan, Bhumigruha Nivas. Yaan, Shayan, Kaksha, Aasan should be covered with cloths. Guru, Ushna Vastra Dharan, thick Agaru Lepa should be done. One can indulge in coitus according to desire

Contraindications— Vatala, Laghu Aahara, Pravata, Pramita Aahara and Udamantha.

Present day implication – One can eat foods which are *guru* like Paneer, Roti, meat preparations, Shreekhand, Basundi, Gulabjamun, Kheer, sweet dishes, Idly, Dosa, & Meduvada. Fried items like Puri, Vadapav etc., drink hot water &take Madhu as Anupana. Massage body with oil, wear warm clothes, expose to sunlight.

Contraindications - Avoid fasting during this season, eating less, eating refrigerated items, Ice creams, Milkshakes, cold juices, cold water, *Vatavardhak* food which are dry, light, gets digested too quickly, avoid cold exposure, travelling & cold-water bath.

#### Shishira Rutucharya

Markers – lowest temperature among all *Rutu's*. Environment will as if eagerly waiting for strong wind & rain. Rest of the things will be same to *Hemant Rutu* with slight difference. *Rukshata* increases because of *Aadana*, while *Megha*, *Maruta* & *Varsha* causes increase in cold. Follow *Aahara* & *Vihara* similar to *Hemant Rutu*.

Special indication– stays in Nivata & Ushna Gruha.

Contraindications – Katu, Tikta, Kashaya Rasa, Vatavardhak Laghu Sheet Aahara.

Present day implication – similar to *Hemanta*.

#### Vasanta Rutucharya

Markers – Seducing northern breeze, Sky will be clear; flowering in plants like *Kinshuk*, *Ambhoj*, *Bakul*, *Chut* and *Ashoka* is seen. Pleasant humming of Cuckoo, Bumblebee can be heard. Sprouting of leaves in many plants is seen.

Effect of *Rutu* – *Kapha Dosha* got *Sanchit* in *Hemant Rutu* will get liquefied in *Vasanta Rutu* by sunrays, leads to *Agnimandhya* causes multiple diseases; hence *Vamanadi Karma* should be done in this *Rutu*.

Ideal food- Yava, Godhum bhojana. Manmas of Sharabha, Shasha, Ena, Lavak, and Kapinjala is preferred.

Peya -Nirgad, Sidhu & Madhvik are told.

Vihara- should do Vyayama, Udwartana, Dhuma, Kavalagraha, Anjana, Sukhoshnajala snana, Chandan Agaru Lepa. Along with Vaman we can also plan Asthapan, Anuvasan, and Shirovirechan according to Dosha vitiation. Chaitra month is preferred for Vaman.

One should decrease frequency of coitus in this season.

Contraindications— Guru, Amla, Snigdha, Madhur Aahara, Divashayan.

Present day implication –

*Vaman* is done in this *Rutu*; eat easily digestible food and eat food items made from *Yava & Godhum*.

Contraindications - sleeping in daytime; eating sweeter items, sour items like *Bhel*, *Panipuri*, Pickles, Lemon juice etc.

#### Grishma Rutucharya

Markers – Rise in temperature, soil turns hot, streams of rivers shrinks& surrounding becomes like lit up. *Chatak* will be wandering eagerly for rainwater. Deer etc. will be eager to drink water. Small plants, grasses & creepers will get dried off; leaves of many plants will be shed off.

Effect of *Rutu* – Hot sunrays will cause absorption of *Sneha Ansha* from body & environment.

Ideal food – food with Madhur, Sheeta, Drava, Snigdha Guna, Jangal Pashu Pakshi Manmsa, Ghrita,

Dugdha with Shali will avoid Grishmajanya Durbal-

*Peya – Sheetal Mantha* with *Sharkara*.

Vihara- Diwaswapna in Sheetal Gruha, in night sleep on terrace exposing to moonlight and cold air with application of Chandanadi Lepa. Wear Moti, Mani etc; take cold air with Bamboo fan soaked in Chandanaudak. Roam in cool jungle, dip in Sheet Jala & do Sheetal Pushpadharan.

Contraindications – Lavan, Amla, Katu, Ushna items. Avoid alcohol if at all taken restrict it to very less quantity and mix it with plenty of water. Avoid Vyayama, Maithun.

Present day implication —Should avoid spicy, sour, salty food items like Misal, Panipuri, Bhel, spicy curries, Chips. Take sweet dishes like Kheer, Gulabjamun, Fruit juices, Ice creams, cold water, Mantha. Can take a nap in afternoon. Trip to hill station having greenery &waterfalls.

Contraindications – exercises, Maithun& afternoon outings.

#### Varsha Rutucharya

Markers of *Rutu*- Rivers will be overflowing, flowering to *Kumud*, *Neelakamala* can be seen. Earth will be covered with green grass. Sky will be covered with clouds& continuous rain with slight noise will be there.

Effect of Rutu – it is starting of Aadana, causing Durbalata in Shareera & Agnimandhya. Because of Bhubashpa, Meghanisyandan, Amlavipak of Jala & Agnimandhya causes Tridosha Prakop. Again, this Tridosha, Agnimandhya & Durbala Shareera will prevent Utpatti of Rasa Dhatu, leads to Dhatu Kshaya & Vatavruddhi. Hence in this Rutu Sadharana Vidhi (Tridoshahara) & Agnideepak Aahara Vihara is followed.

Ideal food – In *Paan & Bhojana Madhu* is used for *Sanskarartha*. Eat food with evident *Amla*, *Lavan Rasa* with *Sneha Dravyas*. For *Agni Sanrakshanartha Yava*, *Godhum*, *Shali*, *Jangal pashu Pakshi Manmsa & Sanskarit Yusha's* should be consumed.

Peya – Jala is taken with slight addition of Madhu or Madvikarishta to decrease Shareeraja Kleda. For drinking purpose rainwater, well water, boiled &

cooled water or lake water can be used. Vihara – Pragharshan, Udwartana, Snana, Gandha Dravya Prayoga, Sugandhi Mala Dharan, and clothes should be neat and clean. Dwelling should be at place devoid of moisture.

Contraindications – Udamantha, Diwaswapna, Avashyaya, Nadi Jala, Vyayama, Aatapsevan, Maithun.

Present day implication –

Items like Panipuri, Bhel can be taken in this season. Diet should be easy to digest with adequate *Snehadra-vyas*. Chapatis of Wheat or Barley, soups made from pulses like *Mudga* should be consumed. For drinking purpose harvested rainwater or boiled and cooled water of lake& well is used. It should be added with slight Honey. One should avoid sleeping in daytime, exercises, more cold items, water from river & *Maithun*.

#### Sharad Rutucharya

Markers- Sun will be reddish yellow; Sky will be covered with white clouds and will be clear. Soil will be present with occasional dry & wet mud. Termite hills will be seen at some places. *Baan*, *Saptavha*, *Bandhuk*, *Kasha* & *Asana* plants will be seen at many places.

Effect of Rutu – Sanchit Pitta of Varsha Rutu gets Prakupita in Sharad.

Ideal food –Madhur, Laghu, Sheeta, Tikta Aahara, eat Matrayukta Pitta Shamak food items. Lava, Kapinjala, Yen, Urabhra, Sharabha, Shashak manmsa can be taken. Shali, Yava, Godhum & Tikta Ghritapana should be done.

Peya – Hansodaka (clean water from Sarovar etc. which gets hot by Sunrays in a day & cooled by Moonlight in night &detoxified by Agatsya Nakshatra is like a nectar) it should be used for Paan, Snana & Avagahan.

Vihara *-Virechan*, *Raktamokshan* should be done. Expose themselves to moonlight in *Pradosha Kala*.

Contraindications – Avoid Aatapsevan, Vasa, Taila, Avashyaya, Audak, Aanup manmsa, Kshar, Dadhi, Diwaswapna, Pragvat.

Present day implication – Take Madhur, Laghu, Sheeta and Tikta Aahara. Aahara should be Pit-

tashamak and Laghu in guna. Food items prepared out of Shali, Yava & Godhum should be used more. Virechan & Raktamokshan should be done. Avoid afternoon outings, Vasa, Taila intake. Avoid eating curd and Ksharyukta items.

#### **DISCUSSION**

In Ayurveda prevention has been given more emphasis. Sages were well aware of the fact that human beings are greatly influenced by changes in Day & night, effects of seasons, effects of food habits & effects of behavioral manners on human body. In order to counter them they have explained Dincharva (Daily regimen), Rutucharya (seasonal regimen), Aharacharya (Diet regimen) & Sadvrutta (Behavioral regimen). [14] Among this *Rutucharya* has great importance. We can see frogs and different creatures go in hibernation in winter, [15] plants shed their leaves in autumn & sprouting of leaves seen in spring, similarly Aacharyas had identified effects of seasons on human body & accordingly they had planned Rutucharya. Detailed explanation of such changes and different regimens for them have already explained above, e.g. Kapha Prakop in Vasanta Rutu and Vaman treatment to overcome the same. In modern science such detailing of events and measures are not explained. While planning a diet in modern science we see only calorie requirements are taken into account which is administered same throughout a year, unlike in Ayurveda where changes are made according to seasons. Similarly, while planning exercises also we see Modern science follows same exercises throughout a year whereas in Ayurveda, it varies according to seasons.

In order to implement *Rutucharya*, it becomes more important to identify the season's first. Because events and seasonal changes mentioned in *Ayurveda&* actual tropical phenomena, do not matches with *Hindu* calendar. In *Ayurveda Rutu's* are classified based on two starting points as *Uttarayan & Dakshinayan*. As per *Hindu* calendar *Uttarayan* falls on 14th or 15th Jan (Sun enters *Makar Rashi*), but actual tropical phenomenon (*Uttarayan* i.e. northern movement of sun) winter solstice is evident on 21st Dec. As per *Ayurveda Samhitas* we should get month of *Magha* during

beginning of Uttarayan (14th Jan) but by Hindu calendar it comes Pausha month& lastly when we consider 14th Jan as starting of *Uttarayan* and plot *Rutu's* from there the actual seasons doesn't match with expected rutu's exactly. Based on these facts & article written by Rajen Barua, [16] we can say that our Indian calendar is out of phase with actual seasons. In order to remove these errors, we must reconsider marking of seasons. We can do this by help of facts mentioned in Ayurveda incorporating with Gregorian calendar & actual tropical phenomenon. *Uttarayan* is starting point from which northern movement of sun & gradual rise of temperature is told in Ayurveda. When we consider this as our reference point, the actual tropical phenomena which coincides with it is Winter solstice that comes on 21stDec.After which actual northern journey of sun is evident &we can also observe that after this phenomenon, gradually temperature starts to rise which is considered as Adana Kala that lasts for six months. Similarly, Dakshinayan can be considered from June 21st after which southern journey of sun begins & temperature gradually starts dropping called Visarga kala. In this way, when we consider above two reference points& then we plot six Rutu's in between them as order mentioned in Samhitas. It will give rise to Rutu's as mentioned in Samhitas& they will also match with actual seasonal changes with respect to India.

#### CONCLUSION

For prevention of NCD's & infective diseases Ayurveda provides comprehensive preventive measures through adopting healthy diet & lifestyle through Rutucharya. Unlike modern medicine, Ayurveda takes account of required variations in diet & exercises based on effects on body, during environmental changes in different times of day & different times of season. According to these variations different Rutucharya's are told. Though detailed Rutucharya is explained in Ayurveda it is difficult to decide exact dates of seasons as per Hindu calendar, because they are out of phase with actual tropical events. With help of benchmarks told in Ayurveda as Uttarayan & Dakshinayan, along with the help of seasonal markers

told in *Sushrut Samhitas*, we can decide exact dates of Rutu's & then accordingly we can plan our *Rutucharya*. Based on principles of *Ayurveda*& different *Siddhantas* we must understand *Guna*, *Karmas* of different present-day food articles because at present we don't use every food items that were in use at ancient times. By doing this we can implicate them at present times as per *Rutucharya*.

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**Table 1:** *Rutu* classification as per Hindu calendar:

Rasotpatti Kramanusar (Swasthavrittartha/ Balavridh- yartha/ Samanya Rutu)			Dosha Chayadi Nimittaja (Samshodhanartha)			
Magha	Mid Jan to Mid Feb	Shishira	Falgun (Tapasya)	Mid Feb to Mid-March	*Vasanta	
Falgun	Mid Feb to Mid-March	-	Chaitra (Madhu)	Mid Mar to Mid Apr		
Chaitra	Mid Mar to Mid Apr	Vasanta	Vaishakha	Mid Apr to Mid-May	Grishma	
Vaishakha	Mid Apr to Mid-May	-	Jeshtha	Mid May to Mid-June		
Jeshtha	Mid May to Mid-June	Grishma	Aashadha (Shuchi)	Mid-June to Mid-July	*Pravrut	
Aashadha	Mid-June to Mid-July	-	Shravan (Nabha)	Mid July to Mid Aug	1	
Shravan	Mid July to Mid Aug	Varsha	Bhadrapada	Mid Aug to Mid Sep	Varsha	
Bhadrapada	Mid Aug to Mid Sep	-	Ashwin	Mid Sep to Mid Oct		
Ashwin	Mid Sep to Mid Oct	Sharad	Kartik (Urja)	Mid Oct to Mid Nov	*Sharad	
Kartik	Mid Oct to Mid Nov	-	Margashirsha (Saha)	Mid Nov to Mid Dec		
Margashirsha	Mid Nov to Mid Dec	Hemanta	Pausha	Mid Dec to Mid Jan	Hemanta	
Pausha	Mid Dec to Mid Jan		Magha	Mid Jan to Mid Feb		

**Table 2**: New Classification with reference to Two Solstices

Rasotpatti Kramanusar		Samshodhanartha	Samshodhanartha	
Dec 21 to Feb 20	Late winter	Shishira	Jan 21 to Mar 20	Vasanta
Feb 21 to April 20	Spring	Vasanta	March 21to May 20	Grishma
April 21 to June 20	Summer	Grishma	May 21to July 20	Pravrut
June 21 to Aug 20	Rain	Varsha	July 21toSep 20	Varsha
Aug 21 to Oct 20	Autumn	Sharad	Sep 21 to Nov 20	Sharad
Oct 21 to Dec 20	Early winter	Hemanta	Nov 21 to Jan 20	Hemanta