

VIRUDDHA AHARA: A CONCEPTUAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Ahara is one among the three-sub pillar of body. It plays a vital role for our body hence well said that whatever u eats that type of body will be made. In *Ayurveda*, a very wide explanation is found about *ahara*, in that, *viruddha-ahara* is found. Knowledge about *viruddha-ahara* is must because if a person consumes *viruddha-ahara*, it leads to many diseases and even death. In modern era, people made food or eat packed food in tongue taste. So due to this type of food habit, people are suffering from so many lifestyle disorders. There is need to study in detail about *viruddha-ahara*. Topography is branch in science which deals with food combination and their effect. So, from the help of Ayurveda and modern knowledge, person life can become better and disease free.

Keywords: *viruddha*, *upstambha*, *parihar*, topography

INTRODUCTION

Aharais one of the *trayaupstambha* described in *Ayurveda*. *Upstmbha* means which is supporting the main pillar. Main pillar in our body are *tridosha-vatta*, *pitta* and *kapha*. *Trayaupstambha* are *aahara*, *nidra* and *brahmcharya* which support these pillars of life. Ultimately for balancing of *dosha* and to maintain health, *ahara*, *nidra* and *brahmcharya* balance is must. For *ahara* it is said whatever you eat that type of body will be made. Explanation about *astavidhivisheshayana*, *Pathya* and *apthya* in *Samhita* express the importance of *aahara* in healthy and diseased person. According to *ritucharya* and *dincharya*, a healthy person is said to maintain his food otherwise he will suffer from imbalance *dosha* and will result in ill health. *Viruddha* concept is a very imperative issue discussed in *Ayurveda* and has very much importance in modern era

because of today's lifestyle and food pattern. Nowadays we are dependent on packed food, due to hurry, worry and curry phenomenon. These foods are adulterated with many things it might be for increasing potency or for increasing preservation time, or for business profit and these have adverse effect on human body.

Definition

According to definition explained in *astanga*¹, first substance used should be *aahara* should vitiate the *dosha* but should not eliminate it from body. Naturally if any *dosha* is in *utkleshitaavastha* i.e. vitiated state, it has tendency to get eliminated from body from nearer eliminating root, but incompatible diet vitiates *dosha* but does not get eliminated from body and remain in body and produce disease.

The literal meaning of word *Viruddha* is opposite. It sounds that the food combination of certain type of food may have²

- opposite properties
- opposite activities on the tissues
- may exert some unwanted effect on the body when processed in a form
- may exert undesirable effects, when combined in certain proportion
- may have unwanted effect if consumed at wrong time.

Types

18 types of *virudhaahara* is described in *caraka*-(3)

1. Desha Viruddha: Foods which have similar properties to that geographical area, it will act as *virudhaahara* because it will increase the *dosha* vitiation which is naturally aggravated in that region.

Eg- taking *kaphakara*(heavy) *ahara* in *anoopdesha* (humid area)

2. Kala Viruddha: In *Ayurveda* concept of *ritucharya* is told according to season for a healthy life because according to season or *ritu* naturally *dosha* becomes vitiated. At that time, if person take food of similar quality it will result in aggressive vitiation of *dosha*.

3. Agni Viruddha: *Agnibala* is of 4 types- *Mandagni*, *Teekshnagni*, *Vishamagni* and *Samagni*. Person should take food according to his *agnibala*, if he neglects, he will suffer from *agnimandya* which is told the root of all disease. E.g- if a person is having *mandagni* and took *guru*, *snigdhaahara*, his *agni* will not able to digest that heavy food so it will lead to disease like *grahni*, *udararog*.

4. Matra Viruddha: In *Ayurveda*, *Aharamatra* is explained under two definition i.e. *Sarvagraha*, *Parigraha*

The total quantity is known as *Sarvagraha* and individual quantity is called *Parigraha*.

Quantity of *Sarvagraha* and *Parigraha* is not same for all. It is decided according to *agnibala*. The amount of food which without disturbing the evenness of *doshas* and *dhatu*s, gets digested and metabolized in proper time is regarded as *Matravatahara*. It positively helps the individual in bringing about strength, complexion,

happiness and longevity. *Amatravatahara* does the opposite.

5. Satmya Viruddha: *Satmya* means the substances which bring wellness to person. The food taken opposite to *satmya* is *SatmyaViruddha*. e.g.-the person who consume sweet food article daily and if he starts consuming pungent food in excess quantity, then it will affect his health.

6. Dosha Viruddha: When *dosha* is increased, if person consume food of same quality, it will be *doshaviruddha*.

e.g. – A person of *kaphaja* constitution or in whom there is increase of *kaphadosha*, sweet and oily food is regarded as *Doshaviruddha*.

7. Samskara Viruddha: *Samskara* means processing the food items to change its qualities. *Gunantaradaanam* word is used for describing *samskara*.⁴Various methods of preparation are used for processing of diet / food substances to get more qualitative properties, but when these methods, are not according to rules and regulations of dietetics, one cannot get more qualitative properties but instead get the harmful effect of food substances. So, this type of *Samskara* (preparation) is called *Samskara Viruddha* due to harmful effects it produces on the body tissues.

8. Paka Viruddha: If food is over cooked or under cooked, or with a wrong fuel, it misses its nutritional value and not easily digestible, these all are considered under *pakaviruddha*.

9. Veerya Viruddha: Substances having opposite potency should not consume at one time. It can be *rasa viruddha* or *viryaviruddha*. E.g.- milk should not take with citrus fruit or salt.

10. Koshta Viruddha: *Koshta* are of three type- *mridu*, *Madhya*, and *pravara*. Food and medicine should be consumed according to *koshta*. E.g- If a *KruraKoshta* person is given mild purgative, it would not be effective. Administration of a strong purgative is higher doses for *Mridukoshta* person.

11. Avastha Viruddha: Incompatibility with reference to condition of a person is known as *Avasthaviruddha*. e.g. Intake of *vata* aggravating food by a person after exhaustion, sexual act, and Physical exer-

cise. Intake of *Kapha* aggravating food by a person after sleep or drowsiness.

12. Krama Viruddha- In our *Ayurveda*, *dincharya* is told for maintains of health. *Ahara* should be consumed after clearance of bowel and after taking bath. But nowadays right schedule is not followed e.g. bed teas sign of modernization or due to fixed break time in institute or office, food is not consumed when person feels hungry.

13. Parihara Viruddha: ‘*Parihara*’ means ‘the food substances which are to be avoided according to the condition. In diseased condition, intake of food substances, which are mentioned as *Apathya* (unwholesome) in that disease is called *PariharaViruddha*, e.g.- intake of heavy food in *medajaroga*.

14. Upachara Viruddha: *UpacharaViruddha* is the violence of rule mention during any treatment procedure. e.g.- Intake of cold water after taking ghee.

15. Samyoga Viruddha: Substances that are harmful when used in combination. e.g.- Intake of Sour fruits or any sour things with Milk.

16. Hridaya Viruddha: “*Hridaya*” means pleasant. One should not take a food item for which the person has apathy, or he does not want to eat.

17. Sampat Viruddha: Intake of food articles which are not having edible qualities can be considered as *Sampatviruddha*. For example- Intake of fruit that is not ripe or over ripened or putrefied.

18. Vidhi Viruddha: *Ayurveda* has told some general rule for consumption of food under the heading of *Ashtaaharavidhi-visesayatana*. One should eat food, which is hot, unctuous, non-antagonistic in potency, in proper quantity and after full digestion of the previous meal, in a congenial place, provided with all the accessories, neither too hurriedly, nor too leisurely, without talking or laughing with full concentration and having proper regard to oneself. If a person is not following the rules, then it is considered as *Vidhi Viruddha*

Apart from these eighteen types explained by *Acharya Caraka*, Some more types of *viruddha* are added by *Acharya Sushruta*⁽⁵⁾. They are as follows-
Rasa Viruddha-

Intake of food having contradictory tastes and act antagonistic to the tissues is considered as *Rasa Viruddha*. Eg- *Madhura rasa* taken along with *Amla*, *Lavana*, *Kashaya*, *Katu* and *Tikta rasa*.

VipakaViruddha-

Intakes of food having contradictory *vipaka* are incompatible to the tissues of the body. Following *rasas* produce contradictory *vipaka* in the body- *Madhura rasa* with *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya rasa*.

Acharya Vagbhatta⁽⁶⁾ had given many example of *viruddhaahara*

Effects of *Viruddha-ahara*

Viruddha-ahara acts in the way of *visha* do. Its action are told like *garavisha* and *virudhahara* results in *ama* production which is called *visha*.⁽⁷⁾ *Virudha-ahara* effect can be like *tikshna visha* as it cause death immediately or it can be as latent like *gara* and *dooshivisha*.

Disease due to *viruddha-ahara*

Caraka has mentioned that such types of wrong combinations can lead to even death.⁽⁸⁾ Diseases caused by *Viruddha-aahara* are-impotency, erysipelas, blindness, ascites, bullous, insanity, fistula in ano, coma or fainting, intoxication, abdominal distention, stiffness in neck, varieties of anemia, indigestions, various skin diseases, diseases of intestines, swelling, gastritis, fever, rhinitis, and infertility. It can be observed from the above list that *Viruddha-anna* can lead to disorders up to impotency and infertility, thus it has an impact up to *Shukradhatu Dushti*. From this list of diseases, it can be said that, consumption of *Viruddha-ahara* causes imbalance in all system of body.

Virudhhaahara



leads to *agni* vitiation which is the main root of disease



leads to *dosha* vitiation but not expel them out, but block *srotas*



leads to disease and death.

Chikitsa- Some conditions are explained under which effect of *viruddha-ahara* doesn't work. The ill effects of *Viruddha-ahara* will be nullified if person is-

Vaya- young age

Diptaagni- good digestive power

Bala- immunity and body built is good

Shalinam- lives with *sadvrutta*

Vyayama- does exercise

Snigdha Ahara- food with ghee etc.

Exception in viruddhaahara -

Eg- 1) honey given with hot liquid to induce *vaman*

2)honey +*ghruta* is given in newborn baby

3) *lasunaksheerpaka*

Treatment principles in Viruddha Ahara⁽⁹⁾

A. Anagavyadhichikitsa-

1) *Nidanaparivarjana*

2) *Abhisanskruti-*

Abhisamskruti is the final step to strengthen the body in order to withstand the effects of *Viruddhahara* which is achieved by *Hita-aharas* including *Ra-sayanas*. Adoption of good food item and leaving of bad food should be in *padmsikabhaga-* should be in 1/4 or 1/16⁽¹⁰⁾

B. Aagatavyadhichikitsa

1. *Nidanaparivarjana*

2. *Sodhana-* Depending on the nature of the disease, selection of *shodhana* can be done. For Eg- *Vamana* in case of *Kushta*, *Virechana* in case of *Visarpa* and *Udara*.

3. *Shaman-* symptomatic treatment

DISCUSSION

Some condition can be explained under concepts of *Viruddha-ahara-*

Food Incompatibility-

The term 'Incompatible' generally Food incompatibility is when two elements do not have an affinity for each other and those element causes the disturbance of metabolism which inhibit the formation of tissue.⁽¹¹⁾

Food intolerance-

Food intolerance is difficulty in digesting a food. This can lead to various symptoms such as intestinal gas, abdominal pain or diarrhea.⁽¹²⁾if the person eats a food for which , he is allergic, certain cells make a lot of IgE

for the part of the food that triggers his allergy, called an allergen. The IgE gets released and attaches to the surface of mast cells. For the first time, person did not get any reaction, but for the next time, the allergen interacts with that IgE and triggers the mast cells to release chemicals such as histamine. Depending on the tissue, these chemicals cause various symptoms. Common Food causes allergies are- Peanuts, tree nuts, such as walnuts, Shellfish etc. For children, the food allergens that most often cause problems are-Eggs, milk, peanuts⁽¹³⁾ Most often, food intolerance is confused with food allergy. Food intolerances involve the digestive system. Food allergies involve the immune system. With a food allergy, even a tiny amount of the food has the potential to lead to a serious or life-threatening reaction called anaphylaxis.⁽¹⁴⁾For example, being allergic to milk is different from not being able to digest it properly because of lactose intolerance.⁽¹⁵⁾

Food Poisoning-

It is acute gastro-enteritis caused by the ingestion of food or drink contaminated with either living bacteria or their toxins or inorganic substances and poisons derived from plants and animals.⁽¹⁶⁾

Food additives

Substances that are added to food to maintain or improve the safety, freshness, taste, texture, or appearance of food are known as food additives⁽¹⁷⁾ Though, these preservative are used in small quantity for a long time, so it accumulates in body & shows many hazardous effects on body. Nitrates & nitrites mainly used for preservation of meat, beef etc. It causes allergy, asthma, nausea, vomiting, headache also can cause cancer.

CONCLUSION

Viruddhaahara is a unique and imperative topic which is clarified in Ayurveda. Although it is nicely explained in context but in regular OPD, a doctor almost neglects the questioning about food habit. Almost all disease has *viruddhaahara* as causative factor, so that a doctor should review all the fact about food habit of patient. All example explained in Ayurveda not certainly are in use, but if seen with intellectuality, modern food habit is full of *viruddha-ahara*, which we

should take a center part in finding cause of disease. It is the concept needed to re-evaluate in present era.

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