

A CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVE OF AAHAR VIDHI VIDHAN TO PREVENT AKALAJ JARA (EARLY AGING): A REVIEW STUDY

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Article Received date: 22 Jan. 2024

Article Revised date: 11 Feb. 2024

Article Accepted date: 01 March 2024



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ABSTRACT

The ancient system of Ayurveda is provided several rules and regulations related to the health preservation, *Aharavidhividhana* is one of the forefront theories of Ayurveda. When followed the right way, *Aharavidhividhana* serves to maintain health, prevent disease, and increase longevity, thereby prevent early aging. In Ayurveda, *Ahara* is thought to be primary factor for maintaining balance of bodily elements. The time, place, amount and way of consuming food greatly impacts *Dosha* balance. When food is consumed properly, it contributes to good digestion, assimilation, and growth of the body. When food is consumed improperly, it leads to poor digestion and a myriad of other condition including premature ageing. Ayurvedic classics explain not only the quality and proportion of food but how to consume it properly, including sitting posture, mental state, and the environment. In today's modern time, eating habits have changed and contributed to new lifestyle disorders, which makes the practice of *Aharavidhividhana* more critical than ever before. Present article discussed the role of *Aharavidhividhana* in prevention of *Akalaj Jara* (Early Aging).

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda, Aharavidhividhana, Akalaj Jara, Early Aging, Food.*

INTRODUCTION

Ahara Vidhi Vidhana is an important concept in Ayurvedic texts that aims to achieve Ayurveda's main goal maintaining health in healthy individuals and treating illness in the sick. Just as a proper diet is necessary, following the rules of *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* is equally essential. Ayurveda explains that even wholesome food can cause disease if eaten incorrectly, and unwholesome food may not harm the body if taken properly. This shows that both *Ahara* and *Ahara Vidhi*

Vidhana are equally important for maintaining health and preventing disease. *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* states the nutritional potential of the food consumed can be greatly affected by the manner in which a given food is consumed. This means eating without attention or laughing or speaking while eating can lead to indigestion or signs of complications such as regurgitation. The major elements of *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* are depicted in **Figure 1.**^[1,4]

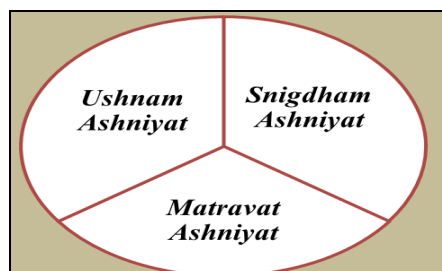


Figure 1: Major elements of *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana*.

Ahara Vidhi Vidhana

- ✚ Ayurveda suggested to consume *Ushna*, *Snigdha* and *Matravat Ahara*
- ✚ *Ahara* should be consumed only when previous meal has properly digested
- ✚ One should avoid incompatible combinations (*Viruddhahara*)
- ✚ Food should be consumed in a pleasant clean environment (*Ishte deshe*), using proper utensils (*Ishta sarvopakarana*).
- ✚ Food should be consumed in a manner not too fast or slow, and with full attention.
- ✚ During meal one should avoid excessive talking and laughter.

Ahara is a main component in Ayurveda as it affects *Sharira vriddhi*, *Bala vriddhi* and immunity, etc. Strict dietary discipline during dietary habits will, in most cases, not even require medicine but violating dietary discipline would make medicine useless. *Sushruta* states food is the cause of the creation of life, sustaining life, and dissolution of life.^[4,6]

Importance of Ahara Vidhi Vidhana

Ayurveda states that food is extremely individual specific, classifying foods in terms of *Satmya* or *Asatmya* for the individual. *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* serves both preventive and curative causes. It supports digestion, prevents *Ama* from forming, decreases the likelihood of *Doshas* becoming imbalanced, boosts immunity, sustains vitality, longevity, and mental clarity, and contributes to emotional balance. *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* can still be applied today with exemplary relevance to prevent lifestyle disorders such as obesity, acidity, hypertension and diabetes; and to keep mindful eating principles, supported digestion and has a relaxing effect.^[5,7]

Ahara Vidhi Vidhana for preventing Akalaja Jara

Ayurveda explains that the reason for early aging (*Akalaja Jara*) is lack of proper food, bad lifestyle choices, and disturbed mind states. By obeying the rules of *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* we can keep our digestion healthy, nourish our bodies and keep the *Doshas* balanced, as a result slowing down length of aging processes.

- ✓ **Ushnam Ashniyat:** Eating warm, fresh meals aids in maintaining *Agni* and support in digesting *Ama* to slow down premature aging.
- ✓ **Snigdham Ashniyat:** Giving the body good fats such as ghee, sesame oil, or other types of healthy fats in

moderation nourishes and rejuvenates tissues, improves skin health, and slows down degeneration process which is mainly responsible for early ageing.

- ✓ **Matravat Ashniyat:** Too much food can burden digestion and too little food will weaken the body; properly portioned meals will regenerate Strength, energy and longevity.
- ✓ **Jirne Ashniyat:** An important aspect of this phase is waiting until the previous meal is digested. It assists in the proper absorption of food and proper digestion to prevent the formation of *Ama* and maintain long term digestion in the end.
- ✓ **Viruddha ahara Varjanam:** Refrain from consuming foods that don't pair together well, like milk with fish, or fruits with yogurt and other cooked foods. Eating incompatible foods can upset digestion, contribute to chronic disease, and accelerate the premature aging of the body's tissues.
- ✓ **Ishta Deshe Ashniyat:** Eat with minimal distractions and comfortable and pleasant atmosphere that feel well-suited. Eating calmly and becoming aware of the taste, nourishment through food achieved by better nutrient absorption, as well as it reduces stress and tension, which are two significant contributors of premature aging.
- ✓ Good chewing facilitates digestion, and eating slowly allows digestive system to avoid overeating, which contributes to better absorption of nutrients.
- ✓ Eating at the same times every day develops the *Agni*, creates stability, and improve process of development while slows down the degenerative process of early aging.

Ahara Vidhi Vidhana can help with the prevention of *Akalaja Jara*, when a diet is improper, lifestyle is faulty and some sort of stressor is problematic, it contributes to premature aging. In this situation, Ayurveda recommends *Dinacharya* to foster living in harmony with nature cycles; it recommends *Sadvrutta*; *Shodhana karma* and prescribes *Rasayana Chikitsa* to reduce aging, restore vitality and life quality. However Ayurvedic concept of *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* also combat against early aging by nourishing tissue and restricting degeneration of cell. *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* also balances *Dosha* and governs normal physiology of *Dhatu*. **Table 1** depicted relation between “violation of rules of *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana*” and their impact in early aging.^[8,11]

Table 1: Violation of rules of Ahara Vidhi Vidhana and their impact.

Violation of Ahara Vidhi Vidhana	Associated Lifestyle Disorders	Impact
Overeating or under-eating	Obesity and diabetes	Excess weight → oxidative stress → <i>Dhatu Kshaya</i>
Intake of incompatible foods	Gastrointestinal disorders	<i>Ama</i> formation → skin aging
Eating hastily and distracted eating	Obesity and digestive inefficiency	Reduced nutrient absorption → <i>Dhatu Kshaya</i> → onset of aging.
Stress during eating	Psychological issue and hypertension	Cortisol rise → oxidative stress → premature aging

Eating in weak or irregular <i>Agni</i>	Constipation and IBS	Accumulation of <i>Ama</i> → systemic toxicity → early degenerative changes
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CONCLUSION

From a philosophical perspective, *Ahara* is considered the innate cause (*Samavayi Karana*) of health, while *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* represents the associated rules (*Asamavayi Karana*) necessary for sustaining life. Together, they promote good health and prevent disease. In this way, food itself acts as *Dravyabhuta Chikitsa*, while the rules of consumption serve as *Adravabhuta Chikitsa*. Following only one aspect either the diet or the rules is unlikely to achieve the desired results. For example, *Ushna* & *Snigdha* must be consumed in the proper quantity to be beneficial. *Atimatra* or *Hinamatra* can be unhealthy, even if food is eaten in appropriate amount (*Matravata*), without thinking, or if food is combined with improper foods, it provides no benefit. Because of these, it is important that every rule of *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* is followed individually and in combination. *Ahara* and *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* are just as important to one another.

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