

Rules of Taking Ahara W.S.R.T Shadarasa

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Abstract-

Ayurveda is a science of life, which deals with maintenance of health and curative measures for disease. Ahara (a balanced diet) gives our body the nutrients it needs to function correctly. In the sage of old wisdom, our Acharyas have mentioned that ahara should consist of shadarasa i.e. six types of taste. Six types of taste are madhura, amla, lavana, tikta, katu and kashaya. But in today's modern lifestyle, it has been markedly changed and the shadarastmaka Ahara gets replaced by only one or two rasa dominant ahara. So it leads to formation of various disorders like Diabetes, hypertension, obesity, PCOS etc. In the society, so it is very important that we should acknowledge the importance of shadarastmaka Ahara, attributes and action of each rasa, effects of excessive intake of each rasa & its availability. By following this, our Ahara should be shadarastmaka.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Shadarasa, Ahara, modern lifestyle, attributes of rasa.

Introduction –

Ayurveda has two basic aims; first, to preserve the health of healthy people and to help them attain the four principle aims of life (virtue, wealth, pleasure and release or liberation from cycles of rebirth). Second, to treat illness and disease.¹

A happy human life (sukha ayu) is one who is devoid of mind and body imbalances, whose sense are perfectly functioning, who possesses a body full of immunity, shine & energy, who is prosperous and has obtained all the richness of the world and who can perform all the duties without obstacles. All the above qualities of happy life can be achieved through wholesome diet.

The wholesome diet and Unwholesome diet is responsible for the health and Disease in human body respectively.² A man should consume his diet (ahara) with all due rules mentioned in our classical ayurvedic literature like ashtoharvidhi visheshayatan (8 factors pertaining to food intake) and Ahar vidhi vidhan (dietary guidelines). Adequate nutrition is the basic need of healthy life but without knowing proper dietary guidelines, one can not gain optimum benefit from the food consumed.

The proper wholesome diet should contain all six types of rasa named: 1) Madhura, 2) Amla, 3) Lavana, 4) Tikta, 5) Katu, 6) Kashaya.³ Ahara

with shadarasa is very important to sustain life and maintaining normal physiological functioning of human body.

Charakacharya has described three types of satmya, i.e. substance conducive to an individual. These are pravara (superior- satmya of six rasa), madhyama (medium- satmya of 2/3/4/5 rasa) and avara (inferior- satmya of only one rasa). He has also emphasized that all human being should try to achieve satmya of shadarasa which is essential for maintenance of health.⁴

But in today's modern lifestyle, there has been drastic change in food intake, daily workout and sleep pattern. It results in disorders such as Diabetes, Hypertension, obesity, skin disorders, infertility etc. which are commonly known as lifestyle disorders. To prevent the formation of this lifestyle disorders, we should change the impaired Ahara. We should consume Ahara which is shadarastmaka (containing all the six rasa). It is very necessary to know the details of each rasa.⁵

Material

- **Rasa** – Taste or rasa of the substance can be felt immediately after contact with the tongue. Rasas are the object of gustatory sense organ. It is aap mahabhautik i.e. born from jala.⁶
- **Origin of rasa**- Aap mahabhuta is must for the feeling of rasa. Without it, Rasa can not be felt. If there is presence of only Aap mahabhuta, the rasa

can not be perceived due to its subtle nature. The substances in the universe are classified as parthiva, Aapya, Tejas, Vavavya and Nabhasa due to presence of Various mahabhuta in disproportionate quality. So it is responsible for the formation of Rasa of that substance and Rasa are differentiated into six types.⁷

● Panchabhautik Sangathan of rasa^{8,9,10}

Madhura- Pruthvi+ Aap

Amla- Pruthvi + Tej

Lavana- Aap + Tej

Tikta- Akash + Vayu

Katu- Tej + Vayu

Kashaya- Pruthvi + Vayu

● Characteristics of Each Rasa^{8,9,10}

1) Madhura rasa –

- ✓ It forms coating inside the mouth.
- ✓ It pleases the sense organs
- ✓ It provides happiness to body.
- ✓ It is very much liked by flies and insects.

2) Amla rasa-

- ✓ After putting in mouth, there is sensitization of teeth , salivation, sweating , awakening of mouth, burning in mouth and throat.
- ✓ It provides a feeling of chills , inside the teeth and causes horripilation.

3) Lavana rasa-

- ✓ It is dissolved quickly and produces moistening, watering, softening and burning in mouth.
- ✓ It causes burning sensation in the throat and cheeks.
- ✓ It makes food tasty.

4) Tikta rasa

- ✓ It destroys all other gustatory perceptions after contact with tongue so that no other taste is perceived and give rise non – sliminess and dryness in mouth, along with cheerfulness.
- ✓ It cleans mouth and throat by remaining the sticky accumulation.

5) Katu rasa –

- ✓ It causes irritation of tip of tongue.
- ✓ It causes tingling sensation.
- ✓ It causes watery discharge from mouth, nose & eyes.
- ✓ It causes burning sensation in throat & cheeks.

6) Kashaya rasa-

- ✓ It inactivated the tongue.
- ✓ Obstructs throat.
- ✓ Produces discomfort in the region of the head.

● Action of each rasa^{8,9,10}

1) Madhura rasa-

As Madhura Rasa is wholesome to all living beings since birth, it helps for the development of all the tissues in the body and enhances the life span.

- It is specially indicated for children, aged and heal up emaciation and consumption.
- It promotes healthy skin, hair and voice.
- It is soothing, nourishing, invigorating & brings about stability.
- It alleviates Vata, Pitta and effects of poison.
- It relieves fainting and thirst.
- It is unctuous, cold and heavy to digest.

2) Amla rasa-

Amla Rasa stimulates the power of digestion.

- These are having Snigdha Guna and are exceptional to heart.
- It adds the deliciousness to the food and increases the digestive power.
- It mitigates the Vata, causes movement of faeces and flatus.
- It stimulates the sense organs.
- It helps digestion, kindles the hunger.
- It produces stoutness, satisfaction, nourishment and moistness to the body.
- It spreads to all the parts quickly i.e. having Vyavayi Guna.
- It is Laghu i.e. easily digestible.
- Having Ushna Virya along with cold touch.
- It increases Kapha, Pitta & Rakta.

3) Lavana rasa-

Lavana Rasa removes the stiffness i.e. loss or difficulty in movements, obstruction and hardness i.e. compactness.

- It is antagonistic to all other Rasas.
- It increases the perception of the taste.
- It kindles the hunger and increases the appetite and thus helps in the digestion.
- It moistens, dries, produces unctuousness and purgation.
- It tears the Doshas, causes movement of fluids.

- It spreads quickly all over the body, causes intoxication.
- It mitigates the Vata & liquefies the Kapha.
- It clears the tissue pores, channels or orifices.
- It is neither very heavy nor very unctuous.
- It is penetrating and hot in potency.

4) Tikta rasa-

Drugs or diet having Tikta Rasa are by themselves not delicious but they promote the taste of food.

- It kindles the hunger and thus improves the digestion.
- It is an antitoxic, germicidal.
- It relieves fainting, thirst, fever, nausea and burning sensation.
- It cures itching and all types of skin disorders.
- It causes drying and helps in depletion of moisture, fat, muscle fat, bone marrow, sweat, urine, faeces, Pitta & kapha.
- It scratches out the adherents.
- These are having Laghu, Ruksha Guna & Sheeta Virya.
- It purifies breast milk and good for throat.
- It increases the intelligence

5) Katu rasa-

It cures Alasaka i.e. stasis of food in the stomach without undergoing digestion.

- It also cures dropsy, swelling due to exposure to cold, obesity, worms, diseases of mouth, poisoning, itching and all types of skin disorders.
- It hinders the healing of ulcers.
- It dries up the unctuousness and moistness.
- It improves taste perception.
- It kindles the hunger and helps in the digestion.
- It scratches out the sticky material from the body and cleanses the body.
- It causes burning sensation during digestion of food.
- It increases the acuity of sense organs.
- It breaks clotting of blood and also removes constrictions.
- It opens up or causes widening of tissue pores.
- It mitigates the Kapha.
- It is light, dry, penetrating and hot in potency.

6) Kashaya rasa-

It mitigates the Kapha, Pitta and Rakta quickly.

- Having Guru Guna and purifies the blood.
- It heals ulcers and scratches the adhering materials.
- These are having sheeta virya and dries up moisture.
- It decreases the fat.
- It causes dryness and constipation.
- It enhances the skin complexion.
- It gives a feeling of contentment.

• Effects of excessive use of each rasa^{8,9,10}

1) Madhura rasa-

Though Madhura rasa possessing all good qualities, used in large amount always, it produces obesity, weak digestion, heaviness, stasis of food in the alimentary canal for long time, excessive sleep, dyspnoea, Prameha, diseases of the throat, loss of consciousness, sweet taste always in the mouth, malignant tumours of the eyes and throat, vomiting, rashes over the skin, headache, cough, running nose, worms, Shlipada, fever, ascites and profuse expectoration

2) Amla rasa

If Amla Rasa is used in excess, it produces looseness in the body, liquefaction of Kapha, aggravates Pitta, itching, paleness, defect of vision, Visarpa, bleeding disorders, severe thirst, dropsy even in emaciated persons and giddiness due to its hot potency

3) Lavana rasa

When Lavana Rasa is used in excess, it produces baldness, grey hairs, thirst, burning sensation, fainting, Visarpa, dropsy, Kitibha, Rashes over the skin, convulsions, obstructions, Raktapitta, increases wound, effects of poison and intoxication, produces Vatarakta, reduces strength & Oja.

4) Tikta rasa

Used in excess, it produces weakness of the tissues, fainting, debility, giddiness, diseases caused by Vata, hardness, roughness, non-stickiness & dryness.

5) Katu rasa

When Katu Rasa is used in excess, it produces thirst, intoxication, fainting, vomiting, delusion, weakness of the body, decrease in strength of the body & Shukra, results in contractures and tremors of the body, also causes pain the hip & back region.

6) Kashaya rasa

Excessive intake of Kashaya Rasa results into stasis of food without digestion, abdominal distention, pain in the chest region, thirst, emaciation, loss of virility, constricts the vessels and obstructs flatus, faeces and urine. Also it causes Pakshaghat, convulsions and such other diseases.

● **Availability of each rasa**^{8,9,10}

1) Madhura rasa

Ghrita, Hema (Gold), Guda(jiggery), Akshoda(Walnut), Kadali(Banana), Dalchini (Cinnamomum Tamala), Parushaka, Shatavari, Panasa (Jackfruit), Yashtimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra),Bimbi, vidari, Kashmari, Kshira (Milk), Ikshu (Sugarcane), Gokshura, Madhu (Honey), draksha(Vitis venifera), drugs of Jivaniya Gana etc.

2) Amla rasa

Amalaki (embelica officinalis), Amlika (tamarindus indica), Matulunga (Citrus medica), Amlavetasa (Garcinia pedunculata), Dadima (Punica granatum), Rajat (Silver), Takra (Buttermilk), Chukra(Rumex vesicarius), palevata(Guava), Dadhi (Curd), Amra (Magnifera indica), Amratarka (Spondias pinnata), Bhavya (Dillaenia indica), Kapittha(Feronia limonia), 77karmardaka(Carissa carandus) etc.

3) Lavana rasa

Vara (Saindhava lavana), Sauvarcha Lavana, Bida Lavana, Samudra Lavana, Oudbhida Lavana, Romaka Lavana, Sisa (Lead), Kshara(sarjakshar, Yavakshar)etc.

4) Tikta rasa

Patola (Trichosanthes cucumerina), Trayanti (Gentiana Kurroo), Ushira (Vetiveria zizanoides), Chandana (Santalum album), Bhunimba (Andrographis paniculata), Nimb (Azadirachta indica), Katuka (Picrorhiza kurroa), Tagara(Valeriana wallichii), Aguru (Aquilaria agallocha), Vatsaka (Holarrhena antidysenterica), Karanja(Pongamia pinnata), Harida & Daruharidra , Musta (Cyperus rotundus), Murva (Marsdenia tenacissima), Vasa (Adhatoda vasika), Patha (Cissampelos pariera), Apamarga (Achyranthus aspera), Kansya (bronze), Ayas(iron), Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia), Dhanvayasa (Fagonia

cretica), Brihatpanchamula, Brihati- Kantakari , Vishala, Ativisha, Vacha etc.

5) Katu rasa

Hingu (Ferula foetida), Maricha (Piper nigrum), Vidanga(Embelica ribes), Panchakola-Pippali(Piper longum), Pippalimula (Root of Piper longum), Chavya (Piper chaba), Chitraka(Plumbago eylanica),Nagara(Zingiber officinale), Kutherika (Ocimum sp.), and others, pitta, Mutra, Arushkara etc.

6) Kashaya rasa

Haritaki (Terminalia chebula), Bibhitaki(Terminalia bellerica), Shirisha (Albizia lebbek), Khadira (Acacia catechu), Madhu (Honey), Kadamba (Anthocephalus indus), Udumbara (Ficus racemose), Mukta (Pearl), Praval (Coral), Gairik (red ochere), Bal Kapittha(Tender fruit of Feronia limonia), Kharjura(Phoenix sylvestris), Bisa (leaf stalkof Lotus), Padma (Prunus padam), Utpala(Nymphaea stellate).

Discussion-

We have seen the detail information regarding origin, panchabhautik Sangathan, Characteristics, action , effects if used in excess quantity and availability of each rasa , the following discussion can be done

- It is clear that each rasa has good qualities of used in proper quality
- Each Rasa improves hunger if used in proper way & quantity.
- If each rasa is taken in proper amount in daily diet, it keep tridosha in equilibrium and causes proper saptadhatu poshan.
- But if only two or three rasa are used in excess quantity, it definitely leads to complications.
- The excess intake of Madhura rasa causes obesity, Prameha, digestion related problems.
- If only amla rasa is used in excess , it results in aggravation of pitta, raktadushti which leads to formation of many skin disorders.
- If only Lavana rasa is used in excess, it causes adverse effects to vision, skin and hairs.

- If Tikta rasa is taken in excess, it causes weakness ,fainting, many disorders causes due to aggravation of vata.
- If there is excess intake of Katu rasa, it causes weakness in the body. It decreases strength & shukra dhatu in the body which leads to formation of infertility.
- If Kashaya rasa is taken in excess, it causes stasis of food and impaired digestion.

From above , it is clear that intake of only one rasa may cause impairing the digestion.

At ancient time, the diet had all the six rasa and in proper quantity. But in todays modern lifestyle & civilisation, all the lifestyle is impaired including diet. Due to busy schedule, shift of duties , night duty , lack of time, people used to ignore the diet which is taken by them. Homemade fresh food is replaced by pack food or instant food items. These food items mainly having preservatives which is full of Lavana rasa. After coming of fast food, Madhura rasa is disappeared from daily diet. It is only taken in the form of chapati and rice. Due to disliking, Tikta and Katu rasa are ignored . Thus , daily Ahara contains almost amla, Lavana and Katu rasa. So it is clear that only two or three rasa are taken instead of shadarastmaka Ahara and it results in many disorders like Daibetes, infertility & skin disorders etc. They are collectively known as lifestyle disorders.

To avoid formation of lifestyle disorders, the most important way is to start taking all six rasa in Ahara.

● Conclusion-

From all the above, it can be concluded that-

- ✓ One should prefer the Ahara which contain all the six rasa.
- ✓ Shadarastmaka Ahara leads to Swasthya (condition of health).
- ✓ In classical ayurvedic literature, resources of each rasa are mentioned in detail.
- ✓ The excessive use of any rasa leads to formation of lifestyle disorders.
- ✓ As a preventive measure , we should prefer the shadarastmaka Ahara.

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