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Physiological Importance of food intake on *Niyat Kaal* w.s.r. to Digestive Disorders

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ABSTRACT: -

In Ayurveda the *Ahara* (diet) and *Anna* (food) are the two major factors that are the means of healthy lifestyle and wellness. Healthy and wholesome food always nourishes the body, mind and soul while the unhealthy and unwholesome diet leads to the development of disease or unhealthy state of an individual. According to the Ayurveda although the digestive capacity or the *Jathargni* is different for each person but the quality and appropriate quantity of food is necessary along with the food intake on adequate time for the healthy lifestyle.

Acharya Charaka mention the importance of *Kaal Bhojan* i.e, the proper time of food intake by saying that food intake at adequate time leads to healthy state of a person. Ayurveda emphasis more on the time of the intake of food. even if the food is taken in proper quantity and is of proper quality the time and the interval at which the food is taken is necessary for the proper digestion of food. If the food is taken at inadequate time it can leads to various digestive disorders.

This article presents the importance of food intake on the *Niyat kaal* or on adequate time, its physiological importance and digestive disorders which can happen to our body if we do not take food on adequate time.

Keywords : *Ahara*, Digestion ,*Niyat Kaal Bhojan*, *Ahara vidhi Vidhan*, *Vishuchika* and *Alsaka*



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INTRODUCTION

Food or nutrition is needed by the human body to provide energy for all life processes, including development, repair, and maintenance. A well-balanced diet requires a range of foods in appropriate amounts and proportions to satisfy the body's needs. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned the factors which are responsible for the growth of the body as 4 *Sharira Vridhnikar bhava* (Factors lead to the growth of the body) in the *sharir sthana*. These are *Kala Yoga* (Proper time), *Swabhav Sam Siddhi* (habit), *Ahara Shausthava* (food) and *Avighata* (injury). So here *Acharya* has mentioned the importance of *Ahara* as one of the factors responsible for the development of our body.¹ The factors such as diet, nutrition etc. which are favorable to the body and *mana* (mind) are termed as *Pathya* (wholesome) and *pathya* factors are those which do not causes harm to the body and also are not responsible for the development of the disease and *Apathya* (unwholesome) are just opposite to the *Pathya* (wholesome) which are responsible for the development of the disease or which causes imbalance of the *doshas* in the body. But in the same time these *Pathya* (wholesome) and *Apathya* (unwholesome) are dependent on various other factors.² There are 3 factors mentioned as *Triupsthambha* i.e., *Ahara* (food), *Nidra*, (sleep), *Brahmcharya* (Celibacy). These are the three pillars which keeps the body well-nourished and in state of development.³This is fact that the diet plays an important role in the development and

nourishment of the *Sharirika Dhatus* but the time at which the food is taken and the time interval between the two diet is also equally important for the proper digestion of the ingested food and if the time is not taken in consideration while eating it can lead to various digestive disorders.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Ayurvedic text, previous articles, internet, Wikipedia, modern medical literatures were reviewed to collect data.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

***Niyat Kaal* (adequate time):**

***Kaal Bhojanam Arogyakaranam.*⁴**

Acharya Charaka has mentioned the importance of *Niyat kala* (adequate time) while mentioning about the *Agraya dravya* (superior) in *Sutra Sthana*. he mentioned that the food taken on the *Niyat kaal* or on definite time is foremost and superior in all the factors which are *Arogyakar* or curative for our body. It shows the importance of the definite time at which an individual should intake the food. *Acharyas* has mentioned that if the food is taken before or after a particular time that it can cause various disorders in our body. If the food is taken before a definite time or *Niyat kaal* (adequate time) then the food taken irrespective to the quantity of the food is not digested and leads to the stage of *Guruta* or heaviness in the

body, which subsequently leads to the development of various disease. And if the food is taken after the definite time or the *Niyat kaal* (adequate time) than the *Jathargni* which is the *Pradhana Agni*, responsible for the digestion of the food gets suppressed by the violated *Vata dosha* and is not capable of proper digestion of the food and indigested food leads to the formation of the *Ama Dosha* (indigested food) and finally to various diseases.⁵ Thus According to *Acharya Shusruta* food should be taken at its definite time, if the food is taken before or after the *Niyat kal* (adequate time) it will lead to various digestive disorders like, *Vishuchika* (Gastroenteritis), *Alsaka* (Meteorism) etc.

Samshana, Vishmashana and Adhyashana : *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned the three diseased state if the food is not taken on the *Niyat kaal* (adequate time). While mentioned these conditions he focus on the importance of the *Niyat kaal* (adequate time). If the food is taken on definite time but if *Pathya* (whole some) and *Apathya* (unwholesome) food is taken together on the *Niyat kaal* (adequate time) than also it will lead to the diseased state called *Samshana* (pacification).

If the food is taken in more or less quantity means that if the quantity of the food is not according to the *Jatharagni* and if the food is taken before or after the *Niyat kal* or *Bhojana kaal* (adequate time) that it will lead to the condition known as *Vishmashana*. If the food is taken in more quantity than our *Jatharagni* or the digestive fire is not able to completely digest the ingested food and if the time is not taken into proper consideration and food is taken before time i.e., complete digestion of the previously taken food than it will lead to the indigestion and formation of *ama*. And if the food is taken after the time passed than the *vata*

dosha will be violated which leads to the suppression of the digestive fire, as a result the state of *aruchi* or anorexia will occur and still if food is taken than the already diminished digestive fire will not be able to digest the taken food properly. While mentioning about the *Adhyashan Acahrya* state the importance of the time interval between the two meals. If the food is taken before the digestion of the previously ingested food i.e., before the proper and complete digestion of the previously taken food than it will lead to the condition called *Adhyashana*.

All these three state *Samshana*, *Vishmashana* and *Adhyashana* are dangerous and can lead to the development of serious disorders or sometime death.⁶

Vishuchika (Gastroenteritis), Alsaka (Meteorism) – Two digestive disorders

Acharya Charaka has mentioned the causes of the formation of *Ama* in *Viman Sthana*. Due to suppressed digestive fire the ingested food does not gets digested properly and this indigested or partially digested food leads to the development of *Ama* (undigested food). He mentioned that along with the food taken in excess quantity, *guru* (heavy), *sheet* (cold), *vidahi*, *apavitra* and *viruddha anna* the intake of food in the inadequate time leads to the formation of *Ama Dosha*. And further this *Ama Dosha* leads to the formation of two types of diseases known as *Vishuchika* (Gastroenteritis), *Alsaka* (Meteorism).⁷ The disease in which due to the formation of *Ajeerna* (indigestion) the *Vata Dosha* gets violated and causes a pricking pain in various parts of the body is termed as *Visuchika* (Gastroenteritis)⁸. Further *Acharya Shushruta* also mentioned the various signs and symptoms

of the *Visuchika* (Gastroenteritis) as vertigo, diarrhea, vomiting, thirst, pain, burning sensation, bluish coloration of the skin, pain in cardiac region and headache etc.⁹

After the formation, the developed *Ama Dosha* gets violated by the *Sharirik doshas* and gets sluggish and shiftless this condition is known as *Alsaka*.¹⁰ The symptoms of the *Alsaka* (Meteorism) includes flatulence, unconscious, bellowing and constipation.¹¹

Acharya Charaka mentioned the concept of formation of *Amavish* which is more fragile condition. The person who practice the intake of *Viruddha Ahara* (incompatible food), *Adhyashana*, and *Ajeernashan* converts the preformed *Ama dosha* into more frightful *Amavisha* which is untreatable. *Ajeernashan* is almost similar to the *Adhyashana* mentioned above but the difference between them is that in *Ajeernashan* is the condition which is not developed due to inadequate time of food intake but develops due to indigestion of previously taken food even after the digestion time laps.

CONCLUSION

Food intake on the *niyat kaal* or adequate time has far more importance than we understand. If the food is taken considering the proper and adequate time than the digestive fire or *Jatharagni* will not be disturbed the ingested food be properly digested finally nourishing the body and the tissues. The various digestive disorders including *Visuchika* and *Alsaka Vishuchika* (Gastroenteritis), *Alsaka* (Meteorism) occurs due to the formation of *Ama Dosha* and indigestion of *Mandagni* is the predisposing factor which leads to the *Ama* Formation in the body. So as mentioned above the *kala bhojana* i.e., the food taken while considering the proper time and interval

between the two-diet taken is the factors which is foremost in all the curative factors for our body.

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