



Review Article

PATHYA APATHYA: IMPACT AND ROLE IN LIFESTYLE DISORDERS**Vanya Gupta^{1*}, Ved Bhushan Sharma², R.C.Tiwari³, Manisha Dikshit⁴, Anoop Kumar Singh⁴**¹P.G. Scholar, ²Assistant Professor, ³Professor & H.O.D, ⁴Associate Professor, Dept. of Agad Tantra, Uttarakhand Ayurveda University, Rishikul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, Diet, *Pathya*, *Apathya*, Lifestyle Disorders.**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda is an ancient and most trusted Indian system of medicine commonly used by Indians since time immemorial. Lifestyle diseases/ Metabolic diseases are described as diseases related to the way an individual or group of individuals live, also are referred under Non-Communicable Diseases. Over-crowding and rapid unplanned urbanization; globalization of unhealthy lifestyles is responsible for some of the major reasons for a sedentary life leading to these diseases. It includes arteriosclerosis, heart disease, stroke, obesity and type-2 diabetes, diseases related to smoking, alcohol and drug abuse. The contribution of metabolic risk factors such as high blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol and that of improper diet and alcohol use resulting in health loss. Therefore, the occurrence of these disorders has doubled in India over the past quarter of a century therefore it is the need of the hour to manage them diligently. Diet plays a key role to nourish life and balanced diet is very important for maintaining good health. In Ayurveda, wholesome diet is described which plays a very important role specifically rather than in modern medicine which emphasizes only on the components in the diet like proteins, carbohydrates, fats etc. Ayurveda additionally deals with various other aspects like combination of food article, their quantity, method of preparation, their emotional effect, nature of consumer including environmental considerations. *Pathya* and *Apathya Ahara* (dietary consideration) is a significant component of almost each and every prescription in Ayurveda therapy. Sometimes, *Pathya-Apathya* (dietary management) is itself an entire treatment.

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INTRODUCTION

The aims and objectives of Ayurveda are to maintain the well-being of a healthy person and to cure the diseases of the patients [1]. As evident, the first and foremost aim of Ayurveda i.e. "स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्य रक्षणम्" is preventive in nature rather than curative which is mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* and *Acharya Susruta* both. Hence it is greatly emphasized that "prevention is better than cure" which is relevant even in current times [2]. *Pathya - Apathya*, has its importance in the prevention of the disease, elimination of *Doshas* and bringing harmony within the body. To preserve health, Ayurveda laid many basic principles like *Ritucharya* (seasonal regime), *Dinacharya* (diurnal regime) etc.

but the concept of *Pathya* (wholesome) and *Apathya* (unwholesome) is the peculiarity of Ayurveda.

The country has been undergoing a rapid transition in health over the past several decades and there is a shift of focus from infectious diseases to non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Lifestyle disorders are not specifically mentioned under any headings but the various diseases that comprises under it like obesity, hypertension, diabetes etc are mentioned vividly as separate entity with detailed causes, cure and prevention. Although in Ayurveda, Lifestyle disorders are often seen as a result of '*Pragyaparadha*' (intellectual blasphemy) which is one among the three basic causes of any diseases. There are ample examples of improper actions of

Pragyaparadha which are root causes of various diseases, e.g., habit of suppression of any natural urge is a result of *Pragyaparadha* and enlisted as a cause of nearly 50% of the diseases [3]. Reversal of any neurotransmission or non-removal of the waste products formed during metabolism leading to accumulation of toxins is the basic cause of a disease. Therefore, the habit of suppression of urge in improper lifestyle are often considered as one of the basis causes of lifestyle diseases [4].

Mahatma Gandhiji had also accentuated the importance of appropriate diet. According to him, "The body was never meant to be treated as a refuse bin, holding all the foods that the palate demands" and literally the rise in obesity amongst adults and children within the country is propelled by over-consumption of food high in fats, carbohydrates and salt, and thus seeks our immediate attention to limit its damages due to diabetes, heart diseases, cancers, etc i.e. Lifestyle Disorders.[5]

Fast-paced industrialization and globalization have reduced physical activity levels and is making us to lead a more and more sedentary lifestyle. Neglect of prevention, indulgence in excesses and then seeking medical assistance to cure diseases is a trend now a days in the occurrence of lifestyle related NCDs. The physically inactive adult population in India is found to be 54.4 per cent, with 65 per cent in urban areas, amongst them females are in majority. Even though the life expectancy has increased to 76 years, life today is burdened by lifestyle-related chronic NCDs (Non - Communicable Diseases) [5].

DEFINITION

पथ्यमपथोःनपेतम्यद्यच्चोक्तम्मनसः प्रियम् ।

यच्चप्रियमप्यमन्त्रप्रनयतमतन्नलक्षयेत्॥ Ch.Su.25/45)

The *Aahar-vihar* which is beneficial and nutritional to the body and also tranquilises the mind, is known as *Pathya* and opposite to that is known as *Apathya*. [6]. The word *Pathya* gets its origin from root word '*Patha*' which literally means a way or channel. The substance or regimen that donot adversely affect the body and mind are regarded as *Pathya* (wholesome); those which adversely affect them are considered to be *Apathya* (unwholesome) [7]

In M. Monier-Williams (582):

"पथ्य" means: Belonging to a particular way or Suitable, Fit, Proper or Wholesome. They include:

- (A) 1- Foods indicated for healthy person
- 2- Foods contra-indicated for healthy person
- (B) *Pathya -Apathya*for diseased person

Synonyms

Pathya

Satmya, Swasth-hitakara, Upshaya, Swavasthaparipaalaka, Hita Ahara, Swasthaaurjaskara, Sharmakara, Dhatua-Avirodhi, Sukha-parinaamkara, Dhatu-Saamyakara[8]

Apathya

Asatmya, Swastha-Ahitkara, Anupashaya, Ahitkara, Asukha-Parinaamakara, Ashrmakara, Dhatu- Asamyakara[8].

Lifestyle diseases are defined as diseases linked with the way people live their life and are categorised under non-communicable diseases. They are commonly caused by lack of physical activity, unhealthy eating, stressful life routines, alcohol and drugs abuse. Majority of lifestyle disorders are obesity, type II diabetes, hypertension, arteriosclerosis, cardiac disease, stroke, cirrhosis, cancer etc. [9]

Obesity

A disorder involving excessive body fat that increases the danger of health problems. It isn't just a cosmetic concern but also a medical problem or rather a precursor that increases the risk of other health problems, such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and certain cancers [10].

Type II diabetes

A chronic condition that affects the way the body processes blood glucose. It is a lifelong disease that prevents the body from using insulin the way it should. People with type 2 diabetes are said to possess insulin resistance [11].

Hypertension

Approximately 234 million Indians suffer from high blood pressure. Some reasons for high blood pressure are stress, obesity, genetic factors, unhealthy eating habits and smoking[12].

Arteriosclerosis

Arteriosclerosis occurs when the blood vessels that carry oxygen and nutrients from the heart to the rest of the body (arteries) become thick and stiff - sometimes restricting blood flow to the organs and tissues. Accumulation of cholesterol plaque in the walls of arteries, causing obstruction of blood, is the major reason of this[12].

Cardiac diseases

Any irregularity or abnormality which affects the heart muscle and blood vessel walls can be referred to as a cardiac disease. Smoking, diabetes and high cholesterol contribute to its development within the body. India has approximately over 50 million people suffering from cardiac-related issues, giving it the number

one rank of heart patients in the world and thus a major concerning health problem^[12].

Stroke

When the blood vessel carrying blood to the brain has a blockage leading to an oxygen deficiency it usually results in a stroke. Hypertension, if not taken care of it in time with proper treatment, can lead to a stroke^[12].

Cirrhosis

This has become a common lifestyle disease as many people consume alcohol on a daily basis to deal with stress^[12]. Around 10 lakh patients of liver cirrhosis are newly diagnosed per annum in India. Liver disease is the tenth most common cause of death in India as per the World Health Organization and may affect 1 out of 5 Indians^[13]. Cirrhosis is a late stage of scarring (fibrosis) of the liver caused by many forms of liver diseases and conditions, such as Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), alcoholic hepatitis and chronic alcoholism^[14].

Cancer

India has over two million registered cancer patients. This lifestyle disease is mainly caused by smoking, unhealthy diet, lack of physical activity, stress resulting in lowered immunity and thus the body's inability to fight viruses and other infections^[12].

Metabolic syndrome is result of improper metabolism. In Ayurveda metabolism is considered the function of *Agni*. Various causes of metabolic syndromes like, sedentary lifestyle, oily and heavy food, excessive calorie consumption and lack of exercise or physical exertion etc. mainly vitiate *Agni* especially *Medadhavagni*. Above *Nidana* vitiate *Agni*, producing *Aam*, *Kapha* and *Meda*. As a result of this, metabolic syndrome can be said *Santarpanjanya Vyadhi*. The diseases covered in metabolic syndrome like obesity, diabetes mellitus type 2 and dyslipidaemia also come under the umbrella of *Santarpanjanya Vyadhi*. In Ayurveda above features have been mentioned as the result of *Medovaha Srotodusti*. Thus, it can be said that, initial stage of metabolic syndrome can be compared with *Medovaha Srotodusti*. In the middle stage, metabolic syndrome turns in to type 2 diabetes mellitus and coronary artery diseases. So, it can be said as the condition of *Sankara Vyadhi*^[15].

Excessive consumption of unctuous, sweet, heavy to digest and slimy food, new grains (especially new rice), new wine, flesh of animals living in marshy area or born in water, over use of buffalo's milk and its products, and those prepared with sugar or molasses, varieties of cakes lead to *Santarpana*. Those who overindulge in sedentary,

inactive lifestyles and sleep during the day are prone to *Santarpaniya Vyadhis* (i.e., *Santarpana* induced diseases)^[16].

प्रमेहपिडकाकोठकण्डूपाण्ड्वामयज्वराः॥५॥

कुष्ठान्यामप्रदोषश्चमूत्रकृच्छ्रमरोचकः।

तन्द्राक्लैब्यमतिस्थौल्यमालस्यंगुरुगात्रता॥६॥

इन्द्रियस्रोतसां लेपो बुद्धेर्मोहःप्रमीलकः।

शोफाश्चैवंविधाश्चान्येशीघ्रमप्रतिकुर्वतः॥७॥ (Ch.Su.23/5-7)

If the consequences of *Santarpana* are not treated properly, one suffers from various diseases like obstinate urinary disorders including diabetes, carbuncles, urticaria, itching, *Pandu* (anaemia), *Amaja* diseases (i.e., due to formation of *ama*), *Jwara*, persevering skin diseases, diseases secondary to vitiation of *Ama*, dysuria, anorexia or appetite related complaints, *Tandra* (drowsiness/sleepiness), *Klaibya* (erectile and sexual dysfunctions), obesity, laziness, heaviness of the body, adhesion or blockages in the channels as well as sense organs, delusion, various types of oedema, and other such diseases^[16].

General Pathya and Apathya

Acharya Charak stated some food articles which should always be consumed by healthy persons. These food articles include *Shashtika* (variety of rice), *Shali* (variety of rice), *Mudga* (*Phaseolus radiatus* Linn.), *Saindhav*, *Amalaka* (*Embllica officinalis* Gaertn.), rain water, *Ghee* (butter), meat of animals dwelling in arid climate and honey^[17]. Similarly, *Acharya Charak* has also mentioned some food articles which should be avoided by healthy persons. Such food articles are *Vallura* (dried meat), dried vegetables, lotus rhizome and stalk and one should never consume meat of diseased animals.^[18]

Importance of Pathya and Apathya

The importance of *Pathya* (wholesome) and *Apathya* (unwholesome) in Ayurveda are often deduced from the very fact that *Acharya Charaka* had detailed *Pathya* (wholesome) as a synonym for treatment^[19]. He stated that when channels of circulation become hard by aggravated and vitiated *Dosha*, *Pathya* (wholesome) helps to soften the *Srotasa* (channels of circulation) and *Dosha* alleviation^[20]. He also elaborately described the concept of *Pathya* (wholesome) and *Apathya* (unwholesome) giving a general list of *Pathya* (wholesome) and *Apathya Dravya* (unwholesome) along with specific *Pathya* (wholesome) and *Apathya Dravya* (unwholesome) for patients and *Sansarjana Karma* (specific food regime) for patients who have undergone *Panchakarma Therapy*. *Acharya Susruta* had specifically written a

chapter named *Hita-Ahitiya Aadhyay* in *Sutra Sthan*. *Acharya Kashyapa* explored the medicinal potential of *Aahar* (food) along with its prophylactic value for maintaining health. He highlighted that food is the best medicine. No drug can match the benefits of food in diseased state. Only wholesome food can keep a person healthy^[21].

Acharya Harita mentioned the importance of *Pathya* (wholesome) and *Apathya* (unwholesome) by stating that if an individual ignores the concept of *Pathya-Apathya* and devour *Apathya* (unwholesome), illness will never leave the body^[22].

In *Yogaratanakara*, it is said that for the treatment of diseases aetiology, drug treatment and *Pathya* (wholesome) are three important factors which should be studied thoroughly before starting the treatment. *Yogaratanakara* uses the analogy of *Ankura* (seedling) for progressive form of disease. This *Ankura* (seedling) will dry and be destroyed if it is not nourished by water; similarly, diseases are going to be destroyed if a patient does not consume *Apathya Ahara* (unwholesome food)^[23].

Vaidya Lolimbhraja indicated the essentiality of *Pathya Ahara* (wholesome food) by saying that if a patient consumes wholesome food then there is no need of medicine and if a patient continuously consumes unwholesome food then also there is no need of medicine. In the latter case, medications will not be effective^[24].

Bhela Samhita also explains about merits of *Pathya* and demerits of *Apathya* in the *Sutrasthana*. *Pathya Ahara* nourishes all *Dhatu*s (body elements) and *Srotasa* (channels of circulation) resulting in complete nutrition of body. It also helps to detoxify the body by getting rid of vitiated *Doshas*. Contrary to this, *Apathya Ahara* vitiates *Vatadi Doshas* causing various diseases. Hence for the maintenance of health and treating diseases *Pathya Ahara* should be consumed^[25].

Role of Pathya Apathya

In Ayurveda, *Pathya Aharas* are described irrespective of a particular diseased condition for every season. The practice of *Pathya-Apathya* as per season will improve overall health^[26]. According to *Bhavaprakasha* taking ginger and salt before food is always good and it enhances *Pachaka Agni* (digestive fire), improves taste, clears tongue and throat^[27]. *Acharya Charaka* and *Vagbhata* also describe some regularly consumable food articles. *Raktashali*, *Mudga*, Rain water, *Saindhava* (rock salt), *Jivantishaka*, meat of *Aeda*, *Godha*, *Rohita Matsya*, cow's ghee, cow's milk, *Tila Taila*, ginger,

grapes, pomegranate and sugar are considered as most conducive among food articles.

Also, disease specific *Pathya* (wholesome diet/foods to be consumed) and *Apathya* (unwholesome diet/ foods to be avoided) are explained in various classical texts like *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtangahridaya* etc. but there are detailed descriptions about them in other texts like *Sharangdhara Samhita*, *Pathyapathya Vibodhika*, *Bhaishajyaratnavali* etc^[26]. Here we are taking e.g. of *Madhumeha* (Diabetes mellitus) which has *Pathya- apathya* regimen, as follows:

Pathya-Barley, special variety of grain (*Sanvaka*, *Kodrava*), wheat, Green gram (*Mudga*), *Kulattha*, pigeon pea (*Arhara*), *Alasi*, chickpea (*Chana*) *Patola*, bitter gourd (*Karavellaka*), *Amalaki*, *Haridra*, *Kapittha*, black pepper, honey, betel nut, rock salt.

Apathya -Freshly harvested grains, rice, blackgram (*Udada*), sweet fruits, potato etc. Milk, curd, butter milk, clarified butter, oil, jaggery, alcohol, sugarcane products, betel, eating before digestion of previous food, incompatible food.

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda has an upper edge up in treating the disease with emphasis on its root cause. The Ayurvedic physician concentrates on achieving the purpose of Ayurveda for promotion of health, prevention and management of disease for a healthy and happy life within the ailing society. Lifestyle diseases have replaced traditional health risk factors (e.g. age, gender, addiction, etc) resulting in an increase in incidents of disease and deaths in India in the last two decades, suggests a new research.

कठिन्याद्भवाद्वादोषोऽन्तः कुपितो महान्।

पञ्चैर्मृदुलान्नीतो मृदुदोषकरो भवेत् ॥ (Ch.Chi.30/329)

Acharya Charaka had vividly defined the importance and impact of *Pathya* on the diseases. He said that *Doshas* that had been accumulated with *Kathinta* (difficulty) and *Unabhava*, inside the body in more intensified state are often made *mridu* and fewer in quantity resulting in easy treatment of diseases^[28]. Hence it can be said that *Pathyasewana* is helpful for maintenance of good health by keeping the balance of *Doshas* and also controlling the aggravated *Doshas*, which cause diseases with less complications that are easily curable^[29]. *Acharya Charaka* also said therapeutics measures agreeable to the mind and senses promote mental satisfaction and mental strength as a result of which the strength of disease gets diminished. As per Ayurveda, most of the ailments develop because of faulty eating habits so Ayurveda deals with them, by

the means of the *Pathya Vyavastha* (planning of diet and dietetics), in a very scientific way. Day to day activities, seasonal regimes etc. also plays a crucial role for the maintenance of health and thus, had also been included within the concept of *Pathya-Apathya* by the *Acharyas*.

CONCLUSION

With rapid economic development and increasing westernization of lifestyle within the past few decades, prevalence of these lifestyle diseases have reached to an extremely awful extents amongst Indians in the recent years. Therefore, Ayurveda initiates hope for the best possible way to lead a healthy life. *Pathya* regimen is the one which keeps the person healthy, maintains normal body functions, nourishes the mind and intellect, prevents diseases and at the same time corrects the irregularities that may occur in the body. The planning of diet mentioned in our classical literatures is exceptionally rational and established on certain principles. Lot of importance is given to the diet with regard to its processing, quality, quantity and consumption. Due consideration is given even to the seasonal variations, physiological and psychological conditions, status of health, digestion etc. of the person. The diet should even be planned accordance with the age, season, habitat and the preference of the person. Thus, everyone should refrain from *Apathya* (unwholesome to body) and follow *Pathya* (wholesome to body) as "Prevention is so much better than healing because it saves the labor of being sick."

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