

# Strategic Consideration of Seasonal Regimen: *Briefing Ritucharya*

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**Abstract** – Ritucharya is one of the basic concepts of Ayurveda evolved by seers of ancient (1000 BCE) India. Indian seers observed that there is a seasonal cycle, which has influence over the biological system on earth. Season is a major contributory factor in the various changes in nature as well as human body also. Ritucharya consists of lifestyle and diet routine to cope with the bodily and mental impacts caused by seasonal changes as recommended by Ayurveda. Ritucharya enables us to build our physical strength and mental capability to batteailments that may happen due to seasonal changes. Ayurveda stated this marvelous concept “Ritucharya” which gives the logical reasoning & vision to see beyond the limits, the science of what we should do & not & why we should do it, in the different seasons. Ayurveda has depicted various rules and regimens, regarding diet and behavior to acclimatize seasonal enforcement easily without altering body homeostasis. Ayurveda in equal parlance to the modern Science has explained in detail the reasons of different types of season which we see and effect of different seasons on our body. In this article, we will know about the lifestyle that has to adopt according to respective seasons.

**Keywords** – Ritucharya, Homeostasis, Lifestyle.

## I. INTRODUCTION

We have seen that Ritu affects our physiology so we have to adopt a lifestyle according to respective ritu which we call “Ritucharya”. The word Ritucharya is made of two words, Ritu means seasons & charya means do’s and don’ts (regimen). The changes in diet and practices in response to change in climatic conditions like heat, cold, rain etc, is Ritucharya. In Ayurveda, a year is divided into six Ritu (seasons) depending on changes in the climate, they are shishira (Autumn), Vasant (Spring), Grishma (Summer), Varsha (rainy), Sharat (Post-monsoon period) and Hemanta (Winter). These six seasons are broadly divided into two Ayanas or solstices, depending on the direction of movement of sun, that is uttarayan and Dakshinayana. Ayana means journeying, Uttarayana is also called Aadana Kaalaor the taking away period. Shishira, vasanta & Grishma Ritus from uttarayana. The sun & wind are powerful during this period. The sun take away the energy of the people. Due to the heat, air becomes hot and drains the cooling effect of earth. Due to this, people get dehydrated and weakened and atmosphere becomes hot and dry. Dakshinayana is also called visargakala or the giving away period. The moon becomes powerful during this period. The sun releases its energy to the people the earth cools down due to cold winds and rain people regain their strength and nourishment that was lost in the Aadanakaala. Now days nature is changing its qualities due to various

atmospheric changes like pollution, space experiments, heavy industrialization and population crisis. So while studying the effect of season one has to face the hyper/hypo and perverted faculties of season which are affecting the generations. So the study of season (Ritucharya) in respect of its various effects will be essential thing is future.

## II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

As we already know, our diet, activities, routine have a direct impact on our health. The environment we live in and the changing season also our health.

### *Regimen of Different Season-*

Hemanta Ritucharya (winter)

General condition – mid November to mid January is considered as Hemanta ritu. During Hemanta in a person with good physical strength, the digestive fire becomes powerful, because it gets obstructed from flowing outwards due to external winter. Like fuel consumes the things that it comes into contact digestive fire may cause emaciation of body tissues. Hence in this period one should consume food predominant with sweet, sour and salt tastes.

### *Diet Regimen*

Cereal - Rice, Wheat, Jawar.

Pulses - Udid (black gram), kulitha (horse gram), watana (pea).

Milk products - Milk ghee cheese etc.

Oils - Til, animal fat, coconut.

Fruits - All sweet fruits.

Drinks - Hot water, wine (sura made from sugarcane preparation), fruit juice.

Vegetables - Carrot, tomatoes, figs, onions, cabbage bottle gourd, drumsticks etc.

Contra indication - Vata aggravating food such as laghu, cold and dry food are avoided & cold drinks.

### *Life style :-*

- Massage with oil into hair and body before bath.
- Udvartana with fine paste/ powder of kumkum (kesar) or Agar on body
- Thick sheet made of cotton, leather, silk, wool or bark of trees that are light in weight should be used during sleep.
- Exposure to sunlight and fire to keep yourself warm.
- Exposure to strong & cold wind to be avoided.

### *Shishira Ritucharya (Late Winter)*

General condition – Mid January to mid march is considered as Shishiraritu. Generally the atmosphere in shishiraritu is just same as that of Hemantaone. So the Ritucharya is like that of Hemantaritu only.

### *Vasanta Ritucharya (Spring Season)*

General condition – The approximate time is from mid march to mid May. This ritu is supposed to be the most charming, due to natural beauty in the surrounding nature. In this season, increased kapha is liquefied by heat of Sun & comes out of its assaya or receptacle and spreads all over the body. This causes diminished agni (digestive activity) causing diseases of kapha origin like cold, cough, heaviness and fluid accumulation in joints, increased phlegm in lungs etc. Hence kapha should be controlled quickly by resorting to strong emesis panchakarmatherapy such as Vamana, Nasya etc.

#### Diet Regimen

Cereals - Yava, old wheat, jawar,

Pulses – Masura, chana, moog etc.

Oils - Mustard, Til oil.

Milk Product – only butter milk.

Vegetables – karela, brinjal, Reddish, Pumpkin, drumstick, suran etc.

Non vegetarian – Roasted mutton of goat, Chicken.

Drinks – Wine, asava (fermented infusion) arista (fermented decoction) Sidhu (fermented sugar can juice), honey mixed with water and water boiled with extracts of chandan.

Fruits – Lemon, Betel nut, pomegranate, Jambul.

Contra indication – Avoid food that is hard to digest, cold, sour, sweet and fatty, New grains, curd, cold drinks, are also to be prohibited.

#### *Lifestyle:-*

- Physical exercises, dry massage and mild trampling should be done.
- After taking as bath, powders of karpur, chandana, agaru, and kumkuma are applied over the body
- Avoid sleep during day.

### *Grishma Ritucharya (Summer Season)*

General Condition - Mid May to Mid July is considered as Grishma Season. The sun brightly shines in summer and absorbs the strength of the human beings. Grishmaritu is the season of dehydration, exhaustion, lack of energy and lethargy. During summer, the kaphadosha is regularly decreased due to heat of sun & dryness in the air and there by vatadosha is enhanced. Agni of the person will remain in mild state.

#### Diet Regimen

Cereals - Wheat, Jawar, Sashtishali Rice.

Pulses - Masura, Moog, pea (Matar).

Milk Products – Curd, ghee, buttermilk & milk

Vegetables - karela, cucumber, Methi,

Non vegetarian – meat of goat, deer, Rabbit.

Fruits - Watermelon, kharbuja, jambhul, grapes, bananas, amalaki, pomegranate, lemon, etc.

Drinks - Drink cold water from mud pot. Panakpanchsara, a syrup prepared with sugarcane, madhuka, date, Kashmarya and parshuka fruits all in equal quantity cold with cardamom powder. Fresh juices can be taken in abundance.

Contra indication – Salt, pungent, sour substances and alcoholic preparations are prohibited.

#### *Life Style :-*

- Anoint body with chandan paste and take bath with cold water.
- Stay in cool places.
- Wear loose and light cotton dresses to keep the body temperature cool.
- Use perfumes made from substances that possess cold properties.
- Sleep during day is permitted as nights are short.
- Excessive exercise, or hard work and sunshine are to be avoided.

### *Varsha Ritucharya (Rainy Season)*

General Condition-mid July to Mid September is considered as varsha Ritu. In rainy season, the agni (digestive activity) Weakens further and gets vitiated by vata. Lacks of sunshine as well as a cloudy atmosphere are uncongenial to health. Hence all methods to mitigate doshas and measures to enhance digestive activity should be adopted.

#### Diet Regimen

Cereals – Old wheat, rice, yava, jawar.

Pulses - Masura, Moog.

Oils - coconut or groundnut oil.

Milk Products – goat milk, Butter ghee.

Vegetables - Karela, Methi, Padwal, broad beans, sweet potato, cucumber etc.

Non-vegetarian - Meat of goat, deer, Rabbit.

Fruits - Mango, Pomegranate, amalaki, grapes, sugarcane

Drinks - Well water, boiled water, lemon juice, yusha (soups) made up from meat. Madvika (grape wine), arista, mastu (water separated from curd), intake of river water, udamantha (beverage prepared with flour of corns mixed with ghee).

Contra indication - Excessive liquid and wine are to be avoided, the food which are heavy and hard to digest are prohibited.

#### *Life Style :-*

- Use of boiled water for bath and rubbing the body with Oil properly after bath is advised.
- Medicated Basti (enema) is prescribed, as an evacuative measure to expel vitiated doshas.
- Getting wet in rain, day sleep, exercise, hard work, wind, staying at river bank, and exposure to sunlight are to be prohibited.

### *Sharat Ritucharya (Autumn):-*

General condition - The period between mid-September to mid-November is sharat Ritu. In sharat, the sun is very hot so the atmosphere is also very hot and penetrating. After the exposure to cold weather in rainy season, if a person comes into contact with sharp sunlight, the pitta dosha accumulated during rainy season get aggravated. To pacify or suppress pitta dosha, medicated bitter ghee, purgation and bloodletting are advised.

#### Diet Regimen

Cereals – Rice, Wheat, Jawar, Java of more than are year old.

Pulses - Moog, Tur, Chana, Masura, Beans.

Meat - meat of goat, rabbit, chicken, Pigeon, peacocks.

Oils - Ghee medicated with bitter medicines.

Milk products - Butter milk, Plain milk.

Fruits - Grapes, amalaki, kismis, banana, apple, chiku, etc.  
Vegetables - Methi, karela, cucumber, cabbage, sweet potato etc.

Drinks - "Hansodaka (water in moonlight when agasti shining in the sky), wine of sugarcane – sidhu - honey cold drinks.

Contra indication - avoid heavy food, curd, oil, strong liquors animal fat & excessive eating.

*Life Style:-*

- Udvartanwith chandan
- Bath with warm water
- Pearlsgive soothing effect from aggravated pitta.
- Day sleep, excessive exposure to sunlight etc. are to be avoided.

*Diet and Seasons :-*

During sharat and vasant, dry foods are to be used. In Hemanta, shishira, vasanta and varsha seasons, oily or fatty & hot spicy food is advised, while in Grishma and sharat cold foods are suggested.

*Tastes and Seasons :-*

During Hemanta, madhura (Sweet), amla (sour) and lavana (salt) rasas, during vasanta, katu (bitter), tikta (pungent) and kasaya (astringent) rasas, during summer madhura rasa and during sharatmadhura, tikta and kasayarasas are advised.

The habit of using all the six taster every day is ideal for maintenance of health, However, during particular seasons, the particular tastes should be given special emphasis.

Dosha and seasons - In context to our body seasons affects the doshas in our body is following way-

- Vatadosha accumulates during the summer. Rainy season makes it aggravated which cause indigestion, acidic atmosphere, & gas produced from the earth.
- Pitta accumulates during the rainy season due to indigestion & acidic atmosphere. Autumn makes it aggravated when heat returns after cooling spell of rainy season.
- Kapha accumulates during the winter season. Spring season makes it aggravated when warm weather liquefies the accumulating kapha.

### III. DISCUSSION

It is known that disharmony in the doshas vata, pitta, and kapha results in roga (disease). And aim of the science of Ayurveda is to maintain the harmony, with the changes in diet and life style. There are changes in state of tridosha which is bound to affect us, resulting disharmony, causing life style diseases. It has been observed that there is an increased occurrence of heat stroke in summer, pollen allergy in spring, high incidence of air and water borne diseases in rainy season, skin diseases in autumn and flu & asthma attack in winter season. Thus it can be said that physiology indicates the concept of Ritucharya. In Ayurveda, the knowledge of Ritucharya we can surely avoid these by practicing regimen in accordance with ritu to maintain the harmony of tridosha and to stay healthy ever.

### IV. CONCLUSION

Season is a major contributory factor in the various changes in the nature as well as in human body also. As per Ayurveda Ritucharya (seasonal diet regimen & lifestyle) should be followed for prevention of diseases arises from variations in tridosha due to season. Growing public awareness about ritucharya with support of government and corporate wellness programs may help arrest the rapid increase in the incidence of such seasonal diseases & saving lives.

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