

The Role of Swasthavritta in Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT: In this current era, the lifestyle is changing drastically. Due to busy schedules and odd job timings, the health rate is declining and the rate of diseases and stress levels are increasing rapidly. Diseases that are occurring due to changes in lifestyle are happening due to inappropriate relations of people with their bodies , mind , spirit, and environment. Swasthavritta is a branch of Ayurveda that deals with the prevention methods to lead a healthy life. It is a branch that deals with the maintenance of the health of an individual , and the prevention of diseases through diet, routine , yoga , hygiene , and naturopathy. In this article , we shed the light to acknowledge about the role of Swasthavritta in Ayurveda.

Keywords : Diseases , Swasthavritta, Ayurveda, Lifestyle

I. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda focuses on restoration and promotion of general health since this ancient science believe in principle of “ Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam” (maintenance of health of healthy person) and “ Aturashya Vikar Prasamanam “ (treating diseased person). Ayurveda is derived from the Sanskrit word where Ayur means Life and Veda means Science or Knowledge of life. In Ayurveda , the treatment is started internally to defeat the root cause of the disease . The primary concept of medicine is based on the body ‘s constitution (Prakriti) , and Doshas i.e. Vata, Pitta , and Kapha; which are the ,as they both are dependent on the food we eat i.e. Ahara (Diet) , the lifestyle we practice i.e. (Vihara) , and Drugs medications, and therapies we take i.e. (Oushadha) . the Ahara plays a vital role in most of the diseases as most of the diseases occur due to bad eating habits and the way they cook their food. In Ayurveda, the branch in which the prevention of disease is explained is known as Swasthavritta.[1-4]

What is Swasthavritta

It is a Branch of Ayurveda that deals with the prevention methods to lead a healthy life. It is a science of health that includes the practice of maintenance of public health. It deals with the maintenance of the health of an individual, and the prevention of diseases through diet, yoga , hygiene etc. Ayurveda defines and acknowledges how to live a healthy life as it is not limited to the treatment with herbs but it is a way of life that describes the diet , healthy routine , behaviour and rules that are beneficial to live a healthy life.[4-5]

Role of Swasthavritta in Ayurveda

In Ayurveda , Swasthavritta defines the prevention of diseases through a healthy life style , diet, yoga. It focus on preserving the health of a healthy person and curing the diseases of the diseased person. Ayurveda propounds Dinacharya and Ratricharya (daily routine), Ritucharya (seasonal activities) , Dietary guidelines and Sadvritta(code of conduct for mental health) for maintenance , promotion of health and prevention of ailments; Panchkarma (purification therapy) and various medications for diseases and Rasayanas (rejuvenatives) to enhance health and quality of life. Following are dietary and lifestyle interventions as per Ayurveda that one should follow in order to achieve a healthier life .[5]

Dinacharya (Daily Regimen)

Dinacharya is the daily routine to be followed to remain healthy . followings are the simple routines for a refreshing and rejuvenating day.

Pratarutthanam : Get up early in the morning before two hours of sunrise (Brahma Muhurta) . It is considered to be the purest time of the day . The body is well rested ,mind is alert , focused and peaceful.

Contraindication : In condition of indigestion and any disease conditions.

Ushapana / Achaman : After waking , wash hands and feet and drink 04 anjali (a cup formed by joining two palms of hand) lukewarm/ normal water preferably in a copper or clay vessel.

Benefits : Regular habit of drinking water at early morning helps easy passage of motion and urine, enhance digestive power , minimize the diseases related to digestive system and delayed ageing.

Malmutra Visarjan (voiding of natural urges): It is beneficial to inculcate the habit of voiding natural urges in the morning.

Benefits : It helps to maintain health and prevention of diseases. A tendency to suppress the natural urges (vega vidharan) is the root cause of many diseases.

Dantadhavan (Cleaning Teeth and Tongue): After defecation, clean teeth preferably astringent , punjent or bitter plants such as Arka, Nimba, Nyagrodha , Khadira, Karanja , etc. After cleaning teeth, the tongue should be scrapped by curve scrappers. Teeth also may be cleaned with the fine powder of triphala (Amalaki, Bibhitaki, Haritaki) or Trikatu (Sunthi, Pippali, Maricha) added to Honey.

Benefits : Brushing the teeth removes the accumulated filth and helps in appreciating taste . After cleaning the teeth and tongue , salt water gargling should be done to keep gums , mouth and throat healthy.

Nasyakaram/ Nasal Medication: Apply 3-5 drops of Sesame oil / Ghee or medicated oil via Anu Taila into each nostril in the morning regularly.

Benefits : It keeps eyes , ears , nose , head , shoulder healthy , prevents wrinkles , baldness and early greying of hair. It also alleviates diseases like headache , paralysis, sinusitis, mental disorder, spondylitis and skin complaints and increase the strength of teeth.

Containdicaton: It should not be applied in toxic conditions , indigestion, respiratory diseases and after child birth.

Gandush (Gargling)(Oral Cleansing Technique): Fill the oral cavity completely with lukewarm water

or cold water mixed with paste of Tila Taila (Sesame oil) / Ghee/Cold Milk/ Honey/ Honey mixed water and hold till the tears come out of eyes and nostrils or gargle with either of above regularly.

Benefits : It enhances the efficiency of sense organs ; removes wrinkles ; delayed greying of hair , black circles on face ; removes and prevent cracking and roughness of lips , excessive salivation , dry face, tingling sensation, shaky teeth, diseases of oral cavity, anorexia, loss of taste etc.

Abhyangam (Oil Massage) : Massage oil to the whole body particularly on head , ears , and feet with Sesame oil/ Mustard oil /Coconut oil .

Benefits : Increases softness and unctuousness skin and muscles ; helps in free movement of joints; increases circulation of blood ; enhances the strength of head and forehead and makes hair black , long and deep – rooted ; helps in getting sound sleep , increases hearing power and helps in maintenance of health.

Oil massage of feet especially before sleeping in night improves eyesight, relieves fatigue and stiffness of feet.

Vyayama/ Exercise/Yoga : Do regular exercise to remain healthy till the appearance of sweat on forehead and axilla.

Benefits : It increases the blood circulation and efficiency of lung increases stamina and resistance against disease. Regular walking enhances memory , improves digestion and efficiency of sense organs.

Precaution : Careful selection and extent of exercise should be done in diseases like cough , tuberculosis , heart diseases etc.

Kshaur Karma (Cutting of nails): Shaving , cutting nail and hair , etc should be done regularly i.e. maximum once in 5 days . It imparts lightness to the body and makes one cheerful.

Udvartana (Massage of Herbal Powder): Massage of herbal powder over the body after exercise in the opposition direction of hair root .

Benefits : It reduces fat , cleanses the skin and imparts firmness to the limbs , improves complexion and cures itches and eruptions.

Snana (Bath): Take bath with neither hot nor very cold water.

Benefits: It removes dirt, sweat, itching, thirst, burning sensation, and exhaustion. It also improves appetite, longevity, courage, and strength.

Contraindications: Bathing is not recommended in people suffering from facial paralysis, diseases of eye, mouth, ear, flatulence, indigestion, diarrhoea and immediately after food intake.

Dhyanam (Meditation): For a few minutes to an hour sit in peace for just a little while and meditate. Be quiet for some time and try and introspect. The whole day, indeed the whole world, revolves around meditation.

Dietary Regimen:

Diet should be regulated taking into account the desha (region), kala (time and season), and habit.

Diet should be planned to include all the six rasas (taste) i.e. sweet, sour, salty, bitter, pungent, and astringent.

Madhur (Sweet) rasa food like fruits are advisable to be consumed in the beginning of meal, food with Amla (sour) and Lavana (salty) rasa in the middle and Katu (bitter), Tikta (astringent) and Kashaya (pungent) foods should be taken at the end of the meal.

Do not eat incompatible food items such as milk with fish, eating raw and cooked foods together, salt and milk, cooking honey or honey with ghee in equal quantity.

Diet especially hard substances should be chewed properly and should not be eaten too fast, or too slow and while taking, laughing or watching television.

Water should be avoided at least 15 minutes before food.

Next meal should be taken after proper digestion of previous meal.

Guru (heavy) food should not be taken in night. Dinner should be taken 2-3 hours prior to going to sleep. After dinner it is better to go for a short walk.

RATRICHARYA (ROUTINE AT NIGHT)

RATRIBHOJANA (DINNER) -Should be taken at least 3 hours before bedtime. It should be lighter than lunch consisting of only easily digestible food and consumed in warm state. Avoid consuming curd at night. Walk hundred steps after dinner than lie in left lateral position for 10 – 15 min.

Sleep (Nidra) – It overcomes wear and tear of the body due to physical work and mental stress and tissue loss. The amount of sleep necessary more in case of children and old individuals whereas for an adult on an average 6-7 hours of sleep. Sleeping during the day and late at night should be avoided. Day sleep is not contraindicated in summer. But in winter day sleep causes respiratory and digestive problems. It is advisable to massage the head, sole and palm with oil before going to bed. [6-11]

II. CONCLUSION

Ayurvedic approach of Swasthivritta helps to establish balances synchronization between body and mind. Proper conduction of Ahara and Vihara balances doshas boost Dhatus, potentiate Agni, regularizes Circulation, control metabolic activity and maintain hormonal regulation therefore provides health benefits and resists pathological progression of many diseases.

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