



## THE ROLE OF DIETS AND LIFESTYLE IN PREVENTING “ARSHA”

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### ABSTRACT

In Ayurveda Acharya Charaka, Shushruta, Vagbhata, mentioned and explained various dietary and lifestyle concept regarding Arsha roga. Ahara (diet), vihara (lifestyle) and home remedies (aharakalpana) play an important role in prevention of Arsha roga. Prevention of Arsha is crucial for lowering disease incidence and thus minimizing the individual, familial, and public health burden. Diets rich in green vegetable and fruits are beneficial. Whereas, frequent meat consumption increases the risk. Alcohol, mental tension, occupational hazards also adding its effect on it. There is evidence of the effectiveness of diet or lifestyle modification on Arsha control, but further studies are necessary. The purpose of this article is to analyze and alter the dietary and lifestyle practices for diminution of Arsha.

**Keywords:** Arsha, Diet, Lifestyle, Arsha Prevention

### INTRODUCTION

Lifestyle diseases are outcome of our own way of living. These diseases are not infectious but self-imposed. The right quantity of health education is the only answer to avoid them. Now a day's these diseases are increasing because of stress and strains caused by urbanization. Among lifestyle disorders following are most endangering to human beings.

- Obesity
- Piles(Arsha)
- Cardiovascular diseases
- Diabetes
- Arthritis
- Spinal Problems
- Carcinomas of different body parts
- Dementia, depression and anxiety.

Among these “ Arsha” is one of the lifestyle disease which increasing at an alarming rate in our society but everyone overlook it due to busy schedule, western lifestyle, modern civilization. The growing tendency to intake artificial foods, increase mental tension, lack of rest and careless attitude towards responding to natural urge such as suppression of defecation and urination also intensify the process of disease.<sup>1</sup>

In Ayurveda Acarya Susruta (the father of ancient surgery) mentions this disease under the heading of Mahagadas<sup>2</sup>.

### AETIOPATHOGENESIS

The aetiological factors of Ayurveda classics may be broadly classified in to two categories by acharyacharak<sup>3</sup>.

1] samanya nidan

2] vishesa nidan

### Samanya Nidan

Under this nidan they includes all factors corresponding to dietetic ingredients, vihar and agantuja [trauma] factor

### Dietic Factors

Dietic indulgence like consumption of de-composed and incompatible substances [jirnamn,virudhahar]<sup>4</sup> that lead to vibandh.

Excessive less irregular intake of food i.e. [Atyasan, Pramitasan And Adhyasan In Ayurveda]<sup>5</sup> which will interfere with digestive power[enzyme secretion] leading to poor digestion and constipation.

Eating meat of cow, goat, pork and fish<sup>6</sup> it also suppress the normal dietetic power i.e. cause Mandagni [hypo function of metabolic and digestive enzyme]<sup>7</sup> contribute the aetiopathogenesis of Arsha roga.

### Vihar

#### Sexual indulge

Sexual indulge means unnatural sex which includes sodomy, which causes kshata in anal canal and leads to Arsha roga

#### Preventing natural urge (Vegavarodha)

This leads to Mandagni and vitiation of apanavayu resulting in stasis of faecal matter in guda causes development of pathological changes in gudavali and finally leads to Arsha<sup>8</sup>.

#### Lack of physical exercise and sleep (Avyayam, Divaswapna)

Day time sleep, lack of physical exercise and lack of sleep, these affect the rest of mind in the form of sleep at night and such people are most prone to get constipated<sup>9</sup>.

#### Mental tension

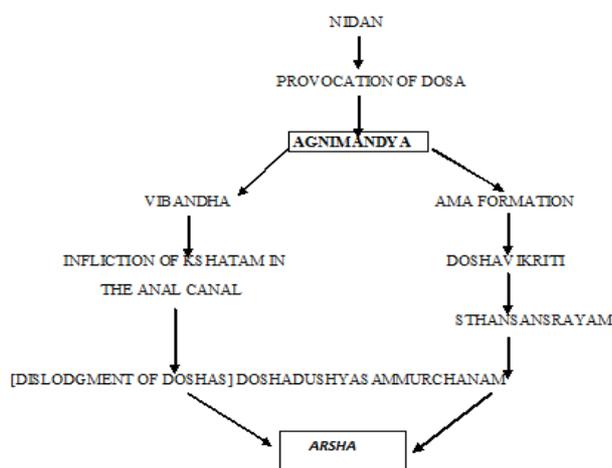
Conditions of mental tension affect the digestion.

#### Pressure and irritation in anal canal (Gudakshananaadabhikshna)

Defective sitting, sitting on haunches, soft place or uneven, hard and irregular pressure, riding on vehicles for long duration, excessive travelling, excessive intake of alcohol and continuous straining during defecation. It causes increase in intra-rectal pressure and it certainly aggravates and possibly precipitates Arsha roga<sup>10</sup>.

#### Agantuj Factor

Irregular and improper use of Bastinetra, repeated deliveries, abnormal deliveries play an important role in causing kshata to the anal canal as in case of women. Later this injury repeatedly irritated with the contact of soiled clothes, undigested food stuff, grass, stones, small herbs causes friction and finally results in Arsha roga<sup>11</sup>.



Above mentioned all nidanas are capable of provocation of dosha and vitiating the Jatharagni in turn of Agnimandya and formation of Vikritahar i.e. Ama. This Ama getting together with Prakupita doshas converts them into their Vikritavastha. This stage is called as Doshavikriti. These Vikritidosha getting together with Apana Vayu travels through the Pradhanahadhamanis of guda by taking shelter in Mamsa, Sira and Raktadhatu. This in turn results into Doshadushyasammurchanam and paves the way in revealing the Purvarupas and repeated consumption of all Nidan factor aggravates the formation of Arsha.<sup>12</sup>

### MANAGEMENT OF ARSHA

It is known that Ayurveda has two primary aims to maintain the health and alleviate the disease.<sup>13</sup> which is achieved by

1. Nidanaparivarjan
2. Apkarshan (samshodhan)
3. Prakritivighaat (samshaman)<sup>14</sup>

### Preventive Measures

In preventive measures we discuss about

- 1] Diet / Aahara
- 2] Deeds [Lifestyle] / Vihara

Both for the prevention and cure of Arsha the patients should rely mainly on conforming to a suitable diet ,drinks and regimen factors which cause constipation and then Arsha, it should be quit.

### Diet in preventing Arsha

Overeating and eating between meals before the previous meal is digested should be avoided (Vaayuranulomya Anna PaanSevyam)<sup>15</sup> such overloads clog and retard the whole process of digestion and evacuation of bowels. All these cause constipation and piles.

### Eating refined foods are avoided

In refined foods the roughage of the original grain has been removed such as white bread, white sugar and polished rice. Likewise eating tinned, preserved and reheated foods should be avoided.

Pulses generally produce more gas during digestion so it avoided by who are constipated.

Vegetarians depend mostly upon pulses and legumes such as moong, masha, rajma, shaandahar for their nourishment [protein requirement] all these pulses, except

moong are gas forming and constipative. To make them wholesome ghee, garlic, ginger and asafoetida should be added while cooking<sup>16</sup>.

### Deep-fried Food Strictly Avoided

Fried and deep fried food preparations though extremely tasty are harmful for the liver and difficult to digest leading eventually to constipation and piles.<sup>17</sup>

### Timely Intake of Food

The three main meals of the day is breakfast, lunch and dinner should be eaten in time. In the present age because of busy life. Eating at set hours of the day becomes the commonest to victim. Irregularly eaten food or food snacks eaten too often affect the digestion and bowel movements leading to constipation and piles.<sup>18</sup>

### Chew Well Before Swallowing

Chewing well makes the food easily digestible. Swallowing food without proper chewing contributes to a considerable extent to constipation in the present age of hurry. The daily routine should be planned so as to leave sufficient time for meals.<sup>19</sup>

### Corns and Cereals

Godhuma, kulatha, raktashali<sup>20</sup>, Barley, Maize and Bajara are very useful for patients suffering from constipation.

### Vegetables

To prevent and cure constipation and Arsha one should take more vegetables especially leafy vegetables such as spinach, methi both during lunch and dinner but should be fried in oil or ghee<sup>21</sup>.

Bitter gourd, patola, kundaru, brinjal, surana, greenpapaya, white pumpkin, drumstick, beetroot are very useful. Potatoes, cauliflower, jackfruit, yellow pumpkin and ladys finger are not useful. They cause constipation and gas formation in the abdomen.

### Surana is very useful

*Amorphophallus companulatus* a kind of yam is very useful when cooked as a vegetable and also when used as a medicine. Boiled and mashed surana is very useful when eaten as a vegetable in order to correct its irritating property while a little tamarind juice is often added.<sup>22</sup>

### Meat and Fish

Non vegetarian foods such as meat, fish and eggs causes constipation. Person are suffering from constipation avoid them as far as possible.<sup>23</sup>

### Fruits

Fruits and fruit juices are very useful in preventing and curing constipation and Arsha. Regular use of ripe papaya and its preparations apples, pears, mangos, guavas and plumps do not make a person constipated. They promote urination and secretion of digestive juices bile from the liver.<sup>24</sup>

### Useful spices

Black pepper, ginger, cumin, fenugreek, long pepper, cardamom, cloves, asafoetida and cinnamon are very useful in promoting the functioning of liver and relieving constipation.<sup>25</sup>

### Vihar

#### Take less of tea and coffee

Hot drinks such as tea and coffee in excess are harmful these taken only in limited quantities not more than two cups/day or should be avoided. They should not be taken on an empty stomach. They causes sluggishness of liver

and excess intake disturbs sleep which results in bad digestion bed tea should also be avoided.<sup>26</sup>

#### **Taking warm milk at bedtime**

Habitually taking a glass of warm milk at least two hours after dinner and before going to bedtime makes a person free from constipation. Buffalo's milk sometimes cause indigestion and gas formation in intestines so prefer cows or goats<sup>28</sup> milk at bedtime.<sup>27</sup>

#### **Alcoholic drinks**

Alcoholic drinks prepared by distillation such as whisky, brandy and vodka are nourishing and act as digestive stimulants. But if taken in excess and if taken untimely, these drinks cause sluggishness and even cirrhosis of liver; this affects the digestion and leads to constipation and piles. Drinks such as beer and Ayurvedic recipes such as asava and aristas are not that harmful. Some of these asava and aristas helps in relieving constipation<sup>29</sup>.

#### **Professional hazards and exercise**

Intellectuals, business managers, administrators and professionals are often required to remain seated for long time. Their work is sedentary. Modern facilities of transport such as cars and scooters do not allow them to perform even the simplest possible exercise i.e. walking after sitting down the whole day either in cars or on chairs they go straight to bed after meal at night. In such cases yogic exercises would prove very useful. These exercises should be learnt under the supervision of experts on yoga and should not be done just by reading books.<sup>30</sup>

#### **Sleep and Rest**

These provide natural aids to digestion and evacuation of faeces. If one does not go to sleep in time and thus cannot get up from bed in time then urge for bowel movement becomes irregular which results is ultimately in constipation and piles hence sleep and rest are essential for prevention and cure of piles.<sup>31</sup>

#### **Mental Peace**

Mental activities are directly connected with digestion and metabolism. Mental tensions, anxiety always cause liver malfunctioning, sleeplessness, constipation and piles. To achieve mental tranquillity, practising Pranayam is described in yoga. It provide a concentration of mind and gives mental peace. Practice of pranayama by simply reading its description in yogic textbooks sometimes leads to harmful effect.<sup>32</sup>

#### **Oriental Toilets**

In western countries commodes or high lavatory seats are used for evacuation of stool. On the other hand in oriental countries such as India, lavatory seats are placed very low and one has to evacuate in an almost squatting position. Also susruta explained in the Arsha prevention don't sit in Utkatukaasana<sup>34</sup> for long time physiologically oriental privies are better for evacuation. The squatting position has a further advantage in as much as the thighs are pressed against the abdomen protecting the abdominal viscera from the hazards of excessive strain. In the name of civilisation in oriental countries also people have started using western style commodes. This may suit a Rheumatic patient but it leads to constipation and piles. The squatting posture is ideal in order to be free from piles.<sup>33</sup>

#### **DISCUSSION**

We human beings are the small units of this universe. When one is in proper tuning with rest of the world, he remains healthy and happy and when there is any disturbance in this harmony diseases appear. Lifestyle decides a lot about our relationship with rest of the universe as what we do is a reaction to our surroundings. And according to Newton every action has a reaction, same happens with the body. We do well with the nature and our body, we get good, no chance for good after doing bad.

Lifestyle disorders are a big problem for our society today. Earlier Bacteria and Viruses were the prime killers, but now a day we human beings are proving biggest killers for ourselves. For treatment, principle should be focused to get rid of the main causative factors i.e. nidana. The three basic steps of treatment principle are described in Ayurveda Nidanaparivarjan, ApakArshana, Prakritivighat<sup>17</sup>. Nidana parivarjan of the three described procedure is the prime one<sup>35</sup>. The causative factors or the nidana are accounted under three categories i.e (Ayoga, Hinayoga and Atiyoga)<sup>36</sup> conglomeration of the object with the Indriyas. Mind is the controller of the senses and responsible for the haemostasis of IndriyaarthaSamyoga to rectify the improper conglomeration of the senses the normal equilibrium of mind should be restore. In another context the treatment can also be performed by Daivavyapashraya, Yuktivyapashraya and Satvaavajaya<sup>37</sup>, Satvavajayais the treatment procedure by which restoration of the mental faculties done. Thus performing the Satvavajay treatment the nidanaparivarjan can also be achieved through the functional apliment of the state of mind. As Arsha has its adhistanas in Dosha, Dushya And Malaayatan<sup>38</sup> that's why it is Gudha Vyadhi which causes it to be Krcchrasadhya or Yapya<sup>39</sup> disease. In this the main treatment principle is pathya<sup>40</sup> for this it require person to manage the life by taking wholesome regimen and enjoying little comfort and happiness for the relief to his ailments. Arsha is aggravated if there is reduction in the power of digestion if it is increased it get cured, so Agni should be protected in Arsha<sup>41</sup>. In Arsha the food ingredients and drugs which promote power of digestion and downward movement of Vayu are invariably useful<sup>42</sup>, so it is necessary to follow Pathya in disease as well as in healthy state.

#### **CONCLUSION**

A substantial and expanding body of evidence has implicated several aspects of diet and lifestyle in the pathogenesis of Arsha. Importantly, lifestyle modifications and dietary changes can effectively control these risk factors and lower the incidence. To realize these benefits, individuals should aim for avoid over eating, proper sleep and rest, be physically active, avoid alcohol, and follow a diet and lifestyle as per above recommendations. Accomplishing these objectives will require individuals to change their behaviour. The current challenge to healthcare providers, researchers, and government officials is to develop and implement effective clinical and public health strategies especially need-based educational programmes that would lead to

sustained lifestyle changes among individuals and, more broadly, among populations

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