

## Concepts of Āyurveda Dietetics - A Unique Approach

<sup>1</sup> Richa Khandelwal, <sup>2</sup> A. R. Murthy, <sup>3</sup> Sumit Nathani

<sup>1</sup> Lecturer, Department of Saundarya Ayurveda (Ayurveda Cosmetology), National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed to be University, Jaipur, Rajasthan

<sup>2</sup> Professor, P.G. Department of Dravyaguna vigyana, National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed to be University, Jaipur, Rajasthan

<sup>3</sup> Associate Professor, P.G. Department of Dravyaguna vigyana, National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed to be University, Jaipur, Rajasthan,

Email - <sup>1</sup>[khandelwalricha98@gmail.com](mailto:khandelwalricha98@gmail.com), <sup>2</sup>[armurthy\\_2005@yahoo.com](mailto:armurthy_2005@yahoo.com), <sup>3</sup>[sumitnathani2@rediffmail.com](mailto:sumitnathani2@rediffmail.com)

**Abstract:** *Āyurveda* describes *āhāra* as one of the sub-pillars of life along with *nidrā* and *brahmacarya*. Food and diet are the most essential requirements of all living beings. Nutrition is a vital component of the individual's and community health. *Āyurveda* considers food in a deeply comprehensive understanding, attaching to it notable emotional and spiritual significance. *Āyurveda* describes *āhāra* as the means of healthy body, mind and soul. Concept of *Āyurveda* dietetics is unique in sense of its individualized approach. Contemporary science is described food only in terms of carbohydrate, protein, fat, vitamins, minerals, calories etc. But *āyurveda* emphasizes the diet contents as well as unique dietary principals like *aṣṭa āhāra vidhi viśeṣāyatana*, *āhāra vidhi vidhāna*, *dvādaśāsana pravicāraṇā*, *hitakara* and *ahitakara āhāra* etc. Most health problems develop due to the incorrect eating practices and cookery procedures in today's era. So, these principles are boon in today's lifestyle and one should follow these guidelines to prevent several metabolic and infectious diseases. Present study aimed to compile, analyze and present different concepts of *Āyurveda* dietetics.

**Keywords** - *Āhāra*, *Āyurveda* dietetics, *aṣṭa āhāra vidhi viśeṣāyatana*, *āhāra vidhi vidhāna*, *dvādaśāsana pravicāraṇā*.

### 1. INTRODUCTION :

Quest of healthy life is supreme for the mankind. To attain this *āyurveda* describes two ways, by maintaining the health status and by curing the disease condition<sup>1</sup>. *Āhāra* plays a crucial role in the prevention as well as in the treatment of diseases. It plays an important role in establishing the phenomena of wear and tear, process of growth and repair supply of energy for all physical activities etc. From the age-old civilizations till today's era, humans and other animals are dependent on food to sustain life. *Ācārya Caraka* also says that *anna* (food) is best to sustain the life<sup>2</sup>.

*Āhāra*, *Svapna* and *brahmacarya* are three sub-pillars of life, as said by *Ācārya Caraka*. When these three factors are being used efficiently by one, the body is endowed with strength, complexion and growth and continues up-till the full span of life<sup>3</sup>. The maintenance of health is carried out by the homeostasis in the various physiological constituents in the body. Not only for the maintenance of the life and for the growth, but also diet have a pivotal role in convalescent state in the regarding of his previous health and vigor. These facts indicate that the food is the prime factor in the maintenance of health as well as life itself.

According to *śabdakalpadrūma*, the meaning of word *āhāra* is a substance which is swallowed through throat after eating<sup>4</sup>. Different synonyms of *āhāra* are also mentioned in this text- *jagdhi*, *jemana*, *bhojana*, *lepa*, *nighaṣa*, *nyāda* (by *amarakośa*), *Jamanam*, *nighaṣa* (by *taṭṭikā*), *pratyavasāna*, *bhakṣaṇa*, *aśana* (by *ratnamālā*), *abhyavahāra*, *khadana*, *nigara* (by *rājanighaṇṭu*).

According to *Dalhaṇa*, "*āhriyate annanalikayā yattadāhārah*" means Substance which is swallowed through *Annanalikā* (oesophagus) is called *āhāra*. According to *Cakrapāṇi*, "*āhriyat ityāhāro bheṣajamapī*" means that which is ingested and thus it includes in itself both diet and drugs<sup>5</sup>. According to *Gaṅgādhara*, "*ā samantāt śarīrasya poṣaṇārtham saṅkalī kriyate tadanantara mukhamārgāt annanalikāyā āmāsaye preṣyate yad dravyam tad āhāra iti*" means Food is that which is collecting for nurturing the body (may be plant-based substances or prepared food) and ingested by mouth and reached to stomach through oesophagus. He has also supported the view of *Cakrapāṇi* by

commenting, “*āhriyate jihvayā galādhaḥ kriyate ityāhāraḥ auśadhādīnāmapyāharatvamato bodhyam*” means that which is ingested by the tongue down to the throat, is called *āhāra*. Therefore, drugs are also included in *āhāra*<sup>6</sup>.

At last, when we comprise all the factors it can be concluded that the food is the substances which is swallowed by mouth for the purpose of nourishment of the body and responsible for all metabolic processes in the body.

Collin’s dictionary defined the word food as “Any substance that can be ingested by a living organism and metabolized into energy and body tissue is known as food”<sup>7</sup>. In Taber’s dictionary food is defined as “any material that provides the nutritive requirements of an organism to maintain growth and physical wellbeing”<sup>8</sup>.

### Importance of *Āhāra*

Food sustains the life of living beings. All living beings in the universe require food. Complexion, clarity, good voice, longevity, genius-ness happiness, satisfaction, nourishment, strength and intellect are all conditioned by food. Professional activities leading to happiness in this world, *vaidika* rituals leading to abode in heaven and actions which are for moksha (freedom from this body - salvation), are all based on food<sup>9</sup>. *Āhāra* plays a vital role in the formation, growth and development, prevention of sickness, as well as to protect the decay of the body<sup>10</sup>.

## 2. DIFFERENT CONCEPTS REGARDING *ĀHĀRA* :

### *Aṣṭa āhāra vidhi viśeṣāyatana*

*Ācārya charak* have mentioned *aṣṭa āhāra vidhi viśeṣāyatana* in *vimāna sthāna* chapter 2<sup>11</sup>, these are rules and regulations for selecting the food articles on the basis of their properties. On the basis of these *aṣṭa āhāra vidhi viśeṣāyatana*, one can decide the wholesome food for self. *Ācārya* also said that one person should take only wholesome food after thinking of these 8 factors<sup>12</sup>. They are as under –

1. **Prakṛti** - Here *Prakṛti* denotes the natural qualities of the *āhāra dravya* i.e., the inherent attribute like *Guru, Laghu* etc. of the diets and drugs. For example, *Māṣa* is *Guru* in nature and *Mudga* is *Laghu* in nature. Similarly, the meat of *sūkara* is *Guru* and of *eṇa* (a type of deer) is *Laghu*.
2. **Karaṇa** - *Karaṇa* means the process or preparation of making food. The mode of preparation and processing, changes the natural properties of the substances. Thus, there is a change of qualities of the *Dravya* due to the processing like dilution, application of heat, cleaning, storing, germination, flavoring, preservation and the material of the utensils in which food is stored or served etc.
3. **Samyoga** --The combination of individual food article with one or more food articles, is known as *Samyoga*. Because of these combinations, there is manifestations of some new qualities, which cannot be manifested by individual substances. E.g., combination of honey and ghee, combination of honey, milk and fish.  
Neither honey nor *ghṛta* causes death, but when these two are combined in equal quantity and taken, this results in death. Similarly, neither fish nor milk causes *kuṣṭha* individually but their combination undoubtedly causes *kuṣṭha* (skin disorders).
4. **Rāśi** - *Rāśi* is the quantity of total (*sarvagraha*) or individual (*parigraha*) substances which determines the result of their administration in adequate or inadequate (may be decrease or increase) amount. The quantity of food taken as whole is ‘*sarvagraha*’ and the quantity of each of ingredients is ‘*parigraha*’.
5. **Deśa** - *Deśa* denotes the habitat. Where the food article is grown and where it would be used. For e.g. drugs which are grown in *Himālaya* are very efficacious, and drugs which are grown in desert area are light. Animals which graze light food or habituating the desert or those who are active are light, otherwise, they are heavy.
6. **Kāla** - Time factor is described in dual context, one particular with daily and seasonal variations while other deals with individual’s conditions of age and disease.
7. **Upayoga samsthā** - It consists of dietetic rules. They are dependent on complete digestion of food. This comprises *āhāra vidhi vidhāna* (what, how, when, where food should be taken).
8. **Upayoktā** - It means the person who takes food. He is responsible for the wholesomeness of food by the habitual intake of things.

However, *Ācārya Vāgbhaṭṭa* in *Aṣṭāṅga samgraha*, has described only seven types of *Āhāra vidhi viśeṣāyatana*. He stated them as “*Sapta Āhāra kalpanā viśeṣa*.” He has combined *Upayoga Samsthā* and *Upayoktā* together and counted them as “*upayoga vyavasthā*”<sup>13</sup>.

### *Āhāra vidhi vidhāna*

*Āhāra vidhi vidhāna*, are the rules and regulations (code of conduct) for dietary intake and these regulations are as important as the food itself. In contemporary science, food is only given importance but not the dietary habits, as given in *Āyurveda* science. Even though a man takes wholesome *āhāra*, he should observe these dietetic rules, to achieve proper digestion, assimilation and health of the body.

In *asta vidha āhāra vidhi viśeṣāyatana*, 7<sup>th</sup> *āyatana* is *upayoga samsthā* which is meant by the regulations of dietary intake. What are the qualities of food has to be taken, what are the type of food and how and when the food has

to be taken, all this mentioned in the concept of *āhāra vidhi vidhāna*. These rules are for patients as well as for healthy individuals. These are followed while using wholesome food articles by nature. As follows<sup>14</sup> -

1. **Uṣṇam aśnīyāt** – One should take hot (*uṣṇa*) food. Here *Uṣṇa* refers to the temperature of food not the *uṣṇa* property of food articles. *Caraka* describes benefits of taking warm food that it tastes delicious, also stimulates digestive fire and it digests quickly. Warm food helps in *vātānulomana* (downward passage of *vāta*). It also decreases the *kapha doṣa*. That's why one should eat hot food.
2. **Snigdham aśnīyāt** – Food has to be unctuous. Unctuous food also tastes good like warm food. It stimulates the depleted digestive fire and digests food quickly and also helps in *vātānulomana*. Other than this unctuous food also increases the growth of the body, strengthens the sense organs, promotes strength of the body and brings out the brightness of complexion.
3. **Mātrāvāt aśnīyāt** – One should take food in proper quantity means neither too much nor too less. It promotes longevity as it not afflicts the three *doṣa*, *vāta*, *pitta* and *kapha*. It easily passes down to the rectum and it does not impair the digestive fire and it get digested without any difficulty.
4. **Jirṇe aśnīyāt** – One should take food only when previous meal gets digested. If one person takes food before digestion of previous meal, the digestive product of previous food i.e. immature *rasa* gets mixed up with the product of food taken afterwards, resulting in the provocation of all the *doṣas* instantaneously. If food is taken after previous food digested, it does not vitiate *doṣa* and *dhātu* and also promotes longevity. So, one should take food only after digestion of the previous meal.
5. **Vīrye aviruddham aśnīyāt** – One should take compatible food by potency, means food having *uṣṇa* (hot) and *śīta* (cold) potency are not to be taken at same time. By taking this food one does not get afflicted with such diseases which may arise by the intake of incompatible food like *kuṣṭha* and other skin disease.
6. **Iṣṭe deṣe iṣṭe sarvokaraṇe aśnīyāt** - One should take food in proper place equipped with all the accessories. By doing so he does not get afflicted with such of the factors as would result in emotional strain which occurs when one takes his food in improper places without the required accessories. Therefore one should take food in proper place equipped with all accessories.
7. **Nātidrutam aśnīyāt** – One should not take food in too rush and hurry. If food is taken so it can go into the wrong passage. food is not staying in stomach for required time (*bhojanasya apratiṣṭhānam*) and one should not get the all benefits of food if taken in hurry.
8. **Nātilambitam aśnīyāt** – One should not take food too slowly. If one person will take food too slowly, one will not get satisfaction. That's why one will take more food than usual. If it is too long to having food then food becomes cold and food will not digest properly. Because when food is taken so slowly digestion of some part of food is started already while some part of food is coming to the stomach. That's why food is not digested properly.
9. **Ajalpan ahasan tanmanā bhujjī** – One should not be talking and laughing, when food is taken. And food should be taken full concentration means any other work is not to be done while eating like watching television or mobile or reading books etc. if one person is taking food like this food is not get digested properly. One is liable to suffer the same disorders as the one who eats too hastily.
10. **Ātmānam abhisamīkṣya samyak** – One person should take food considering his or her own constitution. One should eat food after analyzing, that this food is wholesome for me or this is unwholesome.

#### **Dvādaśāsana pravicharṇā – (by Suśruta)**

Concept of *Dvādaśāsana pravicharṇā* is given by *suśruta* in *svasthavṛttam adhyāya* (*uttara tantra* – chapter 64)<sup>15</sup>. These are the dietary guidelines for specific type of food, which type of food is consumed in which disease or in specific condition, these guidelines are indicate on these factors. This concept gives different ways of food administration based on the quality and quantity of food in relation to the condition of the individual, be it healthy or diseased –

1. **Śīta āhāra** – *Śīta āhāra* (cold potency food) should be used for *trṣṇā* (excessive thirst), *uṣṇa* (excessive heat), *mada*, *dāhārta* (burning), *raktapitta* (bleeding disorder), *viṣārta* (poisoned), *mūrcchārta* (unconsciousness), *strī kṣīṇa* (emaciated after excessive copulation).
2. **Uṣṇa āhāra** – Individuals with *kaphaja* and *vātaja* disorders, after taking purgation therapy, after taking *snehapāna* (oleation therapy), *aklinnakāya* (*kleda rahita* – excessive water part) all are should be given *uṣṇa* (hot potency food) *āhāra*.
3. **Snigdha āhāra** – Unctuous food is recommended in conditions like, *Vātika* (body constitution predominant of *vāta* or condition predominant of *vāta doṣa*), *rukṣa deha* (dryness of body), *vyāvāya upahata* (emaciated due to excessive copulation), *vyāyāmina* (one who performs regular physical activity).
4. **Rukṣa āhāra** – Food having dry property is recommended for persons having excess fat, unctuous body, having *meha* (diabetes) and who have excess *kapha* in the body.

5. **Drava āhāra** – Liquid foods are recommended for *śuṣka deha* (dehydrated), *pipāsārta* (excessive thirst) and in *Durbala* (weakness due to dehydration).
6. **Śuṣka āhāra** – Foods which are dry (devoid of liquid/moisture) are recommended in, *Praklinna kāya (kleda yukta* – excessive water), *vraṇī (Duṣṭa vraṇa* – ulcers) and *śuṣka mehi* (Diabetes mellitus with emaciation).
7. **Ekakālika** – *Ekakālika* means one meal in a day, it is recommended for *durbalāgni* (less digestive capacity). This type of diet increases the digestive capacity.
8. **Dvikālika āhāra** – *Dvikālika* means two meals in a day. This is recommended for persons having *samāgni* (good digestive capacity).
9. **Auśadhayukta āhāra** – Foods prepared or added with medicines are recommended in persons who are disagreed to take medicines. Medicine is mixed with food for this type of persons.
10. **Mātrāhīna āhāra** – *Mātrāhīna* means food in little amount. this is recommended in *Mandāgni* (week digestive capacity) and in *rogī* (persons suffering with diseases – as there is *Mandāgni* always).
11. **Doṣa praśamana kāraka āhāra** – Food is given according to season is called *doṣa praśamana kāraka āhāra*. In some season there is some sort of increase in a particular *doṣa*, in a particular season. So, the food for pacifying that particular *doṣa* is called as *doṣa praśamana kāraka āhāra*.
12. **Vṛttyartha āhāra** – This type of food is recommended for maintaining the health status (*śarīra dhāraṇārtha*) of healthy individual (*sama doṣa, dhātu and prakṛti*).

### Āhāra and Agni

*Agni* means the digestive power. It is also related to the *āhāra*. *Caraka* has described that the *Agni* is responsible for the life process, complexion, strength, health, energy, growth, glow of vital essence, lusture etc<sup>16</sup>. The food is properly digested and metabolized by the *Agni*. The food after ingestion can nourish the body through the *Agni* alone and not by own itself<sup>17</sup>. The transformation of the *vijātīya āhāra dravyas*, to *sajātīya dravyas* like *Doṣa, Dhātu* and *Mala*, is mediated under the influence of the *Agni*. So, the life and death of an individual depend upon the proper or improper functioning of the *Agni*. *Caraka* further describes the *Agni* as the supreme king of all the metabolic agents<sup>18</sup>. *Suśruta* has equated it with the God and *prāṇa, apāna* and *samāna* are three type of *vāta* which ignite the digestive power time to time<sup>19</sup>.

Fuel like wood or coal is required to keep the fire enlighten. Similarly, the *āhāra* acts as the *īndhana* (fuel) for the *jaṭharāgni* (digestive fire) and for other *Agni* in the body<sup>20</sup>. Four types of food are essential to the body – *aśita, pīta, liḍha* and *khādita*, because this body is originated from these four types of *āhāra*<sup>21</sup>. *Āhāra* alone sustains the properties of *agni* in the body. This shows the mutual relationship and interdependence of *āhāra* and *agni*. *Āyurveda* emphasizes that the *āhāra* is the nourisher of the body elements; vital essence, vitality, complexion and other things, but its action is dependent on the proper function of *jaṭharāgni*<sup>22</sup>.

### Wholesome (Hitakara) and Unwholesome (Ahitakara) diet

‘*Hita*’ word is used as so many times in *bṛhatrayī* and *laghutrayī*, to indicate beneficial. In *bṛhatrayī*, the word ‘*Hita*’ is mostly used for *āhāra*. *Suśruta* has described 20th chapter in *sūtra Sthāna* entitled “*Hitāhītyādhyāya*”, in this chapter *suśruta* described wholesome and unwholesome *āhāra dravya*<sup>23</sup>. All *Ācārya* have also given good or bad dietetic habit under the heading of *hita* or *ahita*. The most accurate definition is – ‘the food articles, which maintain the equilibrium of bodily *Dhātus* and help in eliminating the disturbance of their equilibrium, are to be regarded as *hitakara āhāra* otherwise they are *Ahitakara* to body<sup>24</sup>. *Caraka* has stated that *Hitakara* diet is the only cause of growth and development of body and *Ahitakara* diet is the only cause of disease<sup>25</sup>.

### Pathya and apathya āhāra – definitions

According to *Ācārya Caraka*, *Pathya* means the wholesome *āhāra*, which do not adversely affect the body and mind, while these, which adversely affect the body and mind are considered as *Apathya*. *Pathya* and *apathya* are not universal, both are dependent on *mātrā* (dose), *kāla* (time), *kriyā* (action- preparation), *bhūmi* (habitat), *deha* (body), *doṣa* (body humours)<sup>26</sup>.

Well known *Cikitsā Grantha* of medieval period “*Vaidyaka jīvana*” by *Lolimbarāja* has stated the importance of *Pathya-Apathya* in *Cikitsā* as, if a person follows the dietary rules for particular disease there is very little significance of drug treatment and when a person is exposed to *apathya* the drug treatment has not value because taken drug can’t cure the disease.

*Gaṅgādhara* in *Jalpakaḷpataru Tika* of *Caraka Saṁhitā* has given a very clear explanation. A drug and diet not causing harmful effects to any channel of body and which is comfortable to mana also, is defined as ‘*Pathya*’<sup>27</sup>. Although pungent and bitter cause discomfort at a time to mind but, it is ultimately comfortable for body, so it is taken as ‘*Pathya*’. Thus, anything producing discomfort to mind initially or later on is granted as ‘*Apathya*’ otherwise taken under ‘*Pathya*’. *Ācārya Caraka* also stated that, if one takes *Pathya āhāra*, there is no chance for disease pathogenesis<sup>28</sup>.

### **Āhāra Mātrā (quantity of food)**

Due to the difference in digestive power and strength in every human being and the specificity of his/her own nature (*prakṛti*), it is not possible to determine same quantity of food for all humans. That is why the *Ācāryas* have told to determine the amount of food according to the digestive fire of man. Human beings should eat food as required (*mātrā pūrvaka*). The amount of food is expected of the *agni* means digestive fire<sup>29</sup>.

Digestive Fire refers to the 'digestive power of man'. *Ācārya Agniveśa* has told that adequate quantity of food (*mātrā pūrvaka*) is that which should be digested without hampering the nature (*prakṛti*) of human being means does not hamper normal metabolism<sup>30</sup>.

*Ācārya Caraka* has described the quantity according to the food items in the *vimāna sthāna* chapter 2 as follows - While taking food, one should divide the empty space of stomach in three parts. One part should be kept empty for solid foods, one part for liquids (liquids) and one part for *Vāta-Pitta-Kapha*<sup>31</sup>. *Ācārya Vāgbhaṭṭa* has said about the amount of food that, while eating food, two parts of the *Kuṅṣi* (stomach) should be kept empty for solid foods, one part for liquid and one part for *Tridoṣa*<sup>32</sup>.

*Ācārya Caraka* has described the dietary quantity on the basis of some characteristics, after taking food, one should not feel any pressure in the *Kuṅṣi* (stomach), there is no obstruction for the heart, there is no any feeling of distension by the sides of abdomen, not feeling heaviness in the abdomen, end of hunger and thirst, one should not feel any difficulty in sitting, sleeping, walking, breathing, laughing and speaking. Evening meal should be digested in the morning and morning meal should be digested in evening. And food that give strength and great complexion, the food in adequate quantity<sup>33</sup>.

According to the *Guru* (substances digest lately) -*laghu* (substances digest quickly) *Dravya*, the quantity of food is stated in this way. *Guru* dietary foods should be eaten up to half or one third parts of stomach. *Laghu dravya* should not be eaten too much<sup>34</sup>. There is an abundance of *vāyu* and *agni mahābhūta* in the *laghu āhāra dravya*. The *laghu āhāra dravya* illuminates the digestive fire due to its properties similar to fire by nature. There is an abundance of *pṛthvī* and *jala mahābhūta* in the *guru dravya*, that's why they do not illuminate the digestive fire. *Guru dravya* are not vitiate *doṣas* in the person who exercise daily and who have strong digestive fire<sup>35</sup>.

### **3. DISCUSSION :**

Significance of *āhāra* is well appreciated in all *Āyurveda* classics. It is the most important (first and foremost) factor for sustenance of life. It is also important because strength, complexion, growth all factors belong to food, without disturbing the equilibrium of bodily factors (i.e., *doṣa* and *dhātu*). The body continuously broken down and rebuilds, and in this wear and tear, *āhāra* play an important role.

*Āhāra* is mentioned in the *tryopastambha – Āhāra, nidrā* and *brahmacarya*. So, diet and dietary habits are most essential factor to achieve and maintain healthy living status. The health is maintained by wholesome diet as well as unwholesome diet is responsible for different diseased condition<sup>36</sup>. Now a days most of world's population is affected by non-communicable diseases. Improper dietary habits, frequent food intake, sedentary lifestyle are major contributing factors to different metabolic disorders. Lifestyle interventions like diet, exercise, stress management, de-addiction play important role in the treatment and management of diseases.

*Samaśana* (*pathya* and *apathya āhāra* is taken simultaneously), *viśamāśana* (excessive or inadequate eating or food is taken before or after the routine time), *adhyaśana* (Eating before previous meal not get digested), these three are causing major diseases and also causing death, as said by *ācārya caraka*<sup>37</sup>. Despite of above fact, man is habitual of these three wrong dietary habits now a days. Snacking or frequent eating, fast food, ready to eat food, frozen food, canned food or packaged food are components of our daily lives. These all type of food are detrimental to health because in the process of preparation enhances appearance, taste, flavor, shelf life of food but nutritional value decreased because of a lot of fat content or preservatives or salt. This type of food and food habits are causing different metabolic disorders.

*Āyurveda* dietetics can play an important role in prevention of these metabolic disorders. In this context, unique concepts of *āyurveda* dietetics are ideal in today's lifestyle. *Aṣṭa āhāra vidhi viśeṣāyatana* are 8 important factors by which one can decide wholesomeness and unwholesomeness of food. *Prakṛti* of any food article is give knowledge of inherent properties like *gurutā* and *laghutā* means digestibility of any food article like digestion is delayed (*guru*) or fast (*laghu*). *Karaṇa* is factor which give information about the promotion of any properties of food articles gained by preparation process. Knowledge of different food combinations like this combination is harmful or beneficial is gained by *saṁyoga*. *Rāśi* is about quantity of food. *Deśa* is a factor by which one can decide food articles according to habitat. *Kāla* is the time factor for deciding diurnal and seasonal variations and also different in diseased or non-diseased condition. *Upayoga saṁsthā* are the rules of taking food. *Upayoktā* is consumer itself.

*Āhāra vidhi vidhāna* are the rules and regulations of dietary intake that how, when, where and what type of food has to be taken for patients and for healthy persons as well. One should take food according to these guidelines for e.g., One should take hot food, means just after preparation. But now a days frozen food, packaged food, which are prepared, packaged and marketed and consumer use them whenever they want to use but not just after making food. One should

take food in required amount and do not eat in excess. *Vīrya viruddha āhāra* is a habit in general population which is contraindicated in *āyurveda*. We all are not taking food without television or mobile or laptop or other things, although *Āyurveda* says that one should not do anything while taking food. In today's speedy lifestyle we all are in hurry that's why we all are taking food in hasten. We do not think about wholesomeness of food, only think about taste. These are wrong habits, which we are following regularly in our today's lifestyle. If food is taken according to *āhāra vidhi vidhāna*, digestion of food is proper and one should not get any metabolic disease, because *Āyurveda* says that all diseases are born from improper metabolism (*rogāḥ sarve'api mandāgnau*).

*Dvādaśāsana pravacāraṇā* are dietary guidelines for specific condition, either diseased or healthy condition. All *Āyurveda* classics describe about wholesome food and unwholesome food for healthy and diseased both. Wholesomeness of food depends upon some factors like quantity, time, method of preparation, habitat, body constitution and *doṣa*.

*Agni* is an important factor for food digestion. When one eats wholesome diet and follow the dietary regulations, *agni* remains ignited (means digestive power is proper). Now a days we are neglecting the digestive capacity and more attracted to eating only tasty food.

Food is important part of daily routine, if one focuses little more on *āyurveda* dietetic principles then overall health can be boosted.

#### 4. CONCLUSION :

Concept of *Āyurveda* dietetics is unique in sense of its individualized approach. It considers different factors like nature (*prakṛti*) of the consumer and food articles, taste of food articles, *doṣa* status of body and effect of food articles upon *doṣas*, method of preparation, combination of food articles, quantity of food, time of taking food, emotional effect, environmental considerations, etc. Thus, the *Āyurveda* approach to food and dietetics is very different from the conventional Western approach. *Āyurveda*, possesses a fairly well-developed knowledge base food science with a number of unique principles and practices, which, if combined with today's nutrition biology, could provide significant benefits to contemporary food science and nutrition. *Ayurveda* principles of nutrition certainly play an important role in the prevention and management of lifestyle related disorders diabetes, obesity, arthritis, mental illness, cardiac diseases, cancer etc. which are emerging problems of today's era.

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