



Concept of *Aahar* According to *Prakruti*

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Abstract

Ayurveda is a medical system that deals not only with body but with the mind and spirit as well. Ayurveda emphasizes on consuming healthy and nutritious diet. Diet is considered to be a vital for a human body as it provides the basic nutrients. Unfortunately in modern era the concept of Hita ahara which are having a great influence on once health is being ignored. Today fast food chains become a global phenomenon. Eating habits have changed dramatically for example combining food. As a result man has to pay penalty. Doshaj Prakruti is useful to understanding the entire make-up of an individual, what their strength and weakness are, how they respond to different food. Acharya charaka described that every individual must have diet according to Prakruti to remain healthy.

Keywords

Prakruti, Hita Ahar, Eating Habits, Health



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INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is ancient medical science which is designed to promote good health and long life rather than to fight disease. Ayurveda is a medical system that deals not only with body but also with mind but spirit as well. According to Ayurveda health means “Balanced co-ordination of body constitution, mind and spirit¹.”

If we observe, people around us are not simply alike, every individual has different height, weight, structure i.e. every individual has its own anatomy, physiology and psychology. As they have their own specific *Panchbhoutik*, *Doshaj*, *Trigunatmak* constitution at the time of birth which decide their *Prakruti*. Once fundamental *Prakruti* is set up it never changes throughout the life². Once the *Prakruti* is decided every tissue, every system in the body work according to that constitutional *Prakruti*.

According to Charak if *Vatprakruti* person takes *Vatprakopak ahar* (diet) then he/she may suffers from *VatVikara* (disease) and that persons *Bal* (strength), *Varna* (lustor), *Sukh* (happiness), *Aayushya* (life) may be hampered. This is true for *Pitta* and *Kapha Prakruti* also. Therefore, according to *Acharya Charak Aahar* (diet) according

Prakruti depends on quality of food, quantity of food, manner of intake, combination of *Aahar* and frequency of intake³. So if person follows diet according to *Prakruti* he survives 100 year disease free life.

Concept of *Prakruti*-

Prakruti is Ayurvedic profile of an individual, enclosing his or her physical, functional and behavioural characteristic. It is considered that *Prakruti* is formed at the conception of human being and usually does not alter during later phases. So the quality by which a person is born with is called *Prakruti*⁴.

Ayurveda has more emphasis on examining the *Prakruti* or natural state of individual first. The diseased or *Vikruti* is examined later. However in terms of functioning of living beings, Ayurveda sees all actions based on three basic functions called *Doshas* namely *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*. As every *Prakruti* have its own special qualities i.e. physical as well psychological. So to maintain equilibrium of physical and psychological status, diet should be maintained according to *Prakruti*⁵.

Ayurvedic concept of *Aahar*

Ayurveda gives emphasis to *prakruti* or body constitution on consideration of food

intake. Three basic *doshas* *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* forms seven type of *Prakritis*⁶. In this world each person is a unique. For this reason all the natural and good *Aahar* (diet) can't be suitable to all individual to the same extent. Every individual should take diet suitable to his predominant constitutional *dosha*'s to balance them in different ways.

Vata dosha guna are –Ruksha (dry), Laghu (light), Chala (movable), Shita (cold), Khara (rough), Vishad (clear), and Kashay (astringent)⁷. So, *Vata Prakruti* individual has to follow following pattern of diet.

Diet chart for Vata Prakruti Individuals:

Property	Foods to favour (Vataprakruti)	Foods to avoid (Vataprakruti)
Ras (taste) and Guna (properties)	Sweet food, sour and salty tastes, warm	Foods of pungent, bitter and astringent taste, light, dry, rough, cold food.
Cereals	Rice, wheat, jvas (flax seed)	Barley, corn, millet (jwara), rye, oats.
Pulses	<i>Mudga</i> (green gram), mash (black gram)	Rajma (Red Kidney beans), masoor (red lentil), soya beans, peanuts.
Nuts and Seeds	Sunflower seeds, almond, cashew, walnut, sesame seed, coconut	Peanuts.
Vegetables	Brinjal, onion, garlic, potato.	Carrot, cauliflower, peas, spinach, cucumber.
Fruits	Mango, orange, grapes, banana, cherries, figs, pomegranate.	Apple, watermelon, musk melon.
Dairy product	Milk, ghee, cream.	Ice cream.
Oils	Almond, olive, coconut, mustard	Soya bean oil
Sweetness	Raw sugar, fruit sugar.	White sugar.
Animal food	Chicken, egg, fish	Beef

Quantity of food-

Vata Prakruti individual's quantity of *Aahar* depends on their *Agni*. As in *Vat Prakruti Agni* is *visham* (irregular), so there is *Vaishamy* in food intake i.e. individual take more or less quantity of *Aahar* (diet).

Frequency of intake - Vata Prakruti

individual takes *Aahar* (diet) repeatedly.

Pitta dosha guna : *Ushna* (hot), *Tikshna* (sharp), *Drava* (liquidity), *Vistra* (fleshy smell), *katu-aml*a (pungent, sour)⁷. So *Pitta Prakruti* individual has to follow following pattern of *Aahar* (diet)

Diet chart for Pitta Prakruti Individuals:

Property	Foods to favour for (pitta prakruti)	Foods to avoid for(pitta prakruti)
Ras(taste), Guna(character)	Foods of sweet, bitter, astringent taste, cool slightly dry heavy food.	Foods of sour, salty, pungent tastes, hot, sharp and light.
Cereals	Rice, Wheat, Barley, Oat.	Corn, Millet, Rye, chana (Horse gram)
Pulses	Soya, Mudga (green gram)	Peanuts, Masoor(red lentil)), Bengal gram, Mash(Black gram).
Nuts and Seed	Sunflower, Coconut.	Almond, Sesame, Olive, Mustard
Vegetable	Cauliflower, Cabbage, Lady finger, Cucumber.	Spinach, Tomato, Garlic, Brinjal, Methika(fenugreek)
Fruit	Mango, Figs, Dates, Grapes, Watermelon, Pomegranate, Amlaki(goose berry)	Banana, lemon, papaya, Peach, Cherries, Strawberries.
Dairy Product	Milk, Ghee, Cream	Cheese, Butter Milk, Curd.
Oils	Soya bean, Sunflower, Coconut.	Mustard, Almond, Sesame, Olive.
Sweets	Fresh honey, Fruit sugar.	White sugar.
Animal food	Egg, Chicken	Fish, Egg yolk, Beef.

Quantity of food:

In PittaPrakruti Agni is *tikshna* (sharp) so individual takes more quantity of Aahar.

Frequency of intake-

Pitta Prakruti individual takes Aahar (diet) repeatedly.

Snigdha (viscous), *Mrudu* (soft), *Shlakshna* (smooth), *Madhur* (sweet in taste), *Ghan* (dense), *Mand* (slow), *Kathin* (rigid), *Swachya* (clear), *Sheet* (cold)⁷. So *Kapha Prakruti* individual has to follow following pattern of diet.

Kapha dosha's guna-
Diet chart for Kapha Prakruti Individuals:

Property	Foods to favour (kapha prakruti)	Foods to avoid (kapha prakruti)
Ras(taste) and Guna(character)	Foods of pungent, bitter, astringent taste, warm, light, dry foods	Foods of sweet, sour, salty taste, cold, heavy foods
Cereals	Barley, Rye, Corn, Millet	Rice, Wheat, Oats,
Pulses	Mudga(green gram), Rajma(Red kidney beans), Masoor(Red lentils)	Black gram
Nuts and Seeds	Sunflower	Almond, Coconut, Cashew, Sesame, Walnut
Vegetables	Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chillies, Mushroom, Spinach, Peas	Brinjal, Cucumber, Tomato, Sweet potato, Carrot



Fruits	Apple, Pomegranate	Bnana, Mango, Grapes, Pineapple, Dates, Cherries
Dairy products	Goat milk, Butter Milk	Milk , Ghee, Butter ,Cheese,Icecream
Oils	Mustard oil, Sunflower	Almond ,Olive ,Soya, Sesame
Sweets	Honey	White sugar, Fruit sugar

Quantity of food-

In *KaphaPrakruti Agni* is *Mand*, so individual's take less quantity of *Aahar* (Diet)

Frequency of intake-

Less times than *Vat* and *Pitta* Prakruti

Most wholesome and unwholesome dietary product

Acharya Charaka has described various dietary articles which are most wholesome and unwholesome by nature⁸.

Group	<i>Hitatamaahara</i>	<i>Ahitatama</i>
Cereals	<i>Red shali rice(Orzasativa)</i>	<i>Yavaka(a variety of hordiumvulgare)</i>
Pulses	<i>Mudga(green gram)</i>	<i>Masha (black gram)</i>
Green vegetables	<i>Jivanti(leptadenia reticulate)</i>	<i>Sarshapa (mustard)</i>
Rhizomes	<i>Shrungavera (ginger)</i>	<i>Aaluka(potato)</i>
Fruits	<i>Mrudvika (dried grapes)</i>	<i>Nikucha (artocarpusnikucha)</i>
Salts	<i>Saindhava(rock salt)</i>	<i>Usara</i>
Sugar cane products	<i>Sharkara</i>	<i>Faanita</i>
Drinking water	<i>Antarikshajala</i>	<i>Rivar water</i>
Milk	<i>Gava milk(cow milk)</i>	<i>Aavika milk(sheep milk)</i>
Ghrita	<i>Gavaghruta(cow milk)</i>	<i>Aavika milk(sheep milk)</i>
Veg oil	<i>Til tail(sesame oil)</i>	<i>Kusumbh oil.</i>

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda is not only medical science, it is the way that emphasize for ideal healthy living. In every individual *Prakriti* and *Aahar* (Diet) plays a very essential to sustains the health. As it helps in prognosis and in management, it is a diagnostic tool and keeps health in equilibrium (*Prakriti – Samdoshaj Sthapanam*). *Prakriti* remains stable during the whole life and affects every part of life. Thus, *Aahar* according to individual's *Prakriti* easily modulates our

lifestyle. *Aahar* and *Prakruti* are inter-related with each other. It is contemplation process in which an individual constitution lifestyle is accordingly adopted and it is necessary for disease free life. Every individual is subjected to a constant interaction with his environment, which will affect the person's constitution at any time. Lifestyle related disorders like diabetes, obesity prominently occur because of non-adaptation of *Aahar* (diet) according to self-constitution of body.



It is interesting to note that the *Ayurvedic* classics have emphasized the role of faulty life style i.e., inappropriate dietary habits in the causation and pathogenesis of diseases. Ayurveda described specific *Aahar* (diet) according to *Dincharya* and *Rutucharya* but it is noticed that most of the individuals lifestyles and dietary habits are opposite to their *Prakriti*. So, it is clearly indicated that if a person wish to be healthy, he must plan his *Aahar* according to *Prakriti*⁹.

The person of *Vatprakruti* have properties like *Ruksha* (dry skin), *Vishamagni* (irregular digestion) and *Krur-koshth*. So if he take food like *Mudgadal* (Green gram) with *ghee*, chapatti (wheat) then its dry *guna* is maintained by *snigdha* (viscous) of *Mudga* (Green gram) and *ghee*. As *Agni* is *visham* (irregular), so *ghee* acts as good *Agnidipak* (increase intensity of hunger) *ghee* is described as *snehananamuttamam* (lubrication)¹⁰. (*a.hrudya.su.39*). *Mudgadal* (green gram) is easy to digest and *hitatamdravya*, but if *Vatprakruti* person take *Vatprakopakahar* such as *Rajma* (red kidney beans) as dal, millet chapatti, roasted papad as these food stuffs having properties like dry, cool, light which certainly increase vat properties then that person may suffer

from very dry, cracked skin, constipation and many more vat diseases.

The person of *Pitta Prakruti* have properties like *Ushna* (hot), *Tikshna*, *Drava*, *Vistra* (fleshy smell), *Katu* (pungent), *Amla* (sour) rasa. So if he take food like *Mudga dal*, *Ghee* with sugar, *Chapati* (wheat), dry fruits like *Mrudvika* (Dry grapes) then its *Ushna* (hot), *Tikshna* (sharp), *Katuras* (pungent) is maintained by *Go-ghrita* as it is *Mrudu* (soft), *Sheet* (cold), *Snigdha* (viscous), *Madhu.Mudgadal* (green gram) is easy to digest and *hitatamdravya* (wholesome) *Mrudvika* (Dry grapes) is *uttampittashamak*, but person take *Pittaprakrutiperson* take *Pittaprakopakahar* such as *Masoor* (red lentil dal), *Palak* (spinach) as vegetable, *Millet chapatti* as these food stuffs having properties like its *Ushna* (hot), *Tikshna* (Sharp), *Drava* (liquid), *Amla* (Sour) which certainly increase *Pitta* properties then that person may suffer from heart burn, stomatitis, whole body burning sensation and many more pitta diseases.

The person of *Kaphaprakruti* have properties like *Snigdha* (viscous), *Mrudu* (soft), *Shlakshna* (smooth), *Madhur* (Sweet in taste), *Ghan* (dense), *Mand* (Slow), *Kathin* (rigid), *Swachya* (clear), *Sheet* (cold). So if he takes food like *Mudgadal* (green

gram), Milletbhakrii. Then its *Snigdha* (*viscous*), *Mrudu* (soft), *Shlakshna* (smooth), sweet in taste, cold is maintained by Millet as it is light *laghu* (light) *ushnahotdry* (*ruksha*). *Mudgadal* (greengram) is easy to digest and *Hitatamdravya* but if person takes *Udaddal* (black gram dal), wheat chapatti, milk products like Dudhmalai as these food stuffs having properties like *snigdha*, soft, smooth, sweet in taste, dense, slow, rigid, clear, cold which certainly increase *Kapha* properties then that person may suffer from *Aalasya* (Laziness), *Sharigauravatva* (heaviness) *Udard* and many more *Kapha* disease.

CONCLUSION

Healthy citizens are the roots for development of any nation. So we have to improve health of every individual. Physical, mental, social, intellectual, emotional and spiritual, these all dimensions of health could be balanced by taking food according to *Prakruti*. Every human being should be aware about nature of diet, mode of preparation and rules of intake according to their *Prakruti*. Proper knowledge of *AyurvedicAahar* (diet) according to *Prakruti* and its application in our daily routine is essential for healthy life.



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