



International Journal of Ayurveda and Pharmaceutical Chemistry

Volume 7 Issue 2 2017

www.ijapc.com



‘Vishamashan’-A Gateway to Gastrointestinal Disorders

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has described digestion and metabolism on the basis of its basic principle *doshas* and *Agni*. While describing the importance of *Agni*, *AcharyaVagbhata* has stated ‘*Mandagni*’ as the root cause for all diseases and alsomain cause of *ajirna*. According to *Ayurveda*,*AcharyaCharak andMadhavnidan* mentioned ‘*vishamashan*’ is major factor affecting digestion and metabolism. *Vishamashan* is a technical term, which means consuming less or more quantity of food at improper time. This is the one of the type of *apathya*. *Vata* and other *Doshas*suddenly get increased together and are associated with undigested and vitiated food. Due to this body will not be nourished properly and over a period of time it may lead to many disorders.

These references indicate the importance of *Vishamashan* as one of the health destroying factors. Our eating patterns are the principle factors that influence our health and well being. An irregular eating pattern implies the intake of meals at different interval of time. Avoiding the importance of meal or frequently indulging in fat rich food or junk food are very much affecting human health. Though human beings know the ill effects of such mechanical life and are falling victim to it with many disorders .Among these *Ajirna*is more common in modernized human being in which *Vishamashan* is the major factor. So, *Vishamashan*is the diet which is taken in irregular quantity and irregular timings. Quantity of food depends on ones *prakriti* and types of *agni*. This *Ajirna* although not life threatening but causes great distress to human.

KEYWORDS

Agni, Ajirna, ApathyaVishamashan



Greentree Group

Received 09/07/17 Accepted 12/08/17 Published 10/09/17



INTRODUCTION

According to *acharya vagbhata* definition of *vishamashan* is ‘*akale bahuch alpva bhuktam tu vishamashana*’ which indicates consuming less or more quantity of food at improper time is *vishamashan*.

According to principle of *Ayurveda* one should take food only after the complete digestion of previous food. *Vishamashan* therefore is described as a wrong habit of eating and also mentioned the causative factor of many severe and incurable diseases. In *Charak Sanhita* and also in *Madhavidan* it is mentioned as the prime causative factor of the ‘*Ajirna*’ and also *Grahani*. *Acharaya Sushruta* has described *ajirna* as one of the important factor of some more diseases such as *Atisar, Shool, Krimirot* and so on.

There is no direct reference available that how *vishamashan* produces a hazardous effects but it can be understood on the basis of description of *Ajirna*. *Acharyacharak* in description of ‘*Grahanidoshchikitsa*’ stated that ‘*vishamashan*’ is a major cause of *Ajirna*.

Irregular eating causes indigestion which leads to ‘*Ajirna*’ and the main reason of *ajirna* is *Agnimandya*. The Importance of *Agni* is described in our *Sanhitas*

‘*rogasarveapimandagni*’. In this manner *vishamashan* produces many diseases.

Ahar(food) is the vital breath of living beings that is why people rush for the food and complexion, cheerfulness, good voice, imagination, happiness, contentment, corpulence, strength, intellect-as all these are dependent on food. Human beings wish to live long life which is called as “*Praneshana*”. Food(*ahar*) is one of the *Trayopstambh*(three pillars of body) mentioned in *Ayurveda*. Body and food is formed by *Panchamahabhuta*(five elements). Food keeps human being healthy and also can be a cause of illness.. *Ahar* is ‘*Sarvsatmya*’ to everybody from life to death. *Annavahstroats*(Digestive system)is closely related with *Ahar* because consumed food undergoes process of digestion, absorption, and assimilation (*Aharpachan*) in it and produces *vatadidoshas, dhatus* and *malas* maintaining body in normal status. If we lack good quality of food, proper timing of food, proper quantity of food, then it affects the *tridosha* and *jatharagni*(digestive fire) resulting in various type of diseases.. If this process of assimilation of food is disturbed then there is production of *ajirna* which ultimately affects *Annavahstotas* resulting in *atisar, graham, shool*, etc. Word *Vishamashan* is made of two words *visham*



and *ashan* the collective meaning of both is irregular eating. The definition of the word '*visamashan*' is given by various classics of *Ayurveda*, which means eating too much food at a time and without ones capacity because of taste. Thus one should keep in mind the importance of *vishamashan* in the manifestation of *ajirna*.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1. To study the fundamental points of *Vishamashan* and *Ajirna*
2. To review of literature of *vishamashan* and discuss its hazardous.

MATERIALS

1. Literature related to the topic collected from *Bruhatrayee* (*Charak, Sushrut, Vagbhat*) along with their commentaries by different authors were referred for the study. References from modern sciences were also utilized to co-relate the concepts.
2. Related websites and modern texts have also been searched

DISCUSSION

Vishamashan is one type of *apathya* in terms of timing and quantity of food. If one's intake capacity is too much more than his/her need or if someone has too less

intake capacity of food than his/her need, then it is *vishamashan*. If we are eating before the usual habitual time or after that, then it is also *apathya*. Included in *vishamashan* only quantity of food depends on ones *prakriti* (constituent) and type of *agni* (digestive fire), which further depends on season, body strength, exercise one performs and previous diet etc.

According to *Tridosh* therapy of *Ayurveda*, irregular diet affects *Vata, Pitta, Kapha*, and it is a causative factor for *pittajjwara, Dwandwajjwara, sannipatajjwara, Yakshma, Grahanidosh, Ajirna, Tridoshajatisar* etc.

In the explanation of *Vishamashan*, *Charak* explained that those taking *hitkar* diet, adequate diet, *Jitendriya*, do not have disease. But if taking *vishamashan* they are more prone to incurable disease. All *doshaprakop* due to *Gramyaahar* in this *vishamashan* is prime due to *abhojanata, atibhojanat* and taking *Vishamashan* causes *Amlpitta*.

According to ones study it was found that more than 60% of the peoples were habitual to *vishamashan* in the present life style. Generally all the middle class people take two time meal, a breakfast and evening tea but because of their busy life they cannot take it at proper time and in proper quantity.



Students and younger people take fast food and also junk food other than their regular meal, generally house wives are habitual to have late meals with improper times as they give priority to house hold chores, all these conditions leads to *vishamashan*.

According to one study it was observed that more than 50% of the patients were of *vata-Pitta prakruti*. They have mixed features of *vata* and *pitta*. *Acharya Vagbhat* in *shtanghruda*

while describing the charectristic features of *pittaprakruti*. In *pitta prakriti* it is clearly mentioned as *bahubhuja* which means eating of more quantity food and as one of the more feature, *Acharya Charak* uses the word '*chupalahar*' which means taking food quickly. This is due to the *chal* property of *vata dosha*, because of this property *vataprakruti* person can not take more quantity of food at a time so they are habitual to take food in less quantity and improper time. *Pittaprakruti* persons are *kshutpipasavantah* means with strong appetite and thirst, further they are said to be *dandshook* means habitual to more eating this is due to *ushna* and *tikshn* property of *pitta*.

According to *vagbhata* '*rogasarveapimandagni*' and also *mandagniare* the main

Causative factors of *ajirna*. *Acharya charak* has explained *agrasangraha*, in which *vishamashan* is said to be "*agnivaishamyakaranam*". It means it is to be the root cause of *all* diseases.

Agnimandy or *ajirna* are the diseases found in majority of the people habitual to *vishamashana*. All these factors indicate that '*vishamashan* directly affects the digestive functions and produce *ajirna* which is responsible for *atisar, shool and krimiroga*.

CONCLUSION

These days due to improper life style of the people they are habitual to *vishamashana* This affects the digestion, defecation functions like *ajirna, pravahika, shool, krimirog, grahani, apandushti* etc.



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