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RESEARCH ARTICLE

CRITICAL REVIEW OF KAALBHOJAN IN AYURVEDA

Priyanka Sharma¹, Avadhesh Kumar², Ruby Rani Aggarwal³ and Sanjay Kumar Tripathi⁴

1. Ph.D. scholar Department of Swasthavritta and Yoga U.A.U Gurukul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.
2. Professor and head, Dept. Of Swasthavritta and Yoga U.A.U. Gurukul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.
3. Professor and head, Department of Vikriti Vigyan U.A.U Rishikul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.
4. Professor, Department of Kaya Chikitsa U.A.U. Rishikul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.

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Abstract

Ayurveda advocates three sub pillars (Ahara, Nidra and Brahmacharya) which are essential for total wellbeing. Ahara is not only needed for the continuity of life, but for Bala, Varna, Upacaya etc. also. The proper diet if taken in proper manner will lead to better health. On the contrary if not taken in proper manner can lead to disease state. Ahara may be wholesome as well as unwholesome. The wholesomeness depends upon the quantity, quality, time, methods of preparation, habitat, and constitution of the body, disease and the age of an individual. There is a proper time to do everything and for aahar in ayurveda its term is kaal bhojanam. Kaal bhojanam given utmost importance for aarogya i.e. it is foremost factor deciding the status of health. It is strongly advised that a person should never consume aahar out of greed or when he is unaware of what, when and how to eat. Kaalbhojan help in digestion of food, maintaining condition of agni. kala-bhojana is best preventive and clinically applicable way of dealing mandaagni. This article explores the concept of Kalabhojan as explained by Ayurveda and its health benefits.

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Introduction:-

All living beings on earth live on aahar. whatever is undergone process of deglutition is Aahar. Ahara means substance which is taken in via the mouth and swallowed through throat. The main aim of Ayurveda is to preserve the health of a healthy person, and to treat the disease of a diseased one. Ahara, Nidra and Brahmacharya play an important role in the maintenance of "Swasthya" of an individual. Ahara, Nidra and Bhrmacharya are called Trayopastambhas of life. Ahara plays an important role in health maintenance, diseased and convalescent states. It is more important than the medicine itself. Ayurvedic classics have laid down some rules and regulations for taking the diet. In ayurveda wholesome and unwholesome effect of the food elaborated under Ahaara Vidhi Visheshayan by acharya charak, Ahara Kalpana Vishesha by vagbhatt and dwadashaasan pravicharna by acharya Susurta. Acharya Charaka while quoting ahara (food or diet) emphasizes intake of compatible (conductive, hita ahara) food at the right time (Kala Bhoji) and in right quantity (mita ahara) maintains the health and avoid diseases. In Charak Samhita Sutra Sthan 25 it is said that Kalavat bhojana is the best for health. Kāla is one of the nine Karana Dravya, without it, any type of Karya could not occur, though the other Karapa Dravya are present. Appropriation of Kala regarding Karma will lead to produce expected results. Kāla is continuous or indivisible, due respect of practical approach it is divided as Nityaga Kala and Avasthika Kala. The relation between ahara & kala is

Corresponding Author:- Dr. Priyanka Sharma

Address:- Department of Swasthavritta and Yoga, U.A.U Gurukul Campus, Haridwar 249404, Uttarakhand, India.

mentioned time to time in samhita in order to imply the importance of it. According to Ayurveda, Bhojana vidhi just resembles as the Agnihotra homa vidhi. So, as Agnihotra homa vidhi can only be practised exactly at morning and evening every day and no other timings of the day, Bhojana vidhi should be followed the same.[3] Kala – bhojana is a best method of maintaining health as explained in Agrya sangraha. [4]

Acharya vagbhatt explains kalabhojana as
कालस्तुक्रतुव्याधयपेक्षोजीर्णजीर्णलक्षणश्च las.sg.su 10-11

Kala denotes both Ritu, Vyadhiyāpeksā and also refers to the digestive state, whether properly digested or in the stage of improper digestion. So, any bhojana said to be kaalbhojan when its fits properly

1. According to Ritu
2. According to Vyadhi or state of health.
3. According to Jirna Lakshan

Kaalbhojan According To Ritu/Nityaga Kaal:

Aahar should be according to ritucharya as explained in ayurveda. Acharya Sushruta describes Ahara Sevana Kala is influenced by several factors one among them is Ritu (Season). In Hemanth and Shishira Ritu that is from November to March (winter season) nights are longer hence persons may feel hungry in the early morning hours as digestion power is more. So a person should have meal in Purvanha (morning time) in Sapada yama that means if sun rise will be considered at 6 am. Then one should have meal at 9.45 to 10.30 am. Whereas in Greeshma and Varsha Ritu days are long and nights are short so, a person should have meal in Apranha kala (early evening). In Dalhhan Teeka the word Ardh triteeyama has been used for this Kala that means 2 ½ prahar Kala that means 2 ½ prahar. For example, if sun rises at 6 am morning than a person should have meal at 4.30 pm. In sarad and basant ritu when both days and nights are equal a person should have meal at Madhyanha Kala that means if sun rises at 6 am. Morning then meal should be taken at 12 pm. Above all are also consider as ek kaal bhojan and only advice to healthy individual.

Kaalbhojan According To Vyadhi Or State Of Health/Avasthika Kaal:

Aahar should be given according to Avastha of individual. Avastha refer to age as well as stage of disease, balyavastha, yuvaavastha and vridhaavastha have different needs and different doshik predominance. Diseases also had various stages aahar are given according to agni and doshik dominance at that stage to maintain the samaavastha of dosha, dhatu and agni.

Under Dwadashanapravicharna acharya sushuruta advocates Persons with impaired digestion should be given only one meal every day, so that the digestion fire may have opportunities be rekindled and Persons with the proper amount of digestion should be given two meals a day. The time for taking food is said to be morning and evening and taking of food is contraindicated in between, as the process of taking food is compared to Agnihotra karma and the time for this karma is morning and evening. In Dwikala bhojan 1st meal should be taken at 11/4 Prahara that means 9.45 to 10.30 am. And second meal should be taken at 31/2 Prahara that means 4.30 pm. If sun rise time is 6am If Food taken in the mornings is not digested properly, the next food can be taken in the nights without any harmful effects but If the food taken in mornings, in undigested food of last night, causes harmful effects. Because in daytime body is active and can digest ajirna but in night due to low acitivity ajirna converts in visha. Trikala bhojan also mentioned by Bhavprakash in such a way that meal should not be taken in between 1 Yama and meal should not be skiped after 2 Yama. In Ratricharya, 1st and last Yama of Ratri is indicated for Veadabhyas and middle 2 Yama is for sleep. Yogratankar also emphasis on if once food is taken again food should not be taken before one Yama (3hr) as it infers with Rasoutpatti and creates Ama. As well as food should be taken before two Yama because if the person fast for more than two Yama, he will experience Bala Kṣaya

Kaalbhojan According To Jirnaahar Lakshan/Jirnaasinyat:

In matrashitiya adhyaya, acharya vagbhat says that meal should be consumed only when jirna lakshanas are seen. Jirnaahar lakshan are as following

- ✓ after proper elimination of faeces and urine,
- ✓ when the mind is pleasant,
- ✓ when the doshas are moving gently in their natural pathways (functioning normally)
- ✓ when the belching is clean and pure (without foul smell or taste),
- ✓ when the hunger is properly manifested,

- ✓ when the fart (flatus) is moving downward easily,
- ✓ when the digestive activity is good and at its peak,
- ✓ when the sense organs are functioning clearly
- ✓ when the body is light
- ✓ Food should be given in the presence of the above said conditions. Only this is the ideal time for consumption of food. The food when taken at this time gets properly digested and keeps Dosas in samyavastha. Vata will be in Anulomana conditions and facilitates the excretion of urine and fasses. Eructations indicating Hridaya and Mukha stotases are clear, and also experience the lightness of the body. Presence of appetite indicating kindling of Jatharagni. The food that is consumed at this state do not vitiate the Dosas but increase the life span, strength and complexion And this is considered to be best time for taking food. When aahar is taken in ajirna avastha, the undigested Rasa of the food previously consumed, gets mixed up with the food and aggravates all the Dosa

According to Acarya Sushrut the proper time for giving meal is

- when Stools (feces) and urine should have been voided properly
- When the senses are clear, i.e. in the presence of pleasantness of mind
- Presence of lightness of the body
- Presence of clear belching
- Clarity and lightness in the region of heart, heart being devoid of blemishes (feel of goodness in the chest area)
- Proper movement of Vayu, Vayu being in a normal state
- Presence of interest for intake of food
- In the presence of hunger
- The stomach should be empty and clear, light.

All these symptoms are signs of the complete digestion of previous food which is the perfect time to have meal. For the proper digestion, it is necessary that the food should be taken at appropriate time, i. e. when the person feels hungry. Food should not be partaken either before the usual time or after the lapse of the usual time; neither in inadequate quantity nor in excess quantity. The person who eats before the usual time though stout becomes a victim of many diseases or even of death; he who eats after the lapse of the usual time, his digestive power getting affected by Vāta, the food gets digested with difficulty and the person does not desire to partake the second meal. Food eaten in appropriate time feels tasty, increases satisfaction and nutrition, gets digested easily and due to continuous/prolong eating of food and indigestion the diseases do not develop. Sumaring all views ayurveda principal of eating at time is utmost important determinant of health. Food that is taken long after the prescribed time, will cause Vatavardha to the movements of Vata, takes longer time for digestion, makes the body lean and diminishes the desire for taking food. When the digestive fire has not become keen after the morning meal, a second meal should not be partaken; if a second meal is partaken when the earlier food is undergoing for digestion, it only destroys the Jatharagni (digestive fire).

Discussion:-

Acharya Charaka had explained Kala as one of the Ahara-parinamakar bhavas. Ushma, vayu, kleda, sneha, kala and samayoga are 6 Ahara-parinamakar bhavas responsible for parinama of panchbhautik aahar into body entity i.e. transform food from complex form to a digestible and absorbable form. Kala helps in proper digestion of food by letting it go further in a state of parinama. In grahani chikitsa, sthool pachan is described. Pranavayu carry Ahara to the koshtha, then there solid aahar gets separated by dravadi in body and get softens by the sneha guna. Then gets digested by jatharagni and pachak pitta induced by samana vayu. This leads to proper digestion of food. Kaalbhojan had been given utmost important factor for health. One should always consume aahar respective of ritucharya and avastha. Healthy person can have two meal a day morning and evening while if person have mandaagni they should follow once a meal.

Irrespective of season and avastha if one had to follow kalbhोजना then jirna ahar lakshan are best. The first line of treatment in any disease is nidana parivarjan (Avoiding causative factors). As per Ayurveda all the diseases are manifested due to the mandaagni and the main causes of Mandagni are Ajeerna, Mala ahara and Mala sanchaya. Hence adopting jirnaasniyat is best prevention. Jeerna Ahara Lakshanas indicates the completion of the digestion process, so if person consume meal after observing jirna ahar lakshan food gets properly digested and prevents Ama formation. Kaal bhojana in modern can be correlated with time restricted feeding. Time-Restricted Feeding (TRF) involves following the same eating routine each day. That means a certain number of hours are designated as the feeding window and the remaining hours as the fasting period. Because of the tight interaction between the

circadian clock and metabolism, meal timing is an important to maintain healthy metabolism. Dietary approaches based on meal timing are a promising strategy for the modulation of circadian rhythms and clock-controlled metabolic functions in humans. In preclinical animal models, TRF without reducing caloric intake has been shown to prevent or attenuate severity of several metabolic diseases, including obesity, glucose intolerance, hepatic steatosis, dyslipidemia, and age-related decline in cardiac function. In pilot human studies, TRE with or without explicit calorie reduction can reduce body weight, glucose intolerance, hypertension, and dyslipidemia. Thus it clearly proves that kala bhojana strategy of ayurveda is best way to maintain health and prevent diseases.

Conclusion:-

Kala denotes both nityaga kaal (day-night, ritu) and avasthika kaal (vaya, Vyadhiavastha). Kala bhojana aarogykaranam in agrya varga clearly proves that its supremacy over other determinants of health. Kala bhojan implies meal should be taken always according to season (ritucharya), according to age in healthy, according to stage of vikrit dosha in disease state to maintain state of health. Above all kala bhojan simply advocates to take meal only after observing jeerna aahar lakshan. The Jeerna Ahara Lakshanas indicates the completion of the digestion process, and signs indicate the time of food consumption. Jirnaasniyat keeps Dosas and agni in samyavastha. Healthy individual can take two meals per day i.e. Morning and evening. Eating an evening meal on time is not a problem even if the morning meal is not thoroughly digested. If the food is not appropriately digested regularly, one meal a day should be considered. Summing all views ayurveda principal of eating at time is utmost important determinant of health.

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