



## AHARA AND ITS INTERRELATION WITH MANAS

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**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda is science of life. There is three *upstambha* or sub-pillars described for sustaining life. Those are *Ahara, Nidra, Brahmacharya*. *Ahara* is the most important in all three *upstambha*. You are what you eat. Diet and mind are very closely connected, *Ahara* is categorised in three categories *Satvic*, *Rajasic*, *Tamsic* according to their properties. *Satva* or *manas* also have these three kind of *prakriti* so whatever we eat our mind becomes.

*Satvik* food purify the mind and body and calming. *Rajasic* food stimulates the body and mind and causes hyperactivity or irritability, *Tamasic* food makes mind dull and causes confusion, disorientation. Our aim is to understand the correlation between *ahara* and *manas*, and application of the concept for improving mental health quality.

Study material will be collected from *ayurvedic* text and research articles.

*Ahara* is called *maha-ushadha* also, if we consume food in proper manner than it can prevent and cure different illnesses. *Ahara* should be *shadindriya prasadak*- pleasing all six *indriyas*. Diet with high nutritional value is needed for proper development and health of our brain and system and *Satvik ahara* is full of macro and micro nutrients and pleasant for mind also; It is *medhya*, supporting physical brain and enhancing coordination of mental functions. If mind remains strong, its able to effortlessly command the senses and able to makes positive choices and behaviours.

Our physical and mental wellbeing is directly connected to what we consume in our dietary routine. *Satvik, rajasic, tamasic* are not only attributes of food stuff but there is also a way of guiding of mind. *Satvik ahara* purifies mind so that person can have clear vision, good thoughts, wisdom and intelligence by which we can have mental, social and physical wellbeing.

**KEYWORDS :** *Ahara, Manas, Satvika, Rajasika, Tamsika*, diet etc.**INTRODUCTION:-**

*Ayurveda* is not just a medical science. *Ayurveda* is science of life, it teaches us how to live our life in good and healthy way. *Charaka* has mentioned *tri-upstambha (ahara, nidra, brahmacharya)* are supporters of life, adoption of these in proper and reasonable manner helps in sustaining and maintaining our healthy life. It increases strength, complexion, nutrition and causes proper growth and development of mind and body. [1]

According to *Sushruta* An healthy individual is who has equal and homogeneous state of *dosha* (body humor) *agni* (digestion) *mal* (excretion of body wastes) *kriya* (physiology) and cheerful mind and soul and senses of his body. [2]

This definition almost resembles to WHO definition of health is state of complete physical, mental and social well being not merely absence of disease or infirmity.

For healthy life one should have healthy body with healthy mind. Mind is equally important in being healthy. *Charaka* have mentioned that *sharirika roga* and *mansika roga* can interchange into each other. [3] So if one have healthy body but don't own a healthy mind than he may get ill sooner or later. An unhealthy mind can affect our daily life and our body gradually.

*Ahara* is main component of these three *upstambha*. It insists on the good and ideal food should be consumed for attaining and sustaining healthy life. As it is said that "We are what we eat" and for gaining a healthy life we should understand and control what we eat.

*Manas* is usually correlate with the Mind of modern psychology.

The *Gita* accepts that food has major role in physiological and psychological growth. The *Gita* classifies food into three categories- *Satvika, Rajasika, Tamsika*. [4] *Manas* also categorised in these three. [5] *Manas* has all these three *gunas*, but it is shifts between these three frequencies according to the deeds person does frequently.

*Satvika* food increases vitality, energy, health, joy and cheerfulness known as *satvika* food.

Food which are bitter, sour, saline, over hot, pungent, dry are *rajasika*

food and produce pain, grief and sadness.

Food which are stale, tasteless, stinky, cooked overnight and impure are *Tamasika*.

The type of food we consume becomes conducive to growth of their respective nature. *Satvika* food promotes *satvika* nature not produce it. And *Rajasika* and *Tamsika* food promote their respective nature. Food is related to personality development.

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:-**

To elaborate the relation between diet and mind.

To cognize the nature of food and their properties.

To uncloak the effect of *ahara* on mental health.

To cure and control of different mental illness by balanced and healthy diet for sustaining health of individual.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:-**

Mainly in this study material collected from Text books of *ayurveda*, The *Gita*, different related websites and scientific journals available on Internet for garnering information and knowledge related to topic of our study.

**DISCUSSION:-**

In *ayurvedic* texts disease originates from -body and mind and two types of disease physical and mental. [6] *Vata, pitta, kapha* are considered as *sharirika dosha* and *Rajas* and *Tamas* are *Mansika dosha*. [7] *Mansika dosha* causes mental illness if they get imbalanced.

In modern era there are so many mental illnesses present and many of the people are unaware about it but they suffer daily in their day to day life. Reason is there not properly known but it has been seen that people who eat good and healthy balanced diet and follow healthy and good habits are less likely to have these kind of diseases or they overcome those disease early than rest of the people who don't follow healthy eating habits.

Food is another source of mind control, a weapon to decrease the various mental illness.

Food can change your brain; diet is linked to the hippocampus, a key area of brain involved in learning, memory and mental health. People

with healthy diets have more hippocampal volume than those with unhealthy diet.[8]

Healthy mind is very necessary to own a healthy life and having healthy mind is important in every stage of life. Healthy mind creates healthy thoughts and healthy thoughts create healthy deeds in life and than person feels no guilty and regret in their life and this increases his *Satva* or mental stability.

It is mentioned in The Gita that“*Satve sukhe samjayati*” *satva* creates happiness and joy in person's life.[9]

Taking natural food is knowledge enhancing through the nutrients and minerals the human body is able to grow according to what goes inside our system.

Manas have all three gunas but if persons follows *satvika* karma and consume *satvika* diet these increases his *satva* gradually with regular following it, than *satva* occupies *rajas* and *tamas* with its effect and it is cause in *moksha* so it is not *mansik dosha*.

*Mansika dosha* are two *rajas* and *tamas*.

*Satva* guna is reason of pure mind and thoughts, keen memory and intelligence ,good concentration. [10]

*Satvika* diet are seasonal fresh fruits,whole grains,saindhav salt, honey,milk,regular spices like turmeric,cardamom,cumin etc, juicy fruits etc.

These food promotes *satvika guna* of *manas* and it makes person less prominent to various mental disorders like anxiety ,depression ,hyperactivity , mood disorders, disassociated disorders etc. some study have linked an overall healthy dietary pattern to less chance of experiencing age related decline in memory and other cognitive skills. People who eat a diet high in whole food such as fruits, nuts, whole grains, legumes and unsaturated fats are upto 35% less likely to develop depression than who eat less of these.

*Satvik* food has high nutrition value and easy to digest and assimilate within gut.

Wholegrain :- Has high fibre ,vitamins particularly high vitamin B including niacin ,thiamin,folate, minerals such as zinc, iron, magnesium, manganese.

Proteins.

Antioxidants such as phytic acid, lignans, ferulic acid, sulphur compounds.

It lower risk of heart disease,stroke,obesity,type2 diabetes and support healthy digestion by giving bulk to stool and feeding beneficial gut bacteria.

Milk and dairy products :- gives calories,water,protein, carbohydrates, sugar,fiber and fat.

Milk provides two types of protein casein(80%) and whey(20%) protein. Important property of casein is its ability to increase absorption of minerals such as calcium and phosphorus. Whey protein lowers B.P. ,elevates mood, and excellent for growing and maintaining muscles.

Milk is excellent source of high quality protein and different fats, and approximately 5% of carbs.

Nuts :- Nuts are good source of fat,fiber and protein. Nuts have mostly monounsaturated fat as well as omega-6 and omega-3 polyunsaturated fat and some amount of saturated fat. It also have number of vitamins and minerals, including magnesium and vitamin E and phytochemical that functions as antioxidants and promote good digestion.

Honey :- honey is phytonutrient powerhouse so it boost immunity, good source of antioxidants, antibacterial and anti-fungal property and wound healing property. It helps in digestion issues, potent prebiotic means it nourishes good gut bacteria which are crucial for good digestion and overall health.

**Fruits and vegetables :-** these are good source of dietary fibers and

contain phytochemical, and vitamins and minerals.

Raw and fresh fruits and vegetables eating result in better mental health along with physical benefits. Researchers have found evidence that eating fruits and veggies have fewer symptoms of depression, stress and overall negativity and feels generally happier and more satisfied.

Legumes :- improves nutritional quality , aids digestion, eliminates harmful toxins.

Good source of folate and antioxidants. Phytochemical like as saponins,tannins found possess antioxidant and anti-carcinogenic effect.

Recent studies have found that following a diet high in vegetables, fruits, legumes, nuts, beans, grains, and unsaturated fats led to reduction in depression among participants, which was sustained six months after intervention.

We should avoid *Rajasika* and *Tamasika* foods at regular basics.

*Rajasika- Raja-* fit for king. It encourages aggression and can also leave a person feeling busy, overwhelmed and bothered. *Rajasika* food denotes activity ,decision making, energy that required for tasks and mental activeness. This food category stimulate and activate various functions of body and energises various system of body specially nervous system.

***Rajsika* foods :-**

Fruits – sour apple, guava, banana.

Grain- corn, millet.

Vegetable – patato,spinach,tamarid,garlic onion.

Beans- red dal ,toor dal.

Dairy- old sour milk, sour cream.

Meat – fish, shrimp, red meat.

Drink- different energy drinks,tea ,coffee.

And other foods which are salty,sour,spicy,[11]pungent,oily etc; these foods makes mind anxious,hyperactive,restless, lack of concentration and affects sleeping patterns and develops insomnia, increases urges of anger.

Researches have found that high fat and sugar diet causes inflammation in hippocampus.

*Tamasika* foods are Alcohol,meat,heavy meals,canned food, preservatives containing food etc these foods promotes *tamasika guna* of *manas* causes dullness of mind,laziness,excessive sleep,indigestion and feeling low and depression, recklessness,negligence, ignorance. [12]

Saturated fats are very abundant in processed food, it can directly damage neurons by changing the way they use energy and by increasing molecule that cause stress and inflammation.

Dendrites and synapses are necessary for neuronal communication and memory formation. Research and experiments shows that eating high fat and sugar diet has negative effect on neurones in hippocampus; have fewer and thinner dendrites,probably that will be unable to communicate effectively with other neurones. High fat and sugar diet could result in memory loss and learning problems.[8]

Thus it is necessary for neurones to receive quality nutrients from healthy balanced diet.

**CONCLUSION:-**

Nutrition can play an important role in behaviour,learning and mood. Scientific evidences shows that diet is important not only for physical health but also for optimal mental development.

*Satva,Rajas,Tamas* these three *gunas* always present in everyone but their proportion varies person to person. Person consume which type of diet ( *Satvika,Rajsika,Tamsika*),*manas* starts to resemble that *guna* and become prominent in that *mansika guna* gradually. Having *rajsika* and *tamsika* food frequently and regularly causes increasing of that *manas guna* and affects person's mental health by causing different mental illness.

These *rajsika* and *tamsika* categories foods are low nutrition value and

lack of micronutrients and many harmful substances which makes person ill physically and mentally.

A person should follow *satvika ahara* along with *vihara* at regular basics, because *satvika guna* is errorless and causes purity of mind and thought, plus it is full of nutrients essential for brain and body. It is important to take good nutritional intake at an early age; poor diet (with high levels of saturated fat, refined carbohydrates and processed food products) is linked to poorer mental health.

*Satvika* food makes person mentally strong and prevents various mental disorders and if someone have any mental illness (like depression, anxiety, stress etc) than it helps in decreasing its frequency, relieves symptoms and severity decreases gradually.

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