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Importance of Ushnamashniyat for Maintenance of Health.

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ABSTRACT:

Introduction: Our body is made of the five elements of nature and we survive on the food which is also composed of the same five elements. But it cannot be directly assimilated without the process of paka or parinamanon it. food as always been an important way to treat illness and maintain health and that's why food called as Mahabhaishyajya. Certain guidelines of consumption of food have been mentioned by Acharya charaka as to how our Aahara should be consumed called as Aaharavidhividhan. The specific sequence of Ahara Vidhi Vidhan is practically very important and in that Ushnamashniyat is firstly mention in the sequence of Aahar Vidhi Vidhana. Ayurvedic classics were reviewed and compiled in this article. In current scenario, altered habits of food consumption may lead to various diseases. At present many new food processing methods are in practice which are harmful for human life. Nature of work, Duty schedule, hourly duty causes less time availability for preparation and consumption of warm and fresh food daily. The prepared food packing in tiffin, freezing, packing in plastic food preparing method (like microwave oven) is more common, So it affects overall health and leads to health problems. traditional method of cooking is best and it helps the food to become more digestible, So consumption of prepared warm and fresh food is essential for maintenance of health. The method and guidelines are explained in Ayurvedic texts, which are titled as Ahara Vidhi Vidhana where the laws of do's and don'ts about diet and drinks are given.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Ahara , Ahara Vidhi Vidhan, Ushnamashniyat , Agni , Doshas , Ama, Ojas

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INTRODUCTION:

Ayurveda mentions *Aahara* as one of the *Upastambhas* (supporting pillar). It is having an introducing concept that the health and disease both are the product of *Ahara*. *Ahara* has been placed first which shows that it is most important to maintain and sustain the life. *Aharas* supplies bio-energy to the body.¹ The aim of Ayurveda is to promote and preserve the health, strength and longevity of the healthy person and to cure the disease. In present era, diet and lifestyle are major factors thought to influence susceptibility to many diseases. *Ayurveda* has given detail discipline and process to take the *Ahara* for an individual. This discipline is titled as *Aharavidhividhan*, where all the rules about the diet is given. the dietetic rules can be considered as *Upaya* or *Adravabhutaushadi* for *vikarprashaman*.² What we eat has a direct impact on the process of digestion and ultimately on *sharirposhan*. Hence as mentioned above, our diet should contain *Ushnaaahara* which has manifold benefits to body physiology as regards to digestion. *Ushnamashniyat* is the first requisite regarding prepared meal is that it should be taken *Ushna* (warm). taking warm food leads to sense of proper taste, stimulate the *Agni* (Digestive power), *Vatanulomana* and Reduction of *Kapha*. Ayurveda also recommends to drink warm water, as cold water can weaken your *Agni* (digestive fire). Nowadays there is increased prevalence of life style disorders due to modernization and civilization of the society, the people is unconscious enough about what to eat and also the awareness about the food items, their quality, quantity and nutritional value is increasing gradually but also popularity of fast food is greater due to fast life in which faulty dietary habits play an important role. The January-February 1990 issue of Nutrition Action Newsletter reported the leakage of numerous toxic chemicals from the

packaging of common microwave foods, including pizzas, chips and popcorn. Frozen products initially lose fewer nutrients overtime due to oxidation even in a frozen state while fresh food provide greater nutrient intake than frozen food.³ Improper dietary habit is primary reason for increasing trend of health disorders in current era by consuming of frozen, canned, processed food play an important role. So there is need to awake the people about the importance of consuming *Ushna Ahara* (prepared warm fresh food) for maintain of health. In this way healthier eating habits may help to prevention and lower risk of health problem.

Material and Method:

Ayurvedic classics were reviewed and compiled in this article.

Aim: To study the importance *Ushnamashniyat* for maintenance of health.

Objectives:

1. To study the importance of *Aharavidhividhana* from Ayurvedic text.
2. To study the importance *Ushnamashniyat* for maintenance of health.

Review of Literature:

Aacharyacharak described *Ahar Vidhi Visheshayatanani* which need to be study before consuming any kind of diet, A balanced and nutritious diet which is also in accordance with factors mentioned here in proper growth and nourishment of body tissue, these are *Prakruti*, *Karan*, *kala*, *desha*, *samyoga*, *rashi*, *upayokta*, *upyogsanstha*⁴.

Ahar Vidhi Vidhana:

Ahara is food. *Vidhi* is method. *Vidhan*-accomplishing. A few rules should be methodically accomplished. It indicates the method of *ahara*, Some things are originally healthy. They should be religiously observed for better health. Rules of such kind, which should be observed while taking food these are *Ushnam* (eat warm), *Snigdha* (eat unctuous), *Matravat* (in proper quantity),

consumed after the digestion of previously ingested food, *Viryaavirudhaahara* (non-antagonistic), Is to be taken into *Istedeshe* (in favourable place) where it is provided with *Istasarvopakarana* (with all favourable accessories), Not to be taken speedily, Not to be taken too slowly, Taken without talking with others, taken without laughing, Taken with the concentration of the mind and should pay attention to himself while eating.⁵

Ushnamashniyat (consuming warm food)-

It is advised that eat warm food. This is because such food is pleasant to eat means it tastes good, it increases appetite and secretions of digestive juices, such food gets digested fast, it induces flatus and decreases *Kapha dosha*.⁶

Snigdhamashniyat (Consummation of unctuous food)- Unctuous food enhances weak Agni. It digests food fast. It helps to pass flatus. It replenishes or nourishes body. It strengthens special senses, it increases body strength, produces clarity of complexion.⁷

Matravatashniyat (Balanced Diet)- One should eat calculated food. Food taken in proper quantity without disturbing *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*. It should promote life span. It passes excreta smoothly. Proper quantity food does not disturb the *Agni* (digestive fire) and digested with discomfort.⁸

Jeerneashniyat (Meal taken after digestion of previous meal)- One should eat only when previous meal is digested. If eaten before digestion of previous meal food to be digested gets mixed with the previous undigested meal. This leads to instant vitiation of three *Doshas*. If eaten when the previous food is ingested, all three *Doshas* remain in physiological limits, *Agni* is enhanced, and belching is without any smell. No pressure of heart is realized, excreta are smoothly expelled, all building blocks are well maintained and thereby span of life is increased. This happens only due to eating on

empty stomach or when previous food is digested.⁹ **Veeryaviruddhamashniyat** (non-antagonistic)- Food having opposite virya (potency/strong quality) should be avoided to eat together. Such kind of eating generates disease (To eat hot and cold together).¹⁰

Ishtadeshe-ishtasarvopkarnamchashniyat (Meal taken favourable place and with favourable instruments)- This term refers to eating in a hygienic place provided with all the necessary things for sound psychological condition during meals. One should take food in proper equipped with all the accessories and should not produce disturbing emotions like *kama*, *krodha*, *chinta*, *bhaya*. By following this a person does not get afflicted with such of the factors that would result to the disturbed mind. Appropriate appliances or accessories required for dining are needed and indicated in detail by *Acharyas*. For specific kind of food, vessels made from specific material are mentioned in classics e.g., *Ghee* should be kept in vessel of *Kantaloha*, Fruits in *Dala/Patra*, *Milk* in *Tamra* (copper) vessel and *Madya* in vessel of *Mritika*. This specification may be due to some chemical reactions between the food material and utensils. Some materials are strictly contraindicated for specific foods e.g. sour foods should not be kept in copper utensils, as the chemical reaction produces poison like substances and leads to many disorders.¹¹

Naatidrutamashniyat (Not eating too fast)- One should not eat very fast. If one eats very fast, he chokes, vomits, insults food and develops disliking towards food.¹²

Naativilambitamashniyat (Not eating too slowly)- One should not eat very slowly. If one eats very slowly, he does not get satisfaction. Hence he eats more. Food gets cold. And due to this food does not get digested appropriately.¹³

Ajalpanahasantanmanabhunjeet (Eating without talking or laughing, Mindful eating) One should not laugh or talk while eating, because this may cause food to enter the wrong passage. This vitiates *doshas*.¹⁴ *Atmanam abhi samikshya bhunjeet samyak* (Eating after analysing one's needs) – Diet should be taken according to *satmya*, *prakruti*, *agni* and *bala*. It should be taken according to self-energy and nutrient requirement as in case of pregnancy, child, intellectual, old people or sick people. One should eat for himself with appropriate manner. One should be able to decide what is right and wrong for oneself. This makes one eat properly.¹⁵ **Importance of Ushanamashniyat** (Consuming Warm food): The specific sequence of *Ahara Vidhi Vidhan* is practically very important. The first requisite regarding prepared meal is that it should be taken *Ushnam* (warm). If one's taking warm food sense of proper taste, stimulate the *Agni* (Digestive power), *Vatanulomana* and Reduction of *Kapha* are achieved. Besides the whole meal being *Ushna*, it must begin with *Ushna anna*, so that profuse flow of saliva and gastric juices are achieved for the next food items. Warm food tastes good and doesn't pacify *Jatharagni*. Food is easily digested as food has to come to body temperature for digestion. *Vata* and *kapha* are pacified on taking warm food. Heating also kills microbes. It is observed that cooked and freshly prepared food is more preferred over raw food by humans. Cooking exposes the food to heat and changes physical and chemical properties of food. The digestibility and molecular pattern of food is altered after cooking. It also alters the bacterial diversity in gut influencing the gut microbiome after digestion. The techniques of preparation of food can affect feeding time, interest of taking food and digestion processes. Food processed and preserved by modern food

technologies like curing, salting, adding sugar, and the addition of chemical preservatives alters natural properties. This food is harmful for health. Research shows that avoidance of processed food can reduce risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular diseases. On taking cold food more energy will be used for digestion which may lead to lethargy.¹⁶ The *Aahar Ruchi*, *Agni deepana* and *Vatanuloman*, *Kaphahar* these are property of *Ushnaaahar* (warm food). Due to consumption of Warm food expansion of *srotas* (microchannels) of digestive juices. They cause digestion of *Ama*, *Kapha* and helps to expel them through bowels. The mucous and *Kapha* get eliminated easily and the ailment gets attacked right at the root, also expands the microchannels carrying *Doshas*, *Dhatu* and wastes, removes their sluggishness, makes them soft. The elasticity of these channels is restored gradually. This will help to rebalance each *dosha*.¹⁷ *Ayurveda* also recommends that you drink your water warm, as cold water can weaken your *Agni* (digestive fire). One should take warm water during and after meals. Water boiled and reduced to one-eighth, one-fourth or half of the original quantity or simply boiled and removed, all are called *ushnodak*. It has *swaduvipaka* (sweetness at the end of digestion) and *sheetaviryatmaka* even though used hot. So injudicious use of warm water (either less or more than required) does not cause much change in digestion. Warm water stimulates hunger and kindles digestive fire, helps digestion, soothes throat, cleanses bladder, reduces hiccups and alleviates increased *vata* and *kapha*. It eases symptoms of cold, cough, fevers and breathlessness. It removes *Ama* the metabolic toxin of body. Warm water is best in winter.¹⁸

DISCUSSION:

In *Ayurveda*, *Ahara* as well as the method of its intake both have equal importance. Food which is consumed according to the prescribed methods (*Ahara Vidhi Vidhana*) are the seat for the satisfaction for the life. *Ojas*, *teja*, *dhatu*s, senses, *bala*, *Tushti* (satisfaction of mind), health are all dependant on food. In the current scenario, the changing lifestyle leads to neglect even of our basic necessities of food. An unwanted query about the right food to be consumed sends many a people to follow a diet chart unfit for them as regards their body constitution, requirement, and digestive capacity. People basically know very little about them and they who know are little bothered to obey such rules, even they do not have trust enough to consider the code of diet as an important health matter. The proper method of eating is wrongly being interpreted as mere traditional affair. Though all the people cannot always follow all the rules due to the bindings of fast and forward life, due to shift wise working nature, daily 8-12 hours duty schedule most of the people carry food packing tiffin, many times due to hectic duty, tiffin not eating at proper time, so many hours food packing in tiffin, due to these food quality should be changed, these type of food consumed daily impact on health and Many times people suffer from health problem such as, indigestion, constipation, regurgitation, more flatulence, heaviness in stomach. Improper dietary habit and life style is primary reason for increasing trend of health disorders in current era by consuming of frozen, canned, processed food and in these condition certain guidelines to consumption of food have been mention as to how our *aahara* should be consumed called as *aaharavidhividhan*, *Ushnamshniyat* is one of them. So there is need to awake the people about the importance of consuming *UshnaAhara* (prepared warm fresh food) for

maintenance of health. In this way healthier eating habits may help in prevention and lowering the risk of health problem.

CONCLUSION:

The best preventive medicine and support of the natural healing process is diet and lifestyle. The life of all living things is food which is responsible for good and bad health of an individual, So *UshnaAhara* (prepared warm, fresh food) consumption leads to good digestive power, Complexion, reduces mucus, long life span, understanding, happiness, satisfaction, growth, strength and intelligence. The increased hunger as a result of increased flow of digestive juices causes proper digestion of food resulting healthy status of body. In this way, we can say that consuming warm food and water is appetizer, gives sense of proper taste, stimulate digestive fire and ideal for eating and drinking for maintenance of health. It can be concluded that *ahara* should be taken according to *aharavidhividhan* (dietary guidelines) which are truly scientific, following *Aaharavidhividhan* properly helps to increase health and enhance the life span, *Ushnaashniyat* is at first in sequence of *Aharavidhividhan*. One taking warm food feel of proper taste, stimulate the *Agni* (Digestive power), *Vatanulomana* and Reduction of *Kapha*. Its direct impact on the process of digestion and ultimately on *sharirposhan*, So warm food taken is essential for maintenance of health.

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