

## CONCEPT OF AHARA WSR TO SHAREERIKA PRAKRUTI (BODY CONSTITUTION)

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### ABSTRACT

For positive health, *Ayurveda* has given three sub pillars- *Ahara*, *Nidra* and *Abrahmacarya*, which support the body itself. *Ahara*, is given importance for manifestation of disease and maintenance of health. *Ahara* plays a very vital role in satisfying all the aspects of *Swastya*. That which is ingested by the tongue down to the throat is called *Ahara*. The cause of disease is *Ahitahara* or *Apathya* as an aid in curing diseases in the form of *Pathya*. *Prakruti* is an important concept of *Ayurveda* that explains individuality and has role in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases. It expresses unique trait of an individual that is defined by specific and permanent composition of *Dosha* at conception. *Prakruti* forms basis for understanding *Sampraapti* (pathology), extent and *Vikalpana* (combinations) of vitiated *Dosha* and status of host factors. Prediction of proneness and severity of disease can be speculated that helps in prognosis judgment.

The diet for *Vata Prakruti* person should be rich in *Madhura*, *Amla*, *Lavana Rasa*. The *Vata Prakruti* person should avoid frequent skipping the meal .because of *Vishma Agni*. Should have *Snigdha*(unctuous) *Guru*(heavy) ,*Ushna*(hot) *Gunas* in good quantity. Should avoid too much of dry pungent light and cold *Gunas* in his diet. The diet for *Pitta Prakruti* person should be rich in *Madhura*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa*.It should be rich in *Sheeta* (cold), *Guru*(heavy) *Gunas*. He should avoid pungent, light, spicy, hot foods which will aggravate the *Pitta*. The diet for *Kapha Prakruti* person should be rich in *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa*. It should be rich in *Ushna*(hot), *Laghu*(light), *Ruksha*(dry) *Gunas*. He should avoid too much sweets, dairy products, unctuous, which will aggravate the *Kapha Dosha*.

**Keywords:** *Ahara*, *Shareera*, *Prakruti*, body constitution.

### INTRODUCTION

*Swastya* is the state of well-being. It includes Physical, Mental, Emotional, spiritual and Social well being of an individual. For positive health, *Ayurveda* has given three sub pillars- *Ahara*, *Nidra* and *Abrahmacarya*, which support the body itself<sup>1</sup>. *Ahara*, is given importance for manifestation of disease and maintenance of health. *Ahara* plays a very vital role in satisfying all the

aspects of *Swastya*. That which is ingested by the tongue down to the throat is called *Ahara*. Cause of disease is *Ahitahara* or *Apathya* and curing of diseases in the form of *Pathya*.

*Doshas* vitiate due to excess consumption of *Eka Rasa*, which are not conducive for health. *Madhura Rasa Atisevana* causes diseases like *Stoulya*, *Alasya* etc. Similarly,

excess use of *Amla*, *Lavana*, *Katu*, *Kashaya* and *Tikta Rasa* produces *Roga*. *Eka Rasa* alone or in combination if used improperly they may be damaging to the body<sup>2</sup>.

*Prakruti* is an important concept of *Ayurveda* that explains individuality and has role in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases. It expresses unique trait of an individual that is defined by specific and permanent composition of *Dosha* at conception. *Prakruti* is specific composition of *Dosha* that is permanent throughout the life. Dominance (*Utkata*) and unchangeable (*Avyabhichari*) nature of *Dosha* are called as *Prakruti*<sup>3</sup>.

*Tridosha* are basic factors responsible for health and disease. *Dosha* are biological expression of *Mahaabhoota*. They govern all functions of body and mind but on vitiation produce diseases. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* are three *Dosha*. Each *Dosha* possesses specific *Guna* or attributes. These attributes are defined according to pharmacological actions and form base for diagnosis, treatment, diet and lifestyle advisable.

*Prakruti* forms basis for understanding *Sampraapti* (pathology), extent and *Vikalpana* (combinations) of vitiated *Dosha* and status of host factors. Prediction of proneness and severity of disease can be speculated that helps in prognosis judgment.

*Vata Prakruti* is illustrated on the basis of *Ruksha*, *Laghu*, *Chala*, *Sheeghra*, *Sheeta*, *Parusha*, *Vishada*, *Alpa Guna*. Each *Guna* is responsible for specific characteristics. *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata*, *Harita*, *Bhaavmishra* and *Sharangdhara* describe *Prakruti* on anatomical, physiological and psychological characters. *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata* (*Samgraha* and *Hridaya*) have added numerous objective parameters as: cracked legs and feet and developed calf muscles of *Vata*

*Prakruti*, coppery hair and laxity of joints for *Pitta Prakruti*, long arm, wider chest and muscular body of *Kapha Prakruti*. Dreams, liking and disliking of different *Prakruti* have elucidated by other *Samhita*<sup>4</sup>.

Just like modern science explains balanced diet based on macro and micronutrients. *Ayurveda* explains it on the basis on *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya* and *Vipaka*. One has to look at the *Prakruti*, *Agni*, *Kostha* of a person and *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* of food and also the *Rutu*(season) for designing a ideal dietary regimen A proper wholesome diet should be containing food stuff having all five *Mahabhutas* , all six *Rasas*, two types of *Viryas* (*Sheeta* and *Ushna*), eight types of *Viryas* (*Sheeta*, *Ushna*, *Snigdha*, *Ruksha*, *Vishada*, *Picchila*, *Mrudu*, *Teekshna*) and should be suiting his body constitution.

In *Vata Prakruti* appetite will be variable in nature. So the time required for digestion will vary because of the *Vishama Agni*. In *Pitta Prakruti* the appetite will be good and strong and the digestion will be quick due to *Teekshna Agni*. In *Kapha Prakruti* the appetite will not be as strong as in *Pitta* and digestion will be slow and the person can even skip meal without undue discomfort<sup>5</sup>.

*Vata Prakruti* person will have dominance of *Tikta*, *Katu*, *Kashaya* rasa in him so his diet should be consisting of *Madhura*, *Amla*, *Lavana Rasa*. *Pitta Prakruti* person will have dominance of *Katu*, *Amla*, *Lavana Rasa* so his diet should be rich in *Madhura*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya Rasa*. *Kapha Prakruti* person will have dominance of *Madhura*, *Amla*, *Lavana* in him so balanced diet for *Kapha Prakruti* should be one that is rich in *Katu*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya Rasa*<sup>6</sup>. *Vata Prakruti* – *Amlerasa Bhojanecchu* (desire for sour taste) *Pitta Prakruti* – *Tiktaranubhojee* (desire for bitter taste) *Kapha Prakruti* – *Tikta Katu*

*Ushna Bhojee* (desire for bitter pungent and hot food)

## DISCUSSION

The diet of a person should contain the *Gun*nas and *Ras*as which will keep the *Dosh*ik balance of the body in equilibrium. e.g: a *Vata Prakruti* person with a dominance of *Ruksha* (dry) *Guna* should also have a good amount of *Snigdha* (unctous) food in order to balance the excess *Ruksha Guna* which is naturally seen in him.

### Diet for Vata Prakruti:

The diet for *Vata Prakruti* person should be rich in *Madhura, Amla and Lavana Rasa*. The *Vata Prakruti* person should avoid frequent skipping the meal .because of *Vishma Agni*. Should have *Snigdha*(unctous) *Guru*(heavy) ,*Ushna*(hot) *Gun*as in appropriate quantity. Should avoid too much of dry pungent light and cold *Gun*as in his diet.

### Food items suitable for vata prakruti individuals:

Grains: Rice, wheat, oats, amaranth, all cooked until tender. Cooked Vegetables: Asparagus, tender greens, carrots, peas, green beans, lauki squash, sweet potatoes. Fruits: pineapple, papaya, peaches, plums, grapes, mangoes, oranges, cherries, all kinds of berries, limes and lemons, coconut, fresh figs, raisins (soaked) Lentils: Mung beans, urad dhal, mung dhal, masoor dhal, toor dhal, red lentils, all cooked until butter-soft. Dairy: Whole milk, cream, butter, fresh yogurt (cooked into foods), lassi, cottage cheese, fresh paneer cheese

Oils: Ghee, olive oil and sesame oil. Herbs: Fresh ginger root, curry leaves, fresh basil, fresh fennel. Nuts and Seeds: Almonds (soaked and blanched), cashews, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds. Spices: Ajwain, dried ginger, asafetida

(hing) in small quantities, fenugreek, turmeric, cumin, clove, cardamom, coriander, fennel, black pepper, basil, mustard seed, rock salt or sea salt, black salt, dried mango powder, pomegranate seeds or powder

### Diet for Pitta Prakruti:

The diet for *Pitta Prakruti* person should be rich in *Madhura, Tikta and Kashaya Rasa*.It should be rich in *Sheeta* (cold), *Guru*(heavy) *Gun*as. He should avoid pungent, light, spicy, hot foods which will aggravate the *Pitta*.

### Food items suitable for Pitta Prakruti Individuals:

Grains: Rice, wheat, barley, oats all cooked until tender. Vegetables: Asparagus, tender and bitter greens, bitter gourd, carrots, fennel, peas, green beans, lauki squash, cauliflower, beets, sweet potatoes, all cooked, carrots or cucumber. Fruits: pineapple, peaches, plums, grapes, mangoes, melons, pears, pomegranates, cherries, all kinds of berries, apples, coconut, dates, fresh and dried figs, raisins (soaked), all ripe and sweet. Lentils: Mung beans, mung dhal, red or brown lentils, black beans, all cooked until butter-soft. Dairy: Whole milk, cream, butter, fresh yogurt (cooked into foods), lassi, cottage cheese, fresh paneer cheese. Oils: Ghee, olive oil, walnut oil. Herbs: curry leaves, fresh basil, fresh fennel, fresh mint. Nuts and Seeds: Almonds (soaked and blanched), sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds. Spices: Turmeric, cumin, cardamom, coriander, fennel, small quantities of black pepper, mint, saffron, dill.

### Diet for Kapha Prakruti:

The diet for *Kapha Prakruti* person should be rich in *Katu, Tikta and Kashaya Rasa*. It should be rich in *Ushna*(hot), *Laghu*(light), *Ruksha*(dry) *Gun*as. He should avoid too much sweets, dairy products, unctous, which will aggravate the *Kapha Dosha*.

## Food items suitable for Kapha Pradhan

### Prakruti:

Grains: barley, millet, oats. Cooked Vegetables: Asparagus, all kinds of greens, bitter gourd, green beans, cauliflower, beets, radish, cabbage. Fruits: Apricots, prunes, peaches, pears, cherries, berries, apples, lemons, limes, pomegranates. Lentils: Mung beans, mung dhal, toor dhal, red or brown lentils, black beans, all cooked until butter-soft. Dairy: Whole milk diluted with water. Oils: Small portions of ghee and olive oil. Herbs: curry leaves, fresh basil, fresh mint,, neem leaves. Nuts and Seeds: Sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds. Spices: Turmeric, cumin, cardamom, coriander, fennel, dried ginger, mustard seed.

## CONCLUSION

*Swastya* is the state of well-being. It includes Physical, Mental, Emotional, spiritual and Social well being of an individual. For positive health, *Ayurveda* has given three sub pillars- *Ahara*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacarya*, which support the body itself. *Ahara*, is given importance for manifestation of disease and maintenance of health. The diet of a person should contain the *Gunās* and *Rasas* which will keep the *Doshik* balance of the body in equilibrium. e.g: a *Vata Prakruti* person with a dominance of *Ruksha* (dry) *Guna* should also have a good amount of *Snigdha* (unctous) food in order to balance the excess *Ruksha Guna* which is naturally seen in him.

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