VIRUDDHA AHARA - THE INCOMPATIBLE FOOD AND ITS MILENIAL IMPORTANCE

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ABSTRACT

Ahara, nidra and brahmacharya are considered as the three sub pillars that supports life in Ayurveda. These 3 sub pillars are closely influential on the prime 3 pillars of life – dosha, dhathu and mala. A person’s diet should be in accordance with the deha, kala, prakriti, vayah and avastha - both in healthy and non-healthy individuals. Diet plays an important role in maintaining and promotion of health and also disease causing. Many descriptions about food can be found in Ayurveda textbooks.

Objective: The present article deals with concept, critical review, types, effects and treatment of Viruddha ahara along with its modern perspective. It also focuses more on compatible and non-compatible foods prevalent in our society nowadays.

Methods: All the available references of Viruddha Aahara from Ayurvedic Samhita are considered and compared to evaluate and enlighten the concept of Viruddha Aahara with modern medical literature.

Discussion: Virudhaahara is one of the distinctive concepts of Ayurveda. Virudhaahara as per Ayurveda is that certain food that is incompatible because of its combinations, the various processing of food that hampers the metabolism and thereby interrupts the formation of Dhatus and which have the opposite
property to the Dhatus are called as Virudhaahara. Hence the food which is erroneous in combination, processing, quantity, season, time of the day, body nature can be considered as Virudha Ahara.

**Conclusion:** Virudha Ahara is still relevant especially in the millennial food culture. Ayurveda have given keen attention on concept of wholesome ahara and unwholesome ahara. Correspondingly intake of incompatibility food is much increases in present era.

**Keywords:** Virudhaahara, Agonist, Antagonist

**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda have always given emphasis more on the preventive aspect of disease rather than the treatment aspect. Description on Dinacharya and Rutucharya are meant for modulating our immune responses. Ayurveda have always given emphasis about the right diet and regimens. According to Ayurveda food helps in maintaining the agni of the body. Practice of wholesome diet naturally leads to a healthy life where as unwholesome diet leads to unhealthiness. Here the concept of virudhaahara comes and is explained by Acharya Charaka and his commentators Chakrapani and Gangadhara. They have described total 18 types of Viruddha Aahara with proper examples of food products and food to food interactions which is used by layman in day-to-day life. According to Acharya Charaka Virudha Ahara is certain diets and its combinations which hampers the metabolism of tissues, which interrupts the formation and function of tissues and also possess the opposite property of the tissue. The unwholesome food formed as a result of erroneous combination or food processing or consumed at wrong time of the day and season. Regular consumption of Virudha Ahara can cause several diseases. Aim of the article is to create general awareness among the public about the harmful effects of Viruddha Aahar and to advocate them to take wholesome diet. Globalization in this era have bought a tremendous revolution in food industry and food trade also demanding more and more contamination of food by chemical and biological agents, in the form of changing Veerya, Guna, Rasa and Swabhava of that food item which in turn leads to Incompatibility i.e (Viruddha Aahara).

Therefore, it is the need of the hour to explore the concept of Viruddha Aahara with proper understanding of their types, their role in disease pathogenesis and line of treatment among the millennials.

**CONCEPT OF VIRUDDHA AAHARA**

The word Viruddha literary means contrast or opposite. In this context it may be the combination of food with edibles that may have

- Opposite properties
- Opposite activities in bodily tissues
- May exert some unwanted effects on the body when processed in a particular method
- May cause some undesirable effects in the body when consumed at wrong time of the day and season
- May produce some undesirable effect when taken at certain proportions.
Acharya Charaka has defined Viruddha Aahara as any food product or its combination which interrupts the metabolism of tissues i.e. Sharira Dhatu, which inhibits the process of formation of tissue and which have the opposite property to the tissue.

The food which is wrong in combination, has undergone wrong processing, consumed in incorrect dose and/or consumed in incorrect time of the day and in the wrong season can be termed as Viruddha Aahara.

Those substances which aggravate Doshas but cannot eliminate them or pacify to their normal status and also contradict with Doshas, Dhatu; yet remains inside the body are termed as Viruddha Dravya.

In Kriyakaumudi—an authentic keraleeya Ayurvedic textbook on Agadtantra defines Virudhaahara as any which is more toxic than visha and kaivisha (garavisha). The book also says that foods that are incompatible when cooked together and eating before the previous meal are completely digested can be considered as Virudhaahara.

**TYPES OF VIRUDDHA AAHARA**

As mentioned earlier there are 18 types of Viruddha Aahara. They are well explained with examples and mode of action by Acharya Chakrapani and Gangadhara in their own commentaries. Though they have explained number of examples of food incompatibility in their own Samhita but some of those food combinations are not used nowadays. It is essential to identify new food incompatibilities, which are used in day-to-day life in Ayurvedic perspective. These food incompatibilities can be categorized into different types of Viruddha Aahara as follows:

**Desha Viruddha**

- The food items having similar properties to that of Desha is called as Desha Viruddha. It is stated that one should take food having properties opposite to corresponding Desha. Charakacharya considered only Bhumi Desha as Desha Viruddha whereas Gangadhara has explained Desha Viruddha as Bhumi Desha as well as Sharira Desha Viruddha.
- e.g.: Ruksha, Tikshnaahara in Marubhumi – consumption of alcohol in desert land. Snigdha, Sheetaahara in Anupabhumi – cool milkshakes and juices

**Kaal Viruddha**

- Consuming food items having similar properties to that of Kaali.e. Season.
- e.g.: Sheetahara in Hemant Rutu - consumption of Ice-creams in winter. Katu and Ushnaahar in Grishma Rutu – spicy pavbhaji and missal-pav in summer.

**Agni Viruddha**

- Food taken without knowledge of individual's Agni which may be either of 4 types Mrudu, Madhyama, Tikshna and Vishama.
- e.g.: Laghu and AlpaMatra Aahara for Tikshna Agni - consuming Churmura (popcorn etc.) in excessive hungry condition. Guru and AdhikaMatra Aahara in Manda Agni.
Matra Viruddha

➤ There are some food items which act as Viruddha Aahara when mixed in equal proportion.
➤ e.g.: Cow’s Ghee + Honey in equal proportion.

Saatmya Viruddha

➤ Consuming such food items for which that individual is not used to.
➤ e.g.: Chinese food by Indians. Madhura and Sheetaahar by a person who is used to Katu and Ushnaahara.

Dosha Viruddha

➤ Food items having similar properties to that of Doshas, which causes Doshadushti are called as Dosha Viruddha. Gangadhara has elaborated this term in 3 types

1. Dosha Viruddha according to Rasa – KashayaRasa for Vata.
2. VyadhiViruddha - Curd mixed with rice for Kushtha.
3. DravyaSwabhava - Poison (Dhatupradushanadravya).

Sanskara Viruddha

➤ Food prepared by wrong method is Sanskara Viruddha.
➤ e.g.: Reheating Food items - French Fries, Reheating oil which is used once, Heated Honey (mixing with hot water, cooking biscuits).

Veerya Viruddha

➤ Consuming food items having opposite Veerya at the same time termed as Veerya Viruddha.
➤ e.g.: Fish of Ushna Veerya consumed with Sheeta Veerya Milk.

Krama Viruddha

➤ Food Consumed by wrong sequence is considered as Krama Viruddha.
➤ e.g.: Sweet Dishes after meal.

Koshtha Viruddha

➤ Here Chakrapani and Gangadhara said that any drug or food item taken without proper knowledge of individuals Koshtha termed as Koshtha Viruddha.
➤ e.g.: Strong Laxatives by Mrudu Koshtha person, Barbeque food and baked food consumed by person who is habitual to Constipation i.e. Krura Koshtha person.

Awastha Viruddha

➤ Consuming food without exact knowledge of own health and bodily conditions.
➤ e.g.: Alcohol consumption by Laborers.
Parihara Viruddha

- Consuming cold food items after hot and spicy food is Parihara Viruddha.
- e.g.: Cold drinks after Samosa.

Paak Viruddha

- Food which is not properly cooked i.e. uncooked, partly cooked, partly burned etc. Half-baked food is Paak Viruddha.
- e.g.: Half fried egg

Upachaara Viruddha

- Consuming food items which are not supposed to consume after specific treatment or act is Upachaara Viruddha.
- e.g.: Drinking cold water after snehapana, after steam bath.

Samyoga Viruddha

- Consuming food items which are not supposed to combine with each other is Samyoga Viruddha. Especially Amla rasa fruits with milk.
- e.g.: Amla Rasa with Madhura Rasa – Strawberrymilkshake, Banana milkshake. Only the combination of Mango fruit with milk is advised in Ayurveda.

Hrut Viruddha

- Consuming food items which are not pleasant to consumer is Hrut Viruddha.
- e.g.: Bitter melon, Decoctions for Children.

Sampat Viruddha

- Food items prepared by using unhealthy ingredients is Sampat Viruddha.
- e.g.: Sheera prepared in vegetable oil. Food substance /fruits which haven’t fulfilled their original taste or damaged taste or over ripped.

Vidhi Viruddha

- In Ayurveda there is detail explanation of rules for food consumption under Aahara Vidhividhana concept. Consuming food without considering those rules is Vidhi Viruddha.
- e.g.: Not consuming food which is hot and fresh - food from Lunch box.

Apart from all biochemical effects of Viruddha Aahara, a food substance which is not liked by the person; acts like Viruddha Aahara. This may lead to continual mal digestion too. Acharya Sushruta has explained some different types as Rasa Viruddha, Veerya Viruddha, Vipaka Viruddha.
Some of the incompatible food combinations of present era:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Combination with</th>
<th>example’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>Bananas, cherries, melons, sour fruits, fish, meat, curd</td>
<td>Milk shake, Malai fish &amp; chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey</td>
<td>With equal amount of Ghee by weight, boiled or cooked honey</td>
<td>Panchamret Honeychicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curd</td>
<td>Fruit cheese, eggs, fish, hot drinks, meat, milk, nightshades. Curd should always be taken with salt.</td>
<td>Biryani Curd salads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon</td>
<td>Cucumber, milk, tomato, curd</td>
<td>Milk surbeth, Juices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melon</td>
<td>Dairy products, eggs, fried food, grains, starch.</td>
<td>Milk shake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>Fruits especially melons, Beans, cheese, fish, milk, meat, curd.</td>
<td>Sandwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>Repeated fried oil</td>
<td>Fries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potato, Tomato</td>
<td>Melon, cucumber, dairy products, alcohol</td>
<td>Vegetable Salads</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AETIOPATHOGENESIS**

Acharya Charaka states that including certain food articles in routine diet aggravates the prakrutadoshas. Acharya Chakrapani further adds to that this aggravated prakrutadoshas interact with Sharirastha Viguna Dhatus and lead to many diseases like:

1. **Indriyopghatakara** - Disease which hampers function of Indriya.
   - e.g. - Andhya, Shandhya, Bhagandara, Jwara, Pinasa.
2. **DhatuParinamkar** - Diseases which hamper RasadiSaptaDhatus.
   - e.g. - Dakodara, Visarpa, Pandu, Aamvisha, Kushtha, Santandosha, Visphota, Moorchcha, Aadhmana, Galagraha, Kilasa, Grahani, Shotha, Amlapitta, Mrityu.
3. **ManasaVyadhi** - Diseases which hampers psychological condition of person.
   - e.g. - Unmada, Mada
FOOD INCOMPATIBILITIES PRESENT IN TODAY'S GENERATION

A new branch of science has been evolved in the last century called Trophology. It is a nutritional that advocates specific combinations of foods as central to good health and weight loss. The idea of trophology must have driven from the ayurveda concept of Virudha ahara. The worst possible combination of foods to mix together at a single meal and yet it is the mainstay of modern western diets: meat and potatoes, hamburgers and fries, eggs and toast etc.

How to combine foods in modern perspective

- Fats - Quality fats with proteins, starches & veg, not fruits
- Proteins - Avoid mixing with starches or fruit
- Starches - Avoid mixing with proteins or fruit
- Vegetables - Mix with either proteins or starches & fats, not fruit
- Fruits - Always eat alone - best on empty stomach

DISCUSSION AND RESULT

With the advent of modernization in the field of food processing and storage all foods are made available throughout the year irrespective of the seasons and geographical barriers. The food culture in our country has undergone a tremendous transformation like never before in the past two decades. Dining out as become a part and parcel of Indians daily routine especially in the younger population. The fast-food system and the online food delivery systems also added on to the changing food culture. Nowadays there is no restrictions on food and timings of meal. In olden times and with Ayurveda classical reference taking curd especially at night is strictly prohibited. But nowadays nobody follows this because food availability is possible throughout the clock. Milk shakes are the new trend in dessert and shakes. These shakes are completely considered as samyoga virudha ahara. The concept of dessert itself is virudha as it falls under karma virudha based on the shadrasa. Heating honey is nowadays seen in modern Indian Culinary is considered as Samskaara virudha as honey turns toxic on heating according to ayurveda. Use of dairy products along with fish and meat are found in cuisines like malai chicken, fish malai tikka masala etc. are examples of Veerya Virudha.

Practice of daily intake of Virudha ahara can hamper the dhathu parinama in our body. This may be the reason of the high incidence of life style disorders and impotency and sterility in the younger population. The alarming increase in the number of cancer cancer patients in India can be looked upon the changed food culture of our society. The emergence of many autoimmune diseases especially of the integumentary system if looked carefully will give a history of taking of incompatible foods in such person
CONCLUSION
From the above discussion the Ayurveda concept of Virudha Ahara is still relevant especially in the millennial food culture. It is the need of the hour to take the concept of Virudha Ahara seriously and thereby pave the way for further research in the field of oncology, infertility, skin diseases. The concept of Virudha Ahara can be undertaken for toxicity studies in animal experiments regarding each type of virudha which are practicably available nowadays.

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