

A Review Article on Sharada Ritu

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Abstract: The newly emerging diseases and diminishing immunity have made humans to seriously think about their health. Lifestyle modulation and adaptation according to climate is the need of hour. The glorious Ayurveda has its principal focus of conserving health and prevention of disease before their occurrence. Acharya's have described Dincharya (daily regimen) and Ritucharya (seasonal regimen). One can cherish good health by following proper Ritucharya, described in classical texts of Ayurveda. The living beings especially humans are hugely affected by the change in climate. The features of all the Ritus, dietary and habitual modulation according to changing Ritu has been widely explained in the foremost texts of Ayurveda. Here, the Sharad Ritu which is one of the Ritu's of Dakshinayan is overviewed so as to present the dietary and behavioural regimen in this season. The Sharad Ritu marks the transition from summers to winters. The hot sun rays in Sharad Ritu exaggerate the Pitta Dosha which is already accumulated in body in the Varsha Ritu. So dietary and habitual modifications which are Pitta Shamak in nature should be followed in Sharad Ritu along with the Shodhan procedures like Virechan and Raktamokshan.

Keywords: Sharad Ritu, Ritucharya, Dakshinayan, Sharatritu, Ritucharya, Aharavihara, Hamsodaka.

INTRODUCTION

The advent of latest technology and digital controls have, on one hand reduced the human efforts to a greater extent, but on the other hand it has created sluggishness in the physical activity of man. Also, with easy availability of junk and packaged food the authenticity of Indian food is getting extinct. As a result of which many new diseases are emerging day by day. The main cause of this is ignorance of humans towards the seasons and various conducts to be followed according to change in climate. The treasure of Ayurveda has precious knowledge of Ritucharya which is explain in almost all the classic text of Ayurveda. The Ritucharya involves, following the genuine rules regarding Ahara and Vihara according to the changing season. There is a strong need to follow some rules regarding diet and habits in order to combat the upcoming diseases. The extensive use

of processed food nowadays has brought about significant imbalance in the Doshas, which is the root cause of all the diseases. Each Ritu has its own characteristics and adaptation according to the changing Ritu in terms of Ahara and Vihara is very essential. The year is broadly divided into two Ayans which are Uttarayana also called Aadan Kaal and Dakshinayan known as Visarga Kaal. These Ayans are further divided into three Ritus in each, that means six Ritus in a year. Shishir, Vasant and Greeshma Ritus being part of Uttarayana while Dakshinayan includes Varsha, Sharad and Hemant Ritus. [2] As per the Hindu calendar the Sharad Ritu includes the month of Ashwin and Kartik. Whereas in English calendar it starts from 22nd September and ends on 21st December. The Pitta which is already accumulated in the body in Varsha Ritu, melts due to the hot rays of sun in Sharad Ritu, thereby causing its Prakopa. So, Pitta Shamak Aahar Vihar should be followed in Sharad Ritu.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To highlight the features of Sharad Ritu along with dietary and habitual regimen explained in various classical texts of Ayurveda.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

To review the foremost Ayurvedic classics in the context of Ritucharya explained by the Acharyas. The relevant websites and journals providing information regarding the Ritus and Ritucharya will also be reviewed.

Features of Dakshinayana

Soma, or cooling energy from the Moon, is more dominant in Dakshinayana. The entire time is getting progressively cooler and milder. The sky is covered in clouds, breezes, and rain during this time. The Moon becomes dominant in nature, cooling the atmosphere. Fruits and vegetables are juicier and getting sweeter as the water content in plants, animals, and people rises. The three seasons in this Visarga Kala (meaning the period of strengthening or increasing) are Varsha (monsoon), Sharad (autumn),

and Hemanta (early winter). Every season brings with it an improvement in our strength. Therefore, in Ayurveda from Sharad Ritu onwards we can begin planning a new fitness regimen, can implement a new strength training program or can even work on our hair, skin or reproductive fitness. With the visarga Kala in our favor, there is a greater chance of success for us in all these enhancing programs. In Sharad Ritu our strength imiddling/moderate – it reaches a peak in Hemanta / early winter season. Features of Sharada Ritu – Dosha changes Chaya (moderate accumulation), prakopa (great aggravation), and prashamana (natural balance) of doshas are present in every season. Depending on which Pancha mahabootha rises to prominence, we may also notice a shift in our physical makeup. In Sharada Ritu, the intense sun's rays cause the Pitta that has already accumulated in the body during Varsha Ritu to melt, resulting in its Prakopa. Therefore, Sharada Ritu should adhere to Pitta Shamak Aahar Vihar. The development of "medhya" or intelligence is significantly influenced by the Pitta dosha, which also controls digestion, skin tone, black hair colour, focus, and eye sight. The production of high-quality blood, or rakta Dhatu, is similarly regulated by the pitta dosha. Pitta must, however, be present in the APPROPRIATE quantity for all of these purposes.

Charak Samhita

Sharad Ritu (autumn season) According to Acharya Charka in the Sharada (Autumn) season, the body's stored Pitta Dosha frequently becomes worsened when a body used to cold and rain is suddenly exposed to the heat of the sun. In this season food and drinks predominantly of sweet, light, cold and slightly bitter qualities and having Pitta alleviating properties should be taken in proper quantity, only when there is good appetite. The meat of Lava (common quail), Kapinjala (grey partridge), Ena (antelope), Urabhra (sheep), Sharabha (wapiti), and as well as Shalli rice (*Oryza sativa* Linn), barley, and wheat, should be consumed in Ghanatyaya (Sharada Ritu). In Sharada, purgative use, bloodletting and consumption of Tikta Ghee (Ghee medicated with bitter substances) are advised whenever the rain clouds vanish. It is not advised to consume curd, alkaline preparations, meat from aquatic and marshy animals, or to expose yourself to the sun or consume muscular fats and oils during this season. Restrict exposure to the easterly breeze and avoid sleeping during the day.[3] Hansodak- During the Sharad Ritu, Acharya Charaka and Acharya Vagbhat

particularly referenced Hansodaka, a water with properties similar to nectar. The word Hansodak comes from the fact that a swan only consumes the cleanest form of water, hence in Sharad Ritu, water that is detoxified by the rising of Agasti star as well as by harsh sun rays is regarded to be in the purest form. According to the Acharyas, the Hansodak is heated by the strong rays of the sun during the day and chilled by the soft moonlight at night. Hansodaka is known as Anshudak according to Acharya Bhavmishra. According to Acharya Vagbhata, it is free of physical, chemical, and biological contaminants, free of toxic materials, non-arid, pacifies the Dosha, and Anabhishtyandi (does not hinder the Rasvaha Sira). This Hansodak is suitable for drinking, bathing, and swimming.[4]

Sushruta Samhita

The sun has a soft golden hue in the autumn. On the deep, dark blue of heaven, huge masses of white clouds can be seen sailing. Ponds are decorated with fully developed lotus blossoms, which are stirred by the wings of diving swans. The high areas get dry, but the lowlands continue to be muddy. The level plains are covered in underbrush and bushes, and numerous species of plants and trees, including Vana, Saptahva, Vandhuka, Kasha, and Asana, flower there.[5]

Ashtanga Hridaya

In the autumn season, the bodies of the creatures that are suffering from water and therefore have coldness, there is Pitta. After that, when autumn comes, suddenly the Pitta formed in the rain in the bodies of the Animals, heated by the strong rays of the sun, becomes angry at this time. In order to overcome age, that is, it should not create any kind of Pittaj disorders, for this, Tikta Gharatpaana, Virechana and Raktmokshana should be done.[6]

Ashtanga Sangraha

The Earth is a little muddy in fall, and the sky is clouded in white. As they begin to bloom, the water lily (*Nymphaea alba* Linn), Kash (*Saccharum spontaneum* Linn), and week (*Samarpan Alstonia scholaris* RB) enhance the beauty of the ground. The sun is the object (Kapil) since the group of clouds has been removed, allowing the sun's piercing rays to fall on the planet. When bird garlands begin to fly in them, the directions become quite clear. When fish and swans, which are hidden between lotuses, collide, tremendous waves are

created in Sar (lakes), but the water is still pure. The bile in the Bangas who encounter rain and cold is abruptly deprived of rain and cold by the sun's beams.

DISCUSSION

The main cause of the rising number of lifestyle disorders is the lack of attention to healthy dietary and behavioural ethics. The Acharyas explain the ethics of nutrition and lifestyle in terms of Ritucharya. Every season has unique, important characteristics. Our bodies are affected by the climate in a variety of ways, therefore it's crucial to adjust our lifestyles to the changing seasons. The body is significantly impacted by the dynamics of the climate because of the metamorphism of hot weather into chilly temperature in Sharad Ritu. There are several Pittaj and Raktaj disorders as a result of Pitta's supremacy in Sharad Ritu's Prakopa Avastha.

This Ritu also suppresses the Agni. Consume the food items that Tikta, Madhura, and Kashaya do in Rasa. The Pitta Shamak qualities of the Tikta, Madhura, and Kashaya Rasa will aid in balancing the excessive Pitta Dosha. It is advised to avoid using Dravyas with Sheet Veerya (potency), as it acts against Pitta's Ushna Guna. The Sharad Ritu's reduced digestive fire is rekindled by the Laghu Gunatmak diet. Jangal Mansa, which is more Ruksha in nature and counteracts the excessive moistness in the sharad Ritu, has been specifically advised by the Acharyas to be consumed rather than Anoop Mansa. Since the moon's Saumya Guna dominates during this season and showers the elixir of life, the Acharyas' explanation of Hansodaka is also extremely pertinent because it deals with water that is detoxified by the sun's intense beams. One of the important days is Sharad Purnima, which falls during Sharad Ritu. On that day, the moon is closest to the Earth, and it is believed that its beams have healing characteristics that nourish the body and the soul. The extended exposure to the sun's strong rays is discouraged during this season because it increases the likelihood that the body will become dehydrated. Instead, Acharyas advise consuming Sharkara Mishrit Jal, which keeps the electrolyte balance. The Virechan is a well-known Panchkarma technique recommended by the Acharyas to attain Pitta Dosha (samyavastha) equilibrium. The Virechan cleans the channels by removing accumulated toxins, mostly from the gut, and has an unmatched effect on the overactive Pitta Dosha. Additionally, it improves meal absorption, digestion, and appetite.

Raktamokshan is another excellent Panchkarma technique that is recommended during this season and is a very efficient therapy for various types of Raktaj diseases since the increased Pitta frequently vitiates the blood humour. Along with Ritucharya, the Acharyas also describe one of Ritusandhi's outstanding conceptions. Ritusandhi is the time between the final seven days of an existing Ritu and the first seven days of an impending Ritu. One needs to be cautious about their health during this time because the Doshas are likely to vitiate to their highest levels. The rule to be followed throughout this time is to gradually give up the current Ritu's routine and acquire its ethics. The Yumdanshtra Kaal, which includes the final 8 days of the Kartik month and the first 8 days of the Margashirsha month, was mentioned by Acharya Sharangdhara. There are claims that this time would have a negative impact on the body, therefore eating should be light and moderate.

CONCLUSION

This review summarizes, various significant aspects of Sharad Ritucharya explained by the Acharyas and its positive approach towards health. Ritucharya and Dincharya explained by Acharya is not less than a boon for mankind, looking at present scenario. The external environment has a strong impact on our body and its necessary to change the diet and behavior according to changing seasons. Saumya Awastha (State of equilibrium) of all the three Doshas is the ultimate aim to stay healthy and as said by Acharyas, the changing seasons brings about the changes in the concentration of the Doshas giving rise to their various stages like Sanchay, Prakop and Prasar etc, which is responsible for deterioration of health. Following proper Ritucharya as stated by Acharyas brings about homeostasis of Doshas and let us remain in harmony with health. The Sharad Ritu is one the most dynamic season as the climate doesn't remain the same where there are sharp rays of sun on hand and on other hand there is beginning of winters. So, in order to cope up with this transition, the Sharad Ritucharya must be carefully followed.

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