

Enhancing Employee Welfare through Ayurvedic Diet and Medical Astrology

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I. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is one of the foremost systems of traditional Indian medicine that has “stood the test of time and may have a fruitful contribution to the overall alleviation of human suffering”. (Narayanaswamy, 1981). As far as its historical background is concerned this system of Ayurveda has its roots in “the ancient schools of Hindu Philosophical teachings named Vaisheshika and the school of logic named as Nyaya. It is also related to the manifestation framework, well-known as Samkhya, and it was established in the same period when schools of Nyaya and Vaisheshika flourished.” (Jaiswal and Williams, 2017). According to Ayurveda, people have a unified mind, body, and soul and this harmony within the body is maintained by the successful coordination of three doshas – Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. Modern organizational culture has acknowledged the central role of mental and physical health in the overall planning and administration of businesses. By deploying Ayurvedic practices for employee well-being, the management of an organization can strive for the holistic development of employees across departments. This research aims, to establish a holistic approach towards employee well-being by promoting an Ayurvedic Diet combined with some principles of Medical Astrology.

II. THE DIET AND THE EMPLOYEES

Employee “Productivity is defined in terms of absenteeism (sick leave, days off) and presenteeism (reduced performance)” (Drewnowski, 2020). Poor diet of employees leads to obesity and other related health issues impacting workplace results. Hence, it becomes obligatory for employers to promote the

health and well-being of their employees, reduce absenteeism, and create a positive corporate image. (Mhurchu et. al, 2010). High-quality workplace catering can be one such method to improve employee engagement (Bhatia, 2018). However, several employers may not give due importance to it. Thus, the responsibility to consume a well-balanced diet, and drink adequate water is left to the employee (Melián-Fleitas et. al, 2021).

But do the employees take their health seriously? A striking example is that of the Indian Information and Technology (IT) sector. The IT employees tend to sit in the workplace for more than 8 hours and consume more high-fat sugar and salt foods and fewer fruits and vegetables (Banerjee et. al, 2023). Another phenomenon observed among these employees is that they also tend to skip meals frequently and drink sugar-based beverages in between intervals. This can have disastrous consequences. Unless this diet is reversed and physical activity is increased, obesity, and non-communicable and chronic diseases among such employees will go up (Gupta & Garg, 2020). These issues are not restricted to the IT sector alone but extend to several other service-driven sectors as well.

III. THE AYURVEDIC DIET

While people may believe in traditional food practices, they may not necessarily practice them (Shyju et.al, 2022). However, an attempt must be made to follow the Vedic concept of a traditional diet classified as Saatvik, Raajasik, and Tamasik. (Pal et al, 2019)

1. The Saatvik diet is very simple, consists of only vegetable items without any spices or roots, and includes fruits, nuts, and milk.

2. The Raajasik diet was designed for food lovers and includes all kinds of vegetables, onion, garlic, fried food, etc. enriched with spices
3. The Tamasik diet contains all types of food items including non-vegetarian food with excessive oil, sweets, spices, etc.

Effect of the 3 Diets

1. The Saatvik diet led to a calm and peaceful aftereffect on the human body and mind. Learned persons, who aspired to have full control of themselves and wanted to be free from external temptations chose a Saatvik diet and remained happy
2. The Raajasik diet stimulated the brain and provided an ample supply of energy to the body. Excess consumption led to insomnia, restlessness, anxiety, anger, etc. And it increased the never-ending desire for fame and wealth. As such, people consuming the Raajasik diet were found to be always unhappy, and certain expectations remained unfulfilled.
3. The Taamasik diet generated excessive desire and negative energy within the body. As a result, people who consume such diet regularly, develop a tendency to be engaged in anti-social activities. Reheating, use of preservatives, stale food, etc. are also considered under the Taamasik category.

Combinations to be Avoided

The Ayurveda guides certain combinations of food which may be avoided in every meal. A few examples in this regard are given below

1. Banana & Milk: Calcium present in milk prevents absorption of Iron from banana
2. Tomato & Cucumber: Tomato is acidic whereas cucumber is alkaline. Hence it is not digested properly when consumed together.
3. Pasta & Minced Meat when taken together remain undigested as starch requires an alkaline digestive environment whereas protein requires acidic. It would lead to heartburn, bloating, etc. In the case of Indian food, we get a similar combination of Meat Curry & Rice, etc.
4. Meat & Cheese: Meat contains iron & zinc which are not absorbed when combined with cheese due to the presence of calcium. One can have both separately and with suitable vegetables.

5. Cheese and Pasta - Protein in cheese, and carbohydrates in pasta require a different environment for digestion.
6. Milk should never be combined with onion, brinjal, banana, pineapple, jackfruit, sour fruits, melon, meat, fish & salt.
7. Curd should not be consumed with most fruits
8. Honey should never be cooked and never be combined with Ghee
9. Fruits and Vegetables should not be taken together as both require a different time for digestion.

Other Rules of a Traditional Diet

The following rules of traditional diet can be followed for proper assimilation of nutrients in the human body

1. The food selection must be as per the needs of the body which must be adjusted according to weather, climate, and geographic locations
2. Local and seasonal ingredients must be used for cooking which must be used in a combination of diets to get all nutrients.
3. Homemade food prepared in hygienic conditions with the peaceful mind of the cook can lead to a better taste and contain elements of Sattva (Saatvik diet)
4. One must take a meal only when the previous one has completed the process of digestion.
5. One must not have any breakfast without taking a bath. One must wash hands, face, and feet before subsequent meals to have a soothing effect on the mind and body. The process must be repeated after every meal.
6. One must observe, concentrate, and praise the food being consumed and be in a positive mental state during the process. Stress, anger, etc. would lead to indigestion of the food consumed.
7. One must eat at moderate speed and chew it properly. The suggested count is 32 (the times when food should be chewed).
8. One must not speak while eating.
9. One must drink sufficient water at the correct time.
10. There should be a gap of about two hours between dinner and before going to bed.

The biological clock within our body is synchronized with the day & night cycle. Saatvik foods should be consumed in the morning to utilize their energy for day-to-day activities. Similarly, Raajasik and

Tamasik food should be avoided at night as it would not allow the body to rest properly.

In present times, the food consumption habits of people have led Saatvik and Raajasik foods to transform into Tamasik food due to reheating, preservatives, and related practices. It is also found in packaged foods. Besides the types of food, other factors like time, quantity, etc. have an important role in assimilation of the nutrients and their effect on the body fast-food outlets are becoming popular in India, due to their tendency to satisfy instant hunger in addition to the time and cost benefits associated with it. (Shyju et.al, 2022). Thus, there is a gradual shift to Tamasik food unknowingly.

IV. AYURVEDA AND MEDICAL ASTROLOGY

As per Ayurveda, the three fundamental bodily bio-elements or doshas (humor) are called Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. An individual may have a body that is Phlegmatic (predominance of Kapha), Bilious (predominance of Pitta), Windy (predominance of Vata), or a combination of these types. The Ayurvedic diet or traditional Indian diet when followed in its true sense can help individuals to balance these doshas in their body.

However, this does not imply that such individuals will not be affected by diseases and health issues. As per the traditional Indian Knowledge Systems, zodiacal, planetary, and stellar influences have a notable effect on the health and habits of an individual. The configuration of planets in the heavens in certain angular positions emanates certain forces of energy. These energies when not in harmony with the energies of an individual bring physical and mental disturbances. As such, there is a need to understand Medical Astrology combined with Ayurvedic Practices.

There are twelve zodiac signs/houses and seven planets as per Vedic Astrology. The twelve signs of the zodiac from Aries to Pisces and the twelve houses in Astrology govern different organs of the body. Each zodiac sign represents a certain part of the human body and the diseases peculiar to it. They also represent the Five Elements (Ether, Fire, Air, Earth & Water) of the Human Body. Each planet indicates certain types of diseases. The seven planets recognized in Indian Vedic Astrology correspond to the different systems of the human body, as Lords of respective

Bhavas/Rasi/Signs of Kalapursha:

1. Sun – The Skeletal System,
2. Moon – The Circulatory System,
3. Mars – The Muscular System
4. Mercury – The Nervous System
5. Venus – The Reproductive System
6. Jupiter – The Digestive System, and
7. Saturn – The Excretory System

Being Karmic planets, Rahu and Ketu are troublemakers and influence other planets to create troubles

These planets in turn affect different parts of the human body and cause health problems as stated below (Krishna Kumar, 1998). Rahu and Ketu also tend to affect some parts in this case.

1. Sun – It represents the heart, eye-sight, body constitution, health and eyes
2. Moon – It represents the breast, mind, head, chest, kidney, water content in the body, and heart.
3. Mars – It represents blood, marrow, genitals, rectum, veins head, female organs, Fore-head, nose, vitality, pregnancy problems, blood pressure, emotions, anger, aggression, and the menstrual cycle
4. Mercury – It represents the tongue, arms, mouth, chest, spinal cord, gall bladder, nerves, skin, and memory.
5. Jupiter – It represents body fat, kidney, liver, tongue, right ear, higher mental plane and diabetes
6. Saturn - It represents all types of joints, particularly knee cap and knee joints, arthritis, and muscular pains
7. Venus – It represents eye trouble, pigmentation, tooth problems, legs, hair, bones, sweat glands, limbs, fatigue, weakness, aging, wrinkles, disease-causing acute sorrow, piles
8. Rahu – It represents bad teeth, dental problems, a suicidal mind, murderous acts, and qualities of a maniac. It also represents the excretory organs and genitals.
9. Ketu – It represents feet, anus, and impotency

Each of the seven planets is given control over some Ayurvedic dosha-causing disease. The type and position of disease would depend upon the nature of the planet and the sign occupied by it. The periodicity of suffering will be denoted by the Dasha and Bhukti

of such a planet. The dosha controlled by the planets is given below

1. Sun – Pitta
2. Jupiter – Kapha
3. Moon - Vata & Kapha
4. Mars – Pitta
5. Mercury – Pitta, Vata & Kapha.
6. Venus – Vata & Kapha and
7. Saturn – Vata.

The representation of 12 houses in Vedic Astrology and its association with the Human Body can be summarized in the image given below

Feet Left eye	12	Head Brain Mind Physical body Headaches	1	Face Tongue Teeth Eyes Tonsils Voice	2	Neck Throat Ears Shoulders Hands Arm bones	3
Shanks Legs Left ear	11	Signs and Parts of the body				Heart Lungs Chest Accident (Vehicular)	4
Knees Bones Flesh	10					Womb Black magic Pregnancy Gall bladder Intestines Back bone	5
Thighs Limbs	9	Private parts Piles Hernia Anus Menstrual Contageous	8	Semen Female organs Ovaries Urinary Female Diseases Kidneys	7	Stomach Indigestion Liver Nervous	6

Figure 1 – The parts of the body and the diseases assigned to it as per Vedic Astrology.

Source – A Book on Medical Astrology – Horoscope for Stethoscope by Dr S Krishna Kumar

A person will have unsound health if he carries the following astrological combinations and then a traditional diet will not help him beyond a point

1. If Lagna (First House) lord is with 6th House lord of Horoscope
2. If the Sun is in Lagna but not Exalted or in Own house, and the Moon in 5th and 6th house, and the Lagna lord is with natural malefic planets
3. In Lagna Sun Moon and Saturn are placed.
4. Malefic planets in the Lagna and Papa Kartari
5. If the Jupiter, Venus & Moon are placed in 6th, 7th and 8th houses.
6. If the 11th lord is placed in 6th house
7. If 6th, 8th and the 12th lords are placed in own houses.

8. If Lagna lord is malefic planets in the 6th, 8th or 12th house.
9. If there are no malefic planets in the 3rd, 6th, and 11th houses.
10. If Malefics in Trines and quadrants and/or Gulika/Mandi is placed along with lagna lord
11. If Lagna lord is placed in the 8th house and watery sign.

V. HEALTHY EMPLOYEES AT THE WORKPLACE – THE IMPACT

As seen earlier, health issues and diseases can be minimized or avoided with the help of a traditional diet and following the principles of medical astrology. However, a healthy diet should be complemented by regular exercise and in no way should be misconstrued to be a substitute for physical inactivity. Healthy employees, in body and spirit, can transform the workplace in the following ways

1. Diversity and Inclusivity – Employees would be more open to diversity and inclusivity practices at the workplace. The corporates can promote diversity in hiring, supporting various cultural practices, and ensuring that all employees feel valued. Organizations can benefit from a more innovative and dynamic workforce as diversity and inclusivity enhance employee satisfaction fostering creativity and problem-solving skills.
2. Conflict Resolution and Emotional Intelligence – The first and foremost impact of a healthy employee would be on his emotional intelligence. An employee with a higher EQ would amicably resolve conflicts due to enhanced understanding and empathy. This approach also strengthens interpersonal relationships within the organization.
3. Ethical Behaviour - A Healthy mind would always promote ethical behaviour. HR practices that draw on ethical teachings can help in shaping a strong corporate culture grounded in integrity and responsibility. By promoting ethical behavior and transparency, organizations can build trust with employees, customers, and stakeholders. This not only enhances the organization's reputation but also creates a positive and ethical work environment.
4. Positive Leadership – Following the system of a traditional diet and borrowing some concepts

from the Indian philosophical traditions, the organizations can help cultivate leaders who are not only effective in driving their goals but also mindful and compassionate. The emphasis on selfless service can foster a culture of collaboration and altruism, while the focus on equanimity can help leaders navigate challenges with calm and resilience. By integrating these principles, organizations can develop leaders who inspire and motivate their teams through both action and example.

5. Holistic Well-Being of Employees – Incorporating Ayurvedic principles into HR practices can lead to the development of comprehensive wellness programs. Employee wellness initiatives can help in reducing stress and improving overall mental health, which leads to productivity and job satisfaction. By addressing wellness from a holistic perspective, companies can create a balanced and supportive work environment.

VI. CONCLUSION

Integrating Ayurveda and other Indian knowledge systems into HR practices offers a unique and enriching approach to managing human resources. By focusing on holistic well-being, ethical leadership, conflict resolution, and inclusivity, organizations can develop more effective and compassionate HR strategies. These practices not only enhance employee satisfaction and productivity but also contribute to the creation of a positive and resilient organizational culture. As organizations continue to navigate complex challenges in the modern world, drawing on the wisdom of Indian knowledge systems can provide valuable guidance and support.

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