



Review Article

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CONCEPTS OF DIETETICS AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN PANCHAKARMA: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Due to various exogenous factors like lack of sleep, inappropriate food habits metabolic toxins (*Ama*) get deeply accumulated in the body which causes congestion in the patency of micro and macro channels leading to the stagnation of excreta and waste metabolites in the tissues, eventually unbalancing all the three *Doshas* in the body which catalyze the occurrence of various diseases like eczema, allergies, improper digestion, chronic fatigue etc. *Panchakarma* is a *Shodhana* therapy which cleanses the body at both gross organ and cellular level by eliminating the metabolic toxin (*Ama*) which restored the equilibrium of *Dosha* and give rise to permanent healing from the disease. As a consequence of this vigorous cleansing, metabolism (*Agni*) get slowed down. Thus, there are certain dietary measure and regimen (*Samsarjana krama*) is mentioned in the *Ayurvedic* classics which are essentially to be followed to restore the hypo function *Agni* and one can attain the utmost result from the *Panchakarma* therapies is to be discussed here.

Keywords: *Ama, Dosha, Panchakarma, Samsarjana krama, Agni*

INTRODUCTION

There are two types of treatment modalities available in *Ayurvedic* classics -*Shaman* and *Shodhan*. *Shodhan* has given paramount importance which expels the morbid *Dosha* at nearest possible route from their route level. This *Shodhan Chikitsa* is completed in three steps *Purva karma* (Preoperative), *Pradhan karma* (operative) and *Paschat karma* (post-operative). *Vaman, Virechan, Basti, Nasya, Raktamokshana* is known as *Panchakarma (Pradhan karma)*¹. Prior to the main therapy *Dipana Pachana Snehana Swedana* is commonly done² and as far as the *Paschat karma* is contemplated, more focus is drawn towards the *Samsarjana krama*.

In many instance foods itself is used as a curative measure in *Ayurveda*. Thus, specific diet pattern is prescribed in disease conditions and some prophylactic and interventional diet is also recommended. *Pathya* which nourishes the body, mind, intellect and maintains the state of health by sustaining the normal functioning of body organs in the meantime it also restrains the sickness and alter the anomalies that may ensue. In *Panchakarma Pathya* helps to boost the *Annavaha Srotas* and *Purishavaha Srotas* to regain the healthy state from the weakened one. *Pathya* not only proponent of wholesome food but it also aimed to accompanied certain dietary measure and regimen to bypass the disease state and to maintains the equanimity of *Dosha* and *Dhatus* with proper defecation of *Mala*.³

This article is focus on the dietary concepts during various procedure of *Panchakarma* and importance of *Pathya kalpana* during *Samsarjana karma* in *Panchakarma*

Conceptual study

Poorva karma

In *Poorvakarma Dosha* presents in *Dhatu* and *Srotas* are moistened by *Snehan*, liquefied by *Swedana* and then brought to *Koshta* (GIT), thereafter it expelled by *Shodhana*.

Diet during *Snehapana* (Internal oleation)

Food should be moderate in amount *Ushna, Dravya*, in nature like hot rice gruel, green gram soup, hot water.⁴ Digestive and carminative foods such as *Trikatu Churna, Panchkola Yavagu* to help in the digestion of fatty material. Foods which are *Abhishyandi* like curd, jaggery which causes obstruction in the channels, *Sankeerna, Viruddha* (incompatible), excess fatty material should be avoided.^{5,6}

Diet during *Swedana* (Sudation Therapy)

Food like hot liquid rice gruel appropriate to take to reinstate the lost fluid during sweating. *Abhishyandi* food should avoid.⁷

Pradhana karma

Diet during *Vamana* (Emesis/TIC therapy)

Vamana is a process in which the vitiated *Kapha* at its own site, combination of *Kapha* with *Pitta* or the condition in which *Pitta* or *Vata* invade the *Kapha Dosha* are expelled through the upper route i.e. mouth.

Diet on the previous night of Vamana

Mamsa rasa, milk, *Krishra (Khichadi)* made up of rice and *Masha*, *Masha vada*, *Masha Payasa*, Sesame and jaggery in enough quantity with curd is advised to aggravates the *Kapha Dosh* to facilitates the process of *Vaman*.^{8,9}

Diet on the day before Vamana

Ikshurasa, milk, *Mamsa rasa*, *Yavagu* mixed with *Ghrita* is advised however excess quantity of *Ghrita* should be avoided.¹⁰

Diet during Virechan (Purgation therapy)

Virechana is a procedure in which the *Pitta* and *Pitta* associated with *Vata* and *Kapha Dosh* are expelled from the lower gastrointestinal tract. Foods like *laghu*, *Snigdha*, *Dravya*, *Ushna*,

Ahara, *Mamsa rasa*. Hot liquid, unctuous diet, meat soup, sour fruits, lemon rice etc is ideal prior to the *Virechana*. To avoid *Vaman* food advised in *Virechana* should be such that not to increase the *kapha Dosh*¹¹ *Acharya Sushruta* advised light diet and *Phalamla Rasa* (sour fruit juice) as this will increase the *Pitta* and facilitates the *Virechana* easily.

Diet after Vamana and Virechana

As after *Vamana Samana Vayu* and *Kledaka Kapha*, in *Virechana Samana Vayu*, *Pachaka Pitta* and *Apana Vayu* disturbance occurred. It is essential to follow a diet in a sequential manner from light to heavy (*Peya-Vilepi-Akrita Yusha-Krita Yusha – Akrita Mamsa rasa – Krita Mamsa rasa*) which is mentioned as *Peyadi Samsarjana Krama* in *Ayurvedic text*¹³ in order to gradually enhance the metabolism (*Agni*). (Table 2)¹²

Table 1: Food items used in Samsarjana Krama

<i>Peya</i>	prepared by adding rice with 14 times of water, thin in consistency ¹⁴	<i>Laghu</i> , <i>Grahi</i> , <i>Dhatu Poshaka</i> , <i>Dipana</i> , <i>Vata anulomana</i> ^{15,16}
<i>Vilepi</i>	prepared by adding rice with 4 times of water, thicker in consistency	<i>Dhatu Vardhaka</i> , <i>Tarpaka</i> , <i>Kapha nashaka</i> , <i>Hridhyabalkarak Madhur</i> , <i>Pitta shamak</i> ¹⁷
<i>Yusha</i>	<i>Krita</i> and <i>Akrita</i>	<i>Laghu</i> , <i>Balakaraka</i> , <i>Ruchikar</i> , <i>Kaphanashaka</i> , <i>Dipan</i> ¹⁸
<i>Mamsa rasa</i>	<i>Krita</i> and <i>Akrita</i>	<i>Brimhana</i> , <i>Preenana</i> , <i>Vranaha</i> ¹⁹

Table 2: Sequence of Peyadi Samsarjana Krama Dravya as administered

<i>Peya</i>	More liquid + rice (in small amount)	Carbohydrates in less quantity
<i>Vilepi</i>	More rice (solid) + less liquid	Carbohydrates increased
<i>Akrita Yusha</i>	Pulses without salt and fat	Protein content
<i>Krita Yusha</i>	Pulses with salt and fat	Protein along with fat
<i>Akrita Mamsa rasa</i>	Fat present in Mamsa + protein	Protein more + fat
<i>Krita Mamsa rasa</i>	Fat + protein (Mamsa) + supplement fat and salt	Protein + fat increased in more amount

Diet during Niruha Basti (Decoction enema)

It is the decoction enema procedure of *Panchakarma* which is advised in cases of vitiated *Vata* and *Vata* associated *Dosha* present in the body. After observing *Samyak Niruha Lakshana* food advised should be light i.e. 1/3rd of the routine diet, in accordance to the *Dosha* dominance like *Yusha*, *Kshira*, *Mamsa rasa* in *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* respectively to avert the occurrence of disease caused by moving and agitated *mala* induced by *Basti*. Diet and regimen should be followed double the time (*Parihara Kala*) of treatment of enema therapy.²⁰

Diet during Anuvasana Basti (Oil/Fat enema)

To curb the morbid *Vata Dosh* and *Vata* associated *Dosha Sneha Basti/ Anuvasana Basti* is advised in *Panchakarma* just after the intake of food. Food should be given 1/4th of daily quantity of diet and walking 100 steps after the intake of food and elimination of natural surge is essential prior to the administration of the *Anuvasana Basti*. Water boiled with coriander and ginger; hot water alone is advised after *Basti Pratyagamana*. Diet and regimen all of the *Snehapana Vidhi* should be followed.^{21,22}

Diet during Nasya karma (Errhine therapy)

Nasya is the important therapy mentioned specifically for the *Urdhvajatrugata* diseases and in *Apamarga Tanduliyam Adhyaya*, it has been given first place in the sequence of *Panchakarma* in *Charaka*. It is recommending taking light meal with like warm water and should stay in windless place. Day

sleep; use of cold water for any reason should be avoided. All diet and regimen of internal oleation is advised to be followed.²³

Diet during Raktamokshana (Venesection)

Vitiated *Rakta* act as vehicle for carrying disease from one place to another *Raktamokshana* is the important procedure in *Panchakarma* which drains out the vitiated *Rakta* from the body and cured diseases. After *Raktamokshana* food which pacify the *Doshas* like light carminative *Panchkola Yavagu*, *Yavagu* with mild *Ghee* is advised in order to prevent *Murcha* and *Braham* and before *Raktamokshana* food like hot liquid gruel, prepared of sesame and rice is ideal. Avoid incompatible diet like milk and salt, milk and sour foods etc during the procedure.

DISCUSSION

Panchakarma is the 5 steps purification procedure which does the systematic purification of the body at the cellular level which helps to rejuvenate the biological system by restoring the balance of all the three *Dosha*. *Sharangadhar* has described various *Pathya Kalpana* like *Peya*, *Vilepi*, *Yavagu*, and *Yusha* (Table 1) which are to be used in all the three stages of *Panchakarma* treatment.

Depending on the level of major evacuator procedure in *Panchakarma* mucosal insult of GIT takes place at mild, moderate and severe level, due to this rapidly shedding of the secretory cells of the GIT tract occurred which arises to poor absorption and digestion hence metabolism (*Agni*) get slowed down. To this reason food is to be reintroduced in the controlled

sequential manner so as to give the sufficient time to heal the GIT tract and restore the normal metabolism. In the meantime, body also gets all the necessary main nutrients of the body in the rapidly absorbable form. Food introduction (Pathya Kalpana) begins with easily digestible starch (Peya) to more complex starch (Vilepi) followed by gradual introduction of water-soluble amino acids (Akrita Yusha) alone and processed in spice with Ghrita (Krita Yusha).

At end more complex protein (Akrita – Krita Mamsa rasa) is introduced before the body is exposed to normal food. All the 3 Major components of food (Carbohydrates, Proteins and Fats) are supplied and all the digestive enzymes to digest the 3 constituents are here by gradually increased in the body²⁴.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the Panchakarma treatment Agni plays an important role, as during the procedure the strength of Agni determines the dosage of drugs used in various procedures of Panchakarma and at the end of procedure the Agni is the major factor to which success of Panchakarma therapy depends. Thus, these specific dietary measure and regimen play cardinal role in whole Panchakarma procedure to nourishes the Agni at normal level.

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