

Effects of Changing Lifestyle on Annavaahasrotas: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays changing food habits, lack of exercise, sedentary lifestyle, late mornings, working late in nights, late night sleep, increased stress all these factors of modern lifestyle influences on physical and mental health of human beings.

Annavaaha srotas is one of the important srotas described in ayurveda. From modern point of view annavaaha srotas can be correlated to gastrointestinal tract. According to ayurveda unhealthy diet and vihar are responsible for annavaaha srotas dushti which inturn is responsible for illness. Healthy diet and vihar keeps annavaaha srotas vishudh which inturn is responsible for health.

Unhealthy lifestyle followed by millions of people is responsible for annavaaha srotas dushti.

Therefore understanding effects of modern lifestyle on annavaaha srotas have been reviewed from various resources and have been systematically presented so as to emphasize its ill effects and measures to be adapted towards healthy living.

KEYWORDS: Annavaahasrotas, Lifestyle

INTRODUCTION

Anatomically, annavaaha srotas can be considered as upper part of gastrointestinal tract from mouth to small intestine where digestion and absorption occurs. And Gastro-intestinal tract is too related to all other system. According to ayurveda all types of diseases are initiated by annavaaha srotas vikruti and if annavaaha srotas is vitiated then all other srotas are affected. So annavaaha srotas is considered as a very important srotas out of all srotas.

Nowadays food habits, food contents, life style are changing very rapidly which are causative factor for indigestion and persistence of the same factor produces diseases.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ayurvedic Review

According to Sushrutacharya the foodcarrying srotas (annavaahasrotas) have their roots in the amashaya and in the food-carrying dhamanis. (Su.Sha. 9/13)^[1]

According to charakacharya annavaaha srotas have their origin in amashaya and the left side. (Ch.Vi. 5/8)^[2]

The symptoms of annavaaha srotas affection are loss of desire for food, anorexia, indigestion and vomiting. (Ch.Vi. 5/8)^[2] Amavaaha srotas are affected due to intake of food in excessive quantity, untimely and unhealthy food and because

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of vitiated agni (digestive fire or digestion capacity). (Ch.Vi. 5/12)^[2]

Food and drinks produce energy in mind, constitution of dhatus, strength, complexion and clarity of sense organs, if properly taken, otherwise they become harmful. (Ch.Su. 27/3)^[2]

One should take food in (proper) quantity. This quantity of food depends on the power of digestion. (Ch.Su. 5/3)^[2]

Whatever quantity of food taken gets digested in time without disturbing the normalcy should be regarded as the measure of (proper) quantity. (Ch.Su. 5/4)^[2]

The food taken in proper quantity provides certainly strength, complexion and happy life to the person without disturbing normalcy. [Ch. Su. 5/8]^[1]

Inappropriate quantity is of two types-deficient and excessive. (Ch.Vi. 2/7)^[2]

Not only quantity of food alone is responsible for vitiation of agni but also the use of food and drinks which are heavy, rough, cold, dry, disliked, distending, burning, unclean, antagonistic and taken untimely and also while afflicted with

psychic emotions such as passion, anger, greed, confusion, envy, bashfulness, grief, conciet, excitement and fear. (Ch.Vi. 2/8)^[2]

Even the wholesome food also taken in proper quantity, does not get digested due to anxiety, grief, fear, anger, uncomfortable bed and vigil. (Ch.Vi. 2/9)^[2]

Life-span, complexion, strength, health, enthusiasm, corpulence, lusture, immunity, energy, heat processes and vital breath all these depend on body-fire. One dies if this fire is extinguished, lives long free from disorders if it is functioning properly, gets ill if it is vitiated, hence agni (digestive fire) is the root cause of all. (Ch.Chi. 15/3-4)^[3]

That food nourishes dhatus, ojas, strength, complexion etc. depends on agni because rasa etc. can't be produced from undigested food. (Ch.Chi. 15/5)^[3]

Agni is deranged by fasting, eating during indigestion, over-eating, irregular eating, intake of unsuitable, heavy, cold, too rough and contaminated food, faulty adaptation to place, time and season and suppression of natural urges. Agni thus deranged becomes unable to digest even the light food and food being undigested gets acidified and toxic. (Ch.Chi. 15/42-44)^[3]

One should eat warm, unctuous, in proper quantity, after the previous food is digested, non-antagonistic, in favourable place, with all the favourable accessories, not too fast, not too slow, not while talking or laughing and with full concentration after due consideration to the self. (Ch.Vi. 1/24)^[2]

one should eat warm (food) because it stimulates the digestive fire, gets digested quickly.

One should eat unctuous because it stimulates the unstimulated digestive fire, gets digested quickly.

Food taken in proper quantity whithout disturbing vata, pitta and kapha only promotes life-span, easily passes dwon to anus, does not disturb the (digestive) fire, gets digested with comfort; hence one should eat in proper quantity.

One should eat when the previous meal is digested because if one eats during indigestion, the eaten food mixing the product of the earlier meal with that of the later one vitiates all the dosas quickly, on the contrary, when one eats after the previous meal is digested well, the dosas are situated in their own locations, agni is stimulated, appetite is arisen, entrances of the channels are open.

One should take food consisting of the items non-antagonistic in potency. While doing so one is not afflicted with the disorders caused by food antagonistic in potency. One should eat in favourable place and with favourable accessories. While eating in favourable place one does not fall victim to psychic disturbance due to such factors found in otherwise places.

One should not eat fast because by eating fast the food may enter into a wrong passage, there is depression and the food is not established in its place; over and above, detection of

the defects of food and achievement of the merits of the same are not certain. Hence one should not eat too fast.

One should not eat too slow because by eating too slow one does not get satisfaction, eats much, food becomes cold and is digested irregularly.

By taking food while talking or laughing or with mind elsewhere, he is inflicted with the same defects as by eating too fast. Hence one should eat while not talking or laughing and with concentration.

This is suitable or unsuitable for me if known in this way then only it becomes suited to his self. Hence one should eat after considering his self well. (Ch.Vi. 1/25)^[2]

Modern Review

Everybody is busy these days. In most families now both parents work and neither has time to cook proper meals at home. Readymade food that can be bought from stores is hugely popular with these people because it helps them save time. Also, in some cases, packaged meals are less expensive than regular homemade meals. Better still, they are available in a variety of tastes and flavours. All of these factors encourage the consumption ready to eat meals.

Regular consumption of readymade food leads to various health problems in people. They contain high levels of preservatives and additives that can cause various diseases.^[4]

And these ready to eat food includes most pizzas, white bread, most packed fruit juices, sweetened breakfast cereals, Pastries, cookies, and cakes, french fries and potato chips, ice cream, over eating dairy products, candy bars, processed meat, processed cheese, most fast food meals, high-calorie coffee drinks, anything with added sugar or refined grains, most highly processed food are generally considered as unhealthy.^[5]

In today's world, peoples spend a lot more of our days dining out at restaurants than we did in the past. For your grandparents, eating out was likely to be a rare treat saved for special occasions. Nowadays, many families eat out on a weekly basis.

In the modern world restaurants, supermarkets and other places selling food are open 24/7, meaning that food is available whenever we want it. The fast-paced lives that people lead today mean that we pick up packets of crisps, biscuits and other snacks without hesitation.

People in the modern day do far less exercise. Modern life is all about the sedentary lifestyle – many of us drive to work, sit at a desk all day, drive home and then sit in front of the TV, until we go to bed. We then still have our 3 meals a day as well as all the snacks and hot drinks in between. Many of us consume more energy that we use, which causes us to become lethargic, unhealthy and overweight.^[6]

Nowadays, stress is a common problem in modern life. Stress is a basic thing of everyday life and there is no way to escape. Stress could be of caused by pressure and problem at work location and individual lifestyle.^[7]

DISCUSSION

In ayurveda annavahasrotas is considered as one of the important srotas. According to ayurveda vitiated agni i.e. digestive capacity is responsible for affection of annavahasrotas. Agni is vitiated by wrong food habits & stress. Wrong food habits vitiating agni includes overeating, dry, salty, heavy, non fresh foods, frosty food, no strict routine of lunch & dinner, no exercise, stressful life, eating too slow or too fast, eating before previous food is digested.

The modern lifestyle and hectic schedules are encouraging more and more people to consume ready to eat food, so peoples are not getting fresh food. Peoples are preferring to eat pizzas, burgers, white bread, packed fruit juices, sweetened breakfast cereals, pastries, cookies, and cakes, french fries and potato chips, chocolates, ice cream, over eating dairy products, candy bars, high-calorie coffee drinks, anything with added sugar or refined grains which are heavy to digest. Peoples are preferring to eat processed meat, processed cheese which consists of preservatives in large amount. Such foods are salty, dry.

Modern life is all about the sedentary lifestyle we then still have our 3 meals a day as well as all the snacks and hot drinks in between. This causes eating before previous food is digested.

Nowadays peoples are eating food while watching tv which causes too slow eating. Because of heavy work shedule peoples eats too fast. Modern lifestyle increases stress which causes emotional disturbances. Again emotional disturbance is responsible for vitiation of agni.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of above discussion it may be concluded that, modern lifestyle is responsible for vitiation of digestion capacity which is responsible for annavaha srotas dushti.

ABBREVIATIONS

Su.Sha. – Sushruta Samhita Sharir Sthana

Ch. Su. - Charak Samhita Sutra Sthana

Ch.Vi. - Charak Samhita Viman Sthana

Ch. Chi. - Charak Samhita Chikitsa Sthana

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