

**UTTARAYANA AND ITS EFFECT\***

BY

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**Abstract**

Ritu expresses different effects on the body as well as the environment. Ayurveda has depicted various rules and regimens (Charya) concerning diet and behaviour to acclimatize body's homeostasis with seasonal changes. The prime principle of Ayurveda is preventive aspect which can be achieved by the change in diet and practices according to change in climatic condition. Lifestyle disorders are very common in the present era, basically originating from lack of following seasonal regimens. A firm scientific analysis as mentioned in the classics of Ayurveda and their importance on lifestyle disorders has been discussed.

**Key words:** Lifestyle disorders, seasonal regimens, seasonal variations in India.

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**Introduction**

With the change in season, the change is very evident in the environment we live in. Various changes in bio-life around us, such as flowering in spring and leaf-shedding in autumn plants and so on. As we are also part of the same ecology, the body is greatly influenced by external environment. When body is unable to adopt itself to stressors due to changes in specific traits of seasons, it may lead to Dosha Vaishamyā, which eventually turns to disease condition. Prevention of disease to maintain health is being the first and foremost aim of the holistic science of Ayurveda. In Tasyashitya chapter of Charaka Samhita, it is said "Tasya Shitadiya Ahaarbalam Varnascha Vardhate. Tasyartusatmayam Vaditam Chestaharvyapasrayam," which means 'the strength and complexion of the person knowing the suitable diet and regimen for every season and practicing accordingly are enhanced <sup>[1]</sup>. Main theme of this chapter is to make people aware concerning the methods to live in accordance with the changing climate. In this article Uttarayana and its effect emphasis has been given on the impact of Uttarayana on lifestyle.

**Uttarayana**

Uttarayana indicates the ascent of the sun or northward movement of the sun. In this period the sun and the wind are powerful. The sun takes away the strength of the people and the cooling quality of the earth. It brings increase in the Tikta (bitter), Kashaya (astringent), and Katu (pungent) Rasa (taste), respectively, which brings about dryness in the body and reduces the Bala (strength). It is also called Adana Kala. According to modern science, this can be compared with the gradual movement of earth around the sun to the position, in which the rays of the sun falls perpendicularly at 30 degree meridian

of the North Pole on June 21st every year, called as summer solstice. The northward journey of the Sun from Tropic of Capricorn to Tropic of Cancer happens.

During Uttarayana the seasonal changes in Indian subcontinent is from Shishira (winter) to Vasanta (spring) and to Grishma (summer). The period can be compared to mid-January to mid-July, when warmness and dryness in weather increases. It has an overall debilitating effect on environment, to which human being is also a part.

Human body is fundamentally composed of Panchamahabhootas at Anatomical level and Tridosha at structural level. Hence impact on panchamahabhoota of body occurring due to changes in season is considerable.

The concept of Panchamahabhutas (five elements) is defined vividly and scientifically in Ayurveda classics. It is stated that human body is panchabhautika (penta elemental) and the food we eat is also panchabhautik, when the food undergoes digestion with the help of jatharagni (digestive fire) parthiv (Prithvi Dominant) properties of food nourishes the parthiv parts of body. In these manner symmetrical properties of mahabhutas (elements) gives nutrition to corresponding symmetrical organs of body<sup>1</sup>. The objective of this review article is to study the conceptual as well as applied aspect of panchamahabhuta siddhant and to prove this principle as the base foundation of all other fundamentals viz. tridosha siddhant (theory of humours), garbhotpatti (foetal development), gunakarma vada (Theory of Property & Action of substances), deha sanghatana (body composition). panchamahabhut siddhant is universally accepted theory. Even it does not oppose the development of other.

For true exploration and validation of Ayurveda in all its aspects, scientific inputs should conform to Ayurveda's basic principles and philosophy. Till date so many studies have been done for elaboration of fundamental principles like Tridosha, Dhatu, Strotas, Agni, Oja, Ama etc. No any rewarding work has been done on Panchamahabhuta siddhant and it is a still stalemate for us. In this perception present attempt is enlightened on clinical application and its importance in Ayurveda. Here emphasis has been given on evolution of Panchamahabhuta, its relation with other fundamentals like Dosha (humours), Rasa (tastes), garbhotpatti (embryonic development), Diagnostic methods and samskar (biotransformation). So on the basis of thorough knowledge and understanding of Panchamahabhut siddhant one can take an account of the causative factors for the imbalance of doshas and thereby discover the solution for the treatment. Detail literature reviewed regarding Panchamahabhuta theory in the form of dissertation, thesis, review articles, internet sources, modern concepts, souvenirs and these are used as material for present conceptual study. Panchamahabhutas are important components of the body both for physiological functions and in the pathogenesis of disease. Hence sincere trial by author to elaborate the concept of Panchamahabhuta in a systemic manner is done. It is very much essential for a good physician to develop with this concept to make the basic things more clear and strong. This study also concludes that each and every fundamental principle of Ayurveda is based on Panchamahabhuta theory.

In fact every dravya (substance) in this universe has its panchamahabhuta composition doesn't matter whether they are chetan (living) or achetan (non living) <sup>2</sup>. All the Karya dravyas (perceivable matters) existing in the world are panchabhautika. Panchamahabhutas are at the juncture of subtle to the more gross manifestation of the universe. But some people think that it is having less practical utility and more mental exercise. The reasoning of anything and everything which cannot be explained by tridoshas can be very well interpreted by panchamahabhuta siddhant. This concept of panchamahabhuta is capable in providing ultimate solution for the queries in the field of Ayurveda as per acharya Sushruta<sup>[1]</sup>. In present scenario all branches of science are busy in finding the basic causes of existence. Even the most modernized equipment leads them to a more pensive problem. These are

the limitations of theirs which has attracted them to eastern philosophy. Ayurveda can satisfy them with a more sound explanation on the basis of panchamahabhuta siddhant. Evolution of Panchamahabhuta theory<sup>4</sup> It takes place in 3 levels a) First level: Evolution of Panchatanmatra (Subtle elements) b) Second level: Bhutantaranupravesha (Imitative pervasion) c) Third level: Panchikaran (Reciprocal pervasion)

a) First level: - Evolution of Panchatanmatra (Subtle elements) At the practical use level, tanmatra form of mahabhutas can be considered as eternal. The Ahamkaar(ego) manifested from mahat contains three charactersitics viz. Satva(essence), Raja(energy) and tamas(mass). The Rajas motivates tamas in specific quantities, the first product of Ahamkara by these two in shabda tanmatra.

Tanmatra is subtle quantum of mahabhuta category having a specific raja or tama. Philosophical science explained them as having a material form and indivisible further. b) Second level - Bhutantaranupravesha (Imitative pervasion) At this level, tanmatras undergo some reactions to form the premolecules of mahabhutas c) Third level - Panchikaran (pentamerization or reciprocal pervasion) The process in which molecules of the mahabhutas (primary existents) are combined with gross existents is called as Panchikaran (pentamerization).

Shodhan dravya(purifying substances) and panchamahabhuta<sup>[2]</sup>

Sushrut acharya stated that Virechan dravyas (purgative substances) are always having Prithvi and Jala mahabhuta dominancy since Prithvi and Jala mahabhuta are having Guru gunas(gravitational properties) and According to vaisheshik darshan (philosophy) adhopatana (gravity) is the prime property of guru guna. As Agni and Vayu mahabhutas are urdhwagami (upward moving tendency) and having laghu gunas therefore dravya with dominancy of these two mahabhutas helps in vaman karma (induced emesis).

### **Regimen of different seasons**

#### **Shishira (winter)**

General condition Mid-January to mid-March (approximately) is considered as Shishira Ritu (winter). During this season, the environment remains cold, along with cold wind. The predominant Rasa and Mahabhuta during this season are Tikta (bitter) and Akasha, respectively. The strength of the person becomes less, deposition of the Kapha Dosha occurs and Agni (catabolism) remains in a higher state. Diet regimen Foods having Amla (sour) as the predominant taste are preferred. Cereals and pulses, wheat/gram flour products, new rice, corn, and others, are advised. Ginger, garlic, Haritaki (fruits of Terminalia chebula), Pippali (fruits of Piper longum), sugarcane products, and milk and milk products are to be included in the diet. Foods having Katu (pungent), Tikta (bitter), Kashaya (astringent) predominant Rasa are to be avoided. Laghu (light) and Shita (cold) foods are advised to be prohibited. Lifestyle Massage with oil/powder/paste, bathing with lukewarm water, exposure to sunlight, wearing warm clothes are mentioned to follow. Vata aggravating lifestyle like exposure to cold wind, excessive walking, sleep at late night, are to be avoided.

#### **Vasanta (spring)**

General condition The approximate time is from mid-March to mid-May. This season is considered as season of flowering and origin of new leaves. Predominant Rasa and Mahabhuta during this season are Kashaya (astringent), and Prithvi and Vayu, respectively. Strength of the person remains in medium degree, vitiation of Kapha Dosha occurs and Agni remains in Manda state. Diet regimen One should take easily digestible foods. Among cereals, old barley, wheat, rice, and others are preferred. Among pulses, lentil, Mugda, and others, can be taken. Food items tasting Tikta (bitter), Katu (pungent), and Kashaya (astringent) are to be should take medicated water or boiled water. Intake of

river water, churned preparations having more water, excessive liquid and wine are to be avoided. The foods, which are heavy and hard to digest, like meat, etc., are prohibited.

Lifestyle Use of boiled water for bath and rubbing the body with oil properly after bath is advised. Medicated Basti (enema) is prescribed as an evacuative measure to expel vitiated Doshas. Getting wet in rain, day-sleep, exercise, hard work, sexual indulgence, wind, staying at river-bank, etc., are to be prohibited.

### **Grishma (summer)**

General condition Mid-May to mid-July (approximately) is considered as Grishma (summer) season. Environment is prevalent with intense heat and unhealthy wind. The river-bodies dried and the plants appear lifeless. The predominant Rasa is Katu (pungent) and Mahabhuta are Agni and Vayu. The strength of the person become less, deposition of Vata Dosha occurs, but the vitiated Kapha Dosha is pacified during this season. Agni of the person will remain in mild state. Diet regimen Foods which are light to digest—those having Madhura (sweet), Snigdha (unctuous), Sheeta (cold), and Drava (liquid) Guna, such as rice, lentil, etc, are to be taken. Drinking plenty of water and other liquids, such as cold water, buttermilk, fruit juices, meat soups, mango juice, churned curd with pepper, is to be practiced. At bedtime milk with sugar candy is to be taken. Lavana and food with Katu (pungent) and Amla (sour) taste and Ushna (warm) foods are to be avoided. Lifestyle Staying in cool places, applying sandal wood and other aromatic pastes over the body, adorning with flowers, wearing light dresses and sleeping at day time are helpful. During night one can enjoy the cooled moonrays with breeze. Excessive exercise or hardwork is to be avoided; too much sexual indulgence and alcoholic preparations are prohibited.

### **Conclusion**

The changing temperature has immense impact on human system based on the fundamental concept of 'Lok-Purusha Samya Siddhanta' hence one should take into consideration the concepts mentioned in classical texts for healthy living.

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