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Scientific analysis on timely taking food in the purview of 'Kalabhojanam Arogyakaranam'

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The main aims of *Ayurveda* are to protect the health of the healthy individual and to cure the diseased one. To achieve those aims *dinacharya* (daily regimens), *ritucharya* (seasonal regimens), various food habits and regimens for different diseases have been depicted in *Ayurveda* classics. *Ahara* is one of the main factors among these regimens. Sustainance of the body depends on *ahara* taken by us. *Ahara* is the essential factor for healthier and diseased persons. *Ahara* acts as a primary medicine for everyone also. *Charaka Samhita*, one of the major compendiums in *Ayurveda*, has categorically mentioned the need of timely food consumption for healthy life with a lucid statement 'Kalabhojanam Arogyakaranam' means taking timely food is best to keep the body healthy.

Method: Focusing on the fact that our eating habits have an important role for causing most of the diseases in the present era, an effort has been made to analyse and review the above statement with respect to two *kalas*. i.e. *Kshanadi kala* and *vyadhi avastha kala*, in this current article. *Kshanadi kala* includes day, night, month, season etc. In this article, administration of food in the *jwara vyadhi* according to its various *avastha* are explained.

Result: We observed different opinions about different times of taking meals as per day time, seasonal variation, according to the hour, situation, lifestyle etc. including condition of the disease. In the context of various disease treatments, *vyadhi-avastha kala* (the time of taking food according to the condition of the disease) is mentioned which is elaborated in this review.

Conclusion: There are many factors which depend on timely consumption of food including the physical and mental performances we do in daily life. Taking food at the appropriate time is the key to achieving a healthy life.

Keywords: *Ayurveda*, *Kalabhojanam Arogyakaranam*, *Charaka Samhita*, *Ahara*, disease.

INTRODUCTION

The main aims of *Ayurveda* are to protect the health of the healthy individual and to cure the diseased one.¹ Sustainance of body depends on *ahara* taken by us.² *Acarya Caraka* explained eight statutes regarding the consumption of food.³ Among these eight-fold rules, the *kala* bears a significant role. *Kala* is *anadi*, *vibhu* and a common factor affecting everything in this world.⁴ In the case of proper nourishment of the body, proper assimilation of nutrients from *ahara* is necessary which could not be possible without considering the time factor.

Caraka, one of the main experts in *Ayurveda*, has stated 'Kalabhojanam Arogyakaranam',⁵ which means timely food consumption is needed for achieving healthy life.

One of the main classification of *kala* is *Kshanadi kala* and *Vyadhi-avastha kala*.⁶ *Kshanadi kala* is specified for the general timeline like minutes, hours etc. for common man where as *vyadhi-avastha kala* is depicted as the situation-based timing of different treatments for physicians.⁷ Time of intake of *Ahara* is analysed in the purview of these two *kalas*.

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METHODS

Focusing on the fact that our eating habits have important role for causing the most of the diseases in the present era an effort has been made to analyse and review the above statement with respect to two *kalas*. i.e. *Kshanadi kala* and *vyadhi avastha kala*, in this current article. *Kshanadi kala* includes day, night, month, season etc. In this article, administration of food in the *jwara vyadhi* according to its various *avastha* are explained.

RESULTS

Intake of Ahara in Kshanadi kala:

The available principles regarding the different times of taking meal from different perspectives according to hour, day time, seasonal variation, situation, lifestyle etc. can be summed up as follows.

- The first *yama* of the morning (between three to six hours after sunrise) and the end of first *prahara* of night (within 3 hours after sunset) are the ideal time for taking meals.⁸
- Half or three-fourth portion of food than regular diet at one and quarter *prahara*(45min) in the morning. The second meal should be after third and fourth *prahara*⁹ for two times intake of food.
- Meals should be taken between third and fourth *prahara* at the day and night.¹⁰
- One should not consume food within the one *yama* (3 hours) of previous food.¹¹
- When the days are long (in *grishma* and *pravrita*), appropriate quantity of *drava* (liquid), *snigdha*(unctuous), and *madhura*(sweet) diet should be taken in the afternoon. When nights are longer (in *hemanta*) diet should be taken in the morning. When the days and nights are equal (in *vasanta* and *sharada*), should be at the midday and midnight.¹²

Intake of Ahara in vyadhi-avastha kala

Vyadhi avastha kala includes conditions of the disease such as *sama*, *nirama*, *mridu*, *madhya*, *tikshna*, and the use of food as medicine as per *avastha* to cure the disease.¹³ In the context of 'Kalabhojanam Arogyakaranam' and assessing the ambit of an article following food mentioned in the treatment of *Jwara* (fever) only are given among the ample examples.(Table 2)

DISCUSSION

Ahara and ahara vidhi:

Etymologically *Ahara* signifies 'taking something in the body'.¹⁴ *Ahara* is one of the major factors for sustenance of life. *Ahara* taken by four methods i.e., *ashita*, *lidha*, *pita* and *khadita* is responsible for the nourishment of *dhatu*, maintaining *bala*, *varna*.¹⁵ Food which is suitable for the

body and containing the characters such as colour, smell and touch, taken with proper regulation, at the right time, season and location is considered to be a source of life and vitality of all the living being.¹⁶ *Vidhivihita annapana* (food taken according to prescribed rules) mentioned in *Ayurveda* increases the *oja*, *teja*, *indriyabala*, *tushti*, *pushti*, *pratibha* and *Arogya*.¹⁷ Hence, one must make all the efforts to follow apt regimens of *kala* to get the food accustomed for the body. Wholesome food is responsible for the proper digestion and metabolism process. It gives energy, promotes proper distribution of body elements, vitality, complexion, activity of the sense organs.¹⁸ Hence *Ahara* is considered as a supreme medicine.¹⁹

Taking food as per Kshanadi kala. The food which plays main role in the prevention of the disease, caused by the dominance of *dosha* in that season. In *hemanta* (Table 1) and *shishira ritu*, food having *guru*, *snigdha*, *ushna* and *brimhana*,^{20,21,22} properties are mentioned to pacify the increased digestive fire and giving strength to the body. In *vasant ritu*, *tikshna*, *ushna*, *ruksha*^{23,24,25} properties of food are mentioned to pacify the *kapha* and ignite the *agni*. In *grishma ritu*, *laghu*, *drava*, *swadu* and *sheeta*,^{26,27,28} food is mentioned to protect the body from the intense sun rays. For pacifying the *vata dosha* in *varsha ritu laghu*, *snigdha*, *ushna*, *amla* and *lavana*,^{29,30} food is mentioned. Food having the characteristics of *sheeta*, *laghu guna* and *kashaya*, *swadu*, *tikta rasa*,^{31,32} are mentioned to pacify the *pitta* in *sharada ritu*.

Taking food as per Vyadhi avastha kala: *Vyadhi avastha kala* includes various conditions of the disease.³³ (Table 2) describes the variety of food mentioned for the different conditions of the disease. 'Yavagu' is an umbrella term under which *manda*, *peya*, *vilepi*, *yusha*, etc. are clubbed. Though sometimes these terms are synonymously used according to the condition of the disease. Variances among these preparations depend on the ratio of *dravadravya* (liquid substance), *kathinadravya* (solid substances), and the final outcome of the material.

Yusha is prepared by adding fourteen times more water than that of *dravya* with the slightly thicker consistency.³⁴ In *jwara*, *agni* is thrown outwards and becomes *durbala*(weak). *Mudga* having *laghu guna* restores *agni* and ignites digestive fire. Hence *mudga yusha* is indicated for *tarpana* of *durbala* patient (for giving strength).³⁵

Yavagu, *manda*, *peya* are indicated in *jwara* after the *vamana* as a food to ignite the digestive fire.^{36,37} There are some conditions in which *peya* is not admissible. Like in *kapha pradhana* patient, it increases *kapha dosha* in *jwara*.³⁸ As the term *peya* and *yavagu* are used synonymously, in such conditions for making *yusha*, *mudga*, *chanaka*, *makushtha*, *kulattha yusha* used in the less quantity is indicated.^{39,40,41}

Table 1. Food substances to be consumed as per ritu (season)	
Season	Opinion of different acharya
Hemant ritu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shukadhanya varga- Aromatic and navina shali(S), Various preparations of godhuma, pishta (V), Nava anna (V) • Shamidhanya varga- Various food preparations of tila, masha(S), Various food preparations of masha (V) • Mamsa varga- Audaka mamsa(C)(S), anupa mamsa(C)(S), bilesahaya mamsa(C)(S), prasaha mamsa(C)(S), kravyada mamsa, bilesahaya mamsa, plava mamsa(S). • Madya varga- madira, shidhu(C), Madya, prasanna(S)⁴², Gauda madya, sura(V). • Gorasa varga- Various preparations of milk (C), (S), dadhi(S), Various preparations of milk (V) • Ikshu varga- sugarcane (C), Preparations of ikshu(S)(V) • Aharayogi varga- Taila⁴³(C)(V), Food seasoned with taila (S), vasa (C)(V), Food seasoned with ghrta (S)

Table 2. Indication of Ahara in Jvara vyadhi as per the avastha	
Shishira ritu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as that of the Hemant ritu.⁴⁴ (C), (V) • Not mentioned(S)
Vasant ritu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shukadhanya varga- Shastika, yava, nivara, kodrava (S), Purana yava, godhuma (V) • Shamidhanya varga- mudga (S) • Mamsa varga- sharabh,shasha,eneya, lavaka and kapinjala mamsa⁴⁵(C), lava,vishkira mamsa rasa with yusha (S), jangala,shulya (V) • Shaka varga- Patola, nimba, vartaka (S) • Madya varga- Varieties of madya such as Madhvasava, madhvarishta, sidhu, madhika, madhava (S), Nirgada asava and arishta, sidhu, mardwika (V) • Ikshu varga- kshaudra • Kritanna varga- Various preparations of yava, godhuma (C), Food preparations of yava and mudga⁴⁶(S)
Grishma ritu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mamsa varga- jangala and mriga(C), Jangala mamsa(V) • Gorasa varga- Milk boiled with sharkara(S), Milk boiled with adding sharkara⁴⁷(V). • Kritanna varga- Saktu made up of sharkara(V), Variety of panaka and mantha with sharkara (S), Rasala, Raga, khandava, panaka and panchasara made up of mocha, chochadala(V), Mantha prepared by adding sugar(C) • Aharayogi varga- Shali with ghrta and paya⁴⁸(C)
Varsha ritu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shukadhanya varga- Yava, godhuma, Purana shali(C), Jirna dhanya(V), Shali(V) • Mamsa varga- Jangala mamsa(C), (V) • Madya varga- madhvarishta (V) • Ikshu varga- kshaudra(V)⁴⁹ • Kritanna varga- Food mixed with honey(C), yusha(V), Sanskrita yusha⁵⁰(C) • Aharayogi varga- Various preparations of food mixed with madhu⁵¹(S), Mastu with sauvarchala/ panchkola(V)
Sharad ritu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shukadhanya varga- Shali, yava, godhuma⁵² (C), Shali(V) • Shamidhanya varga- mudga(V) • Mamsa varga- Mamsa-lava, kapinjala, ena, urabhra, sharabha, shasha(C), Jangala mamsa(V) • Shaka varga- patola(V) • Ikshu varga- madhu(V), sita(V)
Pravrita ritu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shukadhanya varga- Yava, shastika, godhuma, purana shali(S) • Madya varga- Asava, arishta, maireyaka⁵³(S) • Not mentioned by Caraka and Vagbhata

Yavagu, manda, peya are indicated in jwara after the vamana as a food to ignite the digestive fire.^{54,55} There are some conditions in which peya is not admissible. Like in kapha pradhana patient, it increases kapha dosha in jwara.⁵⁶ As the term peya and yavagu are used synonymously, in such conditions for making yusha, mugda, chanaka, makushtha, kulattha yusha used in the less quantity is indicated.^{57,58,59} Peya is a preparation in which fourteen times more water is added than that of dravya and has a more liquid consistency.⁶⁰ Peya prepared by using deepana, pachana dravya,⁶¹ owing to its

amapachana guna, increases agni in jwara,⁶² indicated in mandagni and trishnarta rogi.⁶³ Yavagu is prepared by adding six times more water than dravya. Yavagu is indicated in trishna avastha of jwara. In jwara due to ama, dosha gets stagnated in the channels and patient gets the thirst frequently. Yavagu owing to the laghu, dipana, drava (liquid) property, ignites digestive fire, causes amapachana in trishna.⁶⁴

Mamsarasa is a type of soup preparation in which *mamsa* (meat) gets boiled with the help of water. *Jangala mamsarasa* owing to *kshayahara* and *shramahara*, *jwarahara* property⁶⁵ is indicated *kaphottara alanghita avastha* of *jwara* and *tarpana* of *balavana* person (having good strength).^{66,67} *Raktashali odana* and *purana shashti odana* having *laghu*, *pathya* (wholesome)⁶⁸ property in digests easily in *jwara*.^{69,70}

In *abhighataja jwara*, *vayu* vitiate predominantly *rakta dhatu* resulting in discomfort, swelling, discoloration and pain in the body.⁷¹ *Mamsarasa* having *hritya*, *prinana*, *balya* property⁷² is indicated along with the *odana*. It nourishes *dhatu* and reduces the pain in the *abhighataja jwara*,⁷³ *upavasa* and *shramajnya jwara*, *vata* dominating *jwara*, in *diptagni purusha*, helps in regaining the *bala*(strength).^{74,75} Various *mamsa* are indicated in *jwara*. *Lava*, *kapinjala*, *ena*, *prishata*, *sharabha*, *kalapuccha*, *kuranga*, *mriga*, *matruka mamsa* have *laghu*^{76,77}(easily digestible) property, while *shasha mamsa* has *balya*⁷⁸ property which is indicated in *jwara*.⁷⁹

Kshira has *madhura*, *sheeta*, *snigdha guna*⁸⁰ cures *krisha*, *alpa dosha*, *dina purusha*, *jirna jwara* patient, *vibaddha*, *srishtadosha*, *ruksha rogi*.^{81,82} *Kshira* alleviate *vata-pitta dosha*, is indicated in a *jwara* associated excessive with *daha*, *trishna* and *vatapitta dominated jwara*. *Kshira* is indicated in both the conditions of *jwara* i.e., *baddha dosha avastha* and *pracyuta dosha avastha*. *Gavya kshira* owing to *sara guna* relieves the *vibandha* (constipation) in *baddha dosha avastha* of *jwara*. While in *prachyuta dosha avastha* of *jwara*, *aja kshira* does *samgrahi karma*.⁸³ *Laja tarpana* is the semisolid preparation in which *saktu* (powered *laja*) is mixed in water. *Laja saktu* owing to *sheeta*, *laghu*,⁸⁴ property mixed with *kshaudra* and *sharkara*⁸⁵ used in *trishna*, *chardi*, *daha*, *gharma*⁸⁶ for *tarpana* in *urdhwaga ratkrasrava* condition of *jwara*.⁸⁷ *Lajapeya*, a liquid preparation of *laja* is administered for the easy digestion of food in *jwara*.⁸⁸

Shaka like *Patolapatra*, *varataka*, *kathilla*, *papachailika*, *karkotaka*, *parpataka*, *gojivha balamulaka*, *guduchi patra shaka* having *laghu*, *hritya*, *jwarahara srishtamala*,^{89,90} property is indicated in *jwara*.^{91,92,93} *Yavannavikruti* (various preparations of *yava*) considered as absolutely wholesome in *vishamajwara*.⁹⁴

Sr. no.	Type of Ahara	Vyadhi avastha kala
1.	Yavagu	Ch.chi.3/149, Ch.chi.3/184, Su.ut.39/135, Ah.chi.1/24-25, Ah.chi.1/30-31
2.	Peya	Ch.chi.3/149, Su.ut.39/109, Ah.chi.1/70
3.	Yusha	Ch.chi.3/157, Ch.chi.3/188, Su.ut.39/136, Su.ut.39/138, Su.ut.39/139, Su.ut.39/141, Su.ut.39/150, Ah.chi.1/71,
4.	Lajasaktu	Ch.chi.3/155, Ah.chi.1/36
5.	Odana	Ch.chi.3/179, Ah.chi.1/37, Ah.chi.1/72
6.	Mansarasaodana	Ah.chi.1/95, Su.ut.39/266, Ch.Chi.3/319, Su.ut.39/136,, Su.ut.39/137
7.	Jangala mamsarasa	Ch.chi.3/157, Ch.chi.3/163, Ch.chi.3/166, Ch.chi.3/190-191, Ch.chi.3/192-193, Ah.chi.1/34, Ah.chi.1/76-77
8.	Mamsa	Ch.chi.3/190-192, Su.ut.39/153
9.	Dugdha	Ch.chi.3/167-168, Ch.chi.3/169-170
10.	Lajapeya	Ch.chi.3/179-180, Ah.chi.1/26, Ah.chi.1/27
11.	Shaka	Ch.chi.3/189, Su.ut.39/151-152, Ah.chi.1/75
12.	Yavannavikruti	Su.ut.39/270

CONCLUSIONS

Food is considered as an important factor for the survival of human being. Quality and quantity of food decide the health status of the person. There are many factors depend on timely consumption of food including the physical and mental performances we done in daily life. In these modern era many people do not follow the food timings because of their busy routine resulting in lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, hypothyroidism, hypertension and even stress. To maintain the quality of life in terms of disease-free body timely taking food is necessary. Taking food at the proper time is the key for achieving the healthy life. Like preventive aspect, therapeutically also timely taken food is also applicable according to the condition of the disease.

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