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Review Article

Concept of Ahara W.S.R. incompatible foods; ayurveda and modern perspective

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ABSTRACT

Samhita is considered as most important classical text of Ayurveda, used since 4th B.C. *Samhita* encompasses various concepts related to diseases and their treatment. *Samhita* offers different principles towards the maintenance of health status of whole mankind. These basic principles suggests us how to maintain good physical as well as mental status, rules of *Samhita* emphasizes different aspects related to diseases and their treatment. Ayurveda believe in prevention than cure therefore in this regards Ayurveda mentioned some pillars of life for healthy well being and *Ahara* is one of them. *Ahara* if consumed in proper manner then it will help to remain away from disease while inappropriate dietary pattern may lead pathological conditions. Considering *Ahara* as important aspect of healthy life further Ayurveda described termed "*Viruddha-Ahara*" which means incompatible foods responsible for pathological initiation. Incompatible food is one of the important concepts of medical science and it is believed that consumption of incompatible foods may lead various pathological manifestations. It is believed that opposite properties of wrong food combination, wrong processing, excess food consumption, consumption of food in wrong time and seasonal diversity may leads *Viruddha-Ahara*. Present article described ayurveda as well as modern perspective of *Viruddha-Ahara*/incompatible foods in a view to explore understanding of food originated diseases.

Keywords: *Ayurveda*, *Viruddha-Ahara*, *Incompatible foods*, *Samhita-Siddhant*.

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Introduction

Ayurveda the Indian medical science offers various approaches towards the maintenance of good health status. Ayurveda emphasized that one should consume suitable foods according to his/her *Prakriti*, seasons, age and strength etc. The disciplinary dietary pattern avoids complications such as; food poisoning, diarrhea and dysentery etc. The nutritional values of *Ahara* not only support physical health but also boost mental status. Ayurveda described *Ahara* as one of the prime factor essential to promote growth. Ayurveda believe that appropriate choices of food combinations along with proper cooking methods offer proper nutritional value. The food consumed properly considering all aspects help to balances *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Agni* etc.

Ayurveda mentioned that consumption of incompatible foods (*Viruddha Ahara*) leads initiation of pathological conditions. Consumption of foods having incompatible combinations, foods cooked in wrong way, eating foods in

excess or low amount and inappropriate eating time, etc. are some common aspects of incompatible foods.

Viruddha-Ahara may have opposite properties thus affects body constituents; *Dosha* and *Dhatu*, etc. therefore may possesses some unwanted effect on the body. *Ahara* incompatible to *Desha* (place) termed as *Desha Viruddha-Ahara*, *Kala Viruddha* means food incompatible to eating times, *Agni Viruddha* denotes *Ahara* inappropriate to digestive power, inappropriate amount of diet termed as *Matra Viruddha Ahara*, food which vitiate *Doshic* balances termed as *Dosha Viruddha-Ahara*, food prepared in wrong manner considered as *Sanskar Viruddha-Ahara*, *Koshtha Viruddha-Ahara* means foods opposite to stomach capacity, diet inappropriate for specific age groups comes under *Avastha Viruddha-Ahara*, *Upachar Viruddha-Ahara* indicates wrong therapeutic effects of food stuffs, inappropriate combination of food stuffs described as *Samyoga Viruddha-Ahara*, inappropriate way of eating considered as *Vidhi Viruddha-Ahara*. These aspects of *Viruddha-Ahara* sometimes cause various ailments and care must be taken to prevent chances of such ailments.

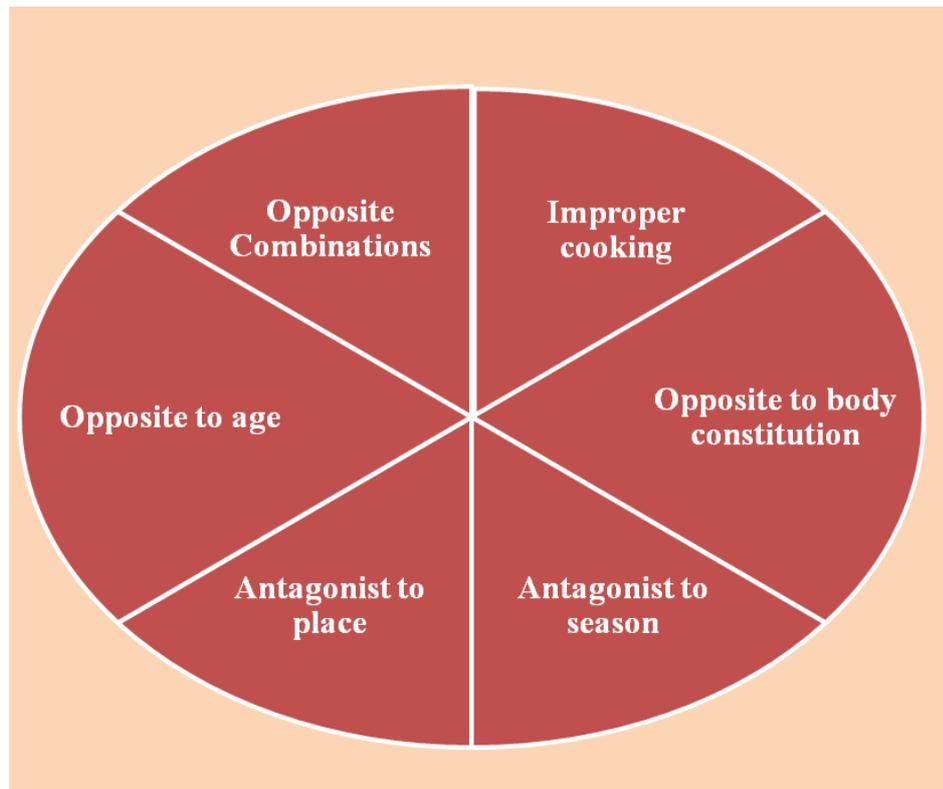


Figure 1: Some modern aspect of incompatible foods which may leads diseases.

Table 1: Some examples of *Viruddha-Aahara* in specific category:

S. No.	Incompatible foods	Types of Incompatibility
1	Fish with milk	<i>Veerya-Viruddha</i>
2	Hot water after consuming honey	<i>Krama-Viruddha</i>
3	Hot honey	<i>Sanskar-Viruddha</i>
4	Fruit salad or milk with sour fruits	<i>Samyoga-Viruddha</i>
5	Honey and ghee in equal proportion	<i>Matra-Viruddha</i>
6	Cold substances (like ice-cream) in winter	<i>Kala-Viruddha</i>
7	Cold water after taking hot tea	<i>Parihar-Viruddha</i>

Diseases associated with *Viruddha-Ahara*

The literature study confirmed that *Viruddha-Ahara* if consumed regularly then it may lead various disorders even sometimes death. The effects of incompatible foods may be acute (*Aashukari*) or chronic (*Chirakari*). Fainting, intoxication, stiffness in neck, abdominal distention, anemia, diarrhea, skin diseases, dysentery, gastritis, fever and rhinitis may be seen as acute manifestation of *Viruddha-Ahara*, while impotency, *Visarpa*, blindness, bullus, insanity, fistula in ano, infertility, diabetes and obesity are chronic manifestation of *Viruddha-Ahara*. Frequent consumptions of *Viruddha-Ahara* affect *Indriya*, *Bala* & *Virya* thus suppress immune response and make person susceptible for infectious diseases. *Mandagni*, *Madhyamkoshtha* & malnutrition are other aspects of *Viruddha-Ahara*.

Pathological Attributes of *ViruddhaAhara*

Incompatible foods vitiate three *Doshas*, *Dhatu* and *Mala*, these vitiated *Doshas* accumulate continuously and this imbalance produces *Ama-Visha* which possesses slow

poisoning effect. The further consequence of *Viruddha-Ahara* creates impairment in *Rasa* and *Rakta*. Contradictory foods if consumed repeatedly it exerted load on digestive system thus accumulation of toxins take places. These toxins affect *Doshas* as well as *Rasa Dhatu*, later on other *Dhatu* also get affected and vitiated *Dosha* and *Dhatu* travels from *Koshtha* to *Shakha*. While travelling throughout the body these toxins initiate pathogenesis of disease in various body organs.

Chikitsa-Siddhant of *Viruddha-Ahara*:

- ❖ *Shodhana* therapies including *Vamana* and *Virechana* helps to eliminate toxin accumulated after consumption of *Viruddha-Ahara*.
- ❖ *Shamana* therapy help to pacify *Doshic* imbalance associated with consumption of *Viruddha-Ahara*
- ❖ Drugs possess *Deepana* & *Pachana* properties boost *Agni* and offer improvement in disease symptoms arises after consumption of *Viruddha-Ahara*.

- ❖ *Haritaki, Amalaki, Pippali, Triphala* and *Laghu-Ahara* recommended in chronic adversity of *Viruddha-Ahara*.
- ❖ The drugs such as; *Shunthi, Musta, Trikatu & Haritaki* act as *Amapachana* thus remove toxins from body.
- ❖ *Vata* vitiation associated with *Viruddha-Ahara* may be treated using *Haritaki* and *Shunthi* together.
- ❖ *Marich, Pippali & Chitraka* recommended for *Sroto shodhana* thus help to clear *Ama* from body which may be accumulated due to the consumption of *Viruddha-Ahara*.
- ❖ Drugs which are qualitatively possess opposite property to *Viruddha-Ahara* help to combat habitual consequences of *Viruddha-Ahara*.
- ❖ Gradual shift from unwholesome diet to wholesome diet help to reduce consequences of *Viruddha-Ahara*.
- ❖ Good conduction of *Ahar-Vidhi*, obeying rule of *Dincharya & Ritucharya* along with disciplinary life pattern helps to prevent any consequences of *Viruddha-Ahara*.

Suggestion to avoid foods incompatibility

- ❖ Cold substances like yogurt should be avoided in *Anupa* place.
- ❖ In *Jangala* dry and hot substances should be avoided.
- ❖ Dry and cold foods to be avoided in winter season.
- ❖ Hot and pungent foods should not be consumed in summer.
- ❖ Oily and heavy foods are contradictory when *Agni* is low.
- ❖ Person involving in heavy manual work should avoid dry and cold foods.
- ❖ Food before attending to nature calls not to be recommended.
- ❖ Food not cooked properly due to faulty methods of cooking including inappropriate methods of roasting, frying, baking and heating etc. Improper cooking destroys *Prana* from the food hence eating of such uncooked or overcooked foods must be avoided.
- ❖ Eating hot substances just after cold substances should be avoided.

Conclusion

Ayurveda mentioned *Ahara* as one of the important factor of life and proper consumption will help one to remain away

from disease while inappropriate dietary habits may lead various disease conditions. Ayurveda described termed "*ViruddhaAhara*" which means incompatible foods responsible for pathological condition. Incompatible food involves wrong food combination, wrong processing, excess food consumption, consumptions of food in wrong time and seasonal diversity, these all alone or together creates complications of *Viruddha Ahara*. Article concluded that understanding of *Viruddha Ahara* help one to remain away from disease conditions. Therefore we can say that food originated diseases may be prevented by taking care of various aspect of *Viruddha Ahara*.

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