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Eye health and *Pitta Ahara Vihara*; a review

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Abstract:

The working units of the body – humors, Vata, Pitta and Kapha are been explained in details by ancient texts. The Dosha principle governs the optimum functioning of the body and mind. There are number of factors which have their effect on these Dosha and thereby affecting the resulting functions of body. Each Dosha is affected with peculiar set of Ahara and Vihara. These in turn affects the organs which are Sthana of respective Dosha. Here Netra – eye is considered as the organ of Pitta Dosha predominance and hence the Ahara Vihara which vitiates Pitta Dosha affects its health. In present context a review is made with contemporary factors of Ahara and Vihara which are on verge and affect the eye health.

Keywords: Netra, Ahara Vihara, Pitta Dosha

Introduction:

Ayurveda is itself a holistic life science. Each aspect of human being is been explained thoroughly and required guidelines are also been stated for better healthy living. In present day scenario the pace of living has been increased and accordingly man has changed his lifestyle and food habits. The life style includes the diet one takes and also the daily activities one performs. Here both the aspects are well illustrated in Ayurveda under the title of *Ahara* and *Vihara*. These in turn are part of one's *Dinacharya* – daily routine and *Rutucharya* – seasonal activities. Ayurveda had described the three pillars of life i.e. *Trayopasthambha* viz; *Ahara*, *Nidra* and *Bramhachrya*. Here the *Nidra* and *Bramhacharya* are the part of one's *Vihara*. Hence the collective evaluation of one's *Ahara* and *Vihara* has major effect on his *Dosha* equilibrium. This results in health keeping and maintaining optimal day to day activities. Variations in *Ahara* and *Vihara* leads to diseases by

vitiating of respective *Dosha*. Moreover the *Dosha* affects specific organs as they have respective *Dosha* predominance. *Pitta* is one such *Dosha* in *Tridosha* which have equal importance as it resembles the metabolic capacity – *Chaya Apachya Kriya*. The prime location or *Sthana* of *Pitta Dosha* are mentioned as,

नाभिरामाशयःस्वेदोलसिकारुधिरंसः |

दृक्स्पर्शनंचपित्तस्यनाभिरत्रविशेषतः | |

- *Ashtanga H. Sutra. 12/2*

Here *Acharya* had mentioned eye as the *Pitta Sthana*. One of the five sub types of *Pitta Dosha*, *Alochaka Pitta* is said to be primarily located in eyes. The process of vision and cognition of the picture one sees is due to the optimum functioning of this *Alochaka Pitta*.

The normal state of *Agni* maintains the homeostasis of the body, where as if the *Agni* is disturbed or uneven – *Vishama*, the body has to face the pathological conditions or diseases. The *Pitta Dosha* has *Ashray - Ashrayi* relation with *Agni*. Hence the optimal digestive fire is responsible for normal levels of *Pitta Dosha* and thereby functioning of its respective organs. Any variation in *Ahara* which affects the *Agni* has vitiation of *Dosha* and resulting in disorders of the organ – *Dhatu* – *Dushya*.

Contemporary Pittakar Ahara:

In present day context the dietary habits are changed to large extent in accordance to one's nature of work. Also the diet is now a days calories oriented, resulting in higher intake of proteins and fats with low on carbs. Following are few examples which are responsible for the due vitiation of *Pitta Dosha*;

- Hot and spicy food
- Fast foods
- Instant foods with preservatives
- Stale food
- Packed food
- Bakery products
- Milk products like cheese and *paneer*
- Processed and ultra-processed food items
- Wrong food combinations

Contemporary Pittakar Vihara:

As the food habits are changed so is the living culture has changed. Many faulty habits of day to day routine and also of seasonal activities are been practiced leading to vitiation of *Dosha*. Some of which can be listed as follows;

- Late night work culture

- Sedentary lifestyle
- Lack of physical exercise
- Increased screen time
- Increasing stress and tension

Ayurveda perspective of *Pittakar Ahara – Vihara*

<i>Ahara</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Amla Ras Dravya</i> - <i>Lavana Ras Dravya</i> - <i>Katu Ras Dravya</i> - <i>Abhishyandi Dravya</i> - <i>Pariushit Anna – Jal</i> - <i>Viruddha Ahara</i>
<i>Vihara</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Anidra</i> - <i>Manas Dosha</i> - <i>Ativyavaya</i>

Eye health in Ayurveda:

As discussed earlier, eyes are considered the seat of *Pitta Dosha*. Hence the *Pitta* pacifying *Ahara* and *Vihara* are to be recommended for the optimum eye sight and overall health. The *Pitta Dosha* as a body humor is to be balanced and it will maintain the sound functioning of respective organs. Here the *Alochaka Pitta* is said to be responsible for recognizing *Roop – Swaroop* and *Akara*.

Kriya Kalpa:

These are the treatment protocols which are specifically mentioned for the treatment of eye disorders. These treatment modalities can be implemented for maintaining the health of a healthy eyes too. These are;

- 1) *Tarpana*
- 2) *Putapaka*
- 3) *Ashchyotana*
- 4) *Parisheka*
- 5) *Anjana*
- 6) *Pindi*
- 7) *Bidalaka/Vidalaka*

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