



# CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF INCOMPATIBLE FOODS W.S.R TO *VIRUDH AAHAR*

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## ABSTRACT

*Ahara* (food) is referenced in Ayurvedic texts as one of the three *Upasthambas* (Sub-pillars of the Body) that support the three main *Sthambas* (Pillars) of the Body. *Ahara* is considered necessary for the human body since it offers the basic nutrients required to carry out the basic operations of digestion and metabolism. Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of eating a balanced and nutritious diet. A physically balanced diet can frequently disrupt equilibrium. Food, when consumed in the appropriate manner, nourishes the person both physically and psychologically, and it is through food that a person achieves positive health and bodily growth. Food consumed in an unbalanced manner can induce a variety of diseases. Ayurveda clearly defines that certain diet and its combinations, which interrupts the metabolism of tissue, which inhibits the process of formation of tissue and which have the opposite property to the tissue are called as *Viruddha Anna* or incompatible diet. The food which is wrong in combination, which has undergone wrong processing, which is consumed in incorrect dose, which is consumed in incorrect time of day and in wrong season can lead to *Viruddha Ahara*.

**Key word-** Ayurveda, *Virudh Aahar*, Incompatible Foods

## 1. Introduction

Ayurveda Indian medical science provides a variety of techniques to maintaining optimum health. *Ahara* has both positive and negative Ayurvedic characteristics. Because Ayurveda takes a comprehensive approach to healing, it delves deeply into the *Ahara* elements. Ayurveda emphasises the need of eating a balanced and nutritious diet for a healthy lifestyle. *Ahara* is absolutely necessary for the survival of all living beings. It is said to be in charge of both *Arogya* (Health) and *Vyadhi* (disease).[1] Food that is wrong in combination, has undergone incorrect processing, is consumed in the wrong dose, is consumed at the wrong time of day, and is consumed in the wrong season can lead to incorrect metabolism, which inhibits the process of metabolism and has opposite properties to the

dhatu is known as *Viruddha Ahara* or incompatible diet .[2] *Viruddha Ahara*, or incompatible diet, is a critical topic addressed by traditional Ayurveda. Many metabolic problems are caused by *Viruddha Ahara*. Acharya Charak defines *Viruddha Ahara*. [3] According to Ayurveda, the ingestion of unsuitable food combinations (*Viruddha Ahara*) causes the onset of diseased conditions. Consumption of meals with incompatible combinations, foods prepared incorrectly, consuming foods in excess or insufficient amounts, and eating at improper times are all examples of incompatible foods. *Viruddha Ahara* may have opposing properties, affecting body elements like as Dosha and Dhātu, and hence may have an unfavourable influence on the body. [4] Continuous consumption of such foods is the cause of the emergence of a number of physical and psychological illnesses. Not only that, but such incompatible food habits by pregnant women may result in birth abnormalities in the offspring.

## 2. Material & Method

Material related to *Viruddha-Ahara* (incompatible foods) is collected from ayurvedic texts books, modern text books, index medical journals and website.

## 3. Conceptual Study

### 3.1 Types of *Viruddha Ahara* (incompatible food)

Various forms of *Viruddha Ahara* have been documented in Ayurvedic literature. According to Maharshi Charka, such unwholesome diets can cause ailments such as abdominal distention, stiffness in the neck, various types of anaemia, indigestions, insanity, various skin disorders, bowel diseases, fever, rhinitis, and infertility, among others. If the ailments in the preceding list are classified according to bodily system, it can be stated that continued use of *Viruddha Ahara* affects the immune system, endocrine system, digestive system, neurological system, and circulatory systems.

#### ➤ *Desh Viruddha* [5]

A person if consume diet or food which is similar in properties of that particular region can lead to the malformation of the different nutrients required for the proper functioning of the body, leading to the manifestation of various diseases. For example using diet which is *Ruksha* (dry), *Ushna* (hot) and *Tiksana* (sharp) quality in a *Jangal Desha* (arid region) can lead to *Vata Prakopa*. It can also vitiate the *Rakta Dhātu* (blood tissues) and cause reduction in the formation of succeeding *Dhatu*s. Similarly, the use of *Snigdha* (unctuous), *Sheeta* (cold), *Guru* (heavy) and other substances of similar quantities to *Anoopa Desha* (marshy region) can cause disturbances in the *Agni* (digestive enzymes and hormones) and may leads to autoimmune diseases. There will be obstruction to the *Srotas* (channels in body) and can lead to diseases like *Premeha* (diabetic syndrome), *Arsha* (hemorrhoids), *Bhagandar* (fistula), *Visarpa* (erysipelas), *Kushta* (skin diseases) etc. So, one should consume the diet or food which is opposite in quality of that region, by which the diet or food will manage accordingly and keep the body stable and free from diseases.

➤ **Kala Viruddha** [6]

The consumption of diet or food with properties similar to the particular season can lead to various diseases. The uses of *Sheeta* (cold), *Rooksha* (dry) *Laghu*(light) and *Khara* (rough) and similar things in winter and the uses of *Ushna* (hot), *Teekshna* (sharp) and *Katu* (pungent) and such similar things in summer are incompatible with reference to Kala(season). The use of *Sheeta* (cold), *Rooksha*(dry) *Laghu* (light) and *Khara* (rough) and similar things in winter can lead to *Vata* Vitiation and diseases resulting from that. Similarly, use of *Ushna* (hot), *Teekshna* (sharp) and *Katu* (pungent) similar things in summer can lead to the improper metabolism resulting in damage to the different *Dathus*. Ayurveda mentions that food substances having opposite Rasa(taste) Guna (properties) are beneficial in that respective session. Therefore, similar qualities of food substances are harmful to respective session and it may be the cause for disease after habitual intake.

➤ **Agni Viruddha**[7]

One should take diet or food after considering the status of Agni. If food has not been taken in accordance to the *Jatharagni Bala* (digestive power) then it will become *AgniViruddha*.

a) *Mandagni Viruddha* (incompatible to low digestive power)– *Guru* (heavy), *Snigdha* (unctuous), *Madhura* (sweet), etc. food substances if taken will not digest properly and can lead to diseases like *Grahani* (*irritable bowel syndrome*), *Atisar* (*diarrhea*), *Visuchika* (*dysentery*), *Daurbalya* (weakness).

b) *Tiksnagni Viruddha* (incompatible to sharp digestive power)- *Laghu* (light), *Tiksana* (sharp), *Vidhi* (heat producing), *Ushna* (hot) food substances if consumed can cause very fast digestion of the food resulting in the over metabolism of the different *Dathus* in the body leading to malnutrition and diseases related to that.

c) *Visamagni Viruddha* (incompatible to fluctuating digestive power) – *Ruksha*(dry), *Laghu* (light), *Suksma* , *Guru*, food substances if taken can cause improper digestion and can lead to the production of *Ama*. This can cause the blockage of *Srotas*. This in turn can lead to the malformation of different *Dathus* in the body.

d) *Samagni Viruddha* (incompatible to balanced digestive power)- Excessive quantity of food and taking can cause improper digestion leading in the formation of *Ama* (metabolic toxins). This in turn can cause different diseases like *Amavata* (rheumatoid arthritis), *Alasya* (laziness), *Tandra* (drowsiness)

➤ **Matra Viruddha**[8]

Food taken in sufficient quantity is termed as *Matravat Ahara* (appropriate dose), if one does not take *Matravat Aharathan* it is called *Matra Viruddha*. According to Maharshi Charak the intake of same quantity of honey& ghee is an example of *Matra Viruddha*. The different *Ahara* if taken in proper quantity it can work as *Rasayana* in the body or else it can become *Visha* or poison.

➤ **Satmya Viruddha**[9]

Consuming the food according to ones Prakirti (constitution) becomes suitable for the person, while consuming the diet which is opposite to ones Prakirti can lead to damage of the body. This type of Viruddha Ahara is called as Satmya Viruddha. For example a person who is Satmya to Katu, Ushna and Teekshna Guna qualities in food, if intakes Svadu (sweet), Sheeta, Guru etc qualities in food it becomes Asatmya (unwholesome) to himself. The wholesome diet will help in the proper nourishment and growth of his body. Unwholesome diet or Satmya Viruddha Ahara will cause manifestation of different metabolic disorders.

➤ **Dosh Viruddha**[10]

The use of article of food, which are dissimilar in quality to that of the respective body humors or Dosha, is called Dosha Viruddha. Consuming the Ahara or diet, drugs and procedure which is similar to the aggravated Doshas in the body can lead to the further aggravation of the Doshas in body leading to different disorders. For example, in case of aggravation Pitta Dosha consuming Ushna, Teekshna, Katu Ahara becoming cause for further aggravation of Pitta and later to various diseases such as vitiation of Rakta (blood), skin ailments etc.

➤ **Samskar Viruddha**[11]

The change in the properties of a Dravya (substances) due to processing is called Samskara. But if improper processing is done it can lead to the formation of toxins which in turn can lead to the damage of the body tissues. For example if peacock's flesh is roasted on sticks of the castor plant it can make the peacock's flesh poison. This type of processing is called as Samskara Viruddha. So while processing any Dravya one should take care about the materials used in processing. The present fast food processing can be taken in this category where many harmful chemical and preservatives are used for commercial purpose, compromising with the health of the population.

➤ **Veerya Viruddha**[12]

The Ahara or diet, drugs and procedure which are opposite to the Potency if consumed or practiced can lead to Veerya Viruddha condition. This type of incompatibility in diet can lead to different physical diseases such as Kushta (skin diseases) etc, psychological disorders like Apasmara (epilepsy), Unmada (insanity), Bhrama (giddiness) etc.

➤ **Kostha Viruddha**[13]

A person with Krura Kostha(excessive absorbent gut) will have an increased level of Vata Dosha in him, leading to Rookshata (dryness) in his body channels. This Rookshata can cause obstruction in the channels and lead to obstruction in the free flow of Vata and Malas (metabolic waste). If such a person is administered a drug, which is in insufficient dose, weak in potency and poor in laxative quality it will further aggravate the condition. Similarly a person having Mirdu Kostha (less absorbent gut) will have Manda Agni (weak digestive power).So if given a drug which is heavy cathartic and in large dose, then it will not be digested and can lead to further diseased condition. This type of Viruddha is called as Kostha Viruddha.

➤ **Avastha Viruddha**[14]

Incompatibility with reference to state of person is known as Avastha Viruddha i.e. when a Vata provoking meal is given to one who is exhausted on account of fatigue sexual act or physical strain then it further aggravates Vata Dosha in the body. This is called as *Avastha Viruddha*. Similarly, if a Kapha provoking meal is given to one subject who is lethargic or sleepy or indolence, then it becomes Avastha Viruddha because it further aggravates the condition. Our diet should be in accordance to our energy expenditure through physical and mental activities. Intake of high calorie diet and sedentary habits is the cause of weight gain, obesity and later many diseases associated with it. Such things can be considered due Avastha Viruddha ahar

➤ **Krama Viruddha**[15]

When a person takes his meal without relieving himself from natural urge of defecation, micturition etc. or eats without feeling of hunger or does not eat in spite of severe hunger then it turns out to be Krama Viruddha. This type of Viruddha Ahara Sevana can lead to formation of Ama Dosha (metabolic toxins) in the body or can lead to Dathu Kshaya (depletion of body tissues), leading to different diseases like Visuchika (dysentery), Alasaka (intestinal torpor), Pandu (anemia), psychological disturbances etc. So, in order to be in a healthy state one should follow a diet and regimen which is compatible to oneself.

➤ **Parihar Viruddha**[16]

This is incompatibility of the rule of prohibition, when a person takes hot substance after a meal of the flesh of a boar and similar animals. The flesh of boar is Ushna Veerya (hot potency), consumption of hot substance after consumption of boar flesh can lead to increase in the Ushna Guna in the body leading to Dathu Kshaya. This type of Viruddha Ahara is called Parihar Viruddha.

**Upachara Viruddha**[17]

That is incompatibility of the rules of ingestion is called as Upachara Viruddha. For example, after the consumption of Ghee intake of cold water or cold food items is called as Upachara Viruddha. A person suffering from Rakta Pitta (hemorrhagic disorders) if administered Ushna and Rakta Prakopaka Ahara (diet aggravating vitiation of blood tissue) can lead to further aggravation of the condition. This type of incompatibility can cause the production of Ama by destroying the Jataragni. This in turn can cause diseases like skin disorders, Amlapitta (acid peptic disorders) etc.

➤ **Paka Viruddha**[18]

If food substance is prepared with bad and rotten firewood or is undercooked or burnt it is called Paka Viruddha. The overcooking and Undercooking of food can cause the production of Ama and can lead to Agnivaishamya (disturbed digestive capacity). This in turn can lead to indigestion and cause diseases like duodenal ulcers, Amlapitta, skin disorders etc. the over cooked foods can cause increase in dryness in body leading to Vata Prakopa leading to the depletion of Dhatu (tissues).

- **Samayog Viruddha**[19] When two or more Dravyas are combined appropriately by considering their similar properties, they help in the development of the body. But if the properties of the combining Dravyas are opposite it can lead to depletion of body elements. Such type of incompatibility of combination is called as Samyoga Viruddha. For example intake of sour things with milk. Milk is cold in potency and sweet in taste, whereas the sour substance is having hot potency. So combination of these leads to improper metabolism and production of toxins in the body resulting in poor digestion and further manifestation of various diseases.
- **Hridya Viruddha**[20] The consumption of food which is unpleasant to person is called as HridyaViruddha. This can lead to physiological disturbances leading to poor digestion. The indigested food accumulates to produce toxins in body, leading to different psychosomatic disorders like IBS.
- **Sampad Viruddha**[21]  
This is incompatibility with reference to richness of quality of food taken. For example, the juice is obtained from unripe over ripe or unpurified food, intake of such food article, which are not having edible qualities can be considered as Sampada Viruddha. Consuming such food can cause the improper digestion leading to poor development of bodily tissues. It can cause the obstruction of body channels leading to different diseases.
- **Vidhi Viruddha**[22] It is incompatibility of the rules of eating where food is not taken in a solitary place. Here solitary place is only an example. One should consider all the rules and regulations of dietetics, or else it can cause depletion of bodily tissues leading to physiological and psychological imbalance. Diseases associated with *Viruddha-Ahara*[23] 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, 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*.

#### 4. Conclusion

Healthy use of *Ahara* promotes health, however unhealthy eating habits contribute to a variety of ailments. The notion of *Viruddha Ahara* describes food incompatibility in Ayurveda. Maharshi Charaka describes 18 kinds of *Viruddha Ahara* in the 26th chapter of *Sutrasthana*. Its regular ingestion may result in the emergence of a variety of disorders. The disorders induced by *Viruddha Ahara* can be avoided by following the Ayurvedic food pattern. Purification therapy followed by *Hita Sevan* (wholesome diet) is recommended for treatment.

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