



RESEARCH ARTICLE

WHAT CAN HELP IN PREVENTION AND CURE OF COVID -19: PEEPING INTO THE AYURVEDIC CLASSICS

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ABSTRACT

Covid-19, infection of Corona Virus, is now a pandemic and a burning problem of the human society. Even the developed countries are not being able to fight with the virus successfully and losing even lakhs of human resource. Searching for the preventive and curative measures the scientists are spending sleepless nights, but till now all efforts are nullified by the virus. As per information available the virus is mesmerizing the researchers by showing newer characters and change of character time to time. Hence need of new weapon /way to prevent / cure the condition can be felt to be the need of time. Ayurveda, the science of life, originated in India before thousands of years, can be considered "not only to be a science dealing with health but also a culture". The Ayurvedic Samhitas are the creator of roadmap for the human society. There are description of good conduct, daily behavior, helpful physical and mental activity, means to become a responsible citizen, selection and use of healthy food and many other facts covering almost all the directions. Discussion on diet is a major and markable aspect of the Ayurvedic Samhitas which is based upon almost all aspects of diet, like, selection, preservation, preparation, consumption etc. A detail discussion on the qualities of food materials for daily use with the aim to prevent diseases and also at the diseased state is a major quality of the Ayurvedic books. Since the human society is now busy in searching the way to escape from the dreadful virus and diet is an important factor influencing in the aspect hence an effort is made here to prepare a guideline for use of the healthy as well as diseased persons to prevent infection and also for quick, uncomplicated recovery from the disease.

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INTRODUCTION

Diet is an important component of health. It is important for growth, development, regeneration and nutrition. Resistance is important for prevention of diseases and also for early, safe recovery when fall sick. A healthy person only can get strong resistance to fight against the external agents causing disease. To become a healthy person one must take good food. Any deficiency and fault in dietetic behavior can lead to a diseased state. Hence good food habit is always important for each and every person. Ayurveda, the ancient science of life, discussing on the rules of prevention of diseases and cure from a diseased state, identified a good number of factors important to practice by each and every individual regularly. COVID -19, the agonizing problem of the present human society, is a condition that is not mentioned in the Ayurvedic classics directly. But some indirect relations are identified after study of the

Ayurvedic classics and depending upon the concept, with an aim to prevent and speed up quick recovery from a state of disease "COVID -19" a schedule of diet (food, additives and other substances used daily) is tried to prepare which is felt to be the need of the hour.

AIM OF THE STUDY: This is a literary study conducted with the following aims –

- To draw an interpretation on the comparison of COVID-19 and diseases mentioned in the Ayurvedic classics
- To find out the principle of selection of diet and its additives etc. depending upon the descriptions of the Ayurvedic classics
- To prepare a list of beneficial diets for the general people to make them efficient enough to resist and also for the COVID -19 affected people for early recovery from the diseased state
- To organize the findings in the form of a scientific article for appraisal of the scientific forum

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main Samhitas, Charaka Samhita, Susruta Samhita, Ashtanga Sangraha and Ashtanga Hridaya were studied in detail in the Central Library of Govt. Ayurvedic College, Guwahati, Assam, India. The available findings related with the aims of the study were collected and arranged in the form of a scientific article.

OBSERVATION AND RESULT

The observations of the study are revealed below -
[A] SIMULATION OF COVID-19 WITH THE CONDITIONS/DISEASES MENTIONED IN AYURVEDIC CLASSICS :-

COVID-19 is a disease caused by infection of the CORONA virus characterized by the group of signs and symptoms like rise of temperature, cough, sore throat, headache, conjunctivitis, pneumonia, tiredness, nasal congestion and diarrhoea. The virus mainly spreads through droplets (through air). Death occurs due to respiratory failure, septic shock (multiple organ failure) or cardiogenic shock (acute myocardial injury or myocarditis). It is already announced as pandemic [1].

(2) The founder of Indian Medicine, Charaka, describes a situation giving the nomenclature "JANAPAD DHWANGSA" when the population of a city/ state/ country suffers from same signs and symptoms without any identifiable aetiology resulting in death. The available treatments do not show praisable benefit [2].

(3) "JANAPAD DHWANGSA" is a situation caused by (1) Dushita Vayu (polluted/contaminated air), (2) Dushita jala (polluted/contaminated water), (3) Dushita desha (polluted/contaminated soil) and (4) Dushita kala (polluted/contaminated time) [3]. When an individual comes to the contact with "BISHADUSHITA VAYU" (poisonous air) then Kas (cough), Pratisnyaya (sneeze, rhinorrhoea, nasal congestion etc.), Sironjuja (headache) and Tibra nayanamaya (severe eye diseases) occur [4]. "Dushita Vayu" is considered as "Bishayukta" (containing poison) [5]. Dushita Desha is said to be "APATHYANNABAHULA" (produces unhealthy / harmful food, drink etc.) [6]. (5) The diseases that are caused due to invasion of external factors are defined as "AGANTUJA ROGA" [7]. Bhuta (organisms invading from the external environment to cause disease) and "BISHA" (poison) are considered as two important "AGANTUJA HETU" (external factors) of disease [8].

REGARDING DIET: (1) Rasayana prayoga is said to be the first measure to be taken during "JANAPAD DHWANGSA" (epidemics/endemics/pandemics) [9]. "RASAYANA" indicates application of measures/medicines that help in maintaining the health of a healthy person and also gives "URJA" (OJA-the vitality of an individual) [10]. It provides "AYU" (longevity) and helps in getting the benefits of the 7 basic body elements [11]. (2) Mudga (Green gram - Phaseolus Mungo) is said to be the best among all the shimbhidhanya (pulses) [12]. (3) "Kulatthya" (Horse gram - Dolichos biflorus) is Ushna (hot), Swas-Pinas-Kas-Kafa-Vatanashak (helps to control breathing difficulty, rhinorrhoea, cough and controls the vitiation of Kafa and Vata (Kafa and Vata are two of the 3 humors maintaining the integrity of the body) [13]

(4) Sangbatsarottita anna (one year old rice) is Laghu (light - easy to digest) [14]. (5) Tulsi (White Basil, Holy Basil - Ocimum album) is Hikka (hiccough), Kas (cough), Bish (poison), Swas (breathing difficulty) nashak [15]. (6) Lashuna (Garlic - Allium sativum) is Hikka (hiccough), Pinas (rhinorrhoea), Swas (breathing difficulty), Kas (cough) nashak and Rasayana (rejuvenator) [16]. (7) Draksha (Grape - Vitis vinifera) is Kas and Swas nashak (cures cough and breathing difficulty) [17].

(8) Ardraka (Zinger root - Zingiber officinalis) is Swas and Kas nashak (cures breathing difficulty and cough) [18]. (9) A person, if drinks gold water, then no poison can show its effect on him [19]. Swama is Bringham (nutritious), Madhura (sweet), Bishadoshahara (removes the effect of poison) and Rasayana (rejuvenator) [20]. (The procedure of preparation of "gold water" is not mentioned in the classics. From the name it is assumed that, it can be prepared by keeping gold into water overnight and drinking the water in the morning).

(10) Trikatu (combination of Sunthi - Dry Zinger, Pippali - Long Peper and Marich - Black Peper) is Swas, Kas and Pinas nashak (cures breathing difficulty, cough and rhinorrhoea) [21]. (11) Bhunimba (Chirata - Swertia Chirata) and Parpataka (Oldenlandia Corymbosa) are Jwarahara (cure fever) [22]. (12) Guggulu (Balsamodendron Mukul) is Ushna (hot) and Rasayana (rejuvenator) [23]. (13) Nagakeshar (Mesua ferrea) and Sindubar (Five leaved chaste tree - Vitex trifolia / Vitex Negundo) are Bisha-Pitta-Kafanashak (cures poison, pitta and kaf) (Pitta and Kaf are two among the 3 body humors that maintain the integrity of the body) [24]. (14) Shirish (Albizia Lebbecke) is considered as the best Bishahara (that destroys poison) [25]. (15) Saindhava (Sodi Chloridum) is the best among all lavana (Salt) [26]. It is Brishya (nutritious), Hridya (good for heart), Tridoshnashak (balances the 3 body humors) [27]. (16) Amoloki (Emblia Officinalis) is Bayahsthanana (produces stability of the body and increases longevity) [28]. (17) Use of Kshira (milk) and Ghrita (ghee) are the best Rasayana [29]. (18) One should take "SARBARASA" (the substances having all tastes) always. It gives strength and resistance [30].

DISCUSSION

From the observation made during the study the following facts can be considered

(1) SIMULATION :- COVID -19 is a condition that is caused by "CORONA VIRUS" infection. Hence it is a disease caused by the effect of external factors. Therefore it comes under the category "AGANTUJA VYADHI" as mentioned in the Ayurvedic classics. The main character of this disease is "to infect a large number of individuals within a short period irrespective of age, sex, religion, profession etc. ending at a fatal sequence". Depending upon the character COVID -19 can be closely co-related with "JANAPAD DHWANGSA" described by Charaka. The main characters of COVID -19 are fever, cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, breathing difficulty, headache, conjunctivitis and diarrhea which directs the similarity with "BISHADUSHITA VAYU" as described by Susruta. From the discussion COVID-19 can be considered as "AGANTUJA, BISHADUSHITA VAYU JANITA JANAPAD DHWANGSA".

(2) DIET :- The descriptions available in relation to management principles of "AGANTUJA ROGA", "BISHADUSHITA VAYU JANITA ROGA" and "JANAPAD DHWANGSA" it is observed that, the diets having the

character “RASAYANA” should be taken by the individuals with the aim to prevent and cure the symptoms. According to the signs and symptoms Jwaraghna (that can cure fever), Kasaghna (that can cure cough), Swasaghna (that can cure breathing difficulty), Pinasanashaka (that can cure rhinorrhoea) food should be selected. (3) From the classical references the following category of substances can be recommended both for the healthy and diseased persons for prevention and/or treatment of such conditions

- Rice - One year old rice
- Pulses - Green grain (Phaseolus Mungo), Horse gram (Dolichos biflorus).
- Fruit - Grape (Vitis vinifera), Emblica Officinalis
- Food additives (spices) - Garlic (Allium sativum), Zinger root (Zingiber officinalis), combination of Dry Zinger, Long Peper and Black Peper
- Salt - Sodi Chloridum (Saindhava lavana)
- Others - Holy Basil (Ocimum album), Chirata (Swertia Chirata), Parpataka (Oldenlandia Corymbosa), Balsamodendron Mukul, Mesua ferrea, Five leaved chaste tree (Vitex Trifolia /Vitex Negundo), Albizzia Lebbecke, Milk and Ghee.

(4) Above all, at the time of selection of the daily usable diet, one should always keep it in mind that, all the 6 Rasa (tastes – sweet, sour, salt, pungent, bitter and astringent) should be included in the daily diet.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

As summary it can be said that,

(1) In the ancient times also there were outbreak of diseases due to effect of external agents and also some of them caused death of a huge number of people within a short time. Also there was incidence of some problems, specially related with the respiratory tract, due to exposure to contaminated/ polluted air. The ancient Ayurvedic scholars were aware of the situations and their management procedures.

(2) RASAYANA, which is basically aimed to enhance the longevity and resistance of the body, is the best measure to be practiced by the individuals, specially when there is outbreak of the diseases that affect a huge number of people both for prevention and cure. (3). At the time of selection of daily usable (food, spices, others) Bishaghna (anti poisonous), Kasaghna (capacity to cure cough), Swasaghna (capacity to cure breathing difficulty), Pinasanashaka (capacity to cure rhinorrhoea) qualities should be considered. (4) Use of all 6 tastes as described in the Ayurvedic classics in daily routine can be considered as the concept of “BALANCED DIET”.

Conclusion

It can be said that, COVID -19 like situations can be prevented /cured by application of the Ayurvedic principles of diet and it's additives which are cheap, easily available and have no untoward effect. Scientific study in this direction can be considered as the need of the hour.

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