

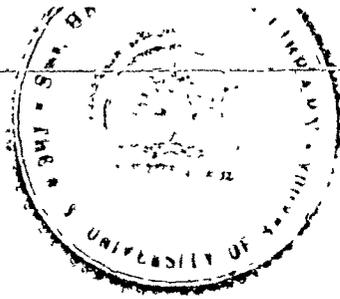
CHAPTER - IIFOODSECTION-IDEFINATIONS OF FOOD AND DIETS :

In the SM, ĀHĀRA ( food ) has been described as a substance which builds up the body. This also includes the intake of water.<sup>1</sup> Derivative meaning of the word, ĀHĀRA ( Food ) is " To take in ". The substance which is taken or swallowed in through the throat is called ĀHĀRA (food).<sup>2</sup> Defined in general term food includes all edible substances.<sup>3</sup>

The modern dietetics offers the following definition of food : "Anything which, when absorbed into the body via alimentary tract is capable of doing one or more of three things :

- (i) Furnishing the body with material from which to produce heat, work or other forms of energy.
- (ii) Enabling it to grow or to repair its wear and tear and
- (iii) Supplying regulators of its functions of growth, repair and production of energy.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, food is a composite mixture of various substances which when taken into the body are able to maintain efficient nutrition and health.



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The term Food and Diet<sup>5</sup> are generally used synonymously. The word Diet is derived from Greek word Diata which means, 'system of life' or 'way of life'. The restriction of its meaning to the Food and Drink in particular was complete in about 1900 A.D.<sup>5</sup> It is termed PATHYA in the Āyurveda. PATHYA is explained as follows :

"Whatever does not obstruct excretive, secretive and protective channels of life, cause<sup>6</sup> pleasure and mental satisfaction and keeps up life in the proper way for its free play is PATHYA.<sup>7</sup> Thus, a diet is a kind of food on which a person or group lives".<sup>8</sup>

#### IMPORTANCE OF FOOD :

Food sustains the life of living beings and the body is constituted of food.<sup>9</sup> It is also stated that food is the centre of life and civilisation revolves around it.<sup>10</sup> According to the Upanisada, it is food which enables a man to use all his faculties.<sup>11</sup>

The food imparts strength immediately. It gives longevity, complexion, good voice, enthusiasm, self-command, good memory and happiness<sup>12</sup> (KK III-44). As stated above the body is constituted of food and all activities regarding four ends e.ġ.

Dharma (religion), Artha (wealth), Kāma (sexual acts) and Mokṣa (salvation) - of human existence depend upon the body (II-1).<sup>13</sup>

The KK describes the constituting process of the body by food according to the principle of the Āyurveda.

The body is composed of five Mahābhūtas, similarly all food stuffs are also composed of them. These substances remain in a particular proportion in the normal body of a living being. However, because of Agnis (enzymatic actions inside the body), this ratio of five Mahābhūtas is replenished through the ingredients of food, drinks, air, heat, sun light etc. The exogenous Pañca Mahābhūtas are converted into endogenous Pañca Mahābhūtas through the process of digestion and metabolism. The soul desires to eat all kinds of food <sup>in</sup> this physiological process.<sup>14</sup>

#### NORMAL DIET :

For sustainence of the body and preservation of health intake of food is essential. This should be normal diet. "If the amount and variety of food required by the body for energy, growth and the functioning and repair of all types of body tissues - these needs - are met, one has a diet considered Normal<sup>15</sup>".

According to the Āyurveda, the eight factors are to be

considered to determine the normal diet conducive to an individual.<sup>16</sup> Eventhough the normal diet can be recommended in general. The KK states following foods which are included in the diet suitable to everyone (II 4,5) :

- (i) Cereals such as Śālī rice etc.
- (ii) Meats
- (iii) Milk and milk products
- (iv) Fruits and Vegetables

Modern dietitians also recommend following groups for selecting the balanced diet:<sup>17</sup>

- (i) Milk and Milk products
- (ii) Meat, poultry, fish and eggs
- (iii) Whole grain bread or cereals
- (iv) Fruits and Vegetables.

The vegetarian diet in India is considered well balanced. It is stated that the diet of the average Indian consists of rice, wheat, pulses and vegetables. This is fairly well balanced diet for adults and contains all necessary vitamins.<sup>18</sup>

THEORY OF MĀTRĀ (Proper Quantity):

Among the dietetic<sup>et</sup> rules and regimens, theory of Mātrā

(intake of food in proper quantity) is very important. One should eat in Mātrā, it increases power of digestion<sup>19</sup> (III-24). Amount of food gets digested as well as metabolised in proper time is to be regarded as the Mātrā (III-25).<sup>20</sup>

The Mātrā depends upon heaviness or lightness of the food articles. Heavy food should be taken upto the half of the stomach-capacity. Even light articles of food should not be taken in excessive quantity (III-24, 25).

Improper quantity of food is of two types (III 26, 27) :

- (1) Deficient in quantity ( Hīna Mātrā). It will produce following symptoms :
  - i) Impairment of the strength, plumpness and ojas.
  - ii) Causation of all types of Vātik diseases.
- (2) Food taken in Excessive Quantity (Ati Mātrā).

It aggravates all the three doṣas. Eating excessive food like an animal causes indigestion which is the root cause of all diseases (III-28). "The major problem about diet is that the average adult normally eats far more than necessary for health. In fact, the excess food that is eaten probably does harm. One should eat in such a way that after one had finished a meal, one is in a position to eat some more".<sup>21</sup>

According to Cakrapāni, the Matrā of food depends upon a number of factors.<sup>22</sup>

PROPER TIME OF TAKING FOOD :

Hunger is the impelling urge to eat. It is advised that a second meal should not be eaten on the same day in the event of the appetite having become dulled by a previous meal.<sup>23</sup> Thus the proper time of taking food varies according to the capacity of digesting food. Even though a guide line has been prescribed for a healthy person.

Intermediate time between two meals should be at least one Prahara ( the eighth part of a whole day). It creates an excession of chyle, if one eats during one Prahara. One feels debility if the meal is eaten after two Praharas (III-23).

Pañjikākāra, a commentator of the SS notes that those who are in the habit of eating two meals a day should eat a light half meal at one and quarter Prahara in the morning (at about 10 a.m.) and another between the third and the fourth Prahara in the afternoon (at about 4-p.m.).<sup>24</sup> Jejjata, another commentator of the SS mentions that the meals should be between the third and the fourth Prahara in the day and night.<sup>25</sup> Caraka does not mention any specific time, but advises that one should take food only when previous meal is digested.<sup>26</sup>

The Āyurveda emphasizes upon moderation in food. It is also advised from very early times. It is said that if a person took his food only twice a day, he would be so wise and intelligent that his sayings would never fail.<sup>27</sup> One is expected to take only as much food as is necessary to satisfy hunger.<sup>28</sup> It is considered improper to take any food between two principal meals.<sup>29</sup>

IMPROPER MEALS :

Adhyā'sana, Viśamā'sana, Samā'sana and Virudhdhā'hāra are considered improper meals. They aggravate all doṣas and cause all diseases (III-37).<sup>30</sup>

- Adhyā'sana - Eating before the previous meal is not completely digested in the stomach.
- Viśamā'sana - Over eating or under eating without thinking of hunger.
- Samā'sana - Taking wholesome and unwholesome foods together in one meal.
- Virudhdhā'hāra - The incompatible food combinations.

It is considered unwholesome and harmful to health. Such diets dislodge the various doṣas but do not expel them out of the body.<sup>31</sup>

The KK enumerates following incompatible food combinations (III 39-42) :

- (1) Milk is incompatible when it is taken with following food stuff.
  - i) Fruits of creeping plants
  - ii) Sour materials in taste
  - iii) Kulattha (Dolichos biflorus Linn)
  - iv) Fish
  - v) Wine
  - vi) Meat
  - vii) Paste of sesamum seeds
  - viii) Karīra
  - ix) Jambū (Syzygium cumini Skeels)
  - x) Salt
  - xi) Curd
- (2) Ghee and cereals are not taken together with buttermilk.
- (3) Curd and wine should not be taken after the intake of meat and eggs (of hen).
- (4) Meat of goose and wine are contradictory.
- (5) Surā type of wine is incompatible with Krusarā and Pāyasa (milk preparation).

- (6) Meats of Kapinjala, Tittira, Lāvā, Godhā and Mayura fried with castor oil are unwholesome.
- (7) Meat of Kapota (pigeon) fried with mustard oil should not be taken.
- (8) Honey, Ghee, Vasā (animal fat), oil and water taken in equal quantity are contradictory. Mixtures of two, three or four out of these five are also contradictory.

Viruddhdhāhāra are illustrated in detail in the CS<sup>32</sup>

#### RULES OF DRINKING WATER :

Water is considered to be the best of beverages.<sup>33</sup> The changes in seasons and the places on the earth where it has fallen affect the properties of water. The rules of drinking water are very important to be observed in order to preserve best health. The KK mentions the rules of drinking water as follows (III 31 to 35, VI 5 to 9):

- 1) Thirst can cause even death. So one should drink water in any case.<sup>34</sup>
- 2) The food does not digest if one drinks water either in excessive quantity or in insufficient quantity. One should drink water in a little quantity at proper intervals. It increases the power of digestion. The best time to drink water is during meals with possibly one or two glasses at each meal.<sup>35</sup>

- 3) Effects of water drunk at the various stages of the meal are as under :

Beginning of the meal      Produces emaciation and indigestion.

Middle of the meal      Promotes the power of digestion. It is considered to be the best.

End of the meal      Causes obesity and Kapha.

- 4) A thirsty person should not eat food, likewise a hungry person should not drink water.
- 5) Water which has the fragrance of lotus, which is clear, cool, health promoting shining like silver and taken from a flowing river is considered good for drinking.<sup>36</sup>
- 6) Drinking water should be kept in a vessel of gold at the left side of the eater.
- 7) One should use drinking water of various sources according to the seasons as shown below:
- i) Pond and lake      - Hemanta- Śisira
  - ii) Well, reservoir and spring      - Vasanta- Grīṣma
  - iii) Well, fallen directly from the sky, well boiled      - Pravṛta
  - iv) Water of any source can be drunk in Śarada.

In the Vedic literature, water is described as nectar and a remedy.<sup>37</sup> Buddhists emphasize upon purification of water. They used eight kinds of strainers to purify drinking water.<sup>38</sup> According to the Harṣacarita, a special officer in charge of drinking water was appointed.<sup>39</sup>

## SECTION - II

### ORGANIZATION OF ROYAL KITCHEN

The word Mahānasa was used for a royal kitchen.<sup>40</sup> The time and energy required to store, prepare, clean, cook and serve food are directly related to the kitchen. So organization of a kitchen is very important.

#### LOCATION OF THE KITCHEN :

The kitchen should be located in south-east corner of the royal mansion (II-8). This corner is considered to be auspicious.<sup>41</sup> The fire place is made from east to west in it. The walls are well coloured. It is a clean, quiet, well lighted and secluded place where strangers might have no access thereto.<sup>42</sup> It is also well equipped and cooks as well as their assistants are good in number.

UTENSILS AND IMPLEMENTS:

The KK describes cooking utensils made of following materials alongwith their properties (II 9 to 12):

1. The food cooked in the utensils made of clay and cleaned with water is considered to be beneficial with its all qualities. These utensils were most common in use in ancient times in India.
2. Utensils made of iron are used when those of clay are not available. But they produce the disease of eyes and piles.
3. The food cooked in the utensils of bronze is considered to be holy and they impart intelligence.

According to Patañjali, milk, ghee, and rice should be eaten in the utensils of bronze.<sup>43</sup>

4. The food, cooked in vessels made of copper is not tasty. It produces hyperacidity.
5. The food cooked in utensils of gold increases intellect and enthusiasm. These utensils are free from all noxious qualities.

These utensils were used in the houses of rich and in the royal kitchen.<sup>44</sup>

TRANSFERENCE OF FOOD :

According to the KK, the expert cooks transfers the cooked food to other utensils. The general rules of such transference are as follows (II 13 to 18):

1. The cooked rice is kept in the same utensils in which it is cooked.
2. Ghee is kept in wooden or iron-made utensils.
3. Meat or meat soup is transferred into the utensils made of silver, gold, iron or wood.
4. Water, beverages, butter-milk, rāga, khāṇḍava and saṭṭaka are preserved in the utensils of clay, glass, crystal or lapis lazuli.

The food kept in the said utensils always impart happiness, relieve pain and they are cardiac tonic.

COOKING IMPLEMENTS :

The KK enumerates following implements which were used in a royal kitchen (II 19 to 25):

1. Mārjanī (Broom or brush)
2. Vāṭī (a shallow and circular pan)
3. Hāṇḍī (earthen pot)
4. Kūrcikā (a key or a needle)<sup>45</sup>

5. Gharsanī (a threshing floor)
6. Vainava pātra (a basket made of bamboo)
7. Aliñjara (a water-jar)
8. The stones which are used as lighter.
9. Kuddāla (a spade)
10. Kuṭharaka (a hatchet)
11. Pieces of dry wood which are two feet in length, clean and free from any insects.
12. Titaucālani (a strainer)
13. Pītha (a pedestal)
14. Musala (a pestle)
15. Ulūkhala (wooden mortar)<sup>46</sup>
16. Śūrpa (a winnowing-basket)<sup>47</sup>
17. Loṣṭha (a clod)
18. Śilādarvi (a ladle of stone)
19. Caturstrā Pāttika (a quadrate box)
20. Two Sandansaka (Two tongs)
21. Four pieces of cloth (four napkins)
22. Nālika (a wooden tube)
23. Chūrika (a knife)
24. Śūlya (an iron-spit)
25. Sukatāhak (a big frying pan of a semispheroidal shape and furnished with handles)<sup>48</sup>
26. A long ladle made of iron.

The cooking utensils and implements as well as rules of cleaning them are described in ancient books.<sup>49</sup> According to the view of a modern scholars, "Proper tools help in improving the quality of work and make it easier to accomplish."<sup>50</sup>

COOK :

A royal kitchen requires many helpers to organise it properly. Head cook and assistant cooks are very important. The head cook is recognised as departmental head. His qualities and qualifications are as follows (III 47 to 50):<sup>51</sup>

1. A person with knowledge of cooking inherited from his ancestors.
2. Competent
3. Conversant with the Śāstras especially Pākāśāstra and the Āyurveda.
4. Expert in delicious cooking.
5. A person with purity and cleanliness.
6. A person who loves the king and his family.
7. Religious.
8. Affectionate and friendly to his boss.
9. Appointed lineally.
10. With a turban wound round the head.
11. Obedient to the physician in the kitchen.
12. A person having capacity to control his staff.

The other members in the staff of a royal kitchen should also possess above-mentioned qualities.

The following staff is recommended for a large kitchen in the modern times:<sup>52</sup>

1. Food Director who manages food production.
2. Dietitian.
3. Food manager.
4. Chef
5. Head cook or cook manager
6. Assistant cooks
7. Kitchen helpers
8. Baker's helpers
9. Vegetable preparation workers
10. Cooks, bakers and butchers.

The following cooks expert in cooking various types of food are mentioned.<sup>53</sup>

1. Sūpakāra (a person who cooks food)
2. Andhasika (a person who cooks only rice)
3. Audanika (expert in cooking rice)
4. Sūda (a butcher)
5. Āpūpika (a person who cooks breads and purīs)
6. Kandaṅka (a person who sells breads)

7. Bhakṣakāra (a cook in general)
8. Paurogava (head of the kitchen)<sup>54</sup>
9. Pakṣr<sup>55</sup>
10. Srapayitr<sup>56</sup>
11. Khādyatapakika (a Superintendent of the kitchen)<sup>57</sup>

FOOD-HANDLER (VI 15-16)

Serving or handling of food is very important. There were servēs of food in Vedic period also.<sup>58</sup> Males and females both were appointed for this work.

The person who serves the food should bathe before resuming the duty. His or her body should be besmeared with perfumes such as Sandal etc. Clean and nice clothes, garlands and flowers should be worn. The male-server (parivesaka) should be -

- (i) with smiling face
- (ii) straight-forward
- (iii) handsome
- (iv) happy-hearted
- (v) devotee
- (vi) lover of his boss
- (vii) expert in cooking
- (viii) matured young man

- (ix) generous person
- (x) pious
- (xi) brahmin by caste
- (xii) born in a good family.

The female server should also have above-mentioned qualities (8-15, 16)

Even in modern times, following views are considered important regarding food handling:<sup>59</sup>

1. Preparation and handling of food should not be entrusted except to knowledgeable and reliable people.
2. Food handlers should have had at least once course in sanitation.
3. They should have been made aware of intentional (e.g. preservatives) and unintentional (e.g. pesticides) food additives.
4. Persons with communicable diseases including skin infections should never be allowed to handle foods to be consumed by others.
5. All food handlers must undergo periodical physical examinations.
6. Food handlers should observe physical cleanliness and should wear clean (preferably white) work uniform (no jewelry).

7. They should keep head covered, finger-nails short and clean (no nail polish).
8. When possible, gloves should be worn, but whether or not gloves are worn, the hands should be washed and dipped in a disinfectant prior to handling food. The hands should be rewashed any time they are used for anything else prior to handling food again.
9. When handling foods, the hands should not touch the mouth, nose or other parts of the body, especially body-openings.
10. During working, food handlers should neither smoke nor eat or drink in the work area.
11. Pets and other animals do not belong in the food processing area.
12. Sneezing and coughing should be confined to a handkerchief. After using a handkerchief, the hands are to be rewashed.
13. Cloth should not be used for cleaning.
14. Food that appear to be unwholesome or that may contain unacceptable contaminants should not be handled.

PHYSICIAN :

They should appoint a physician in the royal kitchen. His merits are as follows (III 3 to 7):<sup>60</sup>

1. Having knowledge of the Āyurveda.
2. Accurate in the diagnosis of diseases and expert in the treatment of diseases.
3. Free from anger, cruelty, jealousy, trickery and idleness.
4. Who has conquered his passions or subdued the senses.
5. Merciful.
6. Having good character, virtues, patience or forbearance.
7. Of high descent.
8. Religious.
9. Affectionate.
10. Strict in the observance of religious vows.
11. Having high ideals.
12. Generous.
13. Straight forward.
14. Faithful
15. Lovely to be hold
16. Very intelligent
17. Not perplexed in misapprehension.
18. Devout.
19. Well wisher
20. Dexterous
21. Courageous
22. Skilful
23. Compentent

- 24) Having all virtues of a physician.
- 25) Who always keeps life saving drugs at hand.

The KK states that the king (or a government) should appoint the physicians having above-mentioned qualities and pay them good salary.

Following types of physicians are not respected (III-16):

- 1. Having no character.
- 2. Who uses harsh language.
- 3. Poor
- 4. Villager
- 5. Who visits the patient without invitation.

#### INSPECTION OF COOKED FOOD :

In royal families, it was customary to examine the food preparations to see that they did not contain any poison.<sup>61</sup> Kautilya mentions the symptoms of poisoned food articles and advises the superintendent of the kitchen to taste every preparation before it is served.<sup>62</sup>

The birds were used to inspect the poisoned foods. They were kept in the court-yards. Sūdraka describes many birds in Vasantasena's palace.<sup>63</sup> The KK enumerates following birds to be kept in the court-yard (II.26):

1. Antelope or deer.
2. Goose
3. Cakora (the Greek partridge)
4. Parrot
5. Heron
6. Monkey
7. Peacock
8. Cock
9. Ichneumon

They exhibit the reactions if they smell, see or touch any poison (III.27).<sup>64</sup>

1. The deer begins to cry
2. The goose stumbles
3. The eyes of Cakora become very red.
4. The parrot vomits
5. The heron begins to cry
6. The monkey leaves eating
7. The peacock dies
8. The cock and the ichneumon produce sweet sound immediately.

The symptoms of various food articles mixed with poison are as under (II 28 to 31) :

1. Poisoned rice becomes discoloured. It takes long time in cooking the rice and if it is eaten, it produces loss of consciousness and faint.
2. Seasoned articles and decoctions become dry if they are mixed with poison. A shade is seen if the effect of mixed poison is very strong.
3. The froth goes upward in the shape of streaks and threads from the poisonous food and it begins to bubble.
4. Rāga, khāḍava, vegetables and meat become asunder and tasteless.
5. The following changes are seen in various food and drinks if they are mixed with poison :
  - i) Black linings in liquids.
  - ii) Linings of coppery red colour in milk and curds.
  - iii) Dark, brown, yellow and white linings in butter milk.
  - iv) The pegeon coloured linings in Mastu.
  - v) Green linings in honey.
  - vi) Reddish brown linings in oils.
6. The dry food articles become wet and the wet become the dry.
7. Soft foods become hard and the hard foods become soft.
8. The flowers fade and loose their fragrance and the tips of the flowers tear away.

9. The black patches are seen on the cloth.
10. The utensils become dull.
11. All unctuous substances loose shining and touching sensation.

The person who mixes poison in the food is described as follows (II 37 to 38):

1. His face becomes dark brown in colour and dry.
2. He watches everywhere meaninglessly.
3. He trembles with sweaty body.
4. He stands still and feared.
5. He stumbles and yawns.

If poisoned foods are thrown into fire, the flames become dark green in colour and a strong smelling spreads everywhere. If these foods are eaten by crows, their voice becomes very weak. The flies die if they sit on poisoned food stuff (II-39).

The description of the inspection of cooked food is found in the AH almost in similar stanzas.<sup>65</sup>

### SECTION - III

#### EATING

In medical works many rules are prescribed to be observed before going to have one's meal.<sup>66</sup> One should go to one's meal

when there is hunger. Rules of diet and etiquette should properly be observed. The KK prescribes following rules of etiquette before going to the dinning hall (VI-1).

1. One should take bath and wear clean, soft and nice white clothes as well as garlands of flowers.
2. One should wash one's feet just before taking a seat in the dinning hall.
3. One should enter the hall with a pleasing heart in the company of dear friends, relatives and physician.
4. One should take wholesome and sātmya food.

SITTING ARRANGEMENT :

The meal is taken in the Bhojanamaṇḍapa (dinning hall) (V-60). The dish is served on a navel high table placed before the eater (VI-10). The eater should sit on a soft cushion covered with a nice cloth. His face should be towards east or north (VI-2).

Somesvara suggests that the king should sit on a cushion with a white napkin spread from the navel to the knee and take his food in the company of his relatives and reliable courtiers.<sup>67</sup>

Vedic Indians took their meal in a sitting posture.<sup>68</sup> According to Sūtras, one should eat sitting on a piece of ground

which has been purified.<sup>69</sup> His face should be towards the east or towards the south.<sup>70</sup> Dining table and dining hall were not used in Vedic period. From the Jātakas we know that people took food in halls and sat on benches while doing so. Some of them also used cushions.<sup>71</sup> From the account of Megasthenes, we learn that when an Indian was at supper, a table was placed before him.<sup>72</sup> Some people took food in a standing posture probably as a result of contact with the foreign elements which had entered India.<sup>73</sup>

The practice of listening to sweet music and interesting stories while taking food, which is accordance with the modern fashion, is also found in the KS.<sup>74</sup>

#### DINING TABLE :

Art of meal planning and serving as well as presentation of food preparations on a dinning table are described (VI 11 to 14). Modern scholars also consider this topic as an important part of culinary art.<sup>75</sup>

The bowls made of new gold should be arranged in rows and a bright shining big dish made of silver should be kept among the bowls on the dinning table. The dish made of white copper or the leaves of the Palāsa (bastard tree) is also used.

The food preparations are arranged on the dinning table as follows :

Left side of the eater	Filtered and sweet smelling drinking water in a vessel of gold.
Front side of the eater	A big clean dish.
Right side of the eater	Syrups, liquids, beverages, milk and articles to be sucked and to be licked.
Middle of the table	Sandhānaka, all products of sugar cane, pāyasa, curds.

Cooked rice, soup, ghee, meat, vegetables, food articles made of flour and fish are served in the dish.

Such arrangement of the food preparations is convenient and appealing. "Food appeal depends upon its presentation. Art in serving is achieved by applying garnishes to food combinations which harmonize in colour, texture and arrangement<sup>76</sup>".

#### DIETETIC RULES :

The food which is to be eaten should be cooked in a proper way. It should be suitable to the season and one should take it according to dietetic rules (III-51). Caraka enumerates eight

factors determining the utility of food.<sup>77</sup> Among them, Upayoga-samsthā stands for the Dietetic rules. The ~~KK~~ also describes almost all important rules.

1. Diet should consist of six rasas (tastes) - sweet, sour, saline, pungent, astringent and bitter. Regular intake of diet of all tastes promotes strength, while regular intake of food having only one taste causes weakness.<sup>78</sup>
2. The daily meal should contain following food articles:
  - i) Rice
  - ii) Soups of pulses
  - iii) Ghee
  - iv) Vegetables
  - v) Fruits
  - vi) Food articles made of flour
  - vii) Meat
  - viii) Pānaka
  - ix) Boiled milk
  - x) Parpaṭas and pickles.

The CS prescribes daily diet as under:<sup>79</sup>

- i) Rice (harvested in sixty days)
- ii) Mudga pulse

- iii) Rock salt
- iv) Amalaka (Emblīca Offīcīnālīo Goertn)
- v) Rain-water
- vi) Ghee
- vii) Honey
- viii) Meat of animals dwelling in arid climate.

The AH gives almost similar list.<sup>80</sup>

The quality and quantity of daily diet should meet the nutritional requirement of the body according to modern views. The food articles consist of protein, carbohydrate, fat, vitamins, minerals etc. should be used as daily diet.<sup>81</sup> The knowledge of chemical composition of the food articles is important to fix balanced food. The biological action of the food articles and their rasas (tastes) are considered to fix balanced or normal diet for an individual in the Āyurveda.<sup>82</sup>

The above mentioned Āyurvedic prescription of daily meal appears to be perfect to meet nutritional requirement of the body.

3. One should take sweet articles of food in the beginning of the meal. Sour articles are taken in the middle. Bitter and pungent articles are eaten in the end. This order of

intake is considered to be beneficial. If the power of digestion is weak, one should take bitter, pungent, sour and saline foods in the beginning of the meal.<sup>83</sup>

4. The fruits should be eaten before taking the meal, but banana and cucumber should not be eaten before the meal.<sup>84</sup>
5. One should eat with happy mood in good company.

In many respects, where we eat, how we eat and with whom we eat is as important as what we eat.<sup>85</sup>

The happy mood and good company play an important part in digesting the food. The CS states that wholesome food taken even in proper quantity does not get properly digested when the individual is afflicted with grief, fear, anger, sorrow, excessive sleep and excessive vigil.<sup>86</sup>

The scientist Pavlov proved that anger, fear, anxiety and worry cause the digestive juices to halt their flow and the digestive tract to become tight and rigid on the other hand, relaxation and happiness help the digestive tract to relax and do its work.<sup>87</sup>

6. Proper digestibility finds a specific mention in Indian Dietology. It is stated that digestibility is more important than the values of food.<sup>88</sup>

The power of digestion (Agni) first digests the food and nourishes the body. If food is not taken, the Agni digests doshas, then dhatus and ultimately Prānas (III-29). The CS states that strength, health, longevity and prānas are dependent upon the power of digestion including metabolism. When supplied with the fuel in the form of food and drinks this power of digestion is sustained. It dwindles when deprived of it.<sup>89</sup>

The Āyurvedists have recognised thirteen kinds of Agnis, of these the Jatharāgni (the abdominal fire or digestive power) is the most important.<sup>90</sup> When food articles are taken in a quantity commensurate with the power of digestion, the latter is properly maintained resulting in the maintenance of health.

7. The doshas that maintain the body get changed by the seasonal variations and to bring them to normacy, the variation of the food becomes necessary.

One of the important contribution of Āyurvedic dietetics is recommendation of the food according to the season.<sup>91</sup>

8. One should not sleep or sit after taking food. One should take rest lying on the back with the face upwards. It

promotes strength. If one lies on the left side of the body, it promotes long life. One should not run or rush after taking food. It harms the span of life (III-45).

According to the AH, following activities are harmful after eating food.<sup>91</sup>

- 1) Over talking
- 2) Walking long distance
- 3) Sleep
- 4) Movement in heat of the sun.
- 5) Sitting near the fire.
- 6) Swimming
- 7) Riding

The SS advises to sit like a king i.e. very comfortably and then to walk about hundred steps. Thereafter one should lie in a bed on the left side of the body. One should do light activities.<sup>93</sup>

9. According to the CS, healthy individuals as well as some of the patients should observe the following rules, even while using such of the food articles as are most wholesome by nature.<sup>94</sup>

- i) One should take warm food. It gets digested quickly.

- ii) One should take unctuous food. It increases the plumpness of the body, strengthens the sense-faculties, promotes strength and brings out brightness of complexion.
- iii) One should take food in proper quantity. It gets digested without any difficulty.
- iv) One should take food only when previous meal is digested.
- v) One should take food having no contradictory potencies.
- vi) One should take food in proper place equipped with all the accessories.
- vii) One should not take food too hurriedly.
- viii) One should not take food very slowly.
- ix) One should not talk or laugh or be unmindful while taking food.
- x) One should take food which is most suitable to one's body constitution, power of digestion and taste.

At the end, it is important to note the following factors which should be considered in planning the meals for the day.<sup>95</sup>

1. Nutritional needs for the day.
  2. Likes and dislikes of the group.
  3. The staying quality of the food-use of some protein food and some fat in each meal.
  4. The suitability of combinations - texture, flavour, colour, form, temperature.
  5. The seasonability - appropriate to the season and weather.
  6. Nutritive values.
  7. The time required and the equipments available for preparation.
  8. The speed with which a food loses quality after preparation.
  9. The ease of serving.
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