

Meticulous Diet and Lifestyle of *Yogi* (*Yoga Practitioners*) for Wellbeing a Review Study

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ABSTRACT

Objective: First objective of this study was to prevent the unwanted and adverse effect of *Yoga* over health and second objective was to create knowledge and awareness for diet and lifestyle of *Yoga* practitioners. **Data Source:** The classical Ayurveda texts and *Yoga* literatures along with the commentaries and peer-reviewed articles are referred. **Review Methods:** In this study Classical textbooks such as *Charak Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Astanga Hridaya* and its commentary, *Patanjali Yoga Sutra*, *Gheranda Samhita*, *Hathayoga pradeepika*, *Bhagavad-Geeta*, etc. were reviewed to analyses the diet and life style as mentioned and its importance. Different databases such as PubMed, Scopus, J-Gate Plus, Science direct etc. were searched using keywords and Boolean operators were applied. **Result and discussion:** This study reflected the importance and need of Meticulous Diet and Lifestyle of *Yogi* (*Yoga* practitioners) for wellbeing. Healthy dietary practices start early in life and improves cognitive development, and may have longer term health benefits such as reducing the risk of becoming overweight or obese and developing NCDs later in life. **Conclusion:** This study show that during *Yoga* practices dominance of milk and milk products (*Stavika Ahara*) in regular food of *Yogi* (*Yoga* practitioners) prevent the additional health issues and get admirable outcome.

KEYWORDS: Lifestyle, Meticulous Diet, *Stavika Ahara* *Yoga*

INTRODUCTION

Disease prevention and promotion of health is the basic aims of health system, it improves the quality of life and standard of living by decreasing the disease incidence, prevalence and economic burden of the country. *Yoga* with meticulous diet and lifestyle is one of the best path for the same, it is a primordial prevention out of the four category of prevention methods. Worldwide > 300 million population practices the *Yoga* as a part of daily activities for health maintenance.

Now a days Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), like heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung disease, are increases gradually and causes 74% of all deaths worldwide. Nearly one fourth of all NCD deaths, and 86% of the 17 million people who died prematurely, or before age of 70 years, occur in low- and middle-income countries. [1] One of the most important ways of reducing deaths from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is to control the risk factors that lead to their development like maintaining

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an active lifestyle and consuming a healthy diet. [2] Along with active life (*Yoga* practices) proper diet play synergistic effect to control the NCDs. Now a days consumption of more high energy food, like excess amount of fats, free sugars and salt/sodium, and use of fruit, vegetables and other dietary fibre such as whole grains are decreased. [3] Dietary guideline for different activities or occupations have specific to equilibrium the necessity of body. [4] Humans required food for energy, but also need fluids. The need for liquid can be felt from feelings of thirst, which can arise at any time (Kroemer & Grandjean, 2000).

Ancient literatures of Ayurveda explained the importance of *Ahara* (Food and Diet) and lifestyle (*Dinacharya*) for formation, maintenance and promotion of healthy long life of individuals. [5-7] Even according to the importance, practices of Proper diet and life style are considered as *Yoga*.

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु |

युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा || 17||

There is no possibility of one's becoming a yogi, if one eats too much or too little, sleeps too much or too little. *Yogi* is comfortable in his habits of eating, sleeping, working and recreation can mitigate all substantial pains by practicing the yoga system.^[8]

Regularly day by day increase in urbanization, migration, fast forward life, competition to fulfil their extended desires and uncontrolled and steady impact of virtual life or digital life over individual imitate change in diet pattern and lifestyle that increases weight, morbidity and ignorance toward health.^[9] Person have myth "to do some postures and alternative nostril breathing (so called *Yoga*) without knowing the proper rules and methods, and become healthy". This is not *Yoga* to leaves life in uncontrolled way, because follow of rules and regulation is the first step toward *Yoga*.^[10]

First aim of yoga is to remove the *Tapa* (all types of disease and sorrows). For admirable effect of yoga over maintenance and promotion of health, proper knowledge of diet and followed by them are the basic important factors. Health is a very precious and rights of individual, without healthy life whole materialistic world is as waste and *Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha* are not be achievable for individual. Till date have very little works are carried over the diet for *Yogi* and published in journals. So with the aim to create knowledge and awareness and also prevent the unwanted or adverse effect of *Yoga* over health, this study was carried out.

Aims and objective:

1. To create knowledge and awareness for diet and lifestyle of *Yoga* practitioners.
2. To prevent the unwanted or adverse effect of *Yoga* over health

Material and Methods:

Ayurvedic literature like *Charak Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Astanga Hridaya and its commentary, Bhavaprakasha Samhita, Sharangadhara Samhita and Yoga Literature like Patanjali Yoga Sutra, Gheranda Samhita, Hathayoga pradeepika, Bhagavad-Geeta*, etc. were reviewed to analyses the diet and life style as mentioned and its importance. Study of WHO website regarding diet, lifestyle and prevalence of NCDs. Many databases such as PubMed, Scopus, Google Scholar, and J-Gate Plus, were searched using keywords like diet, life span, lifestyle, health, diseases with the help of Boolean operators "AND," "OR" and "NOT." Filters like clinical trials and free full text were applied.

Conceptual Study

Physical and mental strength, health, lifespan or life depends upon Agni or digestive power. Before meal individual access the food quality, nature, amount, condition and requirement of the body because over nutrition and deficiency both conditions are accountable for health.^[11]

स्वास्थ्यपरिपालनहेतुषु मात्रावदन्नं प्रधानं

Proper quantity of food is first to maintain the health of the individuals. Quantity of every individuals is different because it follow the quality of *Jatharagini* of the individuals.^[12]

अत्याहारः प्रयासश्च प्रजल्पो नियमाग्रहः ।

जनसङ्गश्च लौल्यं च षड्भिर्योगो विनश्यति ॥ ह.प्र.1/15

Yoga obstructed by six activities like overeating, overexertion, conversation too much, performing needless austerities, socializing and greediness.

Swami Swatmaram has considered *Atyahaar* as the first obstacle because it creates obstacles in the path of *yoga*. By eating more food, the digestive system of a person gets spoiled. Due to which he gets diseases of digestive system like indigestion and obesity. Secondly, a person becomes lazy by eating more food. At the same time, excessive eating leads to craving for food. Due to the origin of raga, the seeker is not able to move forward in *yoga* practice.

उत्साहात् साहसाद्धैर्यात्तत्त्वज्ञानाच्च निश्चयात् ।

जनसङ्गपरित्यगात् षड्भिर्योगः प्रसिद्धयति ॥ ह.प्र.1/16

Yoga practices become successful by six activates like enthusiasm, courage for *yoga*, Patience, knowledge of the truth, determination and solitude.^[13]

Tatv Gyan means having accurate knowledge of any object or substance. As long as we do not have the correct knowledge or actual knowledge of any object or substance. Till then we cannot understand his nature. That's why in order to achieve success in any path, first of all we should have the correct knowledge of that substance or object, requirement of body for maintenance of health, knowledge of diet and lifestyle etc. If we do not have real knowledge of any substance, then it is called a kind of distress called *asmita*. And troubles do the work of taking us away from the path of *yoga*.

ब्रह्मचारी मिताहारी त्यागी योगपरायणः ।

अब्दादुर्ध्वं भवेत् सिद्धो नात्र कार्या विचारणा ॥ ह.प्र.1/57 ॥

One who observes the vow of celibacy, restrains his diet i.e. abstains, who is a *Tyagi* i.e. one who has

renounced the objects of enjoyment and is completely devoted to *Yoga* get perfection very soon.

Mitaahara is considered as important component of *Yama*. Person should take *Susnigdha* and *Madhura* diet after devoting one fourth food to lord or donating to other or take half part food, one part water or liquid and kept one part vacant for proper movement of food is considered as *Mitaahara*.^[12] Different Yogic texts and Ayurveda literatures explained the importance and adverse effects of *Mitaahara* and *Dinacharya* for individuals who practices *Yoga*, if not follow the guidelines they get different types of diseases.^[14]

Some foods like *Shali*, *Shastika*, *Yova*, *Godhuma*, *Mudga*, *Amlaka*, *Sandhava* etc. are recommended for daily use as wholesome diet to maintain health.^[12] On the basis of available literatures special diet and lifestyle are explained in the table 1 and table 2.^[13-15]

Result and Discussion:

Proper knowledge of health and its maintenance methods is key factor to control the food pattern and life style. Timely feeling of hunger, proper digestion and assimilation without any disturbance, proper evacuation of stool, urine and flatus, feeling of lightness, optimal function of all sensory and motor system, proper sleep and wakefulness, improvement in strength, complexion and longevity of expected life span, has pleasant mind and optimal functioning of *Agani* is the characters of health and vice-versa.^[15] Practice of *Yoga* and *Ayurveda* have the same aim primarily maintenance of health and ultimate accomplishment of salvation. According the importance of healthy life, by leaving everything else, one should maintain the health (*Sharira*) for if there is no body, there is nothing that can be made available to the individual.^[17] Therefore, person should take wholesome food in the respect of nature, process, time, quantity, combination, viability, dietetic rules and wholesome for the individual who take them and have control over cognitive functions for prevention of diseases. A nutritious diet helps to protect against all forms of malnutrition, as well as non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Insalubrious diet and absence of physical activity are leading global risks to health.

When healthy dietary practices started early in life, improves cognitive development, and may have longer term health benefits such as reducing the risk of becoming overweight or obese and developing NCDs later in life. Energy intake (calories) should be in balance with energy expenditure. To avoid unhealthy weight gain, total fat should not exceed 30% of total energy intake, saturated fats should be less than 10% of total energy intake, and intake of

trans-fats less than 1% of total energy intake and more use of fruit and vegetable.^[18-20]

Yoga practitioners takes two time meal near at the interval of 12 hours, it provides the sufficient time for proper digestion and assimilation. Repeated meal, overlapping of food time or skip meal causes different types of disease and malnutrition.^[21]

Lifestyle of Yoga practitioners play very important role for getting the result, like proper enthusiasm, regular and continuous practices, celibacy, avoid public performance etc. prevent the mental deviation and increases the confidence in practitioners. Always perform according to guidance and individuals strength other-wise it causes pain, sorrow, cognitive problem, malaise, physical and mental instability, respiratory problems etc.^[10]

Conclusion:

Regular practice of some yoga component for maintenance of health is not utmost along with this regular assessment, selection of food, time, quantity, process, nature and combination work as synergistically. During Yoga practices have dominance of milk and milk products (*Stavika Ahara*) in regular food to prevent the additional health issues and get admirable outcome.

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Conflicts of interest: No

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