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RESEARCH ARTICLE

DINACHARYA FOR 21ST CENTURY-EXPLORING HEALING LITERACY OF SAMHITA

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ABSTRACT

Dinacharya, the Ayurvedic concept of daily regimen is a preventive approach that plays a crucial role in maintaining physical, mental, and social well-being. In the 21st century, the rise in lifestyle disorders such as obesity, diabetes, stress, and insomnia highlights the need for preventive healthcare strategies. This paper aims to analyse classical Dinacharya principles described in Ayurvedic texts and suggests a Dinacharya that aligns closely with modern lifestylebalancing habits and gadgets. Adapting these principles to contemporary lifestyles can significantly improve health outcomes. The study concludes that Dinacharya is a practical and effective model for holistic health in modern times.

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INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda emphasizes preventive healthcare through lifestyle regulation. Dinacharya, or daily regimen, is a fundamental concept described in classical texts. It includes structured daily activities aimed at maintaining balance of Doshas and promoting longevity. In the modern era, rapid urbanization, irregular sleep patterns, unhealthy diet, and sedentary lifestyles have led to an increase in non-communicable diseases. This necessitates revisiting traditional health practices like Dinacharya and evaluating their relevance in today's context.

Aim and Objectives

Aim: To evaluate the relevance of Dinacharya in the 21st century. To reveal Dinacharya as assessable entry point Ayurvedaswisdom. Preventive approach in public health. Promoting Ayurveda by mastering daily regimen.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

1.Charak Sutrasthaana- Adhyaya 5 Matrasheetiya Adhyaya, Adhyaya 7 Navegadharaneeya. 2 Aashtang Hrudaya Sutrasthaana- Adhyaya 2 Dinacharya. 3.Bhavaprakasha Purvakhanda- Adhyaya 5 Dinacharya Prakarana. 4. Social observations.

CONTENT

Care of Sleep

Brahma Muhurta: Brahma Muhurta is precisely 96 minutes before sunrise, so its timing differs according to Rutu (season) and Desha (place). Hence it can generally be considered between 4 AM to 6 AM.This period of time acts as a tonic for the mind and senses, as the atmosphere is calm, peaceful and pleasant.Many complaints of Vitamin D deficiency can be prevented by exposure to early morning sunlight, as sunlight helps in the natural synthesis of Vitamin D in the body.Sunlight helps convert 7-dehydrocholesterol in the skin into Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol).Vitamin D is essential for calcium absorption and bone health.Adequate Vitamin D prevents disorders such as rickets, osteomalacia and osteoporosis.It also helps in improving immunity and muscle strength.Early morning sunlight has lower UV intensity, making it safer and beneficial for regular exposure.Sunlight exposure also helps regulate the circadian rhythm and sleep-wake cycle.Also ACTH (Adrenocorticotropic Hormone) secretion is higher in the early morning, which helps the body cope with stress and daily activities.ACTH stimulates the adrenal cortex to release cortisol, which plays an important role in maintaining the body's circadian rhythm and metabolic balance.

Role of ACTH and cortisol in health management: Improves alertness, concentration and mental readiness at the beginning of the day. Helps in stress tolerance and emotional stability. Regulates energy metabolism by increasing glucose availability, thus preventing fatigue. Supports immune regulation and inflammatory control. Improves cognitive performance, decision making and productivity, which is important for career development and academic performance. Balanced hormonal rhythm also helps maintain positive mood and better social interactions, contributing to a healthy social life and interpersonal relationships.

Avoiding Diwaswapna: Diwaswapna (daytime sleep) should generally be avoided in healthy individuals as it may disturb the natural circadian rhythm of the body. Excessive day sleep can lead to:Kapha aggravation, Heaviness of body, Reduced digestive power (Agnimandya), Lethargy and fatigueand Obesity and metabolic disorders. Day sleep may also interfere with night sleep quality, leading to sleep disturbances and irregular sleep patterns.

However, Diwaswapna is indicated in certain conditions, such as:During GrishmaRutu (summer season), In children and elderly individuals and In exhaustion, illness or after excessive physical work. Thus proper regulation of daytime sleep is important for maintaining balanced health.

Sleep early – Wake early

If one wants to get up at Brahma Muhurta, he/she needs to follow the rule:

"Sleep early and wake up early." Both quality and quantity of sleep are important for maintaining physical as well as mental health.

Sleep disorders according to ICSD-3: According to ICSD-3 (International Classification of Sleep Disorders), several sleep disorders may occur due to inadequate sleep, irregular sleep patterns and improper sleep practices.

The main categories include:

Insomnia disorders – difficulty in initiating or maintaining sleep. Sleep related breathing disorders – e.g. obstructive sleep apnea. Central disorders of hypersomnolence – excessive daytime sleepiness such as narcolepsy. Circadian rhythm sleep-wake disorders – disturbance of biological clock such as jet lag or shift work disorder. Parasomnias – undesirable physical events during sleep such as sleep walking, night terrors and nightmares. Sleep related movement disorders – repetitive movements during sleep such as restless leg syndrome and periodic limb movement disorder. This implies that improper sleep practices can become a major concern leading to several health conditions.

Screen exposure and Melatonin: In modern life, mobile phones, laptops and other electronic devices have become inseparable tools for communication, work and entertainment. However, it is recommended that all screens should be turned off 1–2 hours prior to bedtime.This practice is important because blue light emitted by electronic devices suppresses the production of the sleep hormone Melatonin, making it significantly harder to fall asleep.Melatonin is secreted by the pineal gland, mainly during darkness.It regulates the sleep–wake cycle (circadian rhythm).Reduced melatonin levels can lead to difficulty in falling asleep and poor sleep quality.Artificial light exposure at night delays melatonin secretion.Maintaining a dark, quiet and comfortable sleep environment helps improve melatonin secretion and promotes better sleep.

Care of Bowel & Bladder

Mala Visarjana at Vata Kala helps in easy defecation and urination.

Timely emptying of bowel and bladder is a sign of Agni Pachana. On clear basis of evacuation of previous meals one can plan his meals of the day to avoid Ama. Skipping earlier time can cause suppression of natural urge and can lead to:

UTIs.
Renal stones.
Fecal incontinence.
Hemorrhoids.
Anal fissures etc.

Metabolic Problems if Bowel is not Evacuated (Ayurveda View). Accumulation of Ama due to improper digestion. Mandagni (weak digestive fire). Aadhmana (abdominal distension). Malavstambha (constipation). Grahani disorders. Arsha (piles) and Parikartika (fissure). Raktadushti leading to skin disorders. Headache, lethargy and heaviness of body. Vata aggravation leading to dryness, pain and bloating. Long term suppression may disturb Tridosha balance and metabolism.

Hygiene Protocol

Maintain proper toilet hygiene

Wash hands with soap after defecation and urination. Drink adequate water to maintain bowel regularity. Consume fiber-rich diet (fruits, vegetables, whole grains). Avoid Vegadharana (suppression of natural urges). Maintain personal cleanliness of genital area to prevent infections.

Care of Oral Cavity

Includes Dantadhavana (i.e., brushing teeth).

- As it is not possible to follow the classical methods and articles for Dantadhavana, we can go for herbal toothbrush with soft bristles to avoid damage to enamel and gums causing recession and sensitivity.
- Change toothbrush after at least 3 months to avoid microbial infestation on brush which will further cause dental problems.
- Choosing light toothpaste having Katu, Tikta, Kashaya rasa and strictly avoiding MadhuraRasatmak toothpaste.
- Kavala &Gandusha using warm water, mouth fresheners or TilaTaila can help strengthen oral cavity and many other benefits.
- JivhaNirlekhana (scraping of tongue) is important to combat bad breath (Halitosis), enhance taste perception and reduce bacterial load.

Hygiene Protocol in Dental Care

- Brush teeth twice daily (morning and before sleep).

- Rinse mouth after every meal to remove food particles.
- Use clean tongue scraper daily.
- Avoid sharing toothbrush or oral hygiene tools.
- Replace toothbrush regularly and store it in dry place.
- Limit sugary and sticky foods that promote dental caries.
- Regular dental check-up every 6 months.
- Maintain balanced diet rich in calcium and vitamins for healthy teeth and gums.

Care of Eyes

AnjanaPrayoga: As per classical Ayurvedic texts, Anjana (application of collyrium) is recommended for maintaining eye health. It helps remove accumulated Kaphadosha and impurities from the eyes. In today's practice, classical Anjana can be correlated with the use of herbal kajal, eyeliners and mascaras infused with herbal extracts such as:

Triphala extract – improves eye health and reduces eye strain. Yashtimadhu – soothing and anti-inflammatory. Neem / Haridra extracts – antimicrobial action. Castor oil or ghee based Kajal – lubricates the ocular surface.

Benefits of Classical Anjana-Helps reduce eye strain and digital eye fatigue, Prevents dryness of eyes, Helps remove excess secretions and debris from eyes. Improves clarity of vision and Maintains ocular hygiene.

Contemporary Interpretation: Herbal Kajal, eyeliner and eye serums prepared with Ayurvedic ingredients can be used as safer alternatives to chemical eye cosmetics. Eye drops containing Triphala or rose water extracts also support eye care.

Skin Care

Skin care consists of several steps.

Abhyanga (Oil massage)

Types:

SarvangaAbhyanga – whole body oil massage.
ShiroAbhyanga – head massage.
PadaAbhyanga – foot massage.
Classically advised using different Tailas according to Dosha and Prakriti.

Benefits: Improves blood circulation, Nourishes skin and muscles, Prevents dryness and ageing and Improves sleep and relaxation. In modern practice, regular moisturisation with herbal body oils, creams and face masks can partially replace daily Abhyanga, while classical Abhyanga may be done on off days. 2) Udvartana (Herbal powder massage)-the upward rubbing of herbal powders over the body.

Contemporary Interpretation

It can be compared with body scrubbing or exfoliation. Classical ingredients used: TriphalaChurna, Chandana, Haridra, Masoor Dal powder or MultaniMitti etc.

Benefits-Removes dead skin cells, Reduces excess Kapha and Meda (fat), Improves skin texture and glow, Enhances circulation and lymphatic drainage. Modern herbal scrubs infused with these ingredients can be used for similar benefits.

Snana: Classically recommended method:

Hot / warm water for lower body. Cold or lukewarm water for head region

Reason: Hot water on the head can weaken hair roots and sense organs. Cold water maintains proper functioning of brain and sense organs. Warm water below the neck improves circulation and removes fatigue. Use of herbal soaps, body washes and gels containing classical ingredients such as:Neem, Sandalwood, Aloe vera, Turmeric and Tulsi.

Benefits-Maintains skin hygiene, Prevents infections, Provides cooling and soothing effect and Improves overall health and freshness.

Care of Overall Body: Includes Vyayama (exercise), Yoga and Pranayama.

Vyayama (Exercise):

Includes: Sports ,Physical activity, Movement of body and Exercise should be customised according to individual strength (Bala) and Prakriti.

Benefits: Improves stamina and muscle strength, Enhances metabolism, Prevents obesity and lifestyle disorders and Improves cardiovascular health.

Yoga and Pranayama: Yoga and breathing techniques play an important role in mental and emotional health.

Benefits: Helps manage stress by reducing cortisol levels, Improves emotional control and stability, Enhances concentration and cognitive performance, Helps manage anxiety and depressive thoughts, Improves sleep quality, Promotes mind–body balance and Enhances coping mechanisms in stressful situations.

Examples: Meditation. AnulomViloma, Bhramari Pranayama and Deep breathing exercises etc.These practices help individuals deal with modern lifestyle stress and demanding daily routines.

Other important factors are

Ahara

Proper diet according to Rutu, Dosha and Prakruti. Avoiding ViruddhaAhara, Mithyahara and excessive consumption of processed or junk foods. As per Ayurveda, Ahara is considered one of the components among TrayaUpasthambhas (Ahara, Nidra, Brahmacharya) which sustain life and maintain overall health. Ahara is considered equivalent to medicine when consumed in the right quantity, quality and time. Proper diet itself acts as a preventive and therapeutic measure for many diseases. Balanced Ahara helps in maintaining Agni (digestive fire), proper metabolism and nourishment of all Dhatus, thereby supporting immunity and vitality. Inclusion of fresh, seasonal and easily digestible foods promotes better digestion and prevents Dosha imbalance.

Avoid Adhyashana (overeating), Vishamashana (irregular eating) and AtimatraAhara (excessive quantity) as they disturb digestion and lead to metabolic disorders. Adequate hydration should be maintained. Siddha Jala (medicated water) can be used according to Rutu, for example: Jeera Siddha Jala in summer for better digestion and cooling effect. Sunthi Siddha Jala in rainy season to improve Agni and prevent Ama formation. Dhanyaka Siddha Jala for mild detoxification and digestive support. Practice of RasayanaPrayoga under proper medical guidance can also be encouraged. Rasayana helps in improving immunity, enhancing longevity, promoting tissue nourishment, improving mental clarity and maintaining strength and vitality.

Vega Udirana: Expressing emotions is important but knowing which Vegas are Dharaniya (those that should be controlled) and handling them efficiently is also crucial. Dharaniyavegas include Krodha (anger), Lobha (greed), Bhaya (fear), Moha (attachment) etc., which should be regulated through mental discipline. Practices like meditation, pranayama and mindfulness help in controlling emotional responses. Proper expression and healthy coping mechanisms help maintain ManasikaSwasthya (mental health).

Vega Dharana: Avoid suppression of all natural urges (Adharaniya Vegas) such as urge for urination, defecation, sneezing, hunger, thirst, sleep etc. Suppression of these urges can lead to various systemic disorders according to Ayurveda.
Also consumption of period-postponing medications without proper medical indication, which suppress natural flow of menses, can cause harm to women's health. Long-term suppression of natural urges may result in Dosha vitiation and disturbance of normal physiological functions.

Application in 21st Century

A modified Dinacharya model can be proposed:

For Students	For Working Professionals	For Night-Shift Workers
Wake up early. Light exercise or Yoga. Balanced diet. Limited screen time.	Scheduled meals. Stress management practices. Regular physical activity.	Adjusted sleep cycles Light meals Relaxation techniques

CONCLUSION

I have made a hypothetical protocol, which emphasizes that this isn't about adding tasks; it is about strategically placing non-negotiable self-care essentials throughout the day. So in this era of self-love and self-care, let us make a proper lifestyle protocol. Transforming the workaholic from a victim of their schedule into a master of their Energy.

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