



cooling quality of the earth. It brings increase in the *tikta* (bitter), *kaśāya* (astringent), and *katu* (pungent) *rasa* (taste), respectively, which brings about dryness in the body and reduces the strength.

In the time of *visargakāla* i.e., *Dakshinayana* the wind is not very dry; the moon is more powerful than sun. The earth becomes cool due to the clouds, rain, and cold winds. Unctuousness sets in the atmosphere and *amla* (sour), *lavana* (salty), and *madhura* (sweet) *rasa* are predominant, so the strength of person enhances during this period.

Therefore, in ancient days sages were designed different diets or regimen for different seasons in analytic manner, to obtain a good health and prevent the body from different diseases.

#### Winter season (*śiśira*):-

The winter season is known as *śiśira ritu*. This is of three months viz., January, February and March. It is the best season for the attainment of good health. Because, the environment of this season remains cold, along with cold wind. The predominant *rasa* during this season is *tikta* (bitter). The strength of the person becomes less and deposition of the *kaphadosha* occurs and *agni* remains in a higher state.

Diet regimen in this seasons both quantitatively and qualitatively foods are prescribed. Foods having *amla* (sour) as the predominant taste are suitable. On the other hand *katu* (pungent), *tikta* (bitter) and *kaśāya* (astringent) *rasa* are to be avoided. During this period, wheat or gram flour products, new rice, corn, ginger, garlic, *haritaki* etc. sugarcane and milk products are too very useful in diet. In winter people should avoid taking the cold diets and drinks. Cf.,

*katutikta kaśāyāni vātalāni laghūni cha /  
varjayedannapānāni śhiśhire śītalāni ca //*

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#### a) Spring season (*vasanta*):-

This season is coming from the month of mid-March to mid-May. It is considered as the season of blooming flowers and origin of new leaves. During this season, accumulated *kapha* is liquefied by the heat of the sun and as such disturbs the power of digestion and causes many diseases. Cf.,

*vasanta nicitah slesma dinakridbhabhiritah /  
kayagnim badhate roganstatah prakurute bahun //*

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And hence one should take easily digestible foods. People must avoid heavy, sour and sweet diets. Old barley, wheat, rice and others are preferred. New grains, curd, cold drinks and so on, are also to be prohibited. They should again avoid to sleep during day time. Food items tasting *Tikta* (bitter), *katu* (pungent), and *kashaya* (astringent) are to be taken. Besides those, honey is to be included in the diet. *Sasa* (rabbit) meat is suitable in this season because it is easy to digest.

#### b) Summer Season (*grīśma*):-

The approximate time of this season is from mid May to mid July. It is considered as *gri'ma ritu*. Environment is prevalent with intense heat and unhealthy wind. The strength of the person becomes less. Therefore, people must take of sweet, cold, liquid and ingratiating or oily diets and drink. During this season who takes plenty of water, buttermilk, fruit Juice, meat soups, mango juice as well as the meat of the animals or birds of arid climate along with *Sali* rice, does not suffer from any diseases.

During this season people should avoid salty (*lavana*), sour (*amla*), pungent (*katu*) and warm food.

#### c) Rainy season (*varsā*):-

Rainy season is considered as *varshā ritu* (monsoon). It is stated in the month of mid July and will mid September. The sky is covered by clouds and rains occur without thunderstorm in this season. The river, pond etc. are filled with water. The strength of the body again becomes less. Because the dehydrations occur and the powers of digestions are become weakened due to the vitiation of *vata* and other *dosa*-s during the rains. C.f.,

*ādānadurbale dehe paktā bhavati durbalah /  
sa varsāsvanilādinān dusanairbādhyate punah //*

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During this season foods having *amla* (sour), *lavana* taste (salty) and of *sneha* (unctuous) due to heavy rains accompanied by the storms. Besides meat soup, juice etc. are to be included in the diet. Heavy foods which are hard to digest are prohibited. They should take medicated water or boiled water mixed with honey.

#### d) Autumn season (*śarata*):-

According to the *Carakasamhitā*, the autumn season is running from the month of mid September to mid November. On the other hand it is known as *śarata ritu*. During this season the Sun becomes bright,

the sky remains clear. The strength of the person remains medium. In autumn body parts are suddenly exposed to the heat of the Sun and hence the *pitta* accumulated during the rains gets generally vitiated. So, people should take sweet, light, cold, bitter foods and drinks etc. in the diet. e.g.,

“*varsāsītocitāngānan sahasaivārkarāśmibhih /  
taptānāmācitam pittam prāyah śaradi kupyati //  
tatrānnapanām madhuram laghu sitam satiktakam...*”

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Moreover, during this season diet regimens are as follows- the meats of *lava* (common quail), *kapinjala* (grey partridge), *ena* (antelope), *urabhra* (sheep), *sarbha* (wapiti) and *sasa* (rabbit), rice, barley and wheat.

#### **f) Early winter season (hemanta):**

According to the *Āyurveda* the early winter is coming in the season of *hemanta ritu*. It is found in the month from mid November to mid January. The *hemanta* and *śiśhira* seasons are almost the same in nature. It is started in *visargakāla* i.e., the period of hydration. Environment is remain cold due to the cloud, wind and rains prevail on the other hand *śiśhira* season is remain dryness only because of *ādānakālā*, i.e., the period of dehydration. During this season one should take unctuous, sweet, sour and salty foods. New rice, flour preparation, green gram etc. are mentioned to be used. Various meats, fats, milk and milk products, sugarcane products, *tila* (sesame) and soon, are also to be included in the diet. They should avoid taking such of the diets and drinks, viz. pungent, bitter and astringent tastes and also the cold diets and drinks.

#### **Conclusion:-**

The consumptions of healthy diet are very necessary for our body to prevent ourselves from various diseases. A healthy body is necessary to function a healthy civic life. The environmental factors include the nature of the land, water, and various atmospheric phenomena are too including our food habits in respects of different seasons. Due to global warming and variation in the advent of season, today it can surely be a query, of the importance of *Ritucārya* in the present scenario. But the knowledge of systematic diet or regimen in due season is very helpful to enjoy a healthy body and mind. Therefore the present discussion is an attempt to highlighting the importance of the knowledge of *Āyurveda* or especially the different regimens in different natural seasons as stated in the *Carakasamhitā*.

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