

**YOGIC CONCEPT OF DIET AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC ASPECT****Dr. Ram Kishore^{1*}, Aamena Zaidi², Dr. Anamika Dixit³, Dr. Adarsh Kumar Srivastav⁴****Abstract**

Purpose: Dietetics was built on the principles of yoga and ayurveda. Traditional yoga scriptures like Hathayogic text, Gheranda Samhitha and Bhagavad Gita provide useful advice on various food items and diet for Yoga Sadhaka to get maximum advantages. According to many anthropometric and nutritional criteria, proper nutrition is defined as the intake of nutrients necessary for an individual to fulfil their full genetic growth potential. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the Yogic concept of diet and its scientific aspect in promoting health and preventing from various lifestyle disorders related to diet.

Design/methodology/approach – The terms "Yoga and Diet" were used in a thorough search of the electronic databases in PubMed/Medline, Science Direct, Google Scholar, and Semantic Scholar to find relevant papers. Data extracted from abstracts and free downloadable full paper, available hard copy journals and traditional texts like 'Upnishad', 'Hathapradeepika', 'Gherand Samhita', 'Yogsutra', Shreemadbhagwatgeeta, Charak Samhita and other Yogic texts were also studied to find out any related information.

Findings- Based on the available scientific evidence, this review argues that yoga can have positive effects on nutrition and health. Yoga is also beneficial for young people with obesity, hypertension, and sedentary lifestyles.

Practical implications – Diet and the mind are intimately connected since the mind is made up of the most subtle components of food's essence. Food undoubtedly has an impact on the eater in some ways. Recognising the scientific aspect of yogic food may impact positive effect on health. The nature, quantity of food and specific state of mind affects our digestive system, physical, and mental health respectively.

Originality/value – Till date, explorations of scientific aspect of yogic diet have not specifically focused. Moreover, this is one of the first papers to look at yogic concept of diet and point of view on health.

Keywords- Diet, Health, Mind, Yoga

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Introduction:

Diet has an important place in yoga practice. There is a popular belief regarding diet that "Jaisa khayee ann, vaisa bane mann" that is, diet directly affects the mind according to its tendency. Without controlling the mind, even a single step forward on the path of yoga cannot be imagined. Therefore, diet has an important role in keeping the mind restrained according to yoga. According to yogic texts, the diet which helps in yoga practice is called yogic diet, which is known as Mitahara. Even in Upanishads, yogic diet is considered as Mitahar (Iyengar, 2005). According to Shankaracharya, that which is accepted through the senses is called food (Svatmarama, 2002). According to Gheranda Samhita, the seeker who does not follow diet in the beginning of Yoga, he suffers from various types of diseases (Reddy, 1979).

In Charak Samhita, diet is considered the basis of both body and cause of disease. Where on the one hand the protection and promotion of the body depends on the diet being taken by the man, on the other hand the diet is also the basis of various types of diseases (Patanjali, 2012). In the Upanishads, talking about the purification of the heart and the intellect respectively, it has been said in the Upanishads that "आहार शुद्धौ, सत्व शुद्धिः, सत्व शुद्धौ ध्रुवा स्मृतिः" means that the purity of the diet purifies the Chitta and the purification of the Chitta purifies "Vivek Buddhi" Since the basis of yoga practice is not possible without the purity of the mind and the purity of the mind depends on the purity of the diet. That's why diet has the most important place in yoga practice.

Nature of Yogic diet:

The nature of yogic diet has been very clearly mentioned in the yogic texts. According to the Yogkunda Upanishad, food of aliphatic and sweet nature should be taken for the sake of God (Srikanta, 2012). According to Hathapradipika, the nature of Yogic diet should be aliphatic, sweet and devoted to Shiva (Dasgupta, 1998). According to this text, nutritious, cow milk, Dhatuposhak and mind friendly food is the only acceptable. According to this text consumption of bitter, acidic, pungent, salty, hot, sour vegetables, oil, sesame, mustard, alcohol, fish, curd, buttermilk, asafoetida, garlic etc.

According to Gherand Samhita, pure, melodious, aliphatic suras should be taken with "satisfaction and love" (Pitkänen, 2018). According to this book, rice, barley, sattu, wheat flour, moong with husk, urad, gram etc. come under Mitahar. Parwal,

Jackfruit, Olive, Manakand, Bitter gourd, Kunduru, Arvi, Cucumber, Banana, Gular, Chalai, Brinjal, seasonal vegetables, Bathua, Hurhur etc. are included in Mitahar.

According to the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, food is divided into three types of sattvic, rajasic and tamasic. Among these, the foods that increase longevity, good quality, strength, health, happiness and love, remain stable, give strength to the heart, are juicy and smooth in nature are called Satvik food (Saraswati, 1998). Since only foods of this nature are helpful in yoga practice, they have also been given the noun of yogic diet. Very bitter, very sour, very salty, very hot, very pungent, very dry and very burning food is called the food of royal nature and the food of this nature is the cause of sorrow, grief and diseases. The food which is rotten, juiceless, foul-smelling, stale, false and very impure, such food is of tamas nature.

Diet Quantity:

In Yogic texts, both nature of food and the quantity of food has also been given. According to the Yoga Kundal Upanishad, half of the stomach should be filled with food and one-fourth should be kept empty for water and one-fourth for air (Jain, 2008). According to Hathapradipika, one-fourth part of your total diet should not be consumed (Singh, 2006). According to Gheranda Samhita, half of the stomach should be filled with food and the third part with water and the fourth part should be left empty for the circulation of air (Gherand, 1997). According to the Charaka Samhita, the standard quantity of food is that which does not disturb the nature of the person taking the food and gets digested in time (Nagendra, 2006).

State of mind while taking food: In the Yogic concept of food, great importance has been given to the state of mind while taking food. In almost all the Yogic texts the concept of Mitahar, advice has been given to accept food with a happy heart, with satisfaction, dedicating it to God to keep the state of mind in harmony with the nature and quantity of food.

Materials and Methods:

The terms "Yoga and Diet" were used in a thorough search of the electronic databases. Extensive search was done on PubMed/Medline, Web of Science, Science Direct, Google Scholar, text books such as 'Upnishad', 'Hathapradeepika', 'Gherand Samhita', 'Yog sutra', Shreemadbhagwatgeeta, Charak Samhita and other Yogic

texts were also studied to find out any related information (Saraswati, 1998) (Kriti, 2003). Clinical trials, controlled trials, randomised controlled trial, and reviews that examined yoga either on its own or in conjunction with any other method met the inclusion criteria. Exclusion criteria included research procedures, comments, papers that lacked or repeated the same kind of material.

Results & Discussion:

Explanations of Yogic Diet-

On proper interpretation of diet described in Yogic texts, it gives a unit divided into three classes. as:

1. Nature of diet
2. Diet Quantity
3. Special Mindset

1. Nature of diet: Regarding the nature of diet, all yogic texts have a consensus on the subject that diet should be aliphatic, sweet, sour and nutritious.

2. Quantity of food: In the context of the quantity of food, easily digestible food is taken in the center to prevent laziness. For this reason, a lot of emphasis has been given in Yogic texts on the quantity of food.

3. Special state of mind: In order to keep the mind pure and comfortable under Mitahar, special attention has been drawn on taking food with pleasure and satisfaction by dedicating it to God or Shiva.

According to Yogic belief, there are three components of food, gross, subtle and causal. The taste and weight of food in the gross body, the effects and qualities of food in the subtle body and the sanskars of food in the causal body. These three cells affect our Annamaya, Pranamaya and Manomaya cells respectively. The rituals of diet affect our mental institution (Saraswati, 1998).

It has been proved by modern researches that our emotions affect the food items kept in front of us according to their nature. “Masaru Emoto has carried out very interesting experiments with water at critical point for freezing. He claims that words expressing emotions have effect on the crystals formed in the process. Emoto reports that words with positive emotional contents produce beautiful crystals and those with negative emotional content generate ugly ones. Also music and even pictures are reported to have similar effect. Emoto has also experimented with rice in water and claims that the words with positive emotions content induce a metabolic process

known as fermentation whereas those with negative emotional content tend to induce rotting” (Saraswati, 2002).

This research proves that our words, emotions, negative and positive thoughts and feelings affect the food items placed in front of us, which also affects the recipients. Therefore, from the process of preparation of food to the attitude of all the people involved in serving and receiving it, the samskara kosha of food is affected. Just as the components of food and the skill of preparation increase its taste and nutrition, in the same way the feelings for God, satisfaction etc. give superiority to the food at the level of its sacraments. For this reason, in almost all Yogic texts, while taking food, some activities have been included under Mitahar compulsorily to make the state of mind pure.

Conclusion: The current review, which draws its conclusions from the scientific literature, finds that yogic diet has positive benefits on physical, mental and social health of the younger age group as well as middle-aged and elderly individuals. In addition, yogic diet appears to be more advantageous for the younger generation of obese, hypertensive, and other conditions.

Conflicts of Interest: Nil

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