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## Review Article

### “VYAYAMA” AN ESSENTIAL REGIMEN OF THE DAY: AYURVEDIC VIEW

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#### ABSTRACT

The aim of Ayurveda is not only to treat diseases but also to maintain the health of healthy individuals, to maintain the health, it is very necessary to follow the principles of Rutucharya and Dinacharya to resist the body from environmental changes that are noted in this universe. Vyayama is an important regimen explained in the context of dinacharya. If one follows vyayama properly, it certainly helps to maintain the health and brings maximum benefits; if the same vyayama is followed improperly then it will result in the formation of many diseases.

**Keywords:** Dinacharya, Vyayama, Ayasjanaka karma.

#### INTRODUCTION

Dinacharya the ideal life style for a day<sup>1</sup> explains various duties from one day to the next. Dinacharya systematically and scientifically highlights all the regimens of the day, starting from wake up- early in the morning, regular oil massage, dantadhavan, bathing and vyayama etc. Vyayama is one among the regimens of dinacharya, almost all acharyas of Ayurveda and other ancient literatures of India, explained importance, method of practice, benefits vyayama along with adverse effects if it is practiced wrongly or improperly. By considering the amount of references available in brahatreeyes, one can surely say that vyayama is the most important and unique concept explained among the regimens of dinacharya and which is very essential to maintain the health and to avoid most of the diseases. Vyayama is referred to any karma which can bring ayasa (tired or exhausted)<sup>2</sup>, Vyayama if practiced in proper way it acts as Balavardhaka, Kantivardhaka and Agnivardhaka but if the same is followed in improper way results for nidana (causative factor) of many disorders. The history of Vyayama can be traced from a remote past, even from the primitive societies; the written evidences are available in Mahabharata<sup>3</sup>, which highlights definition and importance of vyayama. In Ayurvedic literature all brahatreeyes explained definition, importance, benefits and adverse effects (if practiced wrongly and excessively) in detail. Acharya Charaka defines vyayama as, the body movement which is meant for producing firmness and strength is known as vyayama, one should practice it in moderation<sup>4</sup> and Acharya Sushruta as, the work involving exertion of the body is known as vyayama.

#### Importance of Vyayama

Vyayama brings about lightness, ability to work, stability, resistance to discomfort and alleviation of dosas (especially kapha). It stimulates the Agni (power of digestion)<sup>5</sup>. There is no anti- obesity measure equal to vyayama; one who performs vyayama regularly can't be overcome by enemies. Diseases do not move towards him, like trifling animals to lion, which sweats with vyayama. Vyayama makes a person charming even if devoid of (youthful) age, look and qualities<sup>6</sup>. Even incompatible food, cooked or uncooked, is digested without any difficulty in persons performing vyayama daily<sup>6</sup>.

#### Vyayama Matra

In all the seasons' daily vyayama should be performed by persons desiring their well- being by balardha (half of strength) otherwise it harms. When prana vayu situated in heart comes out to mouth while performing exercise it is the sign of half of strength<sup>7</sup>. Acharya sushruta again simplifying the word balardha, told that when prana vayu situated in heart comes out of the mouth, while performing exercise is the sign of balardha, here the meaning of the sentence is, the expiration came out because of exertion. Some authors considered balardha as, when profuse sweat appears at axilla, forehead, on nose, on arms, on legs and joints. Generally these symptoms are noted on exertion<sup>8</sup>, so to prevent over exertion, acharyas may be advised to stop vyayama after getting these symptoms.

Acharya Vagbhata also opines the same as sushruta by advising balardha as a matra of vyayama.

### **Vaya (Age), Kala (Season) Anusara Vyayama**

Vyayama should be performed after considering age, physique, place, time and diet otherwise one is afflicted with severe disorders<sup>9</sup>. The children and aged person should avoid vyayama, commenting on this Acharya arunadatta specifically explained the age of bala and vrudha as, Vyayama is not recommended for the persons who are below 16 years and who are above 70 years. So considering the opinion the suitable age for Vyayama is from 16 years- up to 70 years<sup>10</sup>. Vyayama is advised in winter and spring seasons, in other seasons only mild vyayama should be done.

### **Ativyayama Sevana Janya Vyadhi**

Excessive practice of vyayama gives rise to fatigue, exhaustion, emaciation, thirst and internal hemorrhage, darkness in front of eyes, cough, fever and vomiting<sup>11</sup> and even excess practice of vyayama causes ura kshata (wound in the chest), because of which blood, pus and mucus come out while coughing<sup>12</sup>.

### **Contraindications of Vyayama**

The children, the old and those having aggravated vata, those who speaks too much and loudly, who are hunger and thirsty should abstain from vyayama<sup>13</sup>. Vyayama should be avoided by one suffering from intrinsic hemorrhage, emaciation, consumption, dyspnoea, cough and wound, after taking food, wasted due to sex and afflicted with thirst and giddiness<sup>14</sup>. Vyayama should be avoided in persons suffering from Ajeerna, Navajwara, udakodara, visarpa, mutra kruchra, vata rakta, karna roga, asti bhagna, bhagandhara and vrudhi roga.

### **Vyayama as a Nidana of Vyadhis**

Vyayama acts as major cause in the manifestation of diseases if it is not practiced or when practiced wrongly or when practiced excessively, such few examples of diseases where vyayama acts as cause of the diseases are as follows; Vataja hridroga, prameha, madhu meha, bhahya and abhyanta vidradhi (abscess), sthuolyata, vataja gulma, kusta, shosha arsha, pandu roga, shakhashrita kamala, hikka, swasa, chardi and siraja granthi etc diseases.

### **Vyayama as Treatment**

Vyayama is used as treatment measure in both aspects as preventive and curative, almost all acharyas of Ayurveda included vyayama as one of the line of treatment in many diseases, such as in the treatment of sthuolyata, moderate diseases, samana avruta vata, tandra and kapha vrudhi etc disases.

### **Mode of Action of Vyayama**

The foundation of Ayurvedic concept of shareera mainly lies on vayu, pitta and kapha, these are three bio-regulating principles present inside the body and are known as tridoshas, which control the various physiological functions, the vyayama acts on doshas, and dhatus to regulate them if it is followed properly. The probable mode of action of vyayama can be noted on the following concepts;

### **Samanya and vishesha siddhanta**

In the world every substance unless inherent obstacle does follow samanya and vishesha siddhanta, which in brief can be summarized as increment and decrement when associates as other substances. Vyayama increases the strength of the body by means of prabhava of samanya guna and does the apakarshana by karma vishesha specifically by prabhava, so considering these two dimensions of utility vyayama act as causative factor in many diseases and acts as a line of treatment in many more diseases.

### **Dosha pachana and dhatu pachana**

Vyayama by means of its specific action does the dosha pachana and dhatu pachana (mainly in pathological condition), if it is practiced in a proper manner, these two factors contribute lot when vyayama is utilized as preventive and curative aspects. The agni which was remarkable increased by following vyayama in suitable manner, does the dosha pachana or paka, here chakrapani specifically considered dosha means kapha dosha or tridosha, and again one should consider the pathological status of doshas (which is in increased or modified form). Dhathu paka happens when the dosha kshaya occurs, dhatu gets involved in paka process at their respective own site, if dhatu paka is utilized to regularize the quantity and quality of dhatus, then it is beneficial, if increased dhatu kshaya occurs which results in excess increase of vata dosha, which is always pathological condition; may be by considering the action of vyayama, as dosha and dhatu pachak, acharya charaka and vagbhata included vyayama as one among the langhana therapy.

### **Abhisamskara**

Acharya charaka explained the importance of vyayama by considering no effect of virudha ahara on the persons who practice vyayama regularly commenting on this chakrapani considered this as a type of 'Abhisamskara' means preparation of the body with suitable immunizing substance to prevent the ill effects, such substance may be specific antidote or that promoting general resistance power. So these may be the factors on which probably vyayama may act.

### **CONCLUSION**

Dinacharya is the ideal life style for a day and vyayama refers to the body movements which are meant for producing firmness and strength. It should be always performed by considering age, season and strength by Balardha (half of strength). Vyayama mainly brings lightness of the body, ability to work, stability, resistance to discomfort and alleviation of doshas along with stimulation of Agni. During practice of vyayama one should adopt a proper and suitable diet regularly. Vyayama is also contra indicated in many conditions like Pregnancy and in certain diseases Jwara, kusta, mutra kruchhra etc. If vyayama is practiced in contraindicated conditions or improperly followed, it may work as a causative factor for many diseases. Vyayama is also used as a line of treatment in the management of some diseases, such as sthuolyata, kaphaja vyadhis etc.

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