



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

## A Literary Review On Rutucharya

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### Abstract.

The World Health Organization (WHO) says that India has a high number of lifestyle-related diseases, especially non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which are increasing fast because of changes in food habits and lifestyle. Ayurveda, the traditional Indian medical system, teaches that good health depends on keeping the mind, body, and spirit in balance.

One important Ayurvedic practice for this is **Ritucharya**, which means following a seasonal routine. It helps the body stay in tune with nature and keeps the **Doshas** (basic energies of the body) balanced, which prevents many diseases.

Ritucharya includes advice about what to eat, how to live, and what habits to follow in each season. By eating the right foods and following the right lifestyle for each season, a person can stay healthy, strong, and happy.

However, more research is still needed to fully understand how Ritucharya benefits human health. Scientists also need to find the best ways to use these ancient methods in today's modern lifestyles. This study looks at how Ayurvedic teachings about food and lifestyle help people live in harmony with nature, and how Ayurveda's six seasons compare with the four seasons we follow today.

### Introduction

**Ayurveda** is an ancient Indian system of medicine that teaches how to stay healthy, prevent diseases, and treat illnesses using natural methods. According to Ayurveda, there are two main goals:

1. “**Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam**” – keeping healthy people healthy.
2. “**Aturasya Vikara Prashamanam**” – curing the diseases of sick people.

Explained in classical Ayurvedic texts like *Charaka Samhita* (Sutrasthana 6) and *Ashtanga Hridaya* (Sutrasthana 3) gives us clear guidance on how to change our food and daily routine according to the seasons

The first goal means taking care of our health before we fall sick. Ayurveda says we should eat healthy food, sleep well, exercise regularly, and follow good daily habits. It also suggests using natural remedies like herbs and oils to prevent illness.

The second goal means treating people who are already sick. Ayurveda uses natural medicines, massages, special diets, and lifestyle changes to help people recover and stay balanced.

Ayurveda is more than 5,000 years old and is based on the belief that the **body, mind, and spirit** are all connected. Its purpose is not just to treat diseases but also to help people live a balanced and peaceful life every day.

Lifestyle diseases happen because of unhealthy habits like eating junk food, not exercising, or taking too much stress. These diseases develop slowly over time and are often hard to cure once they become serious. The **World Health Organization (WHO)** says that India may soon face a big problem with these lifestyle-related diseases.

A study by **Max Hospital** and **AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences)** showed that such diseases are increasing, especially among young people living in cities. Doctors say that sitting too much, eating oily food, and drinking alcohol are the main reasons for these problems.

To stay healthy and keep the body in balance, **Ayurveda recommends changing your diet and lifestyle according to the seasons**. This practice is called **Ritucharya**. By following Ritucharya, we can keep our body and mind in harmony with nature and prevent many diseases.

Changes in seasons can disturb the three **doshas** in our body — **Vata, Pitta, and Kapha** — especially when our body cannot easily adjust to the new weather. This imbalance, called **Dosha Vaishamya**, can make us more likely to get sick.

According to the **Tasyashiteeya Adhyaya** in the *Charaka Samhita*, following the right food and lifestyle for each season helps improve health, energy, and skin glow. Ayurveda gives special advice about what to eat and how to live in every season to stay healthy and balanced.

For example, during **winter**, it is good to eat **warm foods** like soups and stews made from fresh, seasonal vegetables and fruits. Ayurveda also says we should **avoid frozen, processed, or preserved foods**, because they can harm our health.

The great Ayurvedic teacher **Acharya Charaka** said that if we follow the proper seasonal routines, we can increase our strength and glow. Nature gives us different seasons, and each one affects our body in a different way. Changes in **temperature, humidity, and weather** can influence the balance of the three doshas.

In Ayurveda, the word “**Kala**” means **time or season**. Each season affects our body differently, so we should change our food and habits to match the season. If we don’t, our health can get disturbed.

There are **six seasons** mentioned in Ayurveda:

1. **Shishira** – late winter
2. **Vasanta** – spring
3. **Grishma** – summer
4. **Varsha** – rainy season
5. **Sharad** – autumn
6. **Hemanta** – early winter

Out of these, **Shishira, Vasanta, and Grishma** are called **Uttarayana** or **Adana Kala**, when the sun moves northward. Understanding these seasons and how they affect our **Prakriti** (natural body type) helps us stay healthy.

According to Ayurveda, health is not just about treating diseases but about living in balance with nature. By changing our diet and lifestyle according to the season, we can stay strong, healthy, and happy throughout the year.

### Classification of season

In Ayurveda, the year is divided into two parts called Ayana (solstices), based on the movement of the sun: Uttarayana – when the sun moves north (northern solstice) Dakshinayana – when the sun moves south (southern solstice). Each Ayana has three seasons (Ritus). The word Ritu means —to go|| or —to move,|| showing how nature changes in a regular and specific pattern, which we experience as seasons.

In one year, there are six seasons

Uttarayana (northern solstice)

1. Shishira (winter)
2. Vasanta (spring)
3. Grishma (summer)

Dakshinayana (southern solstice).

4. Varsha (monsoon)
5. Sharad (autumn)
6. Hemanta (late autumn)

These seasonal changes are mainly observed in the Indian subcontinent.

### Uttarayana and its effect

**Uttarayan and Aadhankaal** - The six months that occur during the three seasons of winter, spring, and summer are called 'Uttarayan'; its other name is 'Aadhankaal'. This is because during these days, this period, by its nature, continuously takes away the strength of living beings, that is, it keeps stealing their strength.

While the lines of explanation vary among the authors of statements, the conclusions are generally the same. Here, the six seasons and Uttarayan are discussed. India is a fortunate country; this diversity of seasons and other things is a good fortune for its inhabitants; this is not the case elsewhere. For this, you should study the geography of the world.

The entire year consists of 12 months, 6 seasons, and 2 solstices. This division of time is based on the solar months. According to astrology, the existence of lunar months is also accepted throughout the year. Accordingly, one month increases every third year, because the lunar month is of 27 or 28 days, but the division of seasons is according to the solar months. To understand the above lunar month, you should see - 'Taishchaturbhir Horatrisch, Panchdashahoratraah Paksha. Pakshadvayam month. S Shuklanta'. (A.S.N.S.U. 484) That is, there is a day of 4 hours and a night of 4 hours, which together makes 1 day. There is one Paksha of 15 days, it is considered to be different from Krishna and Shukla. There is a month of 2 pakshas, this month is completed on the 'full moon' day of Shuklapaksha.

Uttarayana is the time when the sun moves towards the northern hemisphere. During this period, the sun becomes stronger and shines directly overhead, which increases heat and reduces the cooling effect of the earth. This affects the human body by weakening strength (Bala) and increasing dryness. It also

increases the bitter (Tikta), astringent (Kashaya), and pungent (Katu) tastes in the environment, which further dries out the body. This time is also known as Adana Kala, meaning the period when energy or strength is taken away from the body. According to modern science, this is similar to the earth's movement around the sun, where on June 21st, the sun's rays fall directly at a 30-degree angle on the North Pole, known as the summer solstice. In India, during the sun's northward movement from the Tropic of Capricorn to the Tropic of Cancer, seasonal changes occur - moving from Shishira (winter) to Vasanta (spring) and then to Grishma (summer). This period lasts from mid-January to mid-July, during which the weather becomes hotter and drier, affecting both human health and the environment.

According to **Sushruta**, the great Ayurvedic scholar and surgeon, there are **six seasons** in a year — **Rainy (Varsha)**, **Autumn (Sharad)**, **Early Winter (Hemanta)**, **Spring (Vasant)**, **Summer (Grishma)**, and **Pre-monsoon (Pravrit)**. He says, "*Tha tu pravriditi*" (Su. Su. 6/10), which means that these six seasons are responsible for the **accumulation, aggravation, and relief** of the three **doshas** — **Vata, Pitta, and Kapha**.

Each season lasts for about **two months**, and Sushruta describes them as follows:

- **Varsha (Rainy Season):** Bhadrapada – Ashwin
- **Sharad (Autumn):** Kartik – Margashirsha
- **Hemanta (Early Winter):** Paush – Magh
- **Vasant (Spring):** Falgun – Chaitra
- **Grishma (Summer):** Vaishakh – Jyeshtha
- **Pravrit (Pre-monsoon):** Ashadha – Shravan

Since Sushruta was mainly focused on **surgery and physical treatments**, he arranged these seasons according to how the **doshas** (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha) change — when they increase, get disturbed, or calm down.

On the other hand, **Charaka**, who focused more on **medicine and body therapies**, did not include the "Pravrit" season separately. Instead, he included the "winter season" in his list. However, Charaka did recognize the existence of "Pravrit" while discussing certain treatment methods.

Both Sushruta and Charaka were highly respected scholars, and their views are accepted as true. The small differences between them are mainly because of **geographical variations**. For example, in **cold regions** (like the Himalayas), winter lasts longer, so there are two winters — *Hemanta* and *Shishira*. In areas with **heavy rainfall** (like Assam), there are two rainy seasons — *Pravrit* and *Varsha*. In **southern regions**, where it is mostly hot, the seasons still have an effect but in a milder form.

The ancient sages studied the land, weather, and their effects on the human body very carefully. Based on their observations, they divided the year into seasons in a way that was most useful for medical understanding and treatment.

Sushruta also explained how **the doshas (Vata, Pitta, Kapha)** change not only with the **seasons** but also during the **day and night**. For example:

- In the **morning** and **spring season**, **Kapha** tends to increase.
- In the **afternoon** and **summer**, **Pitta** increases.
- In the **evening** and **rainy season**, **Vata** increases.
- In the **middle of the night**, **Pitta** gets accumulated again.
- In the **late night and winter**, **Kapha** accumulates once more.

This means that even within a single day, the **doshas naturally rise and fall**, just like they do throughout the year.

## Dakshinayana and its effect

### Visarga Kala (Dakshinayana Period)

In Ayurveda, the **Visarga Kala** or **Dakshinayana period** includes **three seasons** — **Varsha (Rainy season)**, **Sharad (Autumn)**, and **Hemanta (Early winter)**. This period is called *Visarga Kala* because during this time, **nature gives strength and energy** to all living beings. The word “*Visarga*” means “to release” or “to give.”

During this time, the **moon (Soma)** becomes stronger, and the **sun (Surya)** becomes weaker. Because of the presence of **clouds, rain, and cool winds**, the heat of the earth decreases. The weather becomes calm, pleasant, and soothing.

In this period, due to the gentle and cooling nature of the environment, the body gains **strength (Bala)** and energy. Different tastes (**Rasas**) become dominant in each season:

- In the **Varsha Ritu (Rainy season)** – the **Amla (sour)** taste becomes stronger.
- In the **Sharad Ritu (Autumn)** – the **Lavana (salty)** taste becomes stronger.
- In the **Hemanta Ritu (Early winter)** – the **Madhura (sweet)** taste becomes stronger.

Because of this natural nourishment and pleasant weather, the **body's strength and immunity increase** during this Visarga Kala. That's why this time of the year is called **Visarga Kala**, meaning “the period of giving strength.”

Dakshinayana is the time when the sun moves from the northern hemisphere to the southern hemisphere. During this period, the wind becomes cooler, and the moon becomes more powerful than the sun, creating a cooling effect on the Indian subcontinent. The atmosphere becomes more moist and unctuous (oily), and the sour (Amla), salty (Lavana), and sweet (Madhura) tastes become dominant. This helps in restoring the body's strength. This time is known as Visarga Kala, meaning the period when energy or strength is given back to the

body. According to modern science, this period is related to the earth's movement around the sun. On December 21st, the sun's rays fall directly at a 30-degree angle on the South Pole, known as the winter solstice. During the sun's southward journey from the Tropic of Cancer to the Tropic of Capricorn, India experiences seasonal changes- from Varsha (monsoon) to Sharad (autumn) and then to Hemanta (late autumn). This phase lasts from mid-July to mid-January, ending around 14th January, when the Hindu festival Makar Sankranti is celebrated.

### State of strength

At the start of Visarga Kala and the end of Adana Kala that is, during the monsoon (Varsha) and summer (Grishma) the body feels weak. During autumn (Sharad) and spring (Vasanta), the body's strength is moderate. At the end of Visarga Kala and the start of Adana Kala that is, during late autumn (Hemanta) and winter (Shishira) the body has its maximum strength.

### Regimen of different seasons

#### Shishira (winter)

Shishira Ritucharya (Routine of Spring) Due to the extreme cold in the winter season, Kapha Dosha naturally accumulates. This Kapha Dosha, heated by the sun's rays, begins to melt in the spring season, due to which the digestive fire slows down and gives rise to many types of diseases (coryza etc.). Therefore, in this season, try to remove this Kapha Dosha quickly. (Remove it through vomiting and the use of dry drugs.) It is also said elsewhere - 'Hemante chyate slushka vasante cha prakupyati'. Here, the

association of the word Hemant should also be taken into account for the winter season, because the seasonal routine of both is almost similar. This means that the Kapha Dosha accumulated in the autumn and winter seasons gets aggravated in the spring season.) Therefore, to remove Kapha Dosha, induce vomiting by strong emetic substances and take Nasya of strong and dry medicines daily. Eat light (easily digestible) and dry (without fat) food. Use and get others to use exercise, Ubtan, Ghatak (danda-baithak) so that the increased Kapha Dosha gets calmed down (elsewhere in this Ritucharya, there is also a provision of Ghumpaan and Kavalgraha). After that take bath; then apply anallep (tilak) of camphor, agaru, sandalwood, kumkum on the body. For food, eat old barley and wheat bread, consume honey, and eat balls made from the meat of animals native to the jungle, which are cooked by threading them on an iron rod, hence the name "Shoolya."

**Method of drinking:** Extract the juice of a ripe mango, which has been tasted by the beloved before giving it to her beloved. Scented by the scent of her beloved's face, reflected by the shadow of her eyes, pleasing to the mind, and strengthening the heart, drink this mango juice with a group of friends. (Note: The wife must also be present with these friends, otherwise the adjective "priyaanetrotpalaangkitān" will be meaningless). Also, consume flawless asava, arishta, sidhu, sura made from raisins, and mahua infusion in appropriate quantities while sitting with friends. Ginger water, Vijaysar and sandalwood water, water mixed with honey and boiled Nagarmotha water should also be consumed.

Mid-January to mid-March is considered Shishira Ritu (winter season) in Ayurveda. During this time, the weather is cold. The main taste

(Rasa) during this season is bitter (Tikta), and the dominant element (Mahabhuta) is Akasha (space/ether). In this season, a person's strength becomes low, Kapha dosha increases, and the digestive fire (Agni) remains strong.

### Diet regimen

During Shishira Ritu (winter), sour fruits like amla and foods with a sour taste are recommended. You should include cereals and pulses, foods made from wheat and gram flour, new rice, corn, and similar items in your diet. Also include ginger, garlic, Haritaki (Terminalia chebula), Pippali (long pepper), sugarcane products, and milk and milk products. You should avoid foods with a pungent (Katu), bitter (Tikta), or astringent (Kashaya) taste. Light (Laghu) and cold (Shita) foods should also be avoided.

### Lifestyle

A person should avoid activities that increase Vata, such as excessive walking, staying up late at night, or exposure to cold wind, as these can negatively affect health. Instead, one should bathe with warm water, do regular body massage, get some sunlight, and wear warm clothes to stay healthy during this season.

### Vasanta (Spring)

Vasanta Ritucharya (Routine of Spring) Due to the extreme cold in the winter season, Kapha Dosha naturally accumulates. This Kapha Dosha, heated by the sun's rays, begins to melt in the spring season, due to which the digestive fire slows down and gives rise to many types of diseases (coryza etc.). Therefore, in this season, try to remove this Kapha Dosha quickly. (Remove it through vomiting and the use of dry drugs.) It is also said elsewhere - 'Hemante chyate slushka vasante cha prakupyati'. Here, the association of the word Hemant should also be taken into account for the winter season, because the

seasonal routine of both is almost similar. This means that the Kapha Dosha accumulated in the autumn and winter seasons gets aggravated in the spring season.) Therefore, to remove Kapha Dosha, induce vomiting by strong emetic substances and take Nasya of strong and dry medicines daily. Eat light (easily digestible) and dry (without fat) food. Use and get others to use exercise, Ubtan, Ghatak (danda-baithak) so that the increased Kapha Dosha gets calmed down (elsewhere in this Ritucharya, there is also a provision of Ghumpaan and Kavalgraha). After that take bath; then apply anallep (tilak) of camphor, agaru, sandalwood, kumkum on the body. For food, eat old barley and wheat bread, consume honey, and eat balls made from the meat of animals native to the jungle, which are cooked by threading them on an iron rod, hence the name "Shoolya."

**Method of drinking:** Extract the juice of a ripe mango, which has been tasted by the beloved before giving it to her beloved. Scented by the scent of her beloved's face, reflected by the shadow of her eyes, pleasing to the mind, and strengthening the heart, drink this mango juice with a group of friends. (Note: The wife must also be present with these friends, otherwise the adjective "priyaanetrotpalaangkitān" will be meaningless). Also, consume flawless asava, arishta, sidhu, sura made from raisins, and mahua infusion in appropriate quantities while sitting with friends. Ginger water, Vijaysar and sandalwood water, water mixed with honey and boiled Nagarmotha water should also be consumed.

This is a mid-season when flowers start blooming and trees grow fresh new leaves. The weather becomes calm and slightly cold. The main taste (Rasa) during this time is astringent (Kashaya), and the dominant elements (Mahabhutas) are Earth (Prithvi) and Air (Vayu). A person's strength is moderate, Kapha dosha increases, and the digestive fire (Agni) stays at a medium level.

### Diet

One should follow an easily digestible diet during this season. It is good to include honey in the daily diet. Non-vegetarians can eat rabbit meat (Shasha), as it is light and easy to digest. Foods that are cold (Sheeta), oily or heavy (Snigdha), sour (Amla), and sweet (Madhura) should be avoided.

### Lifestyle

During Vasanta Ritu (spring season), people should bathe with warm water and can also do regular exercise. Udvartana (massage) using herbal powders like Chandana (sandalwood), Kesara (saffron), Agar, and others is recommended. Practices like Kavala (gargling), Dhooma (medicated herbal smoke), Anjana (herbal eye application) are also advised. Cleansing therapies such as Vamana (therapeutic vomiting) and Nasya (nasal cleansing) should be done during this season for better health.

### madhyaahnacharya

**Midday routine** - A man seeking happiness should spend the afternoon in dense forests which are cool and fragrant due to the southerly wind, i.e. Malayaj wind, where water is flowing all around, where sunlight falls little or not at all due to the denseness of the forest, where floors are made of diamonds and emeralds etc.; in forests filled with their lustre, where cuckoos are singing, in places suitable for cohabitation, where there are trees with various kinds of fragrant flowers, in such forests (gardens) a man seeking happiness should spend the afternoon in gatherings of friends filled with stories and good talks.

## Grishma (summer)

grishm rutucharya grishm rutu men tikshnamsh (surya) apni tej kiranom se sansar ke jaliya tatva ko susa deta hai. (yahan eka dusra pathabhed is prakar milata hai- 'snehamarko'titikshnamshuh' . yah path adhik spasht hai, isase bhi charakoka yah path adhik spasht hai- 'mayukhairjagatah sneh grishme pepiyate ravih'. (ka.su. 6.27) jisake karan sharirasthit janiya ansh kaphadhatu ka bhi kshaya hone lagata hai, falatah vatadosh ki vruddhi hoti jati hai. islia is rutu men lavan, katu tatha amt ras-pradhan padarthom ka, vyayam evam dhoop (dhaam) ka sevan karana chhod dem..

Summer Seasons In summer, the sharp part (the sun) soaks the watery element of the world with its bright rays. (Here a second textual difference is found as follows: 'Snehamarko'titikshnanshuh'. This text is more clear, even more so than this text of Charako: 'Mayukhairjagatah sneha grisme pepiyate ravih'. (Ka.Su. 6.27) In this season, stop consuming salt, bitter and bitter taste-based foods, exercise and incense (Dham).

Summer (Grishma Ritu) is considered to be from mid-May to July. During this time, the weather is very hot, and dry winds are common. The main taste (Rasa) of this season is pungent (Katu), and the dominant elements (Mahabhutas) are Fire (Agni) and Air (Vayu).

A person's strength becomes low, and Vata dosha starts to increase, while Kapha dosha gets balanced. The digestive fire (Agni) remains weak or mild during this season.

## Diet regimen

What to eat During this season, consume more sweet foods and consume light (quickly digested), greasy (made from P-oil) foods, soft drinks and drinks.

It should be noted that foods made from ghee and oil are heavy, therefore 'gurunamardhasauhityam', that is, heavy foods should be eaten halfway without being filled, is the command of the scriptures; Otherwise, the readers will doubt whether the above has first said laghu (supacha), then further snigdha ? Soak the body in cold water and lick the attached mustard seeds. Method of consumption of sattv Take a bath with very cold water (this naturally cool water is available in mountainous regions, artificial cool water can be found everywhere, but it is inferior in quality. (Add cold water to make it lickable

During summer, one should eat light and easy-to-digest food. The diet should include qualities like sweet (Madhura), oily or moist (Snigdha), cool (Sheeta), and liquid (Drava). Foods like rice, lentils, etc., are good choices. It is important to drink plenty of fluids, such as cool water, buttermilk, fruit juices, meat soups, mango juice, and curd churned with a little pepper. At bedtime, drinking milk with sugar candy is beneficial. Foods that are salty (Lavana), pungent (Katu), sour (Amla), or hot (Ushna) in nature should be avoided.

## Lifestyle

During summer, one should stay in cool places and use pleasant fragrances or natural aromas on the body. Wearing flowers and taking afternoon naps can also be helpful for staying refreshed. Exercise, heavy physical work, and too much sexual activity should be avoided. Drinking alcohol is also not recommended during this season.

**Madhyahnacharya** - During the afternoon, people suffering from the heat should sleep or rest in the groves which touch the sky, that is, in the gardens of very tall Sal, Tala, Tamal trees where the rays of the sun are hidden and surrounded by Madhavi creepers and full of bunches of grapes.

Statement: Although the verb 'svapyat' is included in the 36th verse of this chapter, its chapter has been included here also.

Beautiful environment - Keep the mind healthy during these days, moisten the body with sandalwood paste, wear garlands of flowers and gems, avoid sexual intercourse, wear thin and light clothes. Inhale the breeze from palm fronds soaked in water, or from lotus leaves, or from peacock feathers that are being gently shaken; cool water droplets should be falling from all these feathers and a cool breeze should be coming. Wear crystal garlands scented with camphor solution; this is called Mallikamala. Wear pearl garlands scented with Harichandan. Children (boys and girls) playing all around with lisping voices, parrots and mynas chirping, women wearing bracelets of lotus stem and having faces as bright as blooming lotuses, moving around like lotus flowers, dispel the lethargy caused by summer.

### **Varsha (Monsoon Season)**

The already weakened digestive fire of the weak-bodied beings due to the rainy season (winter, spring, summer) becomes even more weakened in this season (spring and rainy season) due to the doshas like Vata etc. Because these doshas get agitated and pollute each other due to the contact of frosty and cold air when the sky is covered by clouds hanging from the weight of water, due to the effect of steam emanating from the earth, due to the acidic nature of the food, due to the use of dirty water during this period, and due to the slowing down of gastric fire. In such a situation, one should consume a normal diet and lifestyle which alleviates the doshas like Vata etc. and also increases the gastric fire.

The months from July to September are considered Varsha Ritu (rainy season). During this season, the main taste (Rasa) is sour (Amla), and the dominant elements (Mahabhutas) are Earth (Prithvi) and Fire (Agni). A person's strength becomes weak, Vata dosha gets disturbed, Pitta dosha starts to accumulate, and the digestive fire (Agni) also becomes weak or imbalanced.

**Body purification:** At the beginning of this season, purification of accumulated impurities in the body through vomiting and purgation.

After doing Asthapana (Niruhan) take Basti. Normal diet - After the food eaten earlier is well digested, take the following things on these days - eat easily digestible things like old barley and wheat, well cooked and fried meat juice, meat of jungle animals like deer etc, juice of pulses like mung etc, old honey, old infusion, arishta, mastu, mixed with Sauvarchal (black salt) or mixed with the powder of Panchakol (pippali, peepal root, chavya, cheeta, nagarmotha) and take the above mentioned meat, meat juices, juices and infusions.

**Water:** During these days, consume clean rain water (collected in a clean vessel while it is raining from the sky), well water or boiled and cooled water.

On a bad day, when the sky is overcast, eat plenty of sour, salty, and oily foods along with dry chewing gum. These foods are light in weight and therefore digest quickly.

## Diet regimen

During Varsha Ritu (rainy season), one should eat sour fruits like Amla, and include foods with a salty (Lavana) taste and unctuous (oily or moist) qualities (Sneha). Among cereals, old barley, rice, and wheat are recommended. Meat soup, Yusha (lentil or vegetable soup), and similar light, nourishing foods should be part of the diet. It is also advised to drink medicated or boiled water to stay healthy.

## Lifestyle

During Varsha Ritu (rainy season), it is good to do body massage after bathing. Medicated Basti (enema) is also recommended to help remove excess doshas from the body. Activities like getting wet in the rain, sleeping during the day, doing heavy exercise, and sexual activity should be avoided during this season.

Statement 'Harmyaprishthe' - Harmya means the residence of kings or gentlemen or rich people, its 'prishtha' i.e. the upper part, which is called 'atta' in Sanskrit and 'attalika' in Hindi. This 'atta' or 'attalika' is an airy room. Srivagbhata has accepted this as 'Harmyaprishthe'

One should give up the heat of dreams and waters of rivers and waters.

Avoid drinking water from rivers or streams, diluted buttermilk or buttermilk during these days. Avoid consuming Sattu, do not sleep during the day, do not work too hard, and do not expose yourself to the sun.

Statement: River water is generally prohibited during the rainy season. For specific information on this, you should consult the ancient Samhitas and later Nighantu texts. After Bhavaprakasha-Nighantu Varivarga 32-36, Bhavamisra quotes the words of Vrdhasushruta in the same chapter. See also 65-6 'varshanadeyamudakanam' (Ch. Su. 25.39).

'Anupo'hitadeshanam' (Cha.Su. 25/40) Charaka has counted Anup Desh among the harmful countries. Keep in mind, during the rainy season, jungle countries and ordinary countries also take the form of Anup Desh, hence, take utmost care during these days and protect your health. First of all, one should never walk barefoot, then during these days one should wear shoes while walking or travelling by vehicle, otherwise a foot disease called 'Alas' may occur. See-Su.Ni. 13.32.

## Sharad (autumn)

**Sharad routine:** During the rainy season, bile gradually accumulates in the bodies of creatures soaked in water and therefore calm. Then, with the arrival of autumn, the bile accumulated during the rainy season in the bodies of creatures suddenly heated by the intense rays of the sun becomes agitated. To overcome this, that is, to prevent any bile-related disorders, one should consume bitter medicine, purgatives, and perform bloodletting

The months from September to November are considered Sharad Ritu (autumn season). During this time, the sun shines brightly, and the sky is clear at night.

The main taste (Rasa) is salty (Lavana), and the Adominant elements (Mahabhutas) are Water (Apa) and Fire (Agni). A person's strength remains moderate, Vata dosha gets balanced, Pitta dosha becomes disturbed, and the digestive fire (Agni) becomes stronger.

## Diet regimen

**Dietary Method:** Eat small quantities of bitter, sweet, and astringent foods when you feel hungry. Eat rice, mung beans, sugar candy, or muskmelon, Indian gooseberry, pointed gourd, honey, and the meat or juice of wild animals

During Sharad Ritu (autumn season), it is advised to eat cooling foods that have sweet (Madhura) and bitter (Tikta) tastes and are light to digest (Laghu). Foods that help balance Pitta dosha should be chosen. You can include wheat, sugar candy, honey, green gram (moong dal), Patola (a type of gourd – *Trichosanthes dioica*), and the meat of dry land animals (Jangala Mamsa) in your diet. Foods that are hot, heavy, or increase Pitta, such as fats, oils, curd, and meat of aquatic animals, should be avoided during this season.

Instructions for consuming Hansodak: Water naturally heated by the sun's rays during the day and cooled by the moon's rays at night, that is, well-treated by the rays of the sun and the moon, and made free from poison (faults) due to the rising of the star Agastya, hence pure, clean and flaw-destroying, is called 'Hansodak'. This water is neither astringent nor rough. That water, having properties similar to nectar, is fit for drinking.

## Lifestyle

During Sharad Ritu (autumn season), a person should eat only when hungry and avoid overeating. It is recommended to wear flower garlands and apply sandalwood (Chandana) paste on the body to stay cool and refreshed. It is also believed that exposing the body to moonlight during the first 3 hours of the night is good for health. Medical treatments like Virechana (purging) and Rakta Mokshana (bloodletting) are advised during this season. Activities such as sleeping during the day, overeating, and too much exposure to sunlight should be avoided.

Vihar-Vidhi-Rajnimukh (After nightfall, for one or two hours, start by applying a paste of sandalwood, khus and camphor (paste of these substances can be made separately or together), wearing a pearl necklace, wearing clean clothes, sitting on the upper terrace of a building whitewashed with lime, and enjoy the moonlight which is as bright as lime.

Statement: Sit on the rooftop in the evening and soak up the moonlight. This benefit is only available on a few nights around the full moon; on other days, breathe in the evening air. The term "Rajnimukhe" refers to sitting on the rooftop for a day or two as night falls. After that, dew begins to fall. This is harmful; avoid it.

In this season, do not consume the following ten things, these are inauspicious - 1. Boas, 2. Alkaline substances, 3. Eating a full meal, 4. Curd, 5. Oil, 6. Fat (substances cooked with animal affection), 7. Strong sunlight (gram), 8. Strong liquor, 9. Sleeping during the day and 10. Wind blowing from the east.

## Hemanta (late autumn)

Mid-November to mid-January is considered Hemanta Ritu (late autumn/winter season). During this time, cold winds begin to blow, and the weather feels chilly. The main taste (Rasa) in this season is sweet (Madhura), and the dominant elements (Mahabhutas) are Earth

(Prithvi) and Water (Apa). A person's strength is at its highest, Pitta dosha gets balanced, and the digestive fire (Agni) becomes strong and active.

## Diet regimen

During Hemanta Ritu (late autumn/winter), one should eat foods that are unctuous (oily), sweet, sour, and salty in taste. Among cereals and pulses, new rice, flour-based dishes, green gram (moong), and black gram (masha) are recommended. The diet should also include different types of meat, fats, milk and milk products, sugarcane products, fermented drinks (like Shidhu), and sesame seeds (Tila). Foods that increase Vata dosha, such as those that are light, cold, or dry, should be avoided. Cold drinks are also not recommended during this season.

## Lifestyle

During Hemanta Ritu (late autumn/winter), one should bathe with warm water, take sunbaths (Atapa-sevana), and apply Agar (fragrant herbal paste) on the body. Wearing warm and heavy clothes, staying in warm places, and having sexual activity with one partner are recommended for maintaining health. On the other hand, exposure to strong, cold winds and the habit of sleeping during the day should be avoided.

## Discussion

Brief Ritucharya - The Ritucharya already mentioned in detail is now being described here in brief.

In winter (winter and winter seasons) and in the rainy season, consume the first three (sweet, sour, salty) juices. In the spring season, consume the last three (bitter, bitter, astringent) juices. In the summer season, especially consume sweet juice. In the autumn season, consume sweet, bitter, and astringent juices. In autumn and spring seasons, take dry food (food) and drinks. In the summer and late autumn seasons (autumn) consume cold food and drinks and in the winter, winter, and rainy seasons, contrary to the above (dry, cold), one should consume soft and hot food and drinks.

Statement: Mr. Arunadatta in his explanation meant 'other times' in the time of winter, winter, spring and summer, Sri Hemadri is silent here. Other commentators take the word 'Anyada' to mean the seasons of Hemant, Shishir and Varsha. Note: During the rainy season, when it rains, the weather becomes cool for that period or number of days, then it is like winter. On the contrary, when there is no rain and it is hot, then it is called summer.

Instructions for Consuming Rasas - All six Rasas should be consumed daily in all seasons, and in the seasons in which specific instructions have been given for consuming Rasas, one should consume more of that Rasas in that season.

Statement - Maharishi Charak supports Vagbhata's statement above by saying, "Nityam Sarvasabhyasah," thus: "Sarvarasaabhyaso Balakaranaam" and "Ekarasaabhyaso Daurbalyakaranam." (Ch.Su. 25/40) That is, consuming the six Rasas daily, including Madhura, increases the strength of the body and senses; acting contrary to this leads to loss of strength. In today's language, all these Rasas are rich in vitamins and provide the body with the essential elements it needs daily.

Duties at the junction of two seasons are called the junction of seasons. The last week of the first season and the first week of the next season, i.e., this fifteen-day period, is the junction of seasons. During this period, one should gradually abandon the routine of the first season and begin practicing the routine of the next season. If you suddenly abandon the routine of the first season and suddenly begin the routine of the second, this disruption can lead to diseases caused by imbalance in the soul.

Satmya 'Upashaya' or 'Satmya' are synonymous with each other. The diet, dress, country which is suitable for the man is called Satmya. Maharshi Charaka has introduced Satmya as follows: 'Satmyam nama satmyam' (Ch.V. 1.20) That is, Satmya is that which is in accordance with its own Sarvaya, this is called 'Upashaya' He is of three types by distinction of superior, inferior, and middle. He is again of seven types by difference of method. such as six types by the distinction of sweet and other tastes and one type by the

combination of all tastes. The consumption of all these juices is 'Pravarasatmya'. Consumption of only one juice is 'avarasatmya'. The taste between the superior and the inferior is called 'madhyasatmya'. Leave these inferior and middle satmya and consume pravarasatmya respectively.

Elsewhere, Charaka has given the definition of 'satmya' as follows: (Ch.V. 81118) That is, 'satmya' is the element which benefits from continuous consumption. Those in it who consume drink, milk, oil, meat and meat juices and who are accustomed to consuming all juices are strong, able to endure hardships and long-lived, and those who consume any one juice are often less strong, intolerant of hardships, short-lived and poor. Charaka also mentions an 'Okasatmya'. See Ch.Su. 6.45 in. Here the word 'oak' means justification according to 'Gangadhar', the rest mean 'body in the form of house'.

The pattern of cold, hot and rainy seasons may vary according to the range of time divided into months, seasons and solstices above. Therefore, in the field of medicine, this difference can be fatal. Therefore, when winter starts, one should practice winter. Similarly, understand the summer and rainy seasons. When the signs of a season are not fully reflected or more or less visible according to the solar month, these are called ominous signs. This causes distortion in water, country and time; This causes some disease to spread, which is called 'maraka' in the words of Sushruta. See Su.Su. 6.17 and F.V. 3.1-23 to the description of the destruction of the people.

Thus in the Ashtangahridaya-sutrasthana, composed by Dr. Brahmanand Tripathi, son of Vaidyaratna Pandit Taradatta Tripathi, adorned with pure Hindi explanation, special statements, etc

The ancient sages of Ayurveda developed the concept of *Rutucharya* (seasonal routine) through deep observation of nature and logical reasoning. Their main goal was to maintain health (*Swasthya*) and prevent diseases by understanding how the environment constantly changes around us. They studied various natural factors such as land, water, temperature, humidity, wind, rainfall, and air pressure, and how these elements continuously affect human health.

No two moments in nature are ever the same. For instance, temperature rises during the day and falls at night, reaching its highest point in summer and its lowest in winter. These patterns of change repeat every day and throughout the year, forming what we call *Ritus* (seasons).

Modern science supports this understanding. Research shows that changes in sunlight and daylight hours (called the *photoperiod*) influence our immune system and hormone levels, which can lead to seasonal illnesses. Studies on wild animals have also revealed that their stress hormones (*glucocorticoids*) naturally rise or fall with the seasons — meaning their bodies automatically adjust to environmental changes.

In Ayurveda, *Rutucharya* is a practical tool to understand *Kriya-Kala* — the process of how diseases develop step by step as the *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*) go out of balance. By observing these early signs, diseases can be predicted and prevented through timely lifestyle and dietary changes.

It is well known in Ayurveda that an imbalance of *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* leads to disease (*Roga*). The primary aim of Ayurvedic healthcare is to keep these *Doshas* balanced. However, modern lifestyles — with irregular diet, sleep, and stress — easily disturb this balance, resulting in lifestyle-related diseases. Seasonal variations (*Ritus*) also act as external triggers (*Vyanjaka Karana*), aggravating certain *Doshas* and making the body more prone to illness.

For example, *Vata* disorders often worsen during the rainy season (*Varsha Ritu*), while cold and dryness in winter can lead to flu or dry skin. *Pitta* increases in summer, leading to heat strokes, acidity, or skin rashes. Spring (*Vasanta Ritu*) often triggers pollen allergies, and autumn (*Sharad Ritu*) can bring more skin and digestive problems. These examples clearly show how the body reacts differently in each season, just as Ayurveda describes.

Even modern medicine acknowledges seasonal influences. Studies have shown that asthma attacks are more common in winter, and conditions like *Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)* — a type of depression linked to reduced sunlight — occur in colder months.

Lifestyle and diet patterns have also changed drastically over the past century. Earlier, people ate simple, seasonal foods, but after the mid-1900s, consumption of meat, dairy, oils, alcohol, and refined products increased, while the intake of staple grains like rice, wheat, and potatoes declined. This shift has been linked to the rise in lifestyle diseases such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and even cancer.

A hundred years ago, most deaths were caused by infectious diseases like pneumonia, tuberculosis, and diarrhea. But by the late 20th century, non-communicable diseases became the leading causes of death worldwide. India, in particular, is now facing a surge in lifestyle-related disorders and has earned the title of the “diabetes capital of the world.” Research from AIIMS and Max Hospital shows that hypertension, obesity, and heart diseases are rapidly increasing, especially among young urban populations.

While modern medicine focuses on controlling these conditions through diet, exercise, and medication, Ayurveda goes a step further. It offers *Rutucharya* as a preventive and holistic approach — guiding us to live in sync with nature’s changes, maintain *Dosha* balance, and avoid disease before it begins.

If people become more aware of these principles, and if government health programs and wellness initiatives promote seasonal living, we can reduce the burden of chronic diseases and improve overall public health.

Even though climate patterns have become irregular due to global warming, *Rutucharya* remains relevant today. This is because it is based not only on fixed seasons but on the broader principles of *Doshas* and *Panchamahabhutas* (the five elements). By observing the state of our body and the environment, we can still adapt the right seasonal routine. Ayurveda provides timeless guidance for this connection between human life and nature — a relationship that modern society must rediscover and study more deeply.

## Conclusion

*Rutucharya* is not merely a seasonal routine—it is a timeless guideline for dynamic adaptation between body and environment. In today’s context of unpredictable weather and lifestyle-induced diseases, adopting practical *Rutucharya* helps preserve equilibrium, immunity, and vitality. By harmonizing ancient wisdom with modern realities, we can achieve sustainable health that resonates with the rhythm of nature.

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