

## Proper Food and Conduct: The Key to Good Health

**"He alone, whose mode of living is appropriate, whose actions are appropriate, whose sleeping and waking are appropriate, accomplishes yoga and such yoga eliminates sorrows."**

**(Srimad Bhagwad Gita: 6.17)**

When one practising yoga does all actions such as eating, sleeping, waking, purifications, ablutions and other activities in a proper manner and time, in accordance with his own capabilities, seasonal variations and propriety, - then and only then can yoga eliminate all his sorrows.

Afflictions stay away from one who observes complete self-restraint and knows how to prevent and cure various illnesses.

If you wash the eyes thoroughly two to three times a day, exercise daily, massage the soles of the feet with oil, do pranayam, instil oil drops into the nose and ears, and also apply oil onto the hair, it will keep illnesses at bay. Mustard oil is considered best for massage.

The practice of taking a morning walk and sitting in the pleasant morning sun during the vasanta ritu (the months of falguna and chaitra/18th of February to 18th of April, 2005) delays the onset of old age.

A bath in cold water of a lake or pond, applying sandal wood paste to the body and enjoying fresh air during Grishma Ritu (The months of Vaishakha and Jyeshtha/19th of April to 20th of June, 2005) prevent premature advent of old age.

He who takes his bath with lukewarm water, avoids rainwater and consumes a moderate diet at proper intervals in Varsha Ritu, (the months of Ashadha and Shravana/21st of June to 21st of August, 2005) can also defer the onset of old age.

One should avoid rainwater. Those who bathe in the rain are likely to suffer from gastric disorders, arthritis, paralysis and other such disorders in old age.

Those who do not expose themselves to the scorching sun during Sharad Ritu (the months of Bhadrapada and Ashwin/22nd of August 2005 to 22nd of October 2005), take a bath with the water from the well or a lake and eat moderately are less likely to face trouble in old age.

Those who take a bath early in the morning in a pond and consume only fresh food at proper intervals in Hemanta Ritu (the months of Kartika and Margashirsha/23rd of October to 20th of December, 2005) are better equipped to face old age.

Those who wear warm clothes, take a bath with warm water and eat hot food during shishir ritu (the months of Pausha and Magha/21st of December, 2004 to 17th of February, 2005) also do not face problems related to old age.

One who eats wholesome food only when hungry, drinks cool water only when thirsty, consumes fresh butter, khir, ghee and jaggery, and maintains self-restraint remains untroubled in old age.

One who eats meat, sleeps till sunrise, consumes yoghurt that is more than 5 days old, or even fresh yoghurt at night, and goes to bed with promiscuous or menstruating women faces premature old age and all related afflictions. He who eats food served by a promiscuous or menstruating woman, commits a sin which brings about pre-mature old age.

There is a direct relationship between sins and diseases. Sins are the root of most diseases, pre-mature old age and other troubles.

Faulty diet and lifestyle constitute sins. If one lives in a way that is contrary to the injunctions of the scriptures, it is a sin as well. Diseases are caused by sins and sins alone. Premature old age is the direct result of a sinful life style. Penury, conditions of extreme sorrow and misery are also caused by sins.

As such, the wise ones avoid sinful actions by all means. They eschew sinful behaviour for it leads to strife, is the root of all afflictions and brings misfortune.

Diseases flee away, like snakes that run away at the sight of an eagle, from one who is engaged in righteous conduct, has received initiation of the Lord's name as Guru-Mantra, is a

devotee of the Guru, the Lord and guests, has a penchant for tapasya, vrata and fasting and goes to places of pilgrimage (Attending Satsang, association of Saints and meditating on God are also akin to pilgrimage as they make the mind pure, and thus enable one experience Self-Bliss). Neither does old age ever bother them nor are they afflicted with incurable diseases, in other words they escape premature old age and illnesses.

### Reasons and Remedies for Disorders of Vata, Pitta and Kapha

According to the Taittiriya Upanishad :

"Food is the best medicine for all beings as it is food that generates the seven Dhatus, the three Doshas (humours of the body) and the excreta.

Proper diet helps balance the three Doshas Vata, Pitta and Kapha and thereby provides good health. And in case you are afflicted with some disease, a proper diet and living regimen will destroy the disease from its very roots.

### Reasons for Disorders of Vata and their Remedies

Strenuous walking, running, continuous roaming around and sexual indulgence immediately after meals, copulation with an old woman, constantly suffering from grief and sorrow, consuming excessively dry foods, excessive fasting, arguing too much with someone, using bitter words, having conflicts with others, being overcome with fear and misery give rise to Vata. Vata is generated at the Ajna Chakra.

Ripe bananas, sharbat made with fresh lemon juice and sugar, coconut water, fresh butter milk, rich foods like Malpua, Kachori, etc., fresh buffalo curd with sugar, saovir (barley juice), sesame-seed oil, coconut, fruit of the Palm tree, dates, hot drink made from amla, taking a bath with lukewarm water, sandalwood fluid, oily delicacies, a bed of lotus leaves all are capable to reduce Vata-related problems.

Those troubled by Vata-related problems caused by meditation on the Ajna Chakra should instead concentrate on the heart centre; gaze one pointedly on a flame or the picture of God or Guru and then meditate on it.

### Reasons for Disorders of Pitta and their Remedies

If one doesn't eat food while feeling hungry, the Manipur Chakra, the centre and source of radiance and lustre, becomes aggravated, giving rise to an excessive increase in pitta. As such people afflicted with Pitta disorders should avoid too much fasting. Pitta also increases if one consumes water immediately after eating fruits of the Palm or the Bael tree. Avoid drinking hot water in Sharad Ritu and consuming sharp or pungent foods in the month of Bhadrapada as they too increase Pitta.

Powder some coriander seeds and soak it in cold water. After a while take this drink mixed with sugar to remove Pitta disorders. Cow products (milk, ghee, etc), fresh yoghurt (not sour) mixed with candied sugar, ripe fruits of the Palm tree and Bael tree, food items made from sugarcane juice, water of cooked green gram, amla murabba and sesame-seed paste with sugar -are all useful in relieving Pitta disorders. One who lives purely on milk gets easy relief from Pitta Dosh.

### Reasons for Disorders of Kapha and their Remedies

One, who takes a bath immediately after meals, or takes food just after having a bath, drinks water when not thirsty or consumes ice-cream, fruit juices, stale food, butter milk, ripe banana, sour yoghurt, rain water, refrigerated food, sharbat prepared with sugar, coconut water, ripe water melon, cucumber, or takes bath in a lake during the rainy season or even takes meals late at night, becomes prone to kapha disorders. The resultant kapha being produced in Brahma-randhra is highly responsible for semen-loss.

Roasted grams (with salt and black pepper), steam bath, eating dry foods, roasted harad, fasting (without water), pranayam, and taking two pinches of a mixture of equal amounts of black pepper, peepal and dry ginger powders with honey help pacify kapha. Honey, taken with Sant Kripa Choorna, also helps combat Kapha and serves as an appetizer. Beswar, a mixture made out of powdered cloves, cumin and black pepper -pacifies aggravated Kapha immediately and also improves strength and vigour.

Thus, anyone afflicted with any of these three Doshas -Vata, Pitta and Kapha, can take the respective remedial foods and lead a life free from diseases.

**(Excerpts compiled from the Satsang of Sant Sri Asaramji Bapu and Brahmavaivarta Purana).**