

Traditional Methods of Food Habits and Dietary Preparations in Vedas

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Abstract

Vedas (knowledge) are the wide variety of holy books arising in India. The Vedas are contemplated as undeniable means of wisdom. There are Four Vedas: **The Rigveda, The Yazurveda, The Samaveda, and The Atharveda** and all of them are assigned to as 'Chaturveda'. The aim of present research is to find out various traditional methods of food in Vedas how people kept themselves physiologically and immunologically healthy and strengthen. Till now very little researches has been completed on this topic but my current research has been pioneer in concepts of how food and diet plays an important role to maintain the three pillars of supports of life, i.e. diet, sleep and observance of celibacy. Diet plays an effective role in maintain the balance of three main modes of human body i.e. Satvik, Rajasik and Tamasik. Among these four Vedas, Atharveda deals with medicine, sciences and traditional dietary methods. The Ayurveda which accommodates prosperity of wisdom on health and wellness sciences is considered as Upaveda of Atharveda. Rigveda consists of various kinds of dietary methods of preparations. In Ayurveda and Atharveda, diet is mainly contemplated to influence the brain and body. With the belief how to make foods best suited to our physically health as well mentally health, we can exploit nutrition as a source of healing. Diet is the most important part to prolong better health and if the same diet is taken in inappropriate way it becomes the root causes of many diseases.

Keywords: Diet • Physical health • Mental health • Satvic diet • Self-evident

Introduction

The names of food grains and food methods are found in Rigveda. The method of preparation of food varies across the country and traditional foods have been prepared for many years [1]. Conventional knowledge regarding the refining of food, its conservation approach, and their healing outcomes has been fixed for numerous creations in India. Indian conventional meals are also acknowledged as functional foods as of the existence of constituents like antioxidants, anti-inflammatory, body-healing chemicals, probiotics and dietary fibres. Diet concepts are delivering numerous biological functions through the food components in our body. The functional properties of various diets are improving by processing techniques like sprouting, malting and fermentation [2].

The fermented juice of the plant Soma emerges to have been the individual intoxicating drink used in Vedic times. The ancient worshipped as a deity both in India & in Iran. There is one entire Mandala of the Rig-Veda, dedicated to this deity. The procedure by which the Soma juice was processed is entirely narrated in the sixty-sixth hymn of the ninth book of Rigveda, from which the following verses are chosen [3] (Figure 1).

From this illustration it would emerge that the juice of soma used to be taken combined with milk. The verse writers of The Rig-Veda go into enthusiasm above the goodness and the invigorating potency of the Soma, and several of their explanations have evolved into the peculiar Puranic myths of the stirring of the ocean and the finding of the Amrit or eternal drink. The Ether in The Vedas is regarded watery & it usually perplexed along the ocean, and the milking of Soma originating at the Ether is transfiguring in the Puranas among the stirring of the ocean for the Amrit [3].

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Received 05 May 2021; **Accepted** 17 May 2021; **Published** 24 May 2021

Literature Review

In ancient times of Indian civilizations and Indian old literature, especially Bhagavad-Gita, Ramayana, also Manuscript, each society which existed in India had a fair and distinct food affiance method. The majority of them have been influenced by Aryan faith and practices. According to Aryan's faith, food was considered as a source of strength and a gift from God [4].

Aryans were a distinct category of individuals who existed in distinct divisions of primitive India. Aryans were shifted from Indo-Iranian boundary along their cultures and tradition. The olden phase of their conciliation with their virtuous customs in India is popular as the Vedic period [5]. In the Vedic period, wisdom, devotions, prayers and holy songs, and poems were scribbled, which came to be known as Vedas.

“O Soma! you have been crushed; you flow as a stream to Indra, scattering joy on all sides; you bestow immortal food.

“Seven women stir you with their fingers, blending their voices in a song to thee; you remind the sacrificer of his duties at the sacrifice.

“You mix with water with a pleasing sound; and the fingers stir you over a woollen strainer, and filter you. Your particles are thrown up then, and a sound arises from the woollen strainer.

“The woollen strainer is placed on a vessel, and the fingers repeatedly stir the Soma, which sends down a sweet stream into the vessel.

“O Soma! you are then mixed with milk. Water runs toward you with a pleasing sound.”

Figure 1. Traditional food; processing & preparation practices to enhance the bioavailability of micronutrients in plant based diets [2,3].

The Vedas are an important class of holy texts in Indian Literature. The Four Vedas popularly renowned as Samaveda, Rig-Veda, Atharveda and Yajurveda described various kinds of cereal grains and the uses of them in our everyday life. Aryans trusted that food was not easily signified for body nourishment, but was the basic part of a cosmic moral cycle [4]. Barley became the Aryans' initial staple food, and is also mentioned in the Rigveda. Later texts mention wheat, lentils, millets and sugarcane. The most popular lentils used were red lentils, green lentils and black lentils. The word Yava, which in modern Sanskrit implies barley only, was used in the Veda to imply food grains generally, including wheat & barley and the word dhana, implies in the Rigveda as fried barley, which one used as food and offered to the God.

There is also mention of various kinds of cakes were prepared from these grains & used as food and offered to the God. The term Pakti (From pack to cook or to prepare) means prepared cakes & various other terms, such as Purodasa (Sacrificial cake), Apupa (Cake) & Karambha (Barley grouts) are used [6].

Apupa is a form of cake prepared by frying barley. Khichadi made from rice together with lentils or dal is highly nutritious. Lentils and rice were the combinations of complementary nutritional elements consumed by Aryans [5].

Spirituality obtain through food

According to the Bhagavad-Gita (17.8-10) food classifies in three types: Satavik, Rajashik and Tamashik.

- **Satavik:** Food that contains the quality of goodness.
- **Rajashik:** Food that contains the quality of passion.
- **Tamashik:** Food that contains the quality of ignorance.

The more appropriate diet is which contains the quality of goodness like milk products, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. These food products enhances the duration of vital energy and life, purifies the mind, body and soul, provide strength and increase immunity level. Those types of Satavik foods are sweet, juicy and palatable. The diet which is so salty, sour, bitter, pungent is consisting of the quality of passion and cause distress, anxiety, arrogance, ego, physical and mental illness. These types of foods are known as Rajashik foods. The diet which is rich in the quality of ignorance and cause depression, laziness, lethargy, illusion i.e. meat, fish, eggs, non-vegetarian foods classified as Impure, decomposed and unclean. These types of foods are comes under Tamashik foods.

- The purpose of good diet is not only to increase longevity of life, vital energy & bodily strength but also purifies the mind, body, soul & increase consciousness and spirituality level. Boiled vegetables, milk, Cereals, Pulses & lentils, fresh fruits, honey, seeds and nuts are considered as Satavik foods.
- Foods that give enough energy to carry out daily work are categorized as Rajasik foods [7].
- Foods that bring out the lowest class qualities of human behaviour such as liquor, garlic, meat, onion, sour foods and non-vegetarian diet are classified as Tamasik foods.

Eat in a pleasant atmosphere

According to the Ksema-Kuntuhala, a Vedic book from the 2nd century of A.D., an easeful environment and a pleasant and relaxing mood are as necessary to appropriate digestion as the quality & nature of the food. Eat meal in easeful environment helps in improving the state of mind, body as well as soul and increases the vital force.

Blend the diet properly

Foods should be blended not only for taste, but also for proper digestion & assimilation of nutrients present in combined meal. Rice & other grains like wheat, millet can take well with vegetables. Milk products like cheese, butter yoghurt, and buttermilk goes with grains and vegetables, but fresh milk does not combines with cooked or boiled vegetables. Spicy, bitter and pungent foods are also not combines with Milk. In Ancient Era, as we studied in Vedas, the

famous meal known as Vedic lunch which consists - Rice, pulses and lentils soup, boiled vegetables without spices, and multi grain Chapattis are a perfect balanced meal.

Avoid combining the raw vegetables with raw fruits (Fruits can best take as a separate meal). It is also necessary to avoid the mixing of acidic fruits with alkaline fruits, sweet fruits with acidic fruits and milk with fermented dairy products.

Avoid taking water after and before taking meal

As we know the food which is taken by us is digested by a fire present in our stomach, known as Jatharagni (The Fire in the Stomach). Generally we have seen People take water after taking the meal, the effects of water on digestive fire becomes an essential consideration in the art of eating.

Drinking water earlier the food slows down the appetite and, consequently, the desire to overeat. Drinking water immediately while taking meal but in very little quantity helps the stomach in digestion process, but drinking water afterwards the meal is decreases the secretion of gastric juices and reduces the digestive fire. Avoid drinking water for at least half hour before and after taking the meal.

Aryans classified food materials on the idea of their nature and use like Sukhadhanya (cereals), Samidhanya (pulses), Phala (fruits), Shakna (vegetables), Payovarga (milk products), Madyavarga (alcoholic beverages) and Mamasavarga (animal product) [4].

Food must be specific according to the season that is known as Seasonal foods and it comes under the concept Ritucharya in Ayurveda, India has six completely different seasons, These are Vasant ritu (spring season), Grishma ritu (summer season), Varsha ritu (Rainy season), Sharad ritu (autumn season), Hemanta ritu (fall winter season) and Shishira ritu (winter season). Data concerning numerous seasons is extremely vital to create a correct diet plan for individuals, therefore, during this research; effort is formed to produce the main points of individual diet and their seasonal usage.

Ayurveda that greatly called the upveda of Atharveda may be an ancient system of medicines in Republic of India. In step with Ayurveda, Diet is amenable for various dimensions of a person which has the physical built, temperamental and status, emotion, the state of mind and spirituality level moreover. To remain healthy, following a decent and correct healthy diet routine is critical. The number and quality of nutrients absorbs by the body is depends upon the biological process hearth and digestion level of somebody's being. The primary step when taking the meal is to convert the meal into Rasa Tatva (plasma substance), so convert in blood, muscles, bone marrow, fruitful parts and body fluids [8]. Ayurved believed Diet as the initial and foremost stand i.e. (Diet, sleep and observance of celibacy) of life. A correct and nutritional diet ought to be recognized, that is critical permanently health and healthy bodily functions. Ayurveda conjointly provides the idea of Pathya Aahar and Apathya Aahar. Pathya Aahar is understood as the good and well diet that contains proper nutrition and called as balanced diet whereas Apathya Aahar is inappropriate diet that is lack in needed nutrition's.

Pathya Vyavastha chiefly provides knowledge about diet in numerous ailments. It's through with the read of skyrocketing the therapeutic effects of diet, which reinforces the digestive fire, and helps in correct digestion and assimilation of food [8].

According to Vedas, Grains are the first staple food of Republic of India. Consumption of grains in several civilizations of India is determined from the literature. Starting with Yajurveda, the three pulses Urad (Vigna mungo), Mung (Vigna radiate) and Masoor (Lens culinaris) were the foremost unremarkably used grain legumes [9]. Ancient process techniques like fermentation, soaking, and change of state i.e. cooking helps to get rid of these hymenopterans biological process [10].

Food for mind, body and soul

In Bhagavad Religious writing, Lord Krishna states that each one embodied souls area unit operating beneath the management of three modes or qualities of fabric nature [12] (Figure 2).

The thoughts in our head, the activities we have a tendency to perform, the folks we have a tendency to meet, the food we have a tendency to eat will all be classified as Satvic food, Rajashik food or Tamasik food (Table 1 and Figure 3) [11].

Our modern lifestyle with the high level of stress and toxins causes a life that fluctuates between Rajasik and Tamasik food. To achieve joy and happiness, we have to transcend from Tamasik foods to Rajasik foods and Rajashik foods to Satvik foods. In Bhagavad Geeta the religious holy book, Chapter 17, Lord Krishna states about Satvik, Rajasik and Tamasik foods (Figure 4).

Satvik diet

Satvik means fine essence. This is often the purest meal for a consciously Spiritual and healthy life. It nourishes the body and maintains it in a peaceful state. As stated by Ayurveda, this is often the simplest diet for physical vigour, well mind, good physiological condition, and endurance. And it calms and purifies the mind and body, sanctioning it to operate at its most possible state. A satvik meal therefore results in true health: a peaceful mind on top of things of a healthy body, with a steady flow of vitality between them. A satvik diet is best for those individuals who urge to reside a silent, peaceful and meditative life. Satvik foods i.e. sprouted whole grains, fresh fruits, seasonal vegetables, pure and fresh fruit juices, nuts and seeds, milk and cheese products, legumes, sprouted seeds, honey and herbal teas. Satvik meals are those foods which do not upset your stomach [11].

Rajasik diet

Rajasik diet According to Ayurveda, the foods which aggravate pitta and vata doshas and it increases anger and restlessness. They stimulate more fire, outward motion, creativity, aggression and passion. Rajashik diet includes too much spicy, salty and sour food. Sour and spicy preparations, pickles, tea, coffee, alcohol and vegetables like onion, garlic, etc. are said to be rajasik in nature. The mind-body equilibrium will be destroyed by rajasik foods and they make the mind restless and uncontrollable [11].

Tamasik diet

Tamashik Foods are those foods which increase the inner darkness and confusion are called tamasik foods. Tamasik foods include fried and frozen foods, fast foods, microwaved foods, processed foods, left overnight foods, meat, fish, eggs, onion, alcohol, etc. They are good for slowing the metabolism down, numbness, depression and enhancing inertia. Tamasik food is the most unhealthiest food in among these three types of food.

In Vedic Era, People used various types of methods for dietary preparations (Figures 5 and 6) [12].

Some dietary preparations in modern era

Khichadi: To prepare khichadi, Rice and Moong daal are taken either in equal quantity, 1:1/2 ratio or 1:1/4 ratio as per the need. A little amount of sneha (oils), saindhava lavana (rock salt), adraka (Zingiber officinale), hingu (asafoetida) and haridra (curcumin) are added to the preparation. The mixture is cooked in a vessel with six parts of water to attain a solid consistency (Figure 7) [13]. This is a light meal and good for digestion ailments, during fever, diarrhoea, Vomiting.

Soup: It is the preparation which consist of any type of the pulses i.e. red gram, green gram, black gram etc. are soaked, dehusked and boiled with



Figure 2. Healing recipes to cure any chronic disease (Satvik Food Book) [11].

Table 1. Every mode has dissent characteristics.

Satvic	Rajasik	Tamasik
Mode of Goodness	Mode of Passion	Mode of Ignorance
Purity	Arrogance	Laziness
Happiness	Ego	Tiredness
Compassion	Restlessness	Depression
Bliss	Anxiety	Lethargy
Non Violence	Impatience	Ignorance
Fearlessness	Fear	Apathy
Surrender	Uncontrollable desires	Inertia
Love	Distress	Illusion
Self-Control	Satisfaction	

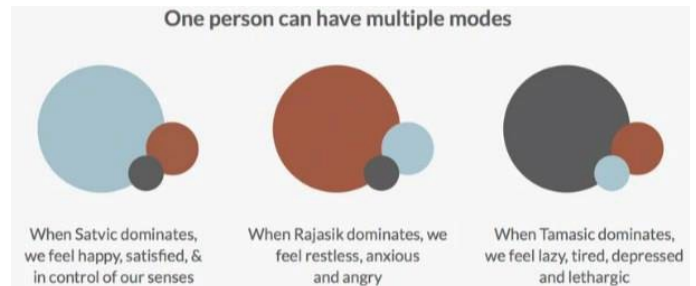


Figure 3. One person will have multiple mode (Atharveda samhita).

Verse 8
*āyuh-sattva-balārogya-sukha-prīti-vivardhanāḥ
 rasyāḥ snigdḥāḥ sthīrāḥ hridayā āhārāḥ sāttvika-priyāḥ*

Foods in the mode of goodness increase the duration of life, purify one's existence and give strength, health, happiness and satisfaction. Such foods are juicy, fatty, wholesome, and pleasing to the heart.

Verse 9
*katv-amla-lavanaty-usna-tikṣna-rukṣa-vidahināḥ
 ahara rajasasyeṣṭa duḥkḥa-sotamaya-pradah*

Foods that are too bitter, too sour, salty, pungent, dry and hot, are liked by people in the modes of passion. Such foods cause pain, distress, and disease.

Verse 10
*yata-yamam gata-rasam puṭi paryusitam ca yat
 ucchistam api camedhyam bhojanam tamasa-priyam*

Food cooked more than three hours before being eaten, which is tasteless, stale, putrid, decomposed and unclean, is food liked by people in the mode of ignorance.

Figure 4. Exploring ayurvedic knowledge on food and health for providing innovative solutions to contemporary healthcare [11].

८५८. घृतहृदा मधुकूलाः सुरोदकाः क्षीरेण पूर्णा उदकेन दध्ना । एतास्त्वा धारा उप
 यन्तु सर्वाः स्वर्गे लोके मधुमत् पिवन्माना उप त्वा तिष्ठन्तु पुष्करिणीः समन्ताः ॥
 हे सब (सोमयज्ञ) के अनुष्ठानकर्ता ! घृत के प्रवाह वाली, शहद से पूर्ण किनारों वाली, निर्मल जल वाली,
 दुग्ध, जल और दही से पूर्ण समस्त धाराएँ मधुरतायुक्त पदार्थों को पुष्ट करती हुई, घुलोक में आपको प्राप्त हों ॥६ ॥

८५९. चतुरः कुम्भांश्चतुर्था ददामि क्षीरेण पूर्णा उदकेन दध्ना । एतास्त्वा धारा उप यन्तु
 सर्वाः स्वर्गे लोके मधुमत् पिवन्माना उप त्वा तिष्ठन्तु पुष्करिणीः समन्ताः ॥७ ॥
 दूध, दही और जल से पूर्ण चार घड़ों को हम चार दिशाओं में स्थापित करते हैं । स्वर्गलोक में दुग्ध आदि
 की धाराएँ मधुरता को पुष्ट करती हुई, आपको प्राप्त हों और जल से पूर्ण सरिताएँ भी आपको प्राप्त हों ॥७ ॥

८६०. इममोदनं नि दधे ब्राह्मणेभु विष्टारिणं लोकजितं स्वर्गम् ।
 स मे मा क्षेष्ट स्वधया पिवन्मानो विश्वरूपा धेनुः कामदुया मे अस्तु ॥८ ॥
 यह विस्तारित होने वाला स्वर्गीय 'ओदन' हम ब्राह्मणों (ब्रह्मनिष्ठ साधकों) में स्थापित करते हैं, यह ओदन
 स्वधा से दुग्ध आदि के द्वारा वर्द्धित होने के कारण नष्ट न हो और अभिलषित फल प्रदान करने वाली कामधेनु
 के रूप में ब्रह्मण्य को प्राप्त ॥८ ॥

Figure 5. According to Shloka 848,849,850 of sukta 34, kanda 4, of Atharveda [12].

enough quantity of water along with the required quantity of salt, oil/ghee and other spicy ingredients (Avoid too much spices) (Figure 8) [14]. This is also a light meal and good for digestion process and heal Sneezing, Cough, cold in a short period of time.

१९१६. तप्तो वां घर्मे नक्षतु स्वहोता प्र वामध्वर्युश्चरतु पयस्वान् ।
मधोर्दुग्धस्याश्विना तनाया वीतं पातं पयस उन्नियायाः ॥५ ॥
हे दोनों अश्विनीकुमारों ! यह तपाया गया तेजरूपी दुग्ध आप दोनों को प्राप्त हो । हवन करने वाले अध्वर्युगण दुग्धसहित आपकी सेवा करें । आप दोनों स्वस्थ गौ के इस मधुर घृतयुक्त दुग्ध को ग्रहण करें ॥५ ॥
१९१७. उप द्रव पयसा गोधुगोषमा घर्मे सिञ्च पय उन्नियायाः ।
वि नाकमख्यत् सविता वरेण्योऽनुप्रयाणमुषसो वि राजति ॥६ ॥
हे अध्वर्यो ! आप गोदुग्ध का दोहन कर, उसे यज्ञशाला में लाएं । उस दुग्ध को तपाने के लिए पात्र में डालें । श्रेष्ठ सविता देवता उषाकाल के पश्चात् सुशोभित होते हुए सम्पूर्ण स्वर्गलोक को प्रकाशित कर रहे हैं ॥६ ॥

Figure 6. According to shloka 1916, 1917 of Sukta 78, Kand 7 of Atharveda [13]

Some Dietary Preparations In Vedas



Figure 7. Khichdi.



Figure 8. Soup.

Takra: It is a liquid preparation prepared by continuously churning the curd for one prahara (3h) with different ratios of water added (Figure 9) [15]. Takra contains many useful bacteria like lactobacillus acidophilus, and it is rich in calcium, Probiotics, Vitamin B-12, Vitamin B2, Potassium and Magnesium. It is very good for improving digestion. It can be taken with adding Roasted cumin powder, dry mint powder, and black rock salt.

Results

The Vedas summarised about the various kinds of traditional dietary methods of preparations which has a great effect on our health and it maintains our physical health as well as mental health. Dietary Methods of diet preparation in Vedas states a large category of well nutritional and complete diet, like when and how much quantity and which quality of food have to be taken. In Modern Era, People have no proper schedule regarding diet, that how to eat, proper



Figure 9. Takra (Buttermilk).

awareness is much needed for people that which type of food they have to be taken. There is a huge diversity of traditional health foods in India because the seasonal foods, regional health foods have consumed according to the climate, culture, and different types of cropping practices of a particular area

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this review paper is to know about the various kinds of dietary and food preparations methods in Vedic Era. The traditional methods of diet preparations according to health are originated over many million years ago in Asia region, leads extensive insights about food and health based on certain unique concepts as well as theory states. My current review paper has been pioneer in field of healthcare by which everyone get proper knowledge regarding dietary habits and food methods.

Diet is an essential requirement in life and one can attain better health by following a proper, natural and healthy diet. In Modern Era most of the health problems develops due to the wrong dieatry habits and cooking methods. Among the three pillars of supports of life, i.e. diet, sleep and observance of celibacy; the first one has been given more importance and considered to be the best in Vedas. A proper, optimum and skilful use of these triads, human body to maintain its integrity, being enriched physical and immunological strength, complexion and growth of nourishment, till full length of life.

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How to cite this article: Alka Yadav. "Traditional Methods of Food Habits and Dietary Preparations in Vedas". *Altern Integ Med* 10 (2021): 10:21