

## VIDHI OF VYAYAMA: AN AYURVEDIC PERSPETIVE

Nemade Ranibala M.<sup>1</sup>, Sardeshmukh S.P.<sup>2</sup>

1. Ph.D. Scholar (Samhita),Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune,2. Ph.D (Ayurveda),Director, BSDT's Integrated Cancer Treatment and Research Centre, Wagholi, Pune, Maharashtra, INDIA.

**ABSTRACT:** *Vyayama* (physical exercise) is an important regimen explained in *Dinacharya*. It is said to be *Agyra* (best) for giving stability. According to *Ayurveda*, everyone should follow a daily routine mentioned in *Ayurvedic* texts to maintain a healthy and disease free life. *Vidhivata Vyayama* (proper exercise) has a positive effect on *Sharira* (body) and *Mana* (mind). *Vyayama* done in excess, improperly or in wrong method, lack of exercise leads to various diseases. Now a days *Avyayama* (physical inactivity) is a leading cause for many diseases. Therefore this review article attempts to explain *Vidhi* of *Vyayama* as mentioned in *Ayurvedic* Texts.

**Key Words-***Ayurveda, Dinacharya, Vyayama, Vidhi.*

**Introduction-** The aim of *Ayurveda* is prevention and cure of the diseases. *Dinacharya* and *Rutucharya* are explained in detail in *Ayurveda* for maintaing the health. *Vyayama* is one among the important regimens of *Dinacharya*. *Vyayama* should be done daily and according to season mentioned in *Ayurveda* for diseased free life. The various references of *Vyayama* shows the importance of *Vyayama* in *Ayurveda*. *Vidhivata Vyayama* acts as *Balavardhaka*, *Kantivardhaka* and *Agnivardhaka* but if the same is done in improper way act as *Hetu* (causative factor) for many diseases. Therefore the present article aims at giving the *Granthokta Vidhi* of *Vyayama*.

### MATERIAL AND METHOD -

This is a literary and conceptual based article therefore *Ayurvedic* texts used in this study are *Charak Samhita*, *Sushrut Samhita*, *Ashtang Hrudaya* and their available Commentaries.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Meaning of the term Vidhi** -*Ayurveda* is a science of life and it has established the *Vidhis* (rules) of *Ahara* and *Vihara* to maintain and promote the health. These *Vidhis* are based on *Samanya* and *Vishesha Siddhanta* which are proved by *Pramanas*.

*Acharya* Hemadri has given the meaning of the term *Vidhi* as - *Vidhi* is to follow the rules given in the *Shashtra*<sup>1</sup> (*Ayurveda Science*).

According to Chakrapani the things which should be avoided i.e. *Apathya* and the things which should be accepted i.e. *Pathya* for a healthy and long life of a well-being is given in the *Ayurveda Samhitas*.<sup>2</sup>

Practising these *Vidhis* of *Ahara* and *Vihara* are very essential to maintain the healthy state of a person. Need of present era is to create awareness among people, related to these things, for gaining and maintaining own health. Detail description of *Vidhi* of *Vyayama* is mentioned in *Ayurvedic* Texts.

### Defination of *Vyayama* -

*Vyayama* is referred to any *karma* (action or movement) which will bring *Ayasa* (exhaustion).<sup>3</sup>

*Acharya* Charaka defined *Vyayama* as any physical activity which is desirable and is capable of bringing about body stability and increases the strength of the body.<sup>4</sup>

WHO defines physical activity as any body movement produced by skeletal muscle that requires energy expenditure-including activities undertaken while working, playing, carrying out household chores, travelling, and engaging in recreational actions – dance, yoga etc.

The term “physical activity” should not be confused with “exercise”, which is a subcategory of physical activity that is planned, structured, repetitive, and aims to improve or maintain one or more components of physical fitness. Beyond exercise, any other physical activity that is

done during leisure time, for transport to get to and fro places, or as a part of a person’s work, has a health benefit. Further, both moderate-and vigorous-intensity physical activity improve health<sup>5</sup>

### Types of *Vyayama* -

*Acharya* Dalhana has described three types of *Vyayama* viz *Kayika* (body), *Vachika* (speech) and *Manasika* (mind).<sup>6</sup>

According to *Acharya* Gangadhar *Adhvagamana* (walking long distance), *Maithuna* (copulation) are included in *Dehavyayama* while *Bhashya-Vak cheshta* (movement of mouth) is considered as *Vacika Vyayama* and *Prajagara* (keeping awake at night) is *Manasa Vyayama*.<sup>7</sup>

### *Vidhi* of *Vyayama* -

According to Hemadri, *Dinacarya* and *Rutucarya* are *Niyatakalika Vihara*.<sup>8</sup> The word ‘*Baddhakrama Vihara*’<sup>9</sup> is used for *Dinacarya* which indicates that the activities which are mentioned in daily routine should be followed serially one by one. In this sequence prior to *Vyayama*, *Abhyanga* (oil massage) should be done as it prevents *Vata Prakopa*. *Vyayama* is followed by *Mardana* (), *Udvardhana* (), *Snana* (bath) and then *Bhojana* (diet).

**Matra of Vyayama (quantity of exercise)**

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Vyayama should be performed by persons as per their *Bala* i.e. *Ardhashakti*<sup>10</sup> ( half of total strength) otherwise it harms. According to Sushruta, when *Prana Vayu* situated in heart comes out to mouth while performing exercise it is the sign of *Balardha*.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore it is said in *Sadvrutta* that before getting exhausted one should stop doing exercise.<sup>12</sup>

**Vaya for Vyayama (age) -**

Vyayama should be performed after considering *Vaya* (age), *Bala* (strength) *Sharira* (physique), *Desha* (place), *Kala* (time) and *Ashana* (diet) otherwise one is afflicted with severe disorders.<sup>13</sup> The *Bala* (children) and *Vruddha* (aged person) should avoid *Vyayama*. *Acharya* Arundatta specifically explained the age of *Bala* as below 16 years and *Vruddha* who are above 70 years<sup>14</sup> so taking this into consideration suitable age for *Vyayama* is from 16 years upto 70 years.

**Vyayama (exercise) and Rutu (season)**

*Alpavyayama* (Mild exercise - in *Grishma* (summer) and *Varsha Rutu* (rainy season).

**Balardha** (half of the capacity) - in *Sharada* (autumn), *Hemanta* (dewy), *Shishira* (winter) and *Vasanta Rutu* (spring).<sup>15</sup>

*Ativyayama* should not be performed in any season. *Sharira bala* (strength) does not remain same in all the season so one should perform *Vyayama* according to *Bala*, *Prakruti* etc.

**Vyayama Varjya (contraindications for exercise)** - *Bala* (children), *Vruddha* (old), *Pravata* (having aggravated Vata), *Ucca and Bahubhasha* (those who speaks too much and loudly), *Kshudhita* (hungry) and *Trushita* (thirsty) should abstain from *Vyayama*.<sup>16</sup>

*Vyayama* should be avoided by one suffering from *Raktapitta* (intrinsic hemorrhage), *Krusha* (emaciation), *Shosha*, *Shwasa* (dyspnea), *Kasa* (cough) and *Kshata* (wound), *Bhuktavana* (after taking food), *Kshina* (wasted due to sex), *Trud* and *Bhramarta* (afflicted with thirst and giddiness).<sup>17</sup>

**Vyayama Arha (indications for exercise) -**

*Vyayama* is indicated for the management of *Santarpanajanya Roga* like *Prameha*, *Sthaulya* etc. *Ayurveda* believes that the root cause of all the diseases is *Agnimandya*. *Vyayama* increases *Agni*.

*Diptagni* prevents the formation of *Ama*. So daily *Vyayama* can keep the person away from many diseases.

### ***Samyaga Vyayama Lakshana* (sign of proper exercise)**

*Lakshana* of *Vyayama* are *Svedagama* (appearance of sweat), *Shwasavruddhi* (increase in respiration rate), *Laghava* (feeling lightness of the body) & *Hrudayaparodha* (feeling of blockage in the region of the heart and such other organs of the body).<sup>18</sup>

### ***Ativyayamajanya Vyadhi* (diseases due to excess exercise)**

Excessive practice of *Vyayama* gives rise to *Shrama* (tiredness), *Klama* (exhaustion), *Kshya* (depletion of body tissues), *Tushna* (thirst), *Raktapitta* (bleeding from different parts of the body), *Pratamaka* (darkness in front of eyes), *Kasa* (cough), *Jwara* (fever) and *Chardi* (vomiting).<sup>19</sup>

***Ayayama* (lack of exercise)**-*Ayurveda* has considered *Ayayama* as a causative factor for the diseases like *Prameha* (ca.ni.4/5), *Sthoulya* (su.su.15/32), *Krumiroga* (worm manifestation) (su.u.54/3) etc.

**Benefits of *Vyayama***-*Vyayama* brings *Laghava* (feeling of lightness of the body), *Karmasamarthya* (increases capacity

to do work), *Sthairya* (stability), *Dukha sahishnuta* (ability to withstand all type of misery), *Doshakshya* (alleviation of three *Doshas*-especially *Kapha Dosh*) and *Agnivruddhi* (increases digestive power).<sup>20</sup>

According to *Sushrutacharya*, regular *Vyayama* gives *Sharirupachaya* (overall body nourishment), *Kanti* (luster), *Gatrasuvibhaktata* (helps body to shape up), *Deeptagni* (improves power of digestion), *Analasya* (removes laziness), *Sthiratva* (improves stability of body), *Laghava* (brings lightness), *Mruja* (purification), *Shrama*, *Klama*, *Pipasa*, *Ushna*, *Sheeta Sahishnuta* (tolerance towards tiredness, fatigue, thirst, heat and cold) and *Param Arogya* (maintain health).<sup>21</sup>

**DISCUSSION-** *Vyayama* is one of the *Balavruddhikarabhava* (increasing strength). *Ativyayama* (excess exercise), *Ayayama* (lack of exercise) are the *Hetus* for many diseases. *Ativyayama* causes *Vataprakopa* and *Ayayama* lead to *Kaphaprakopa*. *Vyayama* is a *Chikitsa* for *Kapha Dosh* and also *Santarpanjanya Vikara*. This proves the importance of *Vyayama* in *Swasthavrutta*, *Nidana* and *Chikitsa*.

According to World Health Organization-Regular and adequate levels

of physical activity-improve muscular and cardiorespiratory fitness; improve bone and functional health; reduce the risk of hypertension, coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes, various types of cancer (including breast cancer and colon cancer), and depression; reduce the risk of falls as well as hip or vertebral fractures; and are fundamental to energy balance and weight control.

Insufficient physical activity is one of the leading risk factors for global mortality and is on the rise in many countries, adding to the burden of NCDs and affecting general health worldwide. People who are insufficiently active have a 20% to 30% increased risk of death compared to people who are sufficiently active.<sup>22</sup>

Ayurveda has given the description of preventive and therapeutic significance

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of *Vyayama*, so one should follow it for maintenance of the healthy state.

## CONCLUSION

*Vyayama* is an essential component of Ayurveda system of preventative health care, rejuvenation and longevity. It should be always performed by considering age, physique, habitat, nature of food, season and strength otherwise the person gets affected by various diseases. Excessive exercise should not be done in any condition. After doing *Vyayama* all parts of body become well developed and in good form. Proper *Vyayama* brings lightness of the body, ability to work hard, stability in whole body, alleviation of *Doshas* along with stimulation of Agni (digestive power). So one should follow the *Vidhi* (rules) of *Vyayama* given in *Ayurveda*.

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